

The regular meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, January 3, 2017, at the Union Train Station. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL:**

Present:

Council Member Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr  
Council Member Darrin Hill  
Council Member W. Howard Myers  
Council Member Annette Smith-Lee  
Council Member Treska Wilson-Smith  
Vice Mayor John A. Hart, Sr.  
Mayor Samuel Parham

Absent: None

Present from City Administration:

Interim City Manager Tom Tyrrell  
City Attorney Joseph E. Preston  
Clerk of Council Nykesha D. Jackson, CMC

**2. CLOSED SESSION:**

\*No Closed Session

**3. MOMENT OF SILENCE:**

a. Clerk of Council, Nykesha D. Jackson, led council and the audience in a moment of silence.

**4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

a. Clerk of Council, Nykesha D. Jackson, led council and the audience in a moment of silence.

**5. PRESENTATION/PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS: (Each presentation will be limited to 10 minutes.)**

**6. CONSENT AGENDA:**

a. Minutes: Regular City Council Meeting – December 13, 201 and Special Meeting of December 19, 2016.

Council Member Hart made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Hill, Myers, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Hart and Parham

**7. OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS: (In accordance with the Rules of Council, public comment will be heard before discussion by Council. Once discussion has started, no further input from the public will be accepted. Each speaker will be limited to three (3) minutes.)**

a. A public hearing for a Special Use Permit pursuant to Article 23, Section 4(5) of the Zoning Ordinance to have a solar power generation facility at 950 (rear) Winfield Road, 2134, 2135 and 2304 Elliott Street, T.P. 034-02-0003, 041-04-0001, 041-03-0001 and 057-01-0001. The property is zoned R-5, Multiple Dwelling District.

**BACKGROUND:** The Zoning Ordinance requires that public utilities, buildings, structures or appurtenances thereto, shall be permitted only with approval of City Council. The subject property is vacant and was once the subject of an approved subdivision for the construction of single-family residential dwellings.

The Comprehensive Plan designates this property as medium/high density residential. The adjacent properties range from a Mobile Home Park to commercial and light industrial uses, as well as CSX and Norfolk Southern railroad lines. This part of the City should be developed as a mixed corridor with residential, employment, retail, commercial and recreation destination for residents and travelers along Route 460, I-95 and County Drive.

This is a special use permit application to construct a photovoltaic solar project also known as a "Solar Farm." Photovoltaic (PV) is the method of converting light to electricity. Solar farms utilize a mass of solar panels to capture solar energy and send it to the local electrical grid where it's bought by an electric utility company for distribution. Solar energy is considered to be a clean, renewable and reliable source of power.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Following a duly advertised public hearing, Council may affirm the Planning Commission recommendation, overturn the Planning Commission recommendation, table for further consideration, or return the item under consideration to the Planning Commission requesting further review. The recommendation of the Planning Commission was to approve the special use permit request with a vote of 7-0.

Michelle Peters, Director of Planning and Community Development, gave a brief overview of the Special Use Permit request for a solar power generation facility.

Glen Zhou, petitioner, gave some information regarding his request for a Special Use Permit.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comment.

Richard Stewart, 129 Rolfe Street, stated that Fort Lee is in the area not too far from where this site is. He asked will this project interfere with the communication towers or anything that is going on at Fort Lee. He also asked will there be run-off waste coming from this project as well.

Mrs. Peters stated that the Planning Commission asked that same questions and that they spoke with representatives from Fort Lee and that they are aware of the project and that they do not have an issue with the solar farm. They are also aware of the location of the farm as well.

Mayor Parham stated that Mr. Stewart's next question spoke about the run-off and the waste form the facility. He asked Mrs. Peters to go into details regarding the waste.

Mrs. Peters stated that the picture that she has up is just picture of what the project will look like once completed. The picture only shows the orientation of the panel. This will be reviewed with the stormwater management in regards to erosion and sediment control to make sure that appropriate requirements are met.

Willie Noise, 1508 Circle Drive, stated that there was some mention of taxes. He stated that he would like to know if there will be taxes generated from this project. He stated that one thing that concerns him is the type of structure it is and the area that it covers. He asked that if a storm or tornado were to happen would the structure be covered. He stated that he would like to know about salary and potential jobs developing from this project.

Mrs. Peters stated that she will have Mr. Richie McKeithen to come up and speak in regards to taxes.

Mr. McKeithen stated that taxes and revenue could be generated but that it depends on the different variable. He stated that leases could be set-up for the actual solar panels. He stated that there are exemptions that the property owner could apply for that would need to be researched through the law department. He

stated that you could have a situation where there could be a lease type scenario and that the actual property owners would have the lease with the tenant who actually would actually have the solar panels. He stated that revenue could be raised that way. He stated that they have to see how it is structured once everything is set-up.

Mrs. Peters stated that there are two permanent positions and then there will be positions for the construction that would take place to clear and develop the site. She stated that the project is only 20 acres and that it is not the actual picture that is up. She stated that the petitioner has to get permission from the City first and then enter into agreement with Virginia Dominion Power. She stated that she does not know the number of panels that will be on the site. She stated that council can add a condition and limit a number of panels.

Mr. Zhou stated that it will be about 15-20 solar panels that they will be using depending on the size. He stated that with his project they will not hire so many people. He stated that everyone hired will be local from the City of Petersburg. He stated that they have to hire a lot of men for the job for cleaning the property and doing electrical work as well. He stated that the state has the green generation. He stated that he has talked to Mrs. Peters in working with a local agency to get workers from the City to work for this project.

Ronnie Clarke, 243 Virginia Avenue, stated that he recommends that there needs to be a prerequisite number 12 in regards to having it say that the employees have to be a Petersburg resident. He stated that he did not hear about the citizens that this would effect. He stated that he did not hear anything about incentives for the 500 people that would be affected about this solar panel. He asked why consider this presentation if the citizens will not be getting a discount of any nature from this.

Ron Flock, 1708 Pender Avenue, stated that looking at the map he would like to know what is the path of distribution from the site to Virginia Dominion Power. He asked will power lines be going through or be close to residential areas. He stated that in the past there have been risks associated with high voltage power lines. He stated that he was looking for a better response to the estimated real estate tax that could come from this. He asked whether there is any City proposed tax incentives. He asked that should the site be closed with the removal of the panels does this include all the concrete footers and supports. He stated that he has been in the work of concrete for many years and that it is a lot of work in removing it. He stated that it will make the land useless to the next owner if it is not removed.

Mr. Zhou stated there are two credentials connection points. He stated that there is a waste treatment facility that is right at the corner of the project. He stated that near it there is a pole. He stated that there is another in a lower site. He stated that both sites can be interconnected for power generation. He stated that there are trying to put power on his site. He stated that this project will be there for about 30 to 40 years. He stated that for 20 years Dominion Power will be a purchaser from them. He stated that this is the contract for the power purchase. He stated that there will be a minimum of 35 years and 70% power generation. He stated that right now they are using a big screw to drill into the land. He stated that all the structure will be based on the screw.

Mrs. Peters stated that in talking with Mr. Zhou and that if they had to use the concrete they wanted to make sure that if he started digging to put the panel poles in and they had to use the concrete they wanted to be sure that he was covered. She stated that it would be a part of the process. She stated that if they had to decommission the site it would be the removal of everything. She stated that there are no incentives that the City offers or the state. She stated that Mr. McKeithen spoke to the land use. She stated that there was an attorney at the training that she went to and they stated that in state law it does exempt machinery and tools and that this is what they call the panels. They are not exempt from the real estate taxes.

Raymond Crockett, 248 Southwood Drive, asked whether this project comes as an LLC Corporation. He asked whether they are putting up performance bonds in case something happens and they walk away. He stated that it is very important to do backgrounds. He asked that with the two jobs are they paying minimum wage or salary.

Leonard Curry, 2014 Woodland Road, stated that he congratulates Mayor Parham. He stated that he is not an expert on solar power but that he looks at this as being something exciting for the City. He stated that this is the chance for the City to do something. He stated that two jobs are not much but solar is brand new. He stated that he does not see that NASA or national parks will put solar panels near people that wouldn't be safe. He stated that he does not think that this man will put solar panels in an area that would not be safe. He stated that the City cannot deny everyone that tries to open a business in the City. He stated that maybe Mr. Zhou business will get bigger and may be other people will follow him.

Ida Edwards, 30 Corling Street, stated that she was not clear on the purpose of the solar system. She stated that they may have stated it but she is not clear on the purpose of it. She stated that she would like to know the benefit of it for the citizens in Petersburg. She asked how this will help the financial situation of the City now. She asked how this will help the City. She asked will this put them in a deeper whole then they have already been. She asked will this affect the property taxes or any taxes of that nature. She stated that she is not familiar with the area and if possible can someone point her in the direction of the area.

Mrs. Peters stated that it is near 95 and near 460 road. She stated that it is near County Drive and Fort Lee and the hospital. She stated that it is near the railroad tracks across from the mobile home. She stated that the City has a small facility near the site.

Ms. Corling asked will the City benefit from this later or will it only affect the 500 people.

Mrs. Peters stated that the 500 number was to let them know the type and amount of homes that could be supplied electricity. She stated that this would be considered commercial development and not residential. It will be taxed as a commercial business. She stated that North Carolina has partnered with a local college where they train people to work with the solar farm. She stated that this project is very small. She stated that they are going to partner with the local colleges in the Petersburg area and surroundings. She stated that Virginia Power has application to have solar farms in the jurisdiction. She stated that this is what's coming down the pipe. She stated that this is going to take some experience in this field.

Michael Edwards, 409 Grove Avenue, stated that he knows that the property owner that he is buying this from is sitting beside him. He stated that he heard Mrs. Peters stated that there is some City property that is adjacent to the area. He stated that he is familiar with the area. He asked whether this development is going to go into City property and if so will the petitioner be negotiating with the City in buying this property.

Mrs. Peters stated that this will not combine with any City property.

Mr. Edwards asked about the increased traffic during construction. He stated that he travels 460 daily. He stated that when you come around that curve the traffic is already heavy. He asked will the developer or the City control the traffic so that it is kept at a minimum.

Mrs. Peters stated that this is no different than any other development. She stated that they have to develop the coordinating activities for the traffic needs of ingress and egress.

Mr. Edwards asked that if this development moves forward are there any sales tax revenue.

Mrs. Peters stated that it is a private sale between a private real estate owner and a private developer. She stated that whatever taxes come to the City will come through that transaction.

Florence Rhue, 1952 South Westchester Drive, stated that her question is in regards to regulatory actions. She stated that she thinks that she heard that the farm is too small to come under regulatory authority of the FCC or any other body. She stated that she did not hear any other body that this would fall under.

Mrs. Peters stated that this is correct. She stated that does not require a permit or DEQ. She stated that it requires review from the locality and then subject to Virginia Dominion Power regulations.

Mrs. Rhue asked that this would be something that the City of Petersburg would be responsible for in regulating the project.

Mrs. Peters stated that no. She stated that the City would have to regulate it like any other land use that comes through the City.

Atiba Muse, 104 South Plains Drive, stated that he does consulting work for the natural resources defense counsel. He stated that he is very excited for the solar in Petersburg. He stated that with being so close to the highway his only question is regarding the reflection that the panels give off. He stated that there may be a moment that may detract the traffic on I-95. He stated that he is pleased that there will be some career and technical education with regards to this project.

Seeing no further hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

Council Member Cuthbert made a motion to move and continue this at the next regular council meeting and that in the meantime asks the Department of Planning to determine an estimate of the cost of decommissioning the proposed facility and the cost of a performance bond and give that information. The motion was seconded by Council Member Wilson-Smith. The motion was not approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee and Wilson-Smith; Voting No: Hill, Myers, Hart and Parham

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve recommendation of the Planning Commission to approve the special use permit request. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Hill, Myers, Hart and Parham; Voting No: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee and Wilson-Smith

**17-ORD-1 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT HAVE A SOLAR POWER GENERATION FACILITY AT 950 (REAR) WINFIELD ROAD, 2134, 2135 AND 2304 ELLIOTT STREET, T.P. 034-02-0003, 041-04-0001, 041-03-0001 AND 057-01-0001, WITH CONDITIONS.**

**8. PUBLIC INFORMATION PERIOD:** The Public Information Period is established by the Rules of Council to hear input from City residents or owners of businesses in the City. It will last for a maximum of 30 minutes. Speakers will be called in the order that they have signed up to speak. If there are ten or fewer speakers, each shall speak for a maximum of 3 minutes. If there are more than ten (10) people desiring to speak, the time allotted to each person may be adjusted or the number of speakers limited to meet the time limitation. A speaker may speak on items **except those that are listed on tonight's Council agenda.** Any matter brought before the attention of the City Council during the public information period will not be acted upon by the City Council at this meeting.

Ellie Fitzell, 2104 Bishop Street, spoke on contacting the police department, the state police and the terrorism hotline. She stated that she received a call from Washington, DC. She stated that she did not recognize the number so she did not answer it. She stated that after that one call she begin receiving numerous calls from different numbers that she did not recognize. She stated that she gave a list of numbers to Officer Johnson to investigate. She stated that there were life threatening phone calls. She stated that her brother was involved in getting threatened.

Brandon Martin, 1546 Berkeley Avenue, spoke on the whereabouts of the little green shoebox of miscellaneous papers. He stated that last year Ms. Belton stated that she found the box but he has not heard anything about it since then. He stated that the contents in the box need to be displayed so that people may see it. He stated that he would like to know the status of the revision of the sign ordinance. He also stated that his water bill went up 69% last year and would like to know of anyone else has as well. He stated that the treasurer has yet to show the final numbers on the June 2016 tax sale. He stated that now the City is having another sale for 17 properties this Friday at the train station at 1pm. He stated that this is not mentioned on the

City's website. He stated that he only seen it in the Progress-Index. He stated that he would request that the Acting City Manager, the Mayor and the Clerk of Council to review the public information section minutes of each of the 2016 meetings looking for questions asked and never answered. He stated that an example is that it was mentioned about the inspection certificates be posted in the elevators. He stated that the one in City Hall has never been in the elevator for years.

Bruce Richardson, Petersburg resident, stated that there will be a Homebuyers Class on January 14, 2016, at Petersburg Transit Station located at 100 West Washington Street. He stated that the time will be from 10:00am to 4:15pm. He stated that the course is free. He stated that he encourages everyone to attend. He stated that each person that attends the course will receive a certificate that is valid for two years. He stated that certificate of completion will allow them to meet education requirements by many VHDA lenders and US Ruled Development Lenders. He stated that it is paramount that they encourage residents and City employees to look at the great opportunities of the City of Petersburg and surrounding areas and the offers as it relates to home ownership.

Sonja Reiss, 221 High Street, asked City Council if they were blind, deaf and where is their shame. She asked whether they seen the newspaper articles referring to their irresponsibleness decisions and horrible money management of the City. She asked have they not heard of the outcry of the citizens asking for accountability and their resignations. She asked them to please listen and respond to the people. She stated that five of them need to leave their positions and that they should go somewhere else. She stated that they need to vote for new council members.

Richard Stewart, 129 Rolfe Street, stated that he would like to commend Mrs. Smith and my accolades to Mr. Cuthbert. He stated that Mr. Cuthbert's father looked out for Pocahontas. He stated that he believes that Mr. Cuthbert will look out for Pocahontas just like his father did. He stated that he is back tonight to speak on the trucks that had been traveling in and around Pocahontas tonight. He stated that there are a total of 25 trucks that have violated the curfew between November 17, 2016 and January 1, 2017. He stated that they stated that they were going to do something about the rocks. He stated that they cannot breathe with the dust that is around and in Pocahontas. He stated to Mr. Cuthbert that something needs to be done.

Willie Noise, 1508 Circle Drive, stated that he would like to speak on the subject of the Rules of Council. He stated that in the past they have been fighting on more time since three minutes is not enough. He stated that he wants to thank everyone that had him in their dreams and prayers. He stated that he wanted to also thank his son that is attending the meeting tonight with him as well. He stated that he is the best son that a person can ever have. He stated that some may remember the jar of jellybeans that he used to tote around. He stated that the jar is the resemblance of the people of Petersburg, the citizens. He stated that he would like City Council to keep in mind that there are people of all professions, complexions, backgrounds and walks of life. He stated that he would like to see this council with good judgments. He stated to please have an open mind.

Michael Edwards, 409 Grove Avenue, stated that it is great to see Mr. Noise back. He stated that he wants Mr. Noise to now that he had some people praying for him. He stated that 2016 has gone down in the history books as the worst year that the City has had. He stated that last year they all witnessed a lot of trials and tribulations. He stated that they witnessed things that they should not have witnessed. He stated that he does not want to see the three ring circus among City Council that they witnessed last year. He stated that he is tired of turning on the TV, looking on Facebook and reading in the newspapers about the firefighters using inadequate equipment. He stated that there are more police cars in Leete's Tire then at the police department. He stated that the Chief of Fire has now retired and that now there is an Interim Fire Chief. He stated that the interim came on TV and made a comment about the firefighters and the equipment that they use is not a threat to them. He stated that they should think about when who they put in these high positions to make comment like that. He stated that when they hire a Fire Chief to make sure that they have the best interest of the firefighters and not just something to put on a resume. He stated that they must work together if the City is going to pull out the slump that they are in. He stated that the first thing to solve a problem is to realize that they have one.

Samuel Rhue, 1952 South Westchester Drive, stated that he wants to thank the Bobb Group for the work that they are doing. He stated that they need to look at the cash management. He stated that it takes seven days for his check to clear the bank when he pays his water bill. He stated that according to the charter they can have the treasurer to come in and give a report. He stated that they need to know the status of the delinquent reports. He stated that they need to invest in technology for the City as well. He stated that there are serious technology problems in the City. He stated that Petersburg has a problem with not being a healthy place. He stated that he suggests that they look at the health insurance carrier. He stated that it has been like this for 30 years.

Carl Ridley, 15 North Crater Road, stated that it is often said that a City is reflected of its leadership. He stated that in the last year the City has been looked at as a failing City in the region. He stated that for the past five years the City has been spiraling in a downward position into receivership. He stated that it was under City Council's watch that the problems got worse and that there was a water bill fiasco. He stated that a new year is upon everyone and now the citizens demand a new beginning and a new direction. He stated that to the two new council persons they hope that they have an independence of thoughts and integrity. He stated to the Mayor that the local media has put him as the new man in charge but to not forget to shake hands, cut ribbons and kiss babies.

Ron Flock, 1708 Pender Avenue, stated that he would like to express his disappointment with council's decision to have the organizational meeting at noon. He stated that they should do the right thing this year and learn their job and the Rules of Council and learn the charter and learn how to rule over each other. He stated that it's not about just City Council. He stated that he wanted to bring references up about the Rules of Council. He stated that the last meeting last year there were two motions. He stated that one was made by the Mayor and one was seconded by the Mayor. He stated that this is wrong. He stated that they need to read the Rules of Council and know their job.

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, stated that she is present to say Happy New Year and that she is looking forward to the new team in place and seeing what happens. She stated that she is thinking about making some of their actions speak louder than words. She stated that she recommends that they listen to some of the comments that have been made tonight.

Gloria Brown, 1557 South Sycamore Street, stated that she would like to congratulate the new Council Members, Mayor and Vice Mayor. She stated that after 2016 it's brave for any of them to come back and serve. She stated that she has one request for 2017 and moving forward. She stated that she asks all of them to agree to show the example of cohesiveness, fairness, open-mindedness and understanding. She stated that she hopes that this behavior can be a seed to be a great harvest throughout the City of Petersburg. She stated that this is a new year with new faces and she hopes that everyone has better attitudes. She stated that they all have responsibility to the City. She stated that they all have a responsibility to move the City forward.

Ronnie Clarke, 243 Virginia Avenue, stated that he wanted to speak on the hiring practices of the City. He stated that since 2013 he has been scrambling on the requirements of the applications to apply for the City of Petersburg. He stated that there are some requirements that he brought to them in the past and nothing has been done on it. He stated that he is employing and begging City Council to look at what they have in place. He stated that they cannot take the time out to bring more jobs to this area. He stated that they need to look at the unemployment rate in the City and that it is bad.

**9. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FOR/FROM THE MAYOR OR OTHER MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL:**

- a. Consideration of an appropriation for Capital Improvement Fund

\*combined with item 9b.

- b. Consideration of an appropriation to reprogram CDBG funds

Nelsie Birch, Interim Finance Director, stated that she would like to table both items regarding the

appropriation for Capital Improvement Fund and the appropriation to reprogram CDBG funds for two weeks. She stated that they are going to go into great detail next Tuesday on the budget regarding this. She stated that she thinks given the discussion next Tuesday there will be a series of changes to the budget that they will present to council in two weeks.

Council Member Myers made a motion to table the two appropriation items. The motion was seconded by Council Member Smith-Lee. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Hill, Myers, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Hart and Parham

- c. Consideration of a lease agreement for property addressed as 835 Commerce Street

**BACKGROUND:** Previous Lease Agreement has expired and a new agreement is being submitted for approval.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend Council approve the Salvation Army Lease Agreement for 835 Commerce Street.

Vice Mayor Hart made a motion to approve the Salvation Army Lease Agreement for 835 Commerce Street. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Hill, Myers, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Hart and Parham; Voting No: Cuthbert

#### **17-ORD-2 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE SALVATION ARMY LEASE AGREEMENT FOR 835 COMMERCE STREET.**

Council Member Cuthbert stated "I would like to follow-up first off with the comments of Mr. Richard Stewart. He laid it on so thick I didn't have a choice. But I do appreciate his comments and Pocahontas is in fact has always been important to my family and very important to me. I wonder what the City Manager has to say with the truck curfew and the dust problems. I would like to give the City Manager the opportunity to address that and perhaps lead us in the direction towards making the situation better for the people of Pocahontas. Mr. Tyrrell how would you like to proceed? Would you like to answer that now or would you like to come back at the next meeting in January with a recommendation? I turn to you for your thoughts as to how you would like to move forward addressing this problem."

Mr. Tyrrell stated "This is something we looked at and we will come back to you in a couple of weeks and update the plan and put a better timeline around it. But this is a project that I thought we had temporarily made some improvements on. I need to check on that."

Council Member Cuthbert stated "Well that would be fine. If we could put this item on our agenda for our next regular meeting and if the City Manager would give us an update as to the extent of the problem and propose solutions, I would be very grateful. Thank you. Another issue on my mind is graffiti on what used to be Ramada Inn. It's a building owned by the City. It is an eyesore right at our gateway. And it shouts loud and clear that we have given up hope which is not the case but that's the message. And I would like again to turn to the Acting City Manager and ask him for his thoughts as to how that graffiti could be addressed. It is on City property. It is a gateway. Could it be painted over? I turn to the City Manager for his response. Thank you."

Mr. Tyrrell stated "Sorry Council Member I lost the very front part of the conversation."

Council Member Cuthbert stated "Right at Exit 52 across from Exit 52 is what use to be the Ramada Inn. The building is owned by the City. It is now under some type of option to purchase by Mr. Harrison's group. There is at the very top I suspect it is on the elevator box at the top of the building there is graffiti that was point on there I think in 2016. And it is unsightly. It would not be a high budget item to paint over it and I would like to see whether that is feasible or not. I don't mean to ask for something difficult. If it is difficult let's study to see if we can find a simple solution. But if the City Manager would look into that and report back to us in two weeks I would be grateful for that as well."

Mr. Tyrrell stated "Certainly I would be happy to do that."

Mr. Cuthbert stated "A third thing that is on my mind is lapel cameras for our police department. The goodness is we have lapel cameras now. The bad news is they don't work. I think it's important for the safety of the public. I think it's important for the determination of the truth and consequently lapel cameras also protect the police department from unfounded claims. As I see it it's a win, win situation. I'd like to pass to other members of council an article that appeared in the Progress-Index on August 21<sup>st</sup> dealing with a purchase of body cameras by the Dinwiddie Police Department. Now their department is much smaller than ours. But they received a 50% grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to be matched by the Board of Supervisors to give all members of the Dinwiddie Police Department lapel cameras. These lapel cameras are sold by Taser. And Taser has a national reputation for lapel cameras. They seem to be the standard issue. The ones the Petersburg Police Department purchased are not Taser cameras. As I understand it the ones with the police department has when we try to download the data from the cameras has problems developed. Let's put it that way. In contrast with the Taser cameras the information is uploaded to the cloud and bypasses that problem. I don't know what the cost would be for Petersburg. I don't know how realistic it would be to obtain a 50% grant for those cameras. And I don't know whether we can find room in our budget. I realize that we are facing great economic hardship and the last thing we need is another proposed expenditure. On the other hand public safety is at issue and protection of our police department is also at issue. So I am going to distribute copies of these newspaper articles to members of council and again I would ask Mr. Tyrrell to bring back at our next regular meeting. He would report to council the feasibility of using the cameras that we already have and if that's not feasible than the feasibility of replacing them with something that does work. But the bottom line is that I would like very much for our police department to always be equipped with lapel cameras when they are on their feet. So I am going to distribute these newspaper articles to council so that council will know what I am talking about and ask Mr. Tyrrell to report back to us at our next regular meeting. Is this something that you think is feasible Mr. Tyrrell?"

Mr. Tyrrell stated "Certainly, this is an issue that we are familiar with and like so many things we are struggling get priority around financing for all the things that our first responders need, firefighters and ems included. I would be happy to come back and explain how we think we are going to get the cameras working."

Council Member Cuthbert stated "That's great. I appreciate it, and that's all I have. Thank you very much."

Council Member Smith-Lee stated "Hello everyone. First of all I would like to congratulate the Mayor Samuel Parham and the Vice Mayor John Hart. This is a token, just a card saying congratulations to you two from council. And I just want to also say that I'm excited about being on council. And I appreciate my ward, Ward 6, for voting and supporting me. So I'm looking forward to working hard and becoming 'One', a team, 'A team to spark the change.'"

Council Member Hill stated "Good evening everyone. I want to start off by congratulating the two new members of council, Councilperson Cuthbert and Councilperson Annette Smith-Lee. We welcome you on and I welcome you on. I want to congratulate my counterpart Vice Mayor Hart and Mayor Sam Parham. Nothing remains the same. So change is good. I am looking forward to this year. It has been a long year. I don't think any of us knew that it would be this tasking when we first came on. But we are up for the challenge. I look for greater things for Petersburg. I would like to thank the citizens for your comments and concerns and your phone calls and all of the input that you have had in meetings and calling me especially my ward, Ward 2. I thank you for all your comments. Also I would like to maybe direct the City Manager to look into our exits. For some reason our exits, every time we ride by I have stopped a few times to pick up trash. It just seem like people want to dump trash here. If we could look at that with our public works department. Also we've talked about the leave removal. There are places where we can drop our leaves off but I'm scared that we are going to have a drainage problem with us not picking up the leaves this year. If the citizens can spread the word, we put up. I know we normally pick up the leaves for the citizens but we're not doing that this year we have drop off sites. So everybody has to pick up their own leaves. Also you can bag them and put them at the edge of your street so that they will take them up. I'm scared that we are going to have a serious drain problem when things start to freezing and water starts settling. I hope that we can get the streets cleaned. I had on my list

also the building off of Exit 52. Maybe we can do something with that like paint it. I don't know how someone get up there to paint on the building. That will be all thank you. Congratulations to the newly elected councilpersons."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated "Good evening to everyone and Happy New Year to you all. Thank you so very much for attending your City Council meeting. I have several items for your hearing. First I would like to also congratulate our new Mayor and Vice Mayor, Mr. Parham and Mr. Hart. The second thing that I would like to discuss is a matter of two resolutions that I have written. I have sent these resolutions to every member of council by way of email and asked for feedback. I only received one. I have discussed these resolutions with the City Attorney. I have made the corrections that we have agreed upon. But since I am not clear on whether you actually read these, what I want to do is give you hard copies and ask that we can vote on them at the next council meeting. And if something needs to be changed I am amenable to changing and editing and doing whatever needs to be done. I can't do it unless I hear from you. I'm going to pass copies to both of you. These resolutions include a resolution to establish the CCRA. Council already took a vote on this. So we voted unanimously to do this. The next step was to write the resolution. And once it's approved, Ms. Jackson can start advertising to get citizens to apply. If you can look at it again and get back with me and any changes I will get back with Mr. Preston. The second resolution is that Councilman Brian Moore had submitted a motion some time ago for us to have a Citizenry Auditing Committee. We decided that we would do this but we never acted upon it. We were waiting on the resolution. I have also written that resolution. There are a couple things that I would still like to include in it such as the auditing committee signing waiver forms or confidentiality forms. But please take a look at both resolutions and let me know what you may want to change on it. And I will get the final draft again to Mr. Preston. Another thing is Councilman Cuthbert has asked the City Manager to look into the Pocahontas Island and the things that are going on there with the dust. He was not here to know that I specifically asked the second time Mr. Stewart came to the podium with the ongoing problem I did ask specifically for the City Manager to look into this already. This would be considered the second request for the City Manager to look into this and come back with a report that we can follow. I wanted to ask can this council have or be a parliamentarian for council."

Mr. Preston asked "Can you repeat your question?"

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated "I think that this council needs a parliamentarian because often times it's very easy to get confused with Robert's Rules of Order. And so if we say we can have one can it be a councilperson."

Mr. Preston stated "If council votes to do that council can do that."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated "Before I go and do that, a citizen made a remark to me today after our first meeting and they said that no one seconded either of the motions for Mayor and Vice Mayor. Do we have that? I tried to write it down."

Ms. Jackson stated "We do not have to have a second because it is a nomination. When you nominate, which we have done in the past, if one person is nominated and you take the vote on it. And that is how you determine who will be the Mayor and Vice Mayor. It's a nomination. It's not to be a motion to do it and then a second. It can happen but we can do it has a nomination to."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated "See that's why I really think we need a parliamentarian. And I would like to make a motion that we do have a parliamentarian and that that person be Mrs. Annette Smith-Lee as a parliamentarian for our council. And that's a motion."

Council Member Wilson-Smith made a motion to have Mrs. Annette Smith-Lee as the parliamentarian for City Council.

Council Member Hill stated "Don't we have a City Attorney that would fill in that role? Normally the City Attorney would advise us on any parliamentary procedures. I'm just asking."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated “Not necessarily so from my understanding. To have a separate parliamentarian, that parliamentarian only focuses on Robert’s Rules of Order period. And the City Attorney would still be in his lane and she would be in her lane.”

Council Member Hill stated “Okay that’s all I wanted to know. Councilwoman Smith-Lee are you aware of this motion?”

Council Member Smith-Lee responded yes.

Council Member Hill stated “What is your background with this?”

Council Member Smith-Lee stated “Parliamentary procedures, Robert’s Rules of Order, I am the president of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. And those are the rules that we use as far as parliamentary procedures.”

Council Member Hill stated “And I am also a grand large officer of the Prince Hall Accepted Mason. That doesn’t mean that you are skilled on primary procedures. I am not speaking to your ability. But I think all of us are members of organizations and things like that. I don’t have any problems with it. I just want to make sure that we are clear on what we are doing. It came out of left field with me.”

Council Member Smith-Lee stated “May be I should clarify something. I’ve gone to several workshops on parliamentary procedures and Robert’s Rules of Order.”

Council Member Cuthbert stated “I have huge respect for Mrs. Annette Smith-Lee and welcome her input on all matters of parliamentary procedure. But I also welcome the input of all the other City Council and also the City Attorney. I don’t think anyone of us necessarily is going to always have the right answer. And I would like all of us to be and feel at ease in chiming in what we think the parliamentary procedure is when an issue arises. I don’t see that we need a parliamentarian but I certainly do agree that we need to pay attention to parliamentary issues and do our very best to follow all the Robert’s Rules of Order.

The motion made by Council Member Wilson-Smith dies due to a lack of second.

Council Member Myers stated “I would like to say Happy New Year’s to everyone. I would like to welcome our new members of council. I am looking forward to work with the two of you. I am very proud to have motioned for Mayor Parham and Vice Mayor John Hart. I look forward to working with you all and the entire council. I appreciate all of your efforts in last year, 2016.”

Vice Mayor Hart stated “I just want to say Happy New Year’s to everyone. I welcome the new members to council. I also want to congratulate Mayor Parham on his moving into his new role. I just want to thank everyone for all your participation in 2016, whether it was good, bad or indifferent. I ask that you continue to hold me accountable for the things I do and may need to do. So feel free to reach out to me if there are any concerns or comments. I too had the Ramada Hotel issue there. I was looking at it for the prospective of security. If this is under the ownership of the Harris Group I think we need to reach out to them and have them to check into security if not we need to better service that area. There is actually not just on the top but there is some new graffiti on the back side. So we have to really do something with cleaning up that project and making sure that when it’s time to get rid of it or somebody wants it. I want to say welcome back Mr. Noise. We really missed you these last couple of months and we are glad that you are okay and more importantly we are glad you are still among us. Finally I would ask the City Manager and the Bobb Group to look into standing committees and come back. As I think there is a need for standing committees with council and the City. There’s things that we need to focus on because the more people we have involved in these things there is a less cause for error. Be prepared as these committees come out to look and be a part of it. Some of us have already talked about it. It’s great to have participation but it’s also great to have some new faces. If you are already on five committees give someone a chance to get on the boards and use their knowledge to be a part. We all grow as we learn new things. I will suggest that we move forward and start looking into standing committees. So let’s have a great 2017 and move this City forward.”

Mayor Parham stated "Good evening and Happy New Year to all. First of all I want to thank God for the opportunity to be here tonight. And I want to thank him for keeping us through a rough year of 2016. And I deeply believe that our best is yet to come and that he has kept us through some rough times and he is going to keep us in the good times as well and they are yet to come. I want to also welcome Councilman Cuthbert and Councilwoman Lee to our team here. Thank you for your commitment to the City of Petersburg and to stepping up, because it takes a lot to make that big step to run for council. And I appreciate you making that step and sacrifice and wearing out a couple pair of shoes, getting signatures and talking to people. Thank you for your commitment because it will benefit all of us in this room. Secondly, I would like to ask Mr. Tom Tyrrell to look at our process of obtaining a business license and event permits here. We've had issues for too long for people wanting to bring business here in the City. We have to simplify that process and on top of the event permit. We have our 10K coming into town in March and every year since he has been doing this since we brought him in two years ago he always have issues getting his permit for this race. He should get a permit the same day. He shouldn't have to wait until the day of the event to get a permit. We have to simplify and serve the people better here when they bring opportunities our way. Thank you for the councilmen who voted for me to be in this seat right here to chair these meetings. The first I would like to do is change the set-up in the room. We need our directories somewhere in the front of this room. That walking from the back to the front is just not acceptable. We are in a critical time right now in the City of Petersburg. And we need our directors here upfront watching what's going on to help assist and guide us in making decisions to better serve here, because we don't have all the answers. No one person has all the answers but as a team we can come up with better answers and better opportunities to move the City in the right direction. I also want to create some seating for the press because we need them to be upfront to make sure that they get the stories right and tell an accurate story of the City of Petersburg. Do not give halfway news to the citizens. We want good news and good reports. I look forward to 2017 and I thank each and every one of you for coming out tonight and look forward to working with the Bobb Group and they have a presentation coming up next."

**10. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA:**

- a. Robert Bobb Group Financial and Operational Update
- b. City Manager's Report

Mr. Tyrrell gave a summary introducing the financial and operational update.

Mr. Bobb and Ms. Birch went through the PowerPoint presentation with explanation.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

**11. CLERK OF CITY COUNCIL'S AGENDA:**

Ms. Jackson stated "In reference to what Nelsie said about the meeting being posted online, it wasn't posted online because we were trying to get in touch with the person that reserves the train station to make sure that it was available before I posted so that everyone can attend the meeting. So we are looking at the 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm here at the train station on next week. Will all council members be available to attend?"

All council members responded yes.

Ms. Jackson stated "It will be on the website tonight so that everyone will get it and a notice out.

**12. CITY ATTORNEY'S AGENDA:**

\*No items for the City Attorney's Agenda.

**13. CLOSED SESSION (IF NECESSARY):**

No closed is necessary.

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

City Council adjourned at 10:04 p.m.

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Clerk of City Council

APPROVED:

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Mayor