

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City and the Commissioners of Pasquotank County met on the above date and time in the Education Center at Albemarle Hospital for a joint city/county meeting. Those attending were: Mayor Pro Tem L. M. Hill-Lawrence, L. A. Hummer, M. E. Brooks, R. T. Donnelly, J. W. Walton, J. A. Stimatz, K. K. Spence, City Manager R. C. Olson, City Clerk D. S. Pierce-Tamplen and City Attorney W. H. Morgan. J. W. Peel and J. M. Baker was absent. Also present were members of the Pasquotank County Commissioners and county staff.

**1} CALL MEETING TO ORDER:**

Mayor Pro Tem L. M. Hill-Lawrence established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. She welcomed those attending.

Commissioner Jeff Dixon called the Commissioners meeting to order and called upon Commissioner Cecil Perry for the invocation after which Commissioner Joe Winslow led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**2} INTRODUCTION OF ECSU INTERIM CHANCELLOR:**

Mr. Charles Becton was introduced by Chairman Dixon. Mr. Becton is the Interim Chancellor at Elizabeth City State University. He expressed his thanks and appreciation for being invited tonight. He is looking forward to working with members of the Council and Commissioners while he is here and plans to become active in community activities.

**3} MIDDLE SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT:**

Mayor Pro Tem Hill-Lawrence recognized City Manager R. C. Olson for comments.

Mr. Olson stated that bids were opened mid July for the middle school renovation project. We had four bids submitted and all four bids far exceeded the budget for the project. The low bid was \$1,133,907. With available funds for the project it was hoped that the bids would come in around \$650,000. There were quite a number of code violations that were found and those would have to be addressed thereby driving the costs upward. Staff is recommending that all bids be rejected and go back and develop different options before putting it out for bids again.

Mr. Sean Robey of Hyman and Robey discussed several Changes that could result in cost savings of about \$205,000. He has looked at potential savings and possible reduction in the scope of the project by cutting back the number of square feet in the project. The HVAC work and electrical work for the project is about \$700,000 of the project costs. He advised that Mr. Robey would look at all possible savings, re-scope the project and prepared a new bid document within the next few weeks. Hopefully the new bid date will be mid September.

The Commissioners expressed that they were at the end of the road as far as additional funding for this project.

***A motion was made by Councilman J. B. Walton, seconded by Councilwoman L. A. Hummer to reject all bids submitted for the Middle School Renovation Project at this time. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Walton, Hummer, Brooks, Donnelly, Hill-Lawrence, Spence and Stimatz. Against: None. Motion carried.***

#### **4} UPDATE – COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION:**

Mayor Pro Tem Hill-Lawrence called upon City Manager Olson for comments.

Mr. Olson advised that the Elizabeth City/Pasquotank County Community Relations Commission was created in 2003. The purpose behind the CRC's creation was to promote the equal treatment of all individuals, to discourage discrimination and to promote harmony. The CRC consists of 15 members: eight appointed by the Mayor and seven appointed by the Chairman of the Commissioners. The core mission of the CRC is to study problems of discrimination, protect basic human and civil rights and to conduct and promote activities that foster mutual respect. He explained that the City and County have worked together and have come up with the following four questions that should be asked tonight. They are: 1} should the mission of the CRC be changed, 2} Do we need to clarify their role and purpose, 3} should the CRC be provided an annual funding allocation from the City and County and 4} what needs are not being met by the CRC.

Dr. Kurt Hunsberger, Chairman of the CRC presented a report on what has happened since the last report in April. One of their activities has been to support the Board of Commissioners Governance Committee's public forums about restructuring the voting process for the election of the Pasquotank County Commissioners. Also, some of the members have been participating in the 2020 Championing Diversity Subcommittee. The CRC interacted with the community during the Potato Festival. During Juneteenth they had a whiteboard and asked for comments and interaction about the idea of freedom in our community. He

noted several CRC members put a lot of time and energy in producing the whiteboard. Some CRC members have recently begun to collaborate with the EC Police Department to try to find ways to promote activities with the youth which will help deter and prevent participation in gang activities. Finally, he noted that the CRC is increasing the awareness and participation in nominating a recipient of the annual Whitterspoon-Harris Community Service Award which is presented each fall.

Dr. Hezekiah Brown advised that the CRC was established during a crisis and everyone was focused on them to come up with solutions to address the problems. When the crisis slowed down the interest in CRC dwindled somewhat. One of the objectives of the commission is to receive referrals, mediate complaints and provide programs that address concerns that result from prejudice and discrimination with regards to race, religion, age, gender, sex, ethnicity and disability.

Mayor Pro Tem Hill-Lawrence stated the concerns rose tonight surfaced at a recent City Council meeting and it was felt more deliberation was needed on what to do with the CRC to make it more functional. She further stated that the commission has no money and it is hard to plan programs not knowing how much money will be needed and hoping the funding will be provided. She personally participated in the mediation training provided by the CRC and they provided several other beneficial programs and conferences.

Councilman Brooks stated the next generation will have a different view because they grew up in a different atmosphere and in an integrated setting. They think differently.

Councilman Stimatz stated his observation during the past five years is that the CRC does good things. It takes money to do this and the city and county should support such programs because we benefit as we carry things over into all relationships. He feels the CRC has tremendous potential and the two governing bodies need to tell them what they want them to do.

It was noted that there is support of appointing elected officials to the CRC. City and County staff were directed to work on revising the bylaws of the CRC to include the appointment of elected officials.

## **5} PROPOSED BUSINESS INVESTMENT PROGRAM:**

Mayor Pro Tem Hill-Lawrence called upon City Manager Olson for comments.

Mr. Olson stated that the City and County staff have been working for a number of months on a proposed Business Investment Program (BIP). The goal of the

program is to encourage the creation, retention and/or expansion of new or existing businesses and jobs in identified investment zones within our community. This policy provides an overview of a grant program, which would provide grants to businesses based on the incremental increase in property taxes. Eligible businesses would include aviation, manufacturing, emerging technologies, logistical and distribution and retail, if the retail business provides a substantial increase in sales taxes. Eligible investment zones include downtown, Halstead Boulevard, the Aviation Park and the County's Commerce Park. The policy is written in such a fashion that about any area within Pasquotank County would be eligible. For a business to qualify for a grant, they must meet certain thresholds including a \$3 million investment and the creation of 20 new jobs. Those jobs must pay 100% of the county's average annual wage. If a business will increase the City/County sales tax revenue by \$150,000 per year, it would qualify. If a manufacturing company creates less than 20 jobs but at least 10 jobs, invests \$6 million and pays 125% of the Pasquotank County average wage it would also qualify. The amount of the grants would start at 100% the first year and decrease by 10% each year. Therefore, the tenth year the grant would only be 10%. Grants would be only for the incremental increase in property tax revenue.

Economic Developer Wayne Harris advised that the required investment and employment standards will be set forth in a contractual agreement between the City, County and Grantee. Standards must be maintained throughout the term of the grant in order for grant payments to continue. Failure to maintain these levels during the term of the grant will result in suspension of grant payments until such time as the levels are once again met and maintained. He went on to explain how the program would work. The Elizabeth City/Pasquotank County Economic Development Commission together with the City and the County would identify candidate companies for the program. If they met the criteria of a Large Economic Impact Project then the city and county governments are involved in the process. Staff will evaluate the prospective project and develop the proposed grant. Both units of government would consider approval of the proposed grant at an official meeting. Investment is broadly defined as improvements to land and/or buildings or the purchase or lease of new equipment or buildings constructed for the qualifying company. All businesses must pay to the County the total amount of property taxes owed on the property. The city/county would determine the incremental increase for a given year and provide a grant back to the company pursuant to the policy.

Following further discussion of the proposal the following motion was made.

***A motion was made by Councilman K. K. Spence, seconded by Councilman R. T. Donnelly to direct the City Manager, County Manager and Economic Developer to come back with a revised***

***plan or proposal to include the economic incentives that are proposed, as well as to include some type of structure for the smaller manufacturing and retail businesses. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Spence, Donnelly, Brooks, Hill-Lawrence, Hummer, Stimatz and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.***

The Pasquotank County Commissioners passed the same motion.

**6} PROPOSED MERGER OF CITY AND COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL BOARD:**

County Attorney Mike Cox explained the few differences in the City and County Dangerous Dog Ordinances. City staff has provided a comparison of the new ordinance to both the city and county. The major difference between the existing ordinances is the creation of a five-person Animal Control Board. Two members of the Board would be appointed by the City and two members of the board would be appointed by the County. The fifth member would be jointly appointed by both bodies upon a recommendation of the SPCA Board of Directors. Since this is a quasi-judicial board, we have set the quorum requirement at three members.

***A motion was made by Councilwoman L. A. Hummer, seconded by Councilman M. E. Brooks to call for a public hearing to be held on August 12, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building to receive public comment regarding the repeal of the City's current Dangerous Dog Ordinance and the adoption of the proposed new Dangerous Dog Ordinance as presented upon like action by Pasquotank County. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Hummer, Brooks, Donnelly, Hill-Lawrence, Spence, Stimatz and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.***

**7} COMMENTS:**

Councilman Spence stated he currently serves on the City's Animal Control Board and dangerous dogs have been a significant issue lately and should be taken seriously.

Councilman Brooks stated he had no further comments.

Councilman Walton stated he would like to commend the Hospital Board on its recent decision regarding the lease of the hospital.

Councilwoman Hummer stated she also has concerns about the Dangerous Dog Ordinances. She feels we need to look at it closely and forward any further questions or concerns to the City Manager prior to the public hearing.

Councilman Stimatz stated he had no further comments.

Councilman Donnelly stated he had no further comments.

Mayor Pro Tem Hill-Lawrence thanked everyone for their attendance.

**8} ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the joint city/county meeting at this time, Mayor Pro Tem L. M. Hill-Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

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Dianne S. Pierce-Tamplen, MMC  
City Clerk

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L. M. Hill-Lawrence  
Mayor Pro Tem