

**TUESDAY – 6:30 P.M.      OCTOBER 30, 2012      JOINT CITY/COUNTY**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City and the County Commissioners of Pasquotank County met in a joint meeting on the above date and time in the Community Room of the Pasquotank County Public Safety building. Those attending were: Mayor J. W. Peel, Mayor Pro Tem J. B. Walton, Councilwoman J. M. Baker, Councilman M. E. Brooks, Councilman R. T. Donnelly, Councilwoman L. M. Hill-Lawrence, Councilwoman L. A. Hummer, Councilman K. K. Spence, City Manager R. C. Olson, Deputy City Clerk V. D. White, City Attorney W. H. Morgan, Fire Chief L. M. Mackey, Parks and Recreation Director B. V. White, Interim Police Chief J. A. Manley, Commissioners Griffin, Perry, Sterritt, White, Trueblood, Winslow, County Manager Keaton, Assistant County Manager Bunch, County Clerk Jennings, Tax Administrator Stewart and County Attorney Cox. Councilman J. A. Stimatz was absent.

Following a delicious meal, Chairman L. E. Griffin, III called the business meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor J. W. Peel established a quorum was present and called the City Council to order at 6:30 p.m.

**1}    INVOCATION:**

Commissioner Griffin gave the invocation.

**2}    PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Mayor Peel led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**3}    REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN GRIFFIN:**

Chairman Griffin welcomed the City Council and guests to the joint meeting of the Pasquotank County Commissioners and the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City.

**4}    REMARKS BY MAYOR PEEL:**

Mayor J. W. Peel thanked the County Commissioners for hosting the meeting and expressed thanks for the delicious meal that was previously served. He welcomed those attending.

**5} UPDATE ON ¼ CENTS SALES TAX:**

Chairman Griffin called upon County Manager Keaton for comments.

Mr. Keaton stated the sales tax proposal of ¼ cents increase must be voted on by the people and is on the November ballot. If successful, the Commissioners have pledged those additional funds for capital needs for the School System and College of the Albemarle. Groceries and prescription drugs would not be included in the new tax. If the people vote it in them it is estimated to generate just under a million dollars a year. The County has been trying to educate the public on the need for this additional tax at this time. He then went over some of the needs that the schools have at this time.

**6} RECREATION UPDATE:**

Parks and Recreation Director B. V. White provided an update from the Parks and Recreation Department. She noted that the City and County have been jointly working as one department for a little over two years. The Recreation Advisory Board established an Interlocal Agreement which has been very beneficial in assisting with understanding the recreational needs and desires of our community. They have also helped us to better able to direct our programming of activities, sport and events as well as planning our future needs of facilities.

a} South Park

Ms. White explained that the five-field softball and baseball facility has been very successful and proves that the City and County have come together for the betterment of the community. The field has hosted twelve tournaments so far this year. She stated that South Park has directly or indirectly contributed \$200,000 into the community this past year. The Parks and Recreation Department has been selling billboards that are placed around the outfield fences and have collected approximately \$7,500 in revenue so far and these funds assist with the operating needs of the department.

b} Long Term Capital Needs

Ms. White advised that the P&R Department has some capital needs. They are as follows:

- 1} Increase the parking situation at South Park to accommodate large tournaments

- 2} A road needs to be built extending to Perkins Road to help with traffic flow.
- 3} Repair the walking path at Fun Junktion which is in bad shape due to the sides of the lake caving. Estimated cost is over \$50,000;
- 4} Construct a skateboard facility inside the city limits;
- 5} The northern end of the County is in need of a public park with playground equipment, walking/fitness trails, picnic shelters and restroom facilities;
- 6} Need to upgrade our technology to our parks and facilities;
- 7} Construction of a dog park;
- 8} Construction of a splash park, playground facilities and basketball courts at the Police Athletic League (PAL) facility;
- 9} Upgrade Holmes Field at the Knobbs Creek Park. It is estimated this overhaul could cost more than \$100,000.

c} Fun Junktion

Ms. White stated that Fun Junktion was built in 1999 and provides several large ponds for catch and release fishing and boating, a basketball court, two pavilions with outdoor grills, playgrounds, volleyball, a disk golf course and a skateboard are a few of the activities offered. Staff has been restructured and a staff person responsible for park maintenance is there every day. All reservations are now handled out of the Knobbs Creek office and this has proved to be more efficient in reservations as well as with park maintenance.

**7} INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR ANIMAL CONTROL:**

Mr. Olson stated the Interlocal Agreement drafted by the City staff utilized the same template included in the Central Communications and Emergency Management Agreements. All Interlocal agreements are required to have a set term. The proposed agreement is for a three-year term beginning July 1, 2012 and provides the county with the option to extend for two years. The agreement also shows the 50% - 50% funding formula. The City and County will continue to contribute an equal amount of funding for the operation of the animal control function.

**8} MODIFICATIONS TO CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INTERLOCAL AGREEMENTS:**

City Manager Olson stated during the January Joint City/County meeting, the City of Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County agreed on an Interlocal Agreement for both Central Communications and Emergency Management. Then those agreements were sent to Camden County for their execution. Camden County refused to execute the agreements. Camden requested that the term of both

agreements be modified from ten (10) years to three (3) years with a two-year renewal. By decreasing the term, the City will have an opportunity to consistently evaluate the level and cost of service and will have the flexibility to make changes, if desired, in the future.

**9} REVALUATION UPDATE:**

Ms. Patrice Stewart was introduced as the Tax Administrator. Ms. Stewart explained that the NC General Statutes require all counties to reappraise each parcel of real estate at least every eight years. Currently we have started working on the 2014 revaluation for Pasquotank County. All real property is reassessed at 100% market value, which is the price at which the property could be sold. Revaluation ensures the property owners bear a share of the total tax burden that is proportionate to the value of the taxable property they own. The Pearson Appraisal Service began the revaluation process in April of this year and has communicated with bankers, real estate brokers, city and county inspectors, planning officials and utility staff personnel gathering information. They have also performed market and analyses/sales studies. They are currently taking digital pictures of all properties in the city/county and are utilizing two vans as mobile offices. Ms. Stewart further stated over the next year they will obtain images of all dwellings, commercial and industrial buildings in the County. This process should be completed by mid 2013. She said property values will change throughout the county depending on market conditions and the recent arms length sales in a particular neighborhood. The assessed value may increase, decrease or remain the same. If a taxpayer has a concern with the proposed value, they will be given the opportunity to request an informal hearing with the appraisal firm. Once the revaluation is complete, the Tax Assessor will notify taxpayers of their new property values. The notices will be mailed in September 2013. Ms. Stewart ended by saying the revaluation is on schedule and she believes the end result will be a good one.

**10} UPDATE ON MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

Mr. Olson commented that he is happy to inform everyone that the City received notice from CI that the application for a CDBG NC Catalyst Grant has been approved to renovate the first floor of the middle school site. City staff worked with the Police Athletic League and the Boys and Girls Club on determining the scope of work. The Grant was for \$500,000 and the application required the City and County to contribute \$75,000 each in matching funds for a total project in the amount of \$650,000. In April the City and County entered into an Interlocal agreement which addresses the application. The improvements would include renovations to the first floor of the building and repairs to the HVAC system. He advised that the City Council discussed the grant at its meeting last night and has requested concurrence of the grant agreement and funding approval by the

Board of Commissioners. He added that the City Council also feels in order to facilitate coordination that there should be a steering committee made up of representatives from PAL, the Boys and Girls Club, the City and the County to help move this project forward.

Chairman Griffin advised that the Board of Commissioners will consider the grant agreement and funding approval at its meeting next Monday.

**11} COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION:**

Dr. Kurt Hunsberger, Chairman of the Elizabeth City/Pasquotank County Community Relations Commission provided an update on the commission's activities. He reported that the annual Witherspoon-Harris Award Ceremony will be held on December 5<sup>th</sup>. They are also working on developing a plan of action for leadership training in the community. The focus would be on developing leaders among the youth in the community and helping those leaders who are already involved. Another thing the Commission has been working on is the "Stand Up For Children Initiative" whereby we encourage people in the community to become involved in mentoring and tutoring in the public schools. A grant application has been made to conduct a follow-up survey about race relations in the community.

**12} COMMENTS BY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AND CITY COUNCIL:**

Councilwoman Baker asked to say that tourism is alive and well in our area. She reported the sixteen Annual Ghost Walk had 1,100 people to attend from 23 different states.

Mayor Pro Tem Walton stated ECSU filled up the area hotels when they held their homecoming a couple of weeks ago. He encouraged all to continue to support ECSU. He wanted to say that he voted in favor of the quarter cent sales tax increase and he encouraged others to vote for it because it will go to supporting our educational facilities.

Councilman Spence said he would like to thank the Interim Police Chief for a job well done. Tonight's joint meeting will probably be the last one he will attend as the Interim Police Chief.

Commissioner White thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. He would also like to thank Ms. Patrice Stewart, our Tax Administrator for her report tonight and commend her on the excellent job she is doing.

Commissioner Winslow stated he would like to point out something on the list of recommendations that Ms. Bobbie White presented on behalf of the Parks and

Recreation Department. Approximately 10,000 people live north of Knobbs Creek which is one-fourth of the County's population. He understands there is a problem finding land in this area but he thinks it is time to move this up in priority for the people of the northern portion of the County. He asked those serving on the Recreation Advisory Commission to address this issue.

Mayor Peel stated there are three schools in the northern part of the County with lots of land around them and he felt they would be a good location for a recreational facility. He asked to commend the County on calling for a referendum on the quarter cent sales tax. He realizes the schools have significant needs and one of those needs is technology. He further stated that the public needs to be aware of the technology needs as they cast their votes.

Commission Trueblood stated that he doesn't think the public is really aware of the electronic testing requirement that will begin next year.

Chairman Griffin reminded everyone of the First in Flight Festival that will be held this weekend.

**13} ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Joint City and County officials at this time, Mayor Peel adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

---

Dianne S. Pierce-Tamplen, MMC  
City Clerk

---

Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor