MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE NEWPORT NEWS CITY COUNCIL
HELD IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
2400 WASHINGTON AVENUE
APRIL 9, 2019
7:00 P.M.

PRESENT:       Marcellus L. Harris III; David H. Jenkins; McKinley L. Price, DDS; Tina L. Vick; Dr. Patricia P. Woodbury; and Saundra N. Cherry, D. Min.-----------6

ABSENT:        Sharon P. Scott, MPA-----------------------------1

A. Call to Order

Mayor Price called the meeting to order, welcomed all. He identified the procedure for citizen participation regarding items on the Council agenda, as well as the opportunity for citizens to address City Council on matters germane to the business of the Council. He explained matters that were germane to the business of Council meant matters that the City Council, by law, were empowered to act upon. This did not include announcements that were personal to an individual, business, or organization. He pointed out copies of the ordinance highlighting citizen participation and encouraged citizens to review the document.

Mayor Price requested that cell phones and/or pagers be silenced or turned off.

B. Invocation

The invocation was rendered by Major Jason Knudeson, Wing Chaplain, U.S. Air Force (480th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Wing, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia).

C. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Councilman Harris.

D. Presentations

1. Proclamation: National Youth Violence Prevention Week – April 8 -13, 2019

Mayor Price invited the following to join him on the podium to accept the proclamation: Mr. Cortez Higgs, Ms. MaRhonda Echols, Action Team Members, Ms. Bridget Adams, Ms. Melissa Morgan, Mr. Arris Madden, Mr. Michael Nichols, Mr. Shavar Bland, and Chief Steve Drew, NNPD.

Mayor Price proclaimed the week of April 8 – 13, 2019 “National Youth Violence Prevention Week” in the City of Newport News and advised that National Youth Violence Prevention Week was founded by Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) as an initiative of the Sandy Hook Promise, to raise awareness and educate youth in communities on effective ways to prevent or reduce youth violence.
D. Presentations Continued

1. Proclamation: National Youth Violence Prevention Week – April 8-13, 2019 Continued

He indicated the safety and well-being of many were unnecessarily jeopardized by violence, and too frequently, there were instances of isolation, bullying, and self-harm in the community. Young people who are isolated could fall victim to bullying, violence, and/or depression, causing them to pull away from society, and struggle with learning and developing.

Mayor Price shared that youth were working to enhance learning environments by reducing social isolation, and speaking up when youth were at risk of harming themselves or others. He advised that schools and communities across the country were uniting to protect the most vital resource – our youth.

Mayor Price advised that the Office of Youth and Gang Violence Prevention; the Departments of Human Services; Parks, Recreation and Tourism; the Newport News Police Department; Youth Adult Police Commissions; Newport News Public Schools; the Mayor’s Campaign to End Bullying; the Mayor’s Youth Commission; the Citywide Student Council Association; and the Silence Empowers Violence Community Action Team, worked collaboratively to host educational and awareness activities through April 8-13, 2019 in various locations throughout the City. The theme for the week was “Be a Superhero: Activate your Super Powers” to encourage everyone to do their part to prevent or reduce youth violence.

Mayor Price, on behalf of his colleagues on the Newport News City Council, proclaimed April 8-12, 2019 National Youth Violence Prevention Week and urged all citizens, agencies, and businesses to work toward preventing youth violence by promoting awareness and the prevention of youth violence.

MOTION MADE BY VICE MAYOR VICK; SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN HARRIS; AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO EXCUSE COUNCILWOMAN SCOTT FROM THIS MEETING.

E. Public Hearings

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget

Mayor Price announced that this was the first of two public hearings that City Council would conduct on the City Manager’s FY 2020 Recommended Operating Budget. The second public hearing was scheduled for Thursday, April 11, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. in Room 113 of the Denbigh Community Center, 15198 Warwick Boulevard. He advised, by State Code, each locality was required to hold one public hearing on the budget, but due to the unique geography of the City of Newport News, there were two public hearings for the ease and benefit of traveling for the citizens. This helped ensure that City Council heard from all citizens on budget issues.
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget
   Continued

Mayor Price stated, at the City Council Work Session on March 26, 2019, the City Manager presented her FY 2020 Recommended Operating Budget to City Council. He stated as the City worked through the year on the FY 2020 Operating Budget, City Council would continue to have discussion and communicate its desires to the City Manager after hearing from the public. He indicated that many questions and concerns had been raised about the level of the City’s contributions to the Newport News Public Schools, and about City Council’s commitment to funding the Schools’ needs, both operating, which included salaries and benefits and capital needs, such as technology investments, and repair and maintenance of buildings.

Mayor Price provided information on some of the recommendations that City Council would consider to support the Schools’ funding request. He shared, as a Council, they valued education. City Council supported teachers and school support staff. They understood the critical role played in preparing young people for successful futures, for which they provided thanks. Mayor Price advised, City Council, as a governing body, also had an obligation to all of citizens to be good stewards of all tax dollars. The policies set, and the decisions made as a Council, were a result of having to balance competing needs. He further advised, just as City Council valued education, they valued public safety, human services, public works operations, code enforcement, parks and recreation, waterworks, and the provision of equitable compensation for City employees, as well as investing in infrastructure and buildings. The services funded and provided by the City are critical to the health and well-being of the community in total. He indicated that establishing the balance between competing needs with finite resources required difficult decisions. When considering and adopting an operating budget, City Council worked within those constraints.

Mayor Price advised that there was information circulating that did not accurately reflect the City’s financial support to the Schools, nor did it include the City’s efforts to provide the Schools’ with the requested funding through all available funding sources. For background information, he shared that the City provides funding to the Schools to support both operating and capital needs. For FY 2020, it was recommended that the Schools receive over $110 million in operating dollars. Approximately $9 million was funded to support schools’ debt service payments associated with capital projects (this was an increase of over $700,000). The City also provided funding to the Schools through the annual Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to fund capital projects in the amount of $11 million.

Mayor Price shared, during the Work Session held earlier (April 9, 2019), City Council received the presentation on the Superintendent’s proposed operating budget. The School Board’s proposed budget included approximately $8.7 million in new funding from the State, and requested an additional $2.4 million in operating funds from the City.

Mayor Price shared there were several options to provide additional funding to meet the Schools’ requested budget items: (1) Substituting Capital dollars for opera-
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

The School Superintendent’s budget proposed adding two new categories for funding in the Operating Budget, with cash for capital needs, such as technology and facility maintenance. The proposed funding in both categories was over $5 million. The City Council would consider the proposed FY 2020 CIP within the next month and could direct the City Manager to include an additional $2.4 million in the CIP. The $2.4 million could be transferred from some combination of one or both of the proposed new capital initiatives to meet other operating needs, such as salaries or new positions. The Schools would be receiving the additional funding in capital dollars, thereby freeing up the $2.4 million designated for capital related expenses; (2) Repurpose the year-end surplus, which was estimated at the end of February 2019 to be approximately $4 million. City Council would consider matching a percentage of that amount from capital dollars, up to the $2.4 million so that the surplus could be strategically reallocated to address one time critical school needs, such as technology, security enhancements, or other capital priorities, potentially freeing up over $5 million in the School Operating Budget that could be designated for other purposes.

Mayor Price indicated, over the years, the Schools had realized significant dollars from overfunding various categories within their Operating Budget. Those funds had been expended for other items not identified within the approved budget. By State Code, those funds should have been returned to the locality. He indicated it was time for the City and the School to work together to develop a systematic approach to utilizing those funds in a manner that would ensure the most benefit to the students and the educational system.

Mayor Price stated, the City provided funding to the Newport News Public School (NNPS), but could not, by State Code, designate how those funds were to be spent. It was up to the Newport News School Board to set priorities, and to determine how those funds were allocated.

Mayor Price reiterated that City Council supported education, and were open to further discussion, and hoped the School Board would work with City Council to support one of the aforementioned options, or some variation, that would provide additional funding as requested to benefit the NNPS (a copy of Mayor Price’s remarks area attached and made a part of these minutes).

Mayor Price opened the Public Hearing with the caveat that (1) there would be no name-calling, finger-pointing, or any behavior deemed inappropriate. Speakers included the following:

Mr. Kevin Otey, Chief Operating Officer, Hampton Roads Community Action Program, 2410 Wickham Avenue, Newport News, was available for questions only.
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

Mayor Price advised if a citizen commented on the FY 2020 City Manager’s Recommended Operating Budget, and complete a card for other agenda items, they would not be allowed to address the budget a second time.

Mr. John McMillan, 43 Ridgewood Parkway, Newport News, expressed his support for the FY 2019-2020 School Board Proposed Budget. He advised that he had served two terms on the School Board and had been a member of the Newport News Education Foundation for the past 15 years. It was his hope that City Council and the School Board would come together to work to determine whether one or both of the options proposed by Mayor Price would work for the City.

Regarding the use of funds that were to go toward capital programs, for salaries, Mr. McMillan questioned who would pay, and who would come up with the money in the following year. He stated there was no guarantee that capital funds would be available in the next year but had committed to some dollar amount in salaries. He realized that City Council expected a great deal out of education, and respected the work being done. Given there were increases expected in revenue within the City, Mr. McMillan believed that all departments should share in those increases. He urged City Council to consider education as vital to the community and worthy of being a budgetary focus, and support full funding for the School Board proposed budget.

Ms. Cindy Connell, 7 Wakefield Road, Newport News, advised that she was a teacher in the NNPS and her children attended NNPS. She referenced her remarks at the March 26, 2019 Regular Meeting of City Council, saying that a zero percent (0%) proposed increase to the NNPS Operating Budget sent a clear message that City Council did not value education and was not prioritizing education. Ms. Connell also referenced Councilwoman Woodbury’s closing comments that Ms. Connell’s comment was personally hurtful, and suggested that citizens who spoke should get all of the facts prior to speaking. Ms. Connell shared a short factual list of what she found hurtful: (1) Newport News ranked ninth out of ten Hampton Roads school districts in per pupil funding; (2) Funding increases for the school system since 2013 had not kept up with inflation; and (3) Debt service funding did not add anything to the NNPS Operating Budget. She urged City Council to stop claiming that the City provided level funding for the schools because debt service was being increased. Ms. Connell indicated a proposed budget for the City was presented that had a 0% increase to the NNPS Operating Budget, which was unacceptable. She closed with the following words from Councilman Jenkins: “Let us use this challenge as an opportunity to not just fix the budget this year, but for years to come. Let us not make this another year where our commitment to education is questioned, but a year where we leave no doubt about the greatness of our City and our future. A year we leave no doubt about our commitment to public education, and the success of every child.” Ms. Connell indicated there was great doubt, and only City Council could fix it.
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

Councilwoman Woodbury responded, clarifying her comment about doing one’s homework – questioning whether Ms. Connell was aware that as of February 2018, according to the NNPS website, the NNPS Budget showed a $4 million surplus. The Superintendent indicated that money was used for other things. Councilwoman Woodbury advised that the most important item it should be used for was teacher salaries. She advised that she was a teacher and knew the importance of being a teacher. She also advised that she had served on the Newport News School Board, and knew it was their responsibility to use the funds received from the City for the teachers and not anything else, but it was not done.

Reverend James Brown, 46 Whetstone Drive, Hampton, referenced remarks made regarding responsibility of spending by City Council and the School Board, and no one should be blamed for past occurrences. Reverend Brown recalled, in 2008, when the City Council and the School Board realized the schools were in trouble, research was done to determine what was needed in the schools. Fast-forward to 2019, Reverend Brown indicated little had been done as the high schools were falling apart, Middle Schools were falling apart, and Huntington Middle School was closed, and yet some mentioned recreation centers and places were kids could go to have fun. Reverend Brown advised that education was of most importance for today’s youth. He complimented the kids honored earlier with the Proclamation for National Youth Violence Prevention Week. He inquired about the children that did not have the opportunity, the money, or parents to show support, nor could they share in the luxuries afforded to others. Reverend Brown indicated that a community school was needed in Newport News. The City needed to be responsible, spending funds were needed, and spent on the most precious commodity – our children. He urged City Council to stop depriving the children of an education and the skills they would acquire by building a school that had advance technology. Reverend Brown indicated it would cost more to rebuild Huntington Middle School because of the request for the City to put more money in the schools, so that Newport News would not be ninth, but number one. He urged City Council to think about the children when the Operating Budget was approved. He quoted scripture (Matthew 19:14) – “Suffer the Children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for such is the kingdom of Heaven” and (Luke 6:31) – “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Ms. Jannie Bazemore, 1004 Hampton Avenue, Newport News, indicated the school division was not asking for luxury items, but for necessities. She further indicated, over the years, the City has on many occasions, not fully funded the NNPS Operating Budget. She extended appreciation to Mayor Price’s explanations and options, but advised that teachers and other school staff, along with firefighters, police officers, and other City employees, were paid at a level where they could not meet their necessities from paycheck to paycheck. The education of the children should be a number one priority. The children are our future. The NNPS could not provide a quality education for the youth without appropriate funding. She urged the City Manager to fully fund the NNPS Operating Budget request. Ms. Bazemore advised that over
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager's Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

400 plus students had been displaced at Huntington Middle School because of funding issues and the failure of proper maintenance – different budget, but same result. The failure to fully fund the school divisions needs results in a failed school system, which was not needed or wanted in Newport News. She thanked City Council for fully funding the NNPS Operating Budget request, and thanked City Council, in advance, that Huntington Middle School would rise again.

Ms. Rhonda Wagner, 107 Haviland Drive, Newport News, Newport News Public School teacher and parent, as well as President of the Newport News Education Association (NNEA), advocated for fully funding of Dr. George Parker’s (Superintendent, Newport News Public Schools) proposed NNPS budget. She indicated that it was exhausting to be an educator today, and equally exhausting to come before City Council each year, begging, pleading, and demanding that the City Council provide what was needed for the NNPS to function properly. She advised that staff were not going away, but becoming more vocal, and more organized. Educators drawing attention to the problem was not what made Newport News look bad – underfunding the schools made the City look bad. Ms. Wagner advised there was a severe deficit in NNPS and some of the NNPS employees were covering it. She questioned what City Council would do if the employees stop coming out of pocket to sustain their classrooms, or stopped working hours required, or decided a job in education was not longer for them. She further questioned how the schools would be kept open. It was the generosity of the employees that sustained the schools, but advised the well was drying up. The average teacher in NNPS worked 55 hours of unpaid overtime per month. She inquired about the percentage of City workers that worked without pay for any timeframe. If educators could financially recoup the time that they had put in over the years, the City would be bankrupt. The children are watching, as were the parents. A parent’s number one concern is their child. School funding affected their children. They watch this fight yearly between the Schools and the City for fair pay, equitable funding, and for what the children were entitled. They need a quality education and not another parking garage. Ms. Wagner asked that City Council do the right thing and show they cared by funding their future.

Mr. John Armstrong, 8 Buckroe Avenue, Hampton, advised that he taught in NNPS for 19 years. He encouraged members of City Council to work more with the new Superintendent, Dr. George Parker, and to support his proposed NNPS budget.

Ms. Brenda Ferguson, 1100 Elizabeth Court, Newport News, advised that she serves as a Substitute teacher in the NNPS for the past five years. She described what the children experienced, how the teachers fought to get materials and supplies, fighting to make plans, struggling on how to manage with their family, classroom, students, and arrival times. Having been in the City for the past 30 years, she questioned the budget for what the increase she had to pay in taxes to better the City of Newport News. She indicated the improvements were not seen in the classrooms. Ms. Ferguson further indicated, that something had to be done when she
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

heard that professional teachers were walking out and away from the profession. She shared that she had a doctorate, had worked in the Shipyard for 33 years, but came back to teach as a substitute because she cared about the students, and cared about supporting the teachers who fed into the youth. She stated that City Council would create a situation if the budget request was not met and teachers continued to walk out. Ms. Ferguson urged members of City Council to do whatever they could to help the students, the families, and the teachers in Newport News. Everyone, especially the youth, were watching Newport News to see what would be done with the budget.

Ms. Shannon Adams, 17 Belles Cove Drive, Poquoson, advised that she was a NNPS teacher. She extended thanks to Councilman Jenkins for his support for NNPS students, teachers, and staff. As a former Newport News resident, she shared, in 2007, that she pulled her five-year old from the NNPS and placed him in a private school for the remainder of his kindergarten year. She was shocked and disgusted by the way her child was treated at Kiln Creek Elementary School, and moved out of Newport News and into a district that valued students more. Ms. Adams advised that her child would graduate in 2020 from a nearby district that continued to put his needs and education before everything else in the community, and a district that went above and beyond to ensure the students were well educated and well prepared for life after high school. After 16 years as a teacher in Newport News, she could not say that Newport News provided the support or valued the future of the students to the degree that the teachers and staff did. She had the honor of working with the most dedicated and passionate individuals that Newport News students could have in their corner; however, due to per-pupil spending and teacher salaries in Newport News, the City was losing both students and highly qualified teachers to other local districts. To put teacher pay in perspective, with 16 years of experience in NNPS, Ms. Adams shared that she made less pay in 2018 than 2017. With 16 years of teaching experience, she advised that she could go to one of five local school districts in Hampton Roads and make an additional $4,000 - $11,000 more per year to start. She advised, if it were only about pay raises, there would be hundreds of open positions throughout the school district. Despite what City Manager Rohlf and many members of the Newport News City Council believed, teachers were not only fighting for themselves and the two percent (2%) pay raise proposed by Dr. Parker, but were fighting for the students - the children – the future of Newport News. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of Newport News students qualified for free and reduced lunch, and came to school daily without the needed basic necessities to be successful in their classes. She advised that the teachers purchased the needed supplies, e.g. pencils, notebooks, paper, sanitizer, tissues, etc. out of pocket. Students meant more than the 0% proposed by City Manager Rohlf.

Ms. Adams shared that many students came to school suffering with trauma to which the schools were too understaffed to handle. They came to school with needs that could not be met without additional revenue to help train classroom teachers, and to obtain and maintain additional qualified ESL (English Second Language) teachers. Instead of approving Dr. Parker’s
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager's Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

Proposed NNPS budget or offering a compromise, City Manager Rohlf saw no value in funding the NNPS, but proposed to fund two (2) pricey and unnecessary parking garages at the Tech Center. Additionally, Ms. Adams advised that no money had been allocated to rebuild Huntington Middle School as promised. She questioned what parking garages were more important and more necessary than the public schools.

With the projected increase in the City's revenue for FY 2020, being 2.2% more than the FY 2019 Budget, it was time for the City Council to send a clear and strong message to the families and students in Newport News that the City was committed to helping schools, and students, to be successful.

Ms. Kristen Young, 301 Calvary Way, Smithfield, commented on the pending full support of Dr. Parker's Proposed NNPS Operating Budget. She advised that she taught for 20 years in the NNPS. Her children had attended several NNPS schools, even though not residing in Newport News. The amount of local funding should not be minimized because the State had anteed up more than in the past. The State had not funded the State Board of Education's new Standards of Quality (SOQ). There should be proper wrap-around services associated with every school; e.g. school counselors, psychologists, nurses, social workers. She applauded authentic collaboration, and looked forward to the NNPS funded future. She shared the following quote from a Prince William County Association Member and School Counselor – "We need school counselors more than ever. We don't want to handle the issue when it's too late. We definitely want to make sure we are equipping students to deal with their emotions and to deal with each other at a very early age." People are surprised to learn that Elementary School Counselors were feeling threats of self-harm and suicidal adulation. At all levels, school counselors had been dealing with it. Making sure school counselors are appropriately staffed and making sure they can spend an amount of time on direct counseling services are key to making sure kids were safe in school, and outside.

Ms. Heather Marconi, 425 Nicewood Drive, Newport News, commended on the City Manager's zero percent (0%) funding proposal for NNPS. Responding to Councilwoman Woodbury, Ms. Marconi advised that she had done her homework. She advised that she read the minutes from the Newport News Planning Commission about the Research Park, and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Research Park contract, and she had seen a copy of the Mater Plan. She further advised that she had contacted the City Tax Assessor’s Office and others to assist with the math (as she was an Art Teacher). Ms. Marconi shared that Newport News had signed an agreement with W.M. Jordan for ten new buildings in City Center. Eight of those buildings had plenty of surface parking space, but two of the buildings would require two parking garages. The parking garages had approximately, 1,350 spaces at about $15,000 per space, costing a little over $20 million. Ms. Marconi stated that funding infrastructure was great, but since the two buildings were speculative, the tax revenue generated needed to be able to pay
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

for itself in a reasonable amount of time. According to the math, her kindergarten child would be 81 years old when the garages had created enough revenue to pay for themselves. The City had $20 million to invest in unnecessary parking garages that would not pay for themselves in a reasonable timeline, but not in the public schools, which paid for itself ten times over. Ms. Marconi questioned whether the two parking garages were needed. She referenced comments by Ms. Florence Kingston, Director, City’s Department of Development, who mentioned “the developers were chomping at the bit to get started.” Prior to getting the MOU, W. M. Jordan had begun working on the main road through the Research Park. Ms. Marconi further referenced remarks by Councilwoman Woodbury who rightly expressed concern for the lack of details about the project. This project was four years in the making and had already cost taxpayers $30 million. Ms. Marconi questioned why the projects took precedence over the NNPS. Historically, since 2013, the City’s General Operating Fund Budget had increased 20%. Over the same period, the City’s support for NNPS increased only five percent (5%). City Manager Rohlf told the Oyster Pointer, “the most rewarding experience is when you feel like you make a difference. We always find a way. We identify what a neighborhood needs, and put resources towards it.” Ms. Marconi urged members of City Council to use discernment when looking over the budget before voting (a copy of Ms. Marconi’s draft notes are attached and made a part of these minutes).

Mr. Samuel L. Eure, Jr., 302 Penrith Crossing, Yorktown, advised that he was a member of the Newport News Education Association. He stated both the City Council and the School Board should and have the same focus, intent and same mission and vision. Kids must be put first, not money, not politics, or special interests, but kids. He indicate that Newport News must view this in the context of a State that is heading in the right direction, with needs consistently on it. The Virginia Education Association (VEA) and its local affiliate, the Newport News Education Association (NEA) were laser focused on the state of things in Virginia. The VEA had an ongoing campaign, “Fund Our Future.” Sir Ken Robinson said, “We need to be helping our students create a future we all want to live in.” Mr. Eure stated that Virginia was the 12th wealthiest State in the United States, ranking 42nd in per pupil State funding. Virginia’s teachers were paid $9,316 less than the national average of teacher salaries. While not about pay, it should be about providing the working conditions. He stated that students to be first cannot have their schools, teachers, and school systems not also be first. Virginia’s State funding of K-12 schools had fallen nine percent (9%) when justifying inflation when student inflation across the State had risen. What was lost in the facts and figures of school funding, were the faces of hard-working educators and the young people who spent their days in their schools. Real people were being hurt by the underfunding of public schools. Mr. Eure shared the following additional statistics: (1) Newport News was the 10th largest school based on average daily membership; (2) Newport News was the 4th largest urban center in the State; (3) Other school divisions were receiving higher pay raises, but put a larger percentage of their budget into public schools; and (4) Newport News had the 2nd largest SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) population.
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

Ms. Terry Cox-Joseph, 607 Burcher Road, Newport News, commented on breaking ground on the former City Farm property, and creating a walking or bike path. She urged City Council to include a line item in the FY 2020 Recommended Operation Budget for this project.

Mr. Phil Harris, 13 Minton Drive, Newport News, suggested speakers pause and take a deep breath. He noticed that many speakers were getting defensive.

Mr. Harris recalled the fighting between the School Board and City Council during FY 2019 Budget negotiations, and did not think it would reoccur in FY 2020 with a new School Superintendent. He shared that he had two sons in the NNPS. Dr. George Parker, III, Superintendent, NNPS, attempted to meet with members of City Council, school staff, and residents in the community about a suggested approach for dealing with the Budget. Mr. Harris did not feel the Superintendent’s Proposed Budget was “bold” enough, only requesting a 2.2% increase, and a 2% salary increase for teachers. He tried to be respectful to the process and members of City Council. Mr. Harris was saddened to hear that Dr. Parker was unaware of the City’s revenue increase, and had to take a guess, which was a bad way to establish a budget, but came close. He believed the 2.2% requested for the NNPS was close to what was expected to be given to the NNPS.

Mr. Harris referenced the options shared by Mayor Price, and felt that option #1 was a good option, and suggested it be put in writing because there was mistrust between the two bodies. Council would vote on the budget before anyone could see the Capital Budget.

Mr. Harris advised that he left NNPS three years prior, to better care for his sons. He could not afford to remain in the NNPS and provide what his sons needed. He stated, 0% new money recommended did not sound as though education was valued.

Ms. Mary Vause, 350 Williamsburg Court, Newport News, advised that she was a Newport News resident, an NNPS gradate, a parent of a child in the NNPS, and a member of the Newport News Education Association Executive Board. She advised that she also served on Dr. Parker’s Budget Advisory Committee, alongside the NNEA President, Ms. Rhonda Wagner.

Ms. Vause advocated for full funding of the Proposed School Board Operating Budget for the approximately 29,000 served by the NNPS. She advised that 67% of the 29,000 qualified for free or reduced lunch and desperately needed more support from the City of Newport News, who had a 2.2% increase in revenue. She reminded that City Manager Rohlf proposed a zero percent (0%) increase in new funding for the NNPS children. Ms. Vause indicated it was not easy to watch the school system in which she grew up, shrink its percentage
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

funding for the schools year after year. She advised that she came back home to the NNPS after college to take her first teaching job. She stated she stuck with NNPS even in tough years because she loved her students, some of whom had slept on the floor because they did not have a bed, had parents with mental health problems, and parents who could not read and write. The thought that a City with this degree of need to receive a zero percent funding increase was unthinkable in her opinion. Ms. Vause also indicated that she remained with the NNPS because she loved her fellow NNPS teachers and staff.

As a parent in the NNPS seeing funding for the schools, where her children were enrolled, getting increasingly tight year after year, less discretionary funding, and more excuses, suggested City Council look beyond the excuses and do research beyond what the City Manager claimed.

In 2016, Portsmouth Public Schools began giving level funding to their schools and continued to do so. Portsmouth Public Schools was now the most underfunded school system in the region, and had to cut programs for students to fund modest salary increases. No one wanted to work there. Ms. Vause advised that Newport News should not go down the same path. Portsmouth Public Schools was in terrible decline. Our children deserved better than not keeping up with the cost of inflation.

Ms. Vause indicated that she had debunked false claims perpetrated by City Manager Rohlf on Social Media and urged citizens to check it out. She stated that City Council must unlearn what was learned, and urged them to question the information they received from the City Manager. She urged City Council to support children in Newport News.

Ms. Pam Mayo, 527 Jean Court, Newport News, advised that she was a product of the NNPS, having grown up in the Stewart Gardens community, and had taught in the NNPS for 11 years. She stated, as a teacher, she was living her dream. She served as an example for her students, sharing that she lived in poverty, but if she could do it, so could they.

Ms. Mayo expressed her support for full funding of the NNPS FY 2020 Proposed Operating Budget. She advised that teachers in Newport News needed extra pay. They did not feel appreciated. She had a Master’s Degree and still felt as though she lived in poverty.

Ms. Mayo, advised that children was the one thing she wanted, but she knew that she could not have children as she would not be able to afford. She could not have the family that she so desperately wanted. She advised that she loved her students so much that she could not leave her career. The students needed her. Teachers should be taken care of as they were everything to their students – mother, father, doctor, and counselor.
E. Public Hearings Continued

1. City Manager’s Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Operating Budget Continued

Ms. Jeannine Christensen, 291 Eastwood Drive, Newport News, advised that she was not a teacher, and usually addressed City Council about Riverview Farm Park and the former City Farm property. She advised that she was mother of three in the NNPS, was a business owner and a homeowner. She shared, as a Mom, she had “Mom” friends, and each year, at least one of those “Mom” friends moved out of Newport News to York County, Poquoson, or Williamsburg. The one word that comes up in their conversation was “schools.” They moved because the reputation of the NNPS was not good. One of her children graduated from Menchville High School and was a student at Thomas Nelson Community College. Having children in the NNPS, Ms. Christensen advised that she had always had a great experience with NNPS, but the reputation was not good. She questioned the message receives throughout Hampton Roads when word got out that the Newport News Operating Budget had increased, but the NNPS did not receive an increase. She shared that the citizens that would lead the City when she was “an old lady,” were in kindergarten. She wanted to ensure that those citizens would take care of her were receiving what they needed. Ms. Christensen asked about the birthright of a child born in Newport News. She believed that birthright should be access to the natural world and a great education.

Councilwoman Cherry moved closure of the public hearing; seconded by Councilman Harris.

Vote on Roll Call:
Ayes: Harris, Jenkins, Price, Vick, Woodbury, Cherry
Nays: None

F. Consent Agenda

Councilwoman Woodbury moved adoption of the Consent Agenda, Items 1 through 3, all inclusive, as shown below; seconded by Vice Mayor Vick.

1. Minutes of the Work Session of March 26, 2019

(No registered speakers)

Vote on Roll Call:
Ayes: Harris, Jenkins, Price, Vick, Woodbury, Cherry
Nays: None
F. Consent Agenda Continued

2. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 26, 2019

(No registered speakers)

Vote on Roll Call:
Ayes: Harris, Jenkins, Price, Vick, Woodbury, Cherry
Nays: None

3. Resolution Requesting the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Include City Center Boulevard Between Jefferson Avenue and Warwick Boulevard in the City’s Street Inventory for Maintenance Payment Purposes

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA, REQUESTING THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION INCLUDE FOR MAINTENANCE PAYMENT PURPOSES THAT STREET LISTED HEREIN. This resolution requested the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) include City Center Boulevard between Jefferson Avenue and Warwick Boulevard in the City’s Street Inventory for maintenance payment purposes. VDOT provided maintenance payments to the City for streets in the City’s inventory. VDOT’s annual roadway maintenance payment to the City was determined by the number of lane miles in the inventory. VDOT completed construction of City Center Boulevard in April of 2015. Addition of the new lane miles into the City’s inventory was delayed awaiting resolution of property acquisitions by VDOT. The City Manager recommended approval.

(No registered speakers)

Vote on Roll Call:
Ayes: Harris, Jenkins, Price, Vick, Woodbury, Cherry
Nays: None

G. Other City Council Actions

1. Item 1 of 2 – Resolution Authorizing and Directing the City Manager to Execute a Cost Sharing Agreement By and Between the City of Newport News, Virginia and Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD)

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AND THE CITY CLERK TO ATTEST, ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA, THAT CERTAIN AGREEMENT FOR COST SHARING BY AND BETWEEN HAMPTON ROADS SANITATION DISTRICT (“HRSD”) AND THE CITY OF NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA (“CITY”), AND DATED THE 9TH DAY OF APRIL, 2019. This resolution authorized and directed the City Manager to execute a Cost Sharing Agreement by and between the City of Newport News, Virginia and Hampton Roads
G. Other City Council Actions Continued

1. Item 1 of 2 – Resolution Authorizing and Directing the City Manager to Execute a Cost Sharing Agreement By and Between the City of Newport News, Virginia and Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) Continued

Sanitation District (HRSD) for the Hampton Truck A & B Replacement Project along Jefferson Avenue. The Hampton Trunk A & B Replacement Project along Jefferson Avenue included the installation of 835 linear feet of 36-inch main along Jefferson Avenue from 14th Street to 16th Street and along 16th Street from Jefferson Avenue to Ridley Circle. The force main installation would be completed as part of the Jefferson Avenue Phase 2 Utility Relocation and Streetscape. Adding this work to the existing streetscape project would limit disruption and inconvenience to the public. The total cost for the force main was $825,318 and would be provided by HRSD. The City Manager recommended approval.

(No registered speakers)

Vice Mayor Vick moved adoption of the above resolution; seconded by Councilwoman Woodbury.

Vote on Roll Call:
Ayes: Harris, Jenkins, Price, Vick, Woodbury, Cherry
Nays: None


A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM LOCAL REVENUE – HRSD ($825,318.00) TO TRUNK A & B REPLACEMENT ($825,318.00). This resolution appropriated $825,318.00 from HRSD funds for the Hampton Trunk A & B Replacement Project along Jefferson Avenue. The force main installation would be completed as part of the Jefferson Avenue Phase 2 Utility Relocation and Streetscape Project. HRSD would provide all funds for the Jefferson Avenue force main work. The City Manager recommended approval.

(No registered speakers)

Councilman Woodbury moved adoption of the above resolution; seconded by Vice Mayor Vick.

Vote on Roll Call:
Ayes: Harris, Jenkins, Price, Vick, Woodbury, Cherry
Nays: None
H. Appropriations

None

I. Citizen Comments on Matters germane to the Business of City Council

Mr. James Braxton, 727 Albemarle Circle, Newport News, the Strategic Engagement Director for RISE for Youth (Re-investing Supportive Environments), a Statewide nonpartisan juvenile justice reform initiative that believed prisons did not work, especially for youth. RISE advocated for the closure of juvenile prisons throughout Virginia, and challenged the State to reinvest those funds back into the impacted communities from which youth came. The group’s work began as the result of a national study conducted in 2015 by the NEKC Foundation on the justice systems in the nation. Virginia claimed its fame as one of the top five worse justice systems, leading the nation in referring students to law enforcement, top three highest recidivism rates, and spending upward of $214,000 per year, per youth, to keep them incarcerated. This discovery shed light on the alarming rate of racial and ethnic disparities that marginalized youth of color in the justice system. Thoughtful collaboration and aggressive advocacy led to the beginning of the much needed transformation for the department. Since then, RISE continued to support the DJJ transformation along with the $40 million reinvestment into the continuum of care created by the closure of Beaumont Juvenile Correction Center in 2016. Mr. Braxton advised that Virginia was moving in the right direction, but there was much work to be done. Data showed that Hampton Roads communities lead the State in the number of youth committed to secure care, with Newport News and Norfolk being the top two. As a proud native of Hampton Roads, Mr. Braxton was given a moment of opportunity to work as a Pediatric Dental Assistant, hired and trained by a retired dentist in Hampton. The opportunity showed him that he could do anything beyond all barriers. He then discovered his purpose in youth development and community outreach, which led him to serve as Area Director for the Boys and Girls Club of the Virginia Peninsula at Marshall Courts, Lassiter Courts, and Lincoln Park units for several years. He was brought home knowing the pain that families and youth experienced daily, knowing the countless hours the City led and grass-roots led initiatives spent serving families and knowing it was not good enough. On behalf of RISE for Youth, Mr. Braxton offered the pledge to stand beside the City in the fight for the youth and families, advocating for all of the national and Statewide resources desperately needed. RISE pledged to assist in bridging the gap by partnering with organizations such as Sister-to-Sister, the Catalyst Effect, Mothers of Murdered Sons and Daughters, to help build capacity to serve. He shared the unique and time-sensitive opportunity the City had to access State resources that could change the trajectory of youths’ lives.

Dr. Robin Van Tine, 105 Cannon Drive, Newport News, reminded that it was springtime, the perfect time to visit the beautiful parks in Newport News. He expressed particular interest in the City’s newest Park, the former City Farm, about which the citizens showed excitement about being able to visit. It was his hope that a line-item would be added in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for funds (approximately $200,000) from FY 2020 – FY 2024 to build a trail, fences around the former prison buildings and the archeological dig that should not be disturbed, to let the citizens see the new waterfront park. Adding this into the CIP would show City Council’s commitment for the land they designated as parkland.
I. Citizen Comments on Matters Germaine to the Business of City Council Continued

Dr. Van Tine reminded about the contest sponsored by Citizens for Riverview Farm Park - the Dream A Park Art Contest,” hosted by “The Citizens for Riverview Farm Park.” Children and could have input into designing the park. He advised that additional details were available at www.cityfarmartcontest.com, as well as www.saveriverviewfarmpark.com. The deadline for all entries was April 12, 2019, at cityfarmartcontest@gmail.com. City Council was invited to attend a display of the art work on Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 6:00 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula (415 Younsg Mill Lane).

Regarding the City’s FY 2020 Operating Budget, Dr. Van Tine, advised that the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism could use a boost in its budget. The Department did a great job with the funds they had available. He further expressed support for teachers – his wife was a retired NNPS teacher, three of his children attended NNPS, and he was a professor at Christopher Newport University (CNU). He indicated that City Council needed to support the children and the teachers in Newport News.

Mr. Antonio Thompson, P. O. Box 413, Newport News, quoted Bible scriptures from Matthew 10:7, as well as 1 Thessalonians 4:16, alluding to United States President, Donald Trump, being the Trump of God. It was his hope that President Trump be re-elected during the next Presidential Election in 2020.

Mr. Thompson advised that his focus was on the topics Treasury Enrichment and Public Safety and Security. He encouraged citizens to support the Newport News Police Foundation at www.nnpolicefoundation.org, or (757) 234-1570. He commended Newport News Police Chief Steve Drew, doing a great job, doing the best he could to protect and serve the City of Newport News, with the help of the communities. Mr. Thompson extended thanks to Chief Drew for his continued service, sacrifice, and commitment to protect and serve the City.

Mr. Thompson extended thanks to Newport News citizens who exercised their right to bear arms in an effort to protect themselves, their families and their communities. Support of the Newport News Foundation would help create a Citizens’ Police Armed Forces. The more lawful citizens with firearms, working together, closer with the Newport News Police Department, the safer the City would become, and bring an end to crime. He suggested putting an end to all prisons and jails.

Mr. Adrian Whitcomb, 316-54th Street, Newport News, shared that he was a product of the NNPS. In the late 1950’s, 1960’s, and 1970’s there were many school built. The City had a vision of what the people needed and wanted. He reminded there was a time when the people also wanted parks. Mr. Whitcomb stated that a City was great, not because it had many shopping areas, office buildings, or subsidized parking garages, but because it improved the lives of its citizens, especially the youth. As shared in the earlier Council Work Session of April 9, 2019, in the Denbigh-Warwick Area Plan, he reiterated that there needed to be more parks closer to where the citizens resided. Citizens visited Yorktown Beach, and Fort Monroe to get near the waterfronts, when they could remain in Newport News at the City Farm to visit the waterfront.
I. Citizen Comments on Matters Germaine to the Business of City Council Continued

there. Mr. Whitcomb encouraged City Council to put more money into the CIP as a start (approximately $250,000 for each year) for a walking trail along the waterfront in an effort to make the City what it could be for everyone. He indicated that schools, libraries, and parks were used by all citizens.

Mr. Whitcomb encouraged the youth to express their opinion by participating in the "Dream A Park Art Contest," sponsored by "The Citizens for Riverview Farm Park." He advised that additional details were available at www.cityfarmartcontest.com, as well as www.saveriverviewfarmpark.com. The deadline for all entries was April 12, 2019, at cityfarmartcontest@gmail.com. City Council was invited to attend a display of the art work on Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 6:00 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Peninsula (415 Youngs Mill Lane).

Mr. James Lovett, 25 Riverlands Drive, Apt. B, Newport News, advised that he was a retired Army Veteran of 20 years. He expressed concern about the rebuilding of Huntington Middle School – the vacant building located at 3401 Orcutt Avenue. He also expressed concern about the timeline needed to demolish the building at 3401 Orcutt Avenue, and commence construction for the 21st century high tech STEM Academy. He questioned how long the residents of the Southeast Community would have to wait for the rebuilding of Huntington Middle School.

Mr. Ernest Thompson, 645-19th Street, Newport News, commended City Manager Rohlf, who was responsible for the great job in hiring Newport News Police Chief, Steve Drew, and the Director of Libraries and Information Services, Ms. Sonia Alcantar Antoine, and the Superintendent of Newport News Public Schools. He expressed concern, and asked that she be given time to address the concerns of the people she hired.

Mr. Thompson reminded that his deepest concern was Huntington Middle School. He urged City Council to find a way to make the rebuilding of Huntington Middle School happen sooner rather than later. The Southeast Community had been denied resources for many years - always under resourced or non-resourced. He shared that the children of the Southeast Community needed something to stimulate, invigorate, and inspire them. As Huntington High School did for him and others, he felt there should be something in the community to do the same for the current children. Mr. Thompson hoped that City Manager Rohlf would work her magic as she had done thus far and bring the rebuilding of Huntington Middle School to fruition.

J. Old Business, New Business and Councilmember Comments

Councilman Harris thanked the citizens for their attendance and participation to shared their thoughts on the FY 2020 Recommended Operating Budget. He indicated that he would reserve the majority of his comments on the budget for the second Budget Hearing, scheduled for Thursday, April 11, 2019, 7:00 p.m., at the Denbigh Community Center (15198
J. Old Business, New Business and Councilmember Comments Continued

Warwick Boulevard), and invited citizens to attend to continue and follow-up on budget discussions. He shared, since 2005, he had served as a School Counselor in the NNPS, working at Greenwood Elementary School, Lee Hall Elementary School, Newsome Park Elementary School, and Epes Elementary School. Since 2009, he advised that he was a Counselor at Denbigh High School. He was familiar with some of the needs in working with children. He shared that he was disappointed when the City Council initially received a copy of the City Manager’s FY 2020 Recommended Operating Budget at its earlier March 26, 2019 Work Session. He had since done his due diligence and met with City Manager Rohlf and Dr. George Parker, Superintendent, NNPS. Councilman Harris agreed with the citizen who made the remark that “we are back here again.” He recalled making a similar statement in 2018 that there must be a better way to come up with a budget that would suit the needs of the NNPS, and the youth, with the understanding of what could be provided to the other departments in the City. From 2009 until 2018, he worked from 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. He, like other employees, could have sought other job opportunities, but that was not where his heart lay. His heart had always been with education and with youth. It was often insinuated that City Council did not care about the youth, which was hurtful, particularly he and other colleagues that had been in the field of education. He promised that he and his colleagues on City Council would continue to have conversations and work with the City Manager to ensure what could be done moving forward to make sure the youth, teachers, and staff kept the same passion and purpose. City Council should have the same focus – education, supporting the youth, and being able to move forward for the City of Newport News. He hoped City Council could get through the Budget Process with more collaboration and a better understanding of what was needed on both sides.

Councilwoman Harris announced, the Third Annual Media Network Mixer, to be held on Wednesday, May 29, 2019, 6:00 p. m. – 9:00 p.m., at Shockwave Strength and Performance, located at 315 Chatham Drive, The event would bring small businesses together to network, and see how to better collaborate with one another. Staff from the Department of Development had been present in the past to make presentations to assist small businesses.

Councilman Harris advised that NNPS students began their fourth and final marking period on Monday, April 8, 2019. He encouraged the students to do their best, finish strong, and do what they could be on the Honor Roll through the end of the school year.

Councilman Jenkins announced there would be a Central District Town Hall Meeting, on Thursday, April 18, 2019, 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., at the Newport News Main Street Library, 110 Main Street. All citizens were encouraged to attend to share issues they felt were important in the City.

Councilman Jenkins expressed support for Dr. Parker’s FY 2019-2020 Proposed Operating Budget for the NNPS, as well as putting his budget in the City’s FY 2020 Operating Budget.
Old Business, New Business and Councilmember Comments Continued

Councilman Jenkins addressed the remarks made by Councilwoman Woodbury stating, as of February 2018, according to the NNPS website, the NNPS Budget showed a $4 million surplus. He stated that surplus should be used for teachers. He stated the biggest part of the surplus was from positions the schools had that had been unfilled or partially filled, during the school year. As a result, until the end of the year, the exact amount was unknown, and the NNPS could not count on that money for the next year, and certainly could not go back and give retroactive salary increases to teachers.

Regarding the CIP, Councilman Jenkins shared there had been proposals about putting $2.4 million in the CIP. He thought it was an attractive proposition, but what the City had gone through in looking at the CIP, and budget, when other projects were looked at, such as Riverview Farm Park and the rebuilding of Huntington Middle School, was that every dollar added into the CIP, cut into the City’s Operating Budget because that money was put in the form of a bond and having to pay it back for years to come. He did not think this should be done to fund the smaller items that the NNPS needed for capital improvements. He wanted to get more information.

At the earlier City Council Work Session of April 9, 2019 Councilman Jenkins advised that City Council heard from Dr. George Parker, Superintendent, NNPS; and Chief Steve Drew, NNPD; as well as Chief Jeffrey Johnson, Newport News Fire Department. Chief Drew shared that he met with City Manager Rohlf upon his arrival to Newport News. Councilman Jenkins stated that Chief Drew had tremendous leadership abilities, and was impressed with the NNPD, but stated in addition to leadership, action was needed. One of Chief Drew’s first actions was to meet with the City Manager about adjusting the pay for police officers in Newport News. As a result, for the first time since the 1980’s, as of July 1, 2019, there would be a full Police force in Newport News. Councilman Jenkins stated, if the salaries of the NNPD could be adjusted, and fill the Department so they could effectively fight crime in Newport News, and questioned why teacher’s pay could not be adjust in Newport News to have a full component of teachers so Newport News could get the results needed in education. Councilman Jenkins agreed that there needed to be better way to come up with a budget.

Councilman Jenkins proposed that 62% of the City’s real estate tax revenue be dedicated to education in Newport News. He believed this would be an important message to send to people who live in Newport News, and were interested in buying homes in Newport News. He indicated it was a problem in the region when people with children looked at Newport News and wondered whether this would be a City that supported education and would be there for their children. He stated, it would send a strong message to share that 62% of a citizen’s tax revenue would go toward education, and would improve the real estate revenues, tax revenues, and housing appraisals. He stated the largest asset that most families had, where they had the bulk of their savings, was in home ownership. Councilman Jenkins felt it was a good day’s work to make every citizen in the City who owned a home, richer by improving the value of their home.
J. Old Business, New Business and Councilmember Comments Continued

Mayor Price advised that there would be a free concert each Sunday in the month of April – Port Warwick Jazz on the Square. The concerts would be held from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., in Port Warwick on the Square. He shared that he attended on Sunday, April 7, 2019. The performance was by the Matt Lockhart Band.

Mayor Price announced the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank’s Annual event, “Tastefully Yours,” would be held on Thursday, April 11, 2019, 6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., at the Hampton Roads Convention Center, 1610 Coliseum Drive, Hampton.

Mayor Price announced the 10th Annual Silent Children’s Garden Opening Ceremony was scheduled for Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., at Boulevard Park (corner of Warwick Boulevard and J. Clyde Morris Boulevard). The event was sponsored by the Newport News Healthy Families Initiative and Parents as Teachers’ Community Advisory Board. April was National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The blue and silver pinwheel, which represented hope, health and safety for all children, was the national symbol for Child Abuse Prevention.

Mayor Price announced the 11th Annual Community Empowerment Fair, was scheduled for Saturday, April 27, 2019, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., at Heritage High School (5800 Marshall Avenue). The event was hosted by 20 Pearls Foundation, Inc., established by the Lambda Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and sponsored by Riverside Health System, Heritage High School and NNPS Family and Community Engagement Specialists.

Vice Mayor Vick also attended the Port Warwick Jazz on the Square, on Sunday, April 7, 2019. She extended thanks to Ms. Jackie Shapiro, Executive Director, Port Warwick Foundation, and Mr. Derry Haywood, Board Chairman, Port Warwick Foundation. Port Warwick Jazz on the Square was a free event, and was open to the public. There were numerous families in attendance. For further details, citizens were encouraged to visit the website, http://portwarwickjazz.com.

Vice Mayor Vick extended thanks to Chief Steve Drew, NNPD; Ms. MaRhonda Echols, the Youth, Gang and Violence Prevention Manager; the Department of Human Services; and everyone involved to help the youth in the past few years as the City focused on the prevention of youth and gang violence. She asked for City Council’s continued support as the City celebrated National Youth Violence Prevention Week, and help the youth realized that they are our future, and their opinions were valued.

Councilwoman Woodbury reminded that the FY 2020 Recommended Operating Budget for the City of Newport News, Virginia, was distributed at the March 26, 2019 Regular Meeting of City Council. She pointed out that the total adopted NNPS Budget was $304.9 million. The City Manager recommended $314.2 million, for a change of $9.3 million, or 31.1 percent. Councilwoman Woodbury indicated that it was not true that the NNPS was not funded as much as FY2019. She advised that City Council did not have the prerogative of giving the NPS teachers a salary increase, as that privilege belong to the School Board. She suggested that
J. Old Business, New Business and Councilmember Comments Continued

NNPS teachers approach the School Board, to point out that there was $4 million in surplus funds, and request that they give teachers and staff a salary increase. The School Board was authorized to provide salary increases to NNPS teachers, not City Council. Councilwoman Woodbury advised that she would give the teachers a 10% salary increase if she could, because she knew what it was like to teach, and to use personal funding for school supplies. She shared, the first year that she taught – in Virginia Beach, the lucky kindergarten teachers had 49 students and others had 50 plus students, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon, or 12 noon – 4:00 p.m. The teachers were instructed to work three extra days with no extra pay. She stressed that things had come a long way. She believed that teaching was the best profession in the world. She reiterated that City Council gave the School Board funding, but the School Board decided how it was allocated. Councilwoman Woodbury further advised there was a way to change this. She suggested approaching the General Assembly, advising that the Newport News City Council wanted to allocate by categories, and at that point City Council could say what should be allowed for school teachers and personnel, which would allow teachers to fuss with City Council.

Councilwoman Woodbury shared that City Council received a copy of the City Manager’s FY 2020 Recommended Operating Budget at its earlier March 26, 2019 Work Session. She felt it was very important that “thinking people” to get the details first before criticizing. It was important to have all of the information to be able to speak knowledgeably. Members of City Council had not had an opportunity to review the Budget. Councilwoman Woodbury indicated to be accused of not caring about the students was quite hurtful, because City Council does. She reminded that she had served on the Newport News School Board, been a volunteer in the NNPS for as long as she could remember. She encouraged citizens to wait for all of the facts and to weigh all of the facts.

Councilwoman Woodbury thanked the citizens for their attendance and participation, and expressed her support for teacher raises. She expressed thanks to the NNPS teachers.

Councilwoman Cherry thanked the citizens for their attendance and participation, and for sharing their thoughts and ideas. She shared her belief that City Council was active and would work together to make a difference in the neighborhoods, the communities, and the City as a whole.

Councilwoman Cherry commended the Parents Against Bullying, the NNPD, and the Boys and Girls Clubs for their collaboration on the kickball game held during Spring Break 2019. It was a fun day for all – both the youth and the adults. She extended thanks to those who coordinated the event.

Councilwoman Cherry announced that the South District Your Voice Matters Town Hall Meeting, scheduled for Thursday, April 11, 2019, normally held at the Brittingham-Midtown Community Center (570 McLawhorne Drive), would be moved to the Denbigh Community Center (15198 Warwick Boulevard) for the Budget Public Hearing, 7:00 p.m.
J. Old Business, New Business and Councilmember Comments Continued

Councilwoman Cherry announced that the next meeting held at the Brittingham-Midtown Community Center (570 McLawhorne Drive), would be held on Thursday, May 2, 2019, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m., rather than May 9, 2019. The topic for discussion would be traffic calming for Huntington Heights. Guests would include the City’s Department of Engineering, representatives from the Newport News Shipyard, and the Navy. She reminded than a 90-day trial was held on measures for which the residents had concerns.

Councilwoman Cherry announced that the South District Your Voice Matters Town Hall Meeting, scheduled for Thursday, April 18, 2019, would be held at the Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center (2410 Wickham Avenue), 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Councilwoman Cherry announced that the Annual Free Easter Basket-Give-Away, for children ages 2 – 12, would be held on Saturday, April 20, 2019, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., at 617-27th Street, rain or shine. Donations of baskets, gifts, and candy were welcomed. She asked that donations be taken to the City Clerk’s Office, Newport News City Hall (2400 Washington Avenue), 9th Floor.

K. Adjourn

Mayor Price adjourned the meeting by addressing the citizens. He stated, “May what you say and do uplift the City of Newport News.”

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS,  
ON MOTION, COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 8:50 P.M.

Mabel Washington Jenkins, MMC  
City Clerk

McKinley L. Price, DDS  
Mayor  
Presiding Officer

A true copy, test:  
City Clerk