

**MONDAY-5:30 P.M.**

**JANUARY 28, 2013**

**WORK SESSION**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City held their first work session of the year on the above date and time in the City Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building with Mayor J. W. Peel presiding. Those members attending were: J. M. Baker, M. E. Brooks, R. T. Donnelly, L. M. Hill-Lawrence, K. K. Spence, J. A. Stimatz and J. B. Walton. L. A. Hummer was absent. City Staff members in attendance were: City Manager R. C. Olson City Clerk D. S. Pierce-Tamplen, City Attorney W. H. Morgan. Deputy City Clerk V. D. White, Planning Commission J. C. Brooks, Human Resources Director K. W. Felton, Finance Director S. E. Blanchard, Parks and Recreation Director B. V. White, Public Utilities Director P. A. Fredette, ECDI Director R. Cross and Fire Chief L. M. Mackey.

Mayor Peel established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He called for a moment of silent reflection after which he led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**1} APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**

Mayor Peel called for approval of the prepared agenda.

Councilman M. E. Brooks asked to ***remove from the agenda Item #7-Policy concerning bringing items of concern to the City Manager by Counselors.***

***A motion was made by Councilwoman J. M. Baker, seconded by Councilman R. T. Donnelly to approve the agenda to include the above noted item. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Baker, Donnelly, Brooks, Hill-Lawrence, Spence, Stimatz and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.***

**2} CLOSED SESSION:**

Mayor Peel called for a motion to retire into Closed Session.

***A motion was made by Councilwoman J. M. Baker, seconded by Councilwoman L. M. Hill-Lawrence to retire into Closed Session for consultation with the City Attorney as per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3). Those voting in favor of the motion were: Baker, Hill-***

***Lawrence, Brooks, Donnelly, Spence, Stimatz and Walton.  
Against: None. Motion carried.***

**3} RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION:**

***A motion was made by Councilman J. A. Stimatz, seconded by Councilwoman J. M. Baker to return to regular session of Council. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Stimatz, Baker, Brooks, Donnelly, Hill-Lawrence, Spence and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.***

**4} ELECTION OF MAYOR PRO TEM:**

Mayor Peel stated a year ago when Council selected a member to serve as Mayor Pro Tem, Council elected Councilman J. B. Walton. It was stated at that time Mr. Walton would serve one year and then we would come back and revisit it on January 28<sup>th</sup>. We had a long discussion about whether we could elect one for one year and then come back and elect another for the remaining year.

***A motion was made by Councilman J. A. Stimatz, seconded by Councilwoman J. M. Baker to approve the selection of Councilwoman L. M. Hill-Lawrence for the position of Mayor Pro Tem until December 2013. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Stimatz, Baker, Brooks, Donnelly, Hill-Lawrence, Spence and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.***

**5} UPDATE-WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM:**

Mayor Peel informed the Council that in 2012 the City completed 118 energy audits. Since January 1, 2013, 24 additional energy audits have been completed. After the initial walkthrough by Dennis Gordon, he determined that 25 homes were beyond the scope of the weatherization program. The primary reason for such a determination was that the \$4,500, which the City has committed to weatherization on individual homes, would not prove any benefit to the property owner because the home was in such a dilapidated state. We are a little over half way through the year. It is fair to say that we have not seen the number of people respond to the letters that we sent or to all advertising we have done to take advantage of this opportunity. The energy audit alone would cost \$300 - \$500 if you had to pay for it. The City does it for free. The City has several alternatives to use that will reduce the consumption of electric power. We will in the near future be sending out another series of letters and we hope those folks that get them will take advantage of this opportunity and that when we report again we will have done about 45 homes and have maybe 50 more in the queue waiting to be weatherized. It is also important to note the City does

partner with ECSU, the Community Development Program to weatherize six homes that are currently under renovation by that organization so we do like to partner with a variety of different community groups as we do this.

Councilman Walton asked the ratio of homeowners verses renters who have applied for this assistance.

Mr. Gordon replied it was probably five to one.

Councilman Stimatz stated he had a couple of things he would like to have. He would like to know the actual money we have spent over the last two years on home renovations and at the same time the actual KVA dollars savings for the homes we have weatherized. You say we are having success and he would like to see the numbers. The third thing is you talk about the load management switches and you indicate an issue has occurred with the load management switches. Can you tell us what that is?

Mr. Olson replied that we got a batch of load management switches which were defective. We sent them back to the company and they have replaced those with a new upgraded model. But what we are seeing now is that the load management switches the technologies is changing and we are going to have to make some major changes over the next couple of years.

Mr. Stimatz stated there were two items in the Goals. One is to adopt the rendition of the Utility Search Application so we can maintain accuracy in the rental properties and also develop a Renter's Bill of Rights. There is nothing indicating either one has been done.

Mr. Olson said we have not developed the Renter's Bill of Rights. There is something from the State of North Carolina that could be incorporated or adopted by the City Council. The other one just has not been done by staff. We do plan on doing it. We are working on the energy efficiency rating now.

## **6} COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**a} Albemarle Economic Development Commission:** Councilwoman Hummer, Councilwoman Baker, Councilwoman Hill-Lawrence and Mayor Peel.

Councilwoman Baker stated we had a meeting two weeks ago and we had a teacher come and speak at the Committee of 100 luncheon about improving schools and what success she has had in bringing up test scores, etc. Nothing huge with the AEDC and our next meeting is in two weeks.

Mayor Peel stated he attends those meetings as well and on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February, Mr. Harris, Rodney Bunch and he are going to Raleigh to attend a program at NC State on wind energy.

**b} Central Communications Advisory Board:** Mayor Pro Tem Walton

Mayor Pro Tem Walton stated they have not met.

**c} Fireman's Relief Fund Board:** Councilman Spence

Councilman Spence stated they have not met.

**d} Joint Land Use Plan Committee:** Councilman Stimatz (*Please note:* Time specific Committee associated with CAMA Land Use Plan adoption. No additional meetings needed).

Councilman Stimatz stated we do not meet unless there is something to meet about and there is nothing to meet about at this time.

**e} NC Eastern Municipal Power Agency:** City Manager Olson and Mayor Peel

Mr. Olson stated our meeting for this month has been cancelled; however, we do have a meeting with the people from ElectriCities tomorrow night at 5:30 p.m. at the Albemarle Plantation. He will be driving if anyone would like to ride with him.

**f} Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc.:** Councilman Donnelly

Councilman Donnelly stated the ECDI Discount Cards are still available for \$10. They are great discount through September of this year. The NC Potato Festival is scheduled for May 18<sup>th</sup>. The first committee meeting has already taken place. We are looking for sponsors and volunteers again so if there is anyone that would like to volunteer or help sponsor the event, ECDI would appreciate that. Speaking of ECDI they are hopeful to be moving into the Mack Sawyer building which needs a name change maybe some time in February. Last, there is an affair going on at the NC Main Street Conference in Salisbury, NC. There are about 15 people from Elizabeth City that will be attending that. We are fortunate the Main Street Champion Award has been given to our City Manager. The Best Image Building Campaign Award is going to Elizabeth City HAS IT campaign and its blog. The Nell Cropsy Ghost Walk will receive the Best Special Event Award. Quite a few people from this area will be attending and being very supportive. Rebecca Cross and Wayne Harris will definitely be there and he wants to thank Rebecca for everything she has done in that area.

**g} Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce Board:** Mayor Peel

Mayor Peel stated the big news there is next week February 7<sup>th</sup> is the 102<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting. We have a great speaker lined up and it should be a great meeting. Also in March will be the Business Expo.

**h} Finance Committee:** Councilwoman Hummer, Councilman Donnelly, Councilwoman Hill-Lawrence and Mayor Peel

Mayor Peel stated he wasn't here for that meeting but there are items on the following meetings' agenda.

Councilman Donnelly stated basically everything we discussed in the Finance Committee meeting we have brought forth to the Council for their deliberations tonight. If there is any question throughout the meeting we will be glad to answer them.

**i} Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** Mayor Pro Tem Walton

Mayor Pro Tem Walton stated we have not met since the last meeting. At this point we are trying to do some reappointments. Ms. White will be out for some surgery but we will still be having our meeting in February.

**j} Alleyway Committee:** Councilwoman Hummer, Councilwoman Baker, Councilman Brooks and Councilwoman Hill-Lawrence

Councilwoman Baker stated we have not met.

**k} Elizabeth City/Pasquotank County Airport Authority:** Councilman Stimatz

Councilman Stimatz stated we meet on the third Thursday of each month and at our last meeting we discussed a strategic vision meeting back in September and the results of that meeting are back in and we are going to be looking at that. Due to the change in the way they contract for Coast Guard Support there is an opportunity for the Airport Authority to get in the defueling and refueling business and to create a new revenue stream. That is being explored. We are looking at a number of different things and one is the TIP Program. There are a number of big items on that. One is a major renovation to the runways to refurbish them and make them more useable. There are a number of things going on out there.

**l} Storm Water Drainage Task Force:** Councilman Stimatz, Councilman Brooks and Councilman Donnelly

Councilman Stimatz stated there is no long a Storm Water Drainage Task Force as there is now a Stormwater Advisory Board. Mr. Fredette is working on a date for us to meet in the not to distant future.

Mr. Fredette stated it will be February 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Public Works Building.

**m} Tourism Development Authority:** Councilwoman Baker

Councilwoman Baker stated she was not able to make that meeting.

Mr. Olson stated the TDA did authorized two applications that we had submitted. One is for \$75,000 for the renovation for the Middle School and the other is for \$38,000 for the Mack Sawyer Building. Both of them were approved.

Ms. Baker stated she was not able to make that meeting because she was in Wilmington at a Leadership Conference for Realtors being the incoming President next year but there were a couple of things that were talked about there that she thought this body would be interested in. One of them was the experts are saying in 18 months this country will see the largest housing shortage in history. The demand will be up and inventory will be down because nobody is building right now and they are all in concert saying this is going to be the biggest housing shortage in history. The other thing was bankers and banks are talking about trying to find some first time home buyer programs again but the net worth of a family that owns their home is \$170,000 and the net worth of a family that rents is \$4600. Drastic numbers and drastic differences. Hopefully banks are looking for ways to get people to be able to buy homes.

Mayor Peel said that we amended the agenda at the beginning to take Number 7 off and Mr. Brooks you did talk about a committee and he thought you and he were going to be that committee. We are open for anyone willing to serve on that committee to look over the policy of bringing items to the City Manager. Councilwoman Hill-Lawrence stated she would like to serve. He will set a time for us to meet.

**7} ADJOURNMNT:**

There being no further business to come before the Work Session at this time, Mayor Peel adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

---

Dianne S. Pierce-Tamplen, MMC  
City Clerk

---

Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor