

The regular meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, October 4, 2016, at the Union Train Station. Mayor Myers called the regular meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

**REGULAR-SCHEDULED MEETING – 6:30 P.M.**

**1. ROLL CALL:**

Present:

Council Member David R. Coleman  
Council Member John A. Hart, Sr.  
Council Member Darrin L. Hill  
Council Member Brian A. Moore  
Council Member Treska Wilson-Smith  
Vice Mayor Samuel Parham  
Mayor W. Howard Myers

Absent: None

Present from City Administration:

Assistant City Attorney Danielle Powell  
Acting City Attorney Mark Flynn  
Acting City Manager Dironna M. Belton  
Clerk of Council Nykesha Jackson

**2. CLOSED SESSION:**

Acting City Attorney Mark Flynn stated that it was City Council's desire to enter into a closed session under Section 2.2-3711.A (1) of the Code of Virginia under Subsection 1 for discussion of performance of personnel of appointees, employees or officials of the City specifically the City Manager and City Attorney; under Subsection 3 to discuss pending litigation with South Central Wastewater Authority.

Vice Mayor Parham moved that the City Council go into closed session for the purposes noted by the Assistant City Attorney. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hart. There was no discussion on the motion, which was approved on roll call vote.

On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

City Council entered closed session at 6:32 p.m.

**CERTIFICATION:**

Council Member Hill made a motion to return City Council into open session. The motion was seconded by Council Member Coleman. There was no discussion on the motion, which was approved on roll call vote.

On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

Vice Mayor Parham made a motion to certify the purposes of the closed session were authorized under the Freedom of Information Act and that while in closed session only the matters for going into closed session were discussed. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hart. There was no discussion on the motion, which was approved on roll call vote.

On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

**MATTERS LAWFULLY EXEMPTED FROM OPEN MEETING REQUIREMENTS OF VIRGINIA LAW WERE DISCUSSED IN THE CLOSED SESSION, AND ONLY SUCH PUBLIC BUSINESS MATTERS AS WERE IDENTIFIED IN THE MOTION CONVENING THE CLOSED SESSION WERE HEARD, DISCUSSED, OR CONSIDERED.**

**3. MOMENT OF SILENCE:**

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

**4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

- a. Clerk of Council, Nykesha Jackson, led council and the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

- a. Proclamation for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

**BACKGROUND:** The City has been supportive in the past. Issuing a proclamation allows citizens to see that City officials take the issue seriously and are taking a proactive approach to addressing the issue.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Proclaim October 2016 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Marie Vargo, Member of Board of Directors for The James House, accepted the proclamation and gave some important facts regarding their program for domestic violence and the services that The James House provides.

**6. CONSENT AGENDA:**

No items for this portion of the agenda.

**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.)**

No items for this portion of the agenda.

**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 six (6) 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.

Dolores Smith, 410 Mistletoe Street, said, "You all are always having closed session but that it seems like you never have an open session and let the people know what is going on. I mean we do not even know what is going on. This is the most important thing. I say that every one of you all that are sitting in those seats are not there to warm the seats. You are there to get some information to the people of what's going on. This is what they want to know. We do not seem to be getting that. One of those was a question. I know sometimes that you all say that you will get back with us later but we see nothing later either. We would like to know what is going on and we like to have some open sessions. You all come back and let the people know what is going on and what you all are doing. Also another thing that I would like to know is if the City is given money to help pay the bills who is going to hold it. Who is going to handle that? Another thing is that you all that have wards it

would be such a good idea to go out in your wards even if there is nothing but just once a week and see what is going on. You have some houses that look like trees because the trees have covered up the property. The owners need to know what is going on with these properties and what not. The back doors are open and windows are broken out. This is your ward and that you all are not there. You are behind the wall and the seats. We need you to interact with the people and let us know what is going on.”

Linwood Christian, 410 Mistletoe Street, said, “First on behalf of the President of the Harding Street Neighborhood Association, Mrs. Dolores Smith, we would like to thank the Senator Rosalyn Dance and Delegate Lashrecse Aird who we work together with at the Voter Education Forum. Especially in light of some of the things that went on with people trying to get their rights back. And of course the Republican Party what they did and the Governor had to do what he did. We had a nice little turn out. And so again I would like to thank them for working with us. Also one thing that I would also like to say too as a citizen is that I remember when it was put in the paper about all of the bills and the citizens not paying their taxes. I just what to say this too. I definitely believe in using public information and going down there and finding out some stuff. I would say to those elected officials that why your blaming me and my fellow citizens for not paying our taxes who are we to blame when you do not pay yours. We have a few City officials who are not paying their bills. We are not talking about \$4 or \$5. We are talking about \$4,500 or more. So remember that when you are put out there that we the citizens that you too need to pay your bills and the same goes for you buddies. They need to pay their bills too. Also I saw where we just hired a new City Attorney and all of that is wonderful. The person that was chosen is a wonderful man but the salary that he is getting is \$1,000 or more shy of what recreation could have had instead to keep the summer program in place. Then you are hiring someone to look for a City Manager when the City already cannot pay their bills like they supposed too and cannot pay some of their workers. But you are going to hire somebody to go look for a City Manager when you need to keep what we have right here for at least another year until we get out of this mess. This is what we need to do. I am tired as well as other poor folk in this City of caring the burden of mismanagement. Because that’s what it is when you are already talking about the City is this and the City is that but then you go hire a firm to make recommendations that are going to put our young people in jeopardy because it will not be any program for them next summer. Then you go hire a firm to hire a City Manager when we already have some that is capable of doing the job. Last but not least a few years ago we talked about the CCRA and a few other commissions. I just want to say this before you decide to do away with the CCRA you cannot do it until you have a public hearing and go before the house of delegates because it is written in our chart. Thank you.”

Talibah Majeed, 1847 Brandon Avenue, stated, “This weekend my friend and I went to Hopewell to the Farmer’s Market because unfortunately we do not have a Farmer’s Market here. After going around Hopewell and seeing all the wonderful things that they have there we came back to Petersburg and saw all of the wonderful things that we have here. My friend pointed out some of the places that warmed her heart when she was a child, the neighbor’s house, her grandmother’s house and the historic buildings. Earlier in the week a friend from work took me to dinner at the Rajun Cajun which I definitely recommend. It was absolutely great. She doesn’t live in Petersburg but she loves the restaurants in Petersburg. There are a lot of good things in Petersburg that really would attract people if they weren’t so discouraged by all the craziness that is going on in Petersburg. It is very tiring and very depressing to have to answer questions about Petersburg and what’s going on. It seems like there is layers and layers of things going on. The last thing that I heard really bothered me which was something that was already mentioned. This is paying a firm to do a selection process for a City Manager. It is a very important position but we have people who are making six figures in the City. If they are not competent enough to put together a committee to choose a City Manager then this is where some of the saving should be. Get rid of those people.

Tomeika Moody, 1862 E. Boulevard, stated, “I have a question about drainage down here in Old Towne because we are having another storm I think Saturday morning. Are there any work crews going around trying to repair drains so far? I haven’t seen anyone but it’s just a question. Also since we are hiring a firm to find a new City Manager, is this the same firm that Rosalyn Dance recommended to hire the last guy? I am just checking and I hope not.”

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, stated, “I would like to talk about some of the operational changes that are being implemented as a result of budget cuts. What stands out to me is the absence of a

coherent plan and the consequences this has happened. A number of us proposed alternative budget reductions which ended up being ignored by City leaders. I am not here to talk about that but there seems to be a hog of spending cuts which are not included on the approved plan which are being implemented anyway. I won't take the time to go through all that. The main point is that we haven't really learned of anyone other than public safety employees losing the use of City provided vehicles or their City provided local phones or their data plans. These are various other material benefit and privileges that Petersburg employees seem to believe are their right. Those of use working for other government organizations or in the private sectors look on amazed at the sense of entitlement demonstrated by City leaders and City employees. Likewise, extra layers of supervisors and a number of administrative support staff are alien to those who are not immersed in Petersburg City Government unique organizational culture. Meanwhile, the screws are being turned tighter on the public safety organizations and other entities as well. The consequence for many employees include their pay has been cut 10%. Who knows when it will be restored and how it will affect their retirement. The City is not paying into the retirement as they should and are many months behind. This is a recurring problem. Operational support for work units are being reduced or withdrawn. Vehicles and equipment are not being maintained and we all know that this has been in the news a lot for public safety. Folks working for the City are relying on colleagues or caring citizens to keep things going. Some of our employees have marketable skills and they can look for a position in a more stable work environment. One that appears to have more concern for its employees then does Petersburg City. We are losing some of our best and brightest. Management is creative budget savings by doing everything in their power to drive off dedicated employees. I do not know if that's an intentional or unintentional consequence. This is what's happening. I say good for those employees if they leave for better job prospects. The result of all this is instant savings from that last chance scenario which is budgeting by attrition. Attrition is the gradual decline in the number of strength due to constant stress, which I think the constant stress is what's being put on our employees. This method used to produce savings has nothing to do with the tough and necessary job of prioritizing what's important to maintain and then cutting the excessive and unnecessary. It just shows the lack of foresight and guts on the part of you, the leaders. Thank you."

Gina Harrison, 1687 South Crater Road, stated, "I just want to touch on a couple of items. One is our HR practice. I was originally told by somebody outside the City of Petersburg that our HR Department has dropped the ball on providing adequate notice of personnel to people who were being laid off, therefore, having to push out the date of their lay-off causing more money from the City that we do not have obviously. And that this was the announcement of the reason why the museums were staying open. The same department has a history of not vetting employees very well and amazingly enough has a history of leaking items out to the public, schools and everywhere. I think that this needs to be looked into its not professional and you pay this person a lot of money. It needs to be looked at and I would appreciate it. All of our tax dollars are paying these large salaries. The other thing I wanted to make a point of is the emergency workers are still getting this 10% cut and their leaving. I think we are down to a little bit over 60 police officers for the whole City I have been told and some with one foot out the door. That's a big concern for me as a resident. When something happens I expect the police to be there. Of course, if my house is getting broken into and someone is getting shot down the street they are not going to come to my house. That's a big problem. So I think that maybe Council and the City Manager needs to look back at some of the alternative budget cuts that were offered and explain to us why they haven't taken them into account. In an effort to stop the 10% cut to our emergency workers and maybe lay-off non-essential. I would rather have high tall grass on the corner then have less police on the ground. Thanks."

Samuel Rhue, 1952 South Westchester Drive, stated, "In difficult times like this I think that it is very important that we have updated financial statements. We have passed the first quarter. We should be getting a quarterly financial statement. I want to know how revenues are tracking on current revenues, taxes being collected and on delinquent taxes. In addition to this, we should be close to looking at expenses and how we track it against other expenses and also the unpaid liabilities. I would suggest that those be considered monthly and that you should be getting those reports every month so we can know exactly where we stand in order to manage through this process. Lastly, tourism is a very important piece of what Petersburg is all about. With the meals tax going up and all these changes I know you have a proposal with tourism and you want to make sure that it stays in place and draws visitors and individuals to this City to spend money at small businesses."

Gloria Brown, 1557 South Sycamore Street, stated, "I am here to talk about a couple of things. Communications as I mentioned in a couple of our City Council meeting has to be across the board. City Council has to know what is going on so that the citizens know what is going on and we do not get to a City Council meeting and City Council do not know what is going on. We have to have communication each and every day. Let's start acting like adults and handle business in the City. This is just so old to me. I know we are better than this. I think for my FOIA request about cars and cell phones. There are 400 cell phones that are used by City employees. I know what our data plan looks like with three. So instead of pay cuts across the board of people barely making over minimum wage, I did not know that we had over 400 employees to give cell phones too. That should be eliminated. That is a cost savings of hundreds and thousands of dollars a year. I do not know about the cars but that the cell phones are nonessential. Everyone that has a cellphone gets a discount. My husband gets a discount and he does not have a City cellphone. He gets a discount by the state. That is a cost savings. I asked before to rescind those raises. I do not know why it's a deer in headlights about the raises that were given from the previous administration. That's a cost saving of one million dollars. I do not understand that tourism is such an important factor. We have to close museums but people got \$20,000, \$30,000 and \$40,000 raises. This is really not cool. I am going to continue to say this because I need to know. The gossip is all over the place. Where is the accountability from Steve Hicks and Johnson Controls that really tipped over this cart? Who was in the meeting to make that deal that went sour and now all of us are paying for it. I really like to know what went on in the meeting and who is responsible. Thank you."

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

- a. Consideration of approval to request Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) provides supplement assistance in the resurfacing project on Crater Road from E. Washington Street to .11 miles north of the I-95 ramp.

**BACKGROUND:** In July 2016 the City received a grant from VDOT to complete a resurfacing project on Crater Road from E. Washington Street to .11 Mile North of the I-95. Typically, the City must pay for the services prior to being reimbursed. In light of the City's financial hardships, VDOT has agreed to provide supplemental assistance with the grant dollars that were to be reimbursed to the City. This will also help save cost of materials as the State is able to purchase items at a lower cost. The Public Works Director will certify the final product.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend City Council approved the request to permit VDOT to provide supplemental assistance in resurfacing Crater Road from E. Washington St. to .11 Miles North of the I-95 ramp and allow the Public Works Director to sign project agreements.

Vice Mayor Parham made a motion to approve the request to permit VDOT to provide supplemental assistance in resurfacing Crater Road from E. Washington St. to .11 Miles North of the I-95 ramp and allow the Public Works Director to sign project agreements. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

- b. Consideration of approval to request the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) provide supplemental assistance for roadway maintenance and repairs within the City limits.

**BACKGROUND:** The City of Petersburg is requesting assistance from VDOT to provide on an as needed basis, assistance in acquiring material, equipment, and or services for any necessary roadway maintenance and repairs.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend Council accept the resolution to allow VDOT to assist with needed roadway maintenance and repairs within the City limits.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

Vice Mayor Parham made a motion to accept the resolution to allow VDOT to assist with needed roadway maintenance and repairs within the City limits. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hart. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

**16-R-56 A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROVIDES SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE TO THE CITY OF PETERSBURG WITH RESOURCES NEEDED FOR ROADWAY MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS.**

- c. Consideration of an appropriation of \$10,000 from the Virginia Tourism Commission to Support Drive Tourism.

**BACKGROUND:** Virginia Tourism Corporation's Drive Tourism team met with City staff, business owners and citizens to make the City a Drive Tourism certified community. Tourism destinations and planning needs were determined and grant funding was sought and acquired through VTC. Funds will be used to revamp and implement plans to create walkable areas around the waterfront and Old Towne areas.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend Council approve the attached appropriation for \$10,000 from the Virginia Tourism Commission.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

Council Member Coleman made a motion to approve the attached appropriation for \$10,000 from the Virginia Tourism Commission. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hart. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

**16-ORD-43 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2016, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2017 IN THE SPECIAL FUNDS FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 FOR VIRGINIA TOURISM COMMISSION FUNDS.**

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "Good evening to everyone. Thank you so much for coming out to your City Council Meeting. At our last City Council meeting I presented a PowerPoint to council and to the citizens. Since then the PowerPoint was sent to all of council and I did stipulate that I would come back today to discuss portions of that PowerPoint. In addition since then we have also gotten the updated budget amendment which was dated for October 3<sup>rd</sup>. So based on these two documents I would like to speak about some things. First is in "Item 6" on the PowerPoint I suggested a savings of over \$84,000, however, the amended budget shows new figures for lodging, travel and dues. Those figures total \$26,522. We are no longer members of NLC or VML so traveling isn't something that we should still have on this document. Therefore, with consideration to both items I like to make a motion to amend the budget deleting these items for a savings of \$26,522."

Council Member Wilson-Smith made a motion to amend the budget deleting these items (lodging, travel and dues) for a savings of \$26,522. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hart. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "Under the City Manager's budget I discussed in the PowerPoint that there is \$20,000 allotted for beautification and supplies. I had suggested that we delete that but that I would like to ask Ms. Belton if she could explain exactly what beautification supplies are under that budget."

Ms. Belton stated, "The beautification line items under the City Manager budget was actually moved from the Public Works budget. It represents the match to the Department of Environmental Qualities Grant.

The grant is approximately average annually around \$10,000. I know those funds are used to match that. As the match is not a requirement some reduction in that line item would not slow the beautification efforts that the grant intends for us to do through the Department of Environmental Quality.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “With it not being a requirement would we still meet the match if it was taken from \$20,000 to \$10,000?”

Ms. Belton stated, “Yes, we would.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “Then based on this conversation, the budget and this presentation I would like to make a motion that we change that line item from \$20,000 to \$10,000, saving us \$10,000.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith made a motion to change the line item from \$20,000 to \$10,000. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “On the budget sheet for Finance, there is \$4,480 in travel, lodging dues and subscriptions. I know that there are some offices that actually have to pay dues for things. Is this a necessity for the finance department? Do we have to absolutely have to keep it? Do they absolutely have to go on the trips, conventions and training or can we save the \$4,480?”

Ms. Belton stated, “If you are talking about the travel amount it is at the discretion of council if they would like to limit no traveling. But the certification amounts are required of staff to maintain their certification in their positions.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “It doesn’t really stipulate certification so rather than make the motion to vote on this tonight I would like to ask you to look at this and come back and let us know what is what and to explain it better. The next item is the Freedom Support Center. It was explained in the PowerPoint at the last council meeting that the City is paying a total of \$8,035.94 in rent. But what we are obtaining from the renter’s doesn’t equal to the amount we are putting out and the amount that we are putting out for the utilities. I would therefore like to make a motion to direct the City Manager to have a discussion with the director of the Freedom Support Center in reference to the leases, which most of them are up 2017 to see if they are willing to increase their rent payments. Also to see what we can do to make the Freedom Support self-sustaining.”

Mayor Myers stated, “You will not need to motion to ask her to do that Council Member Wilson-Smith. You can direct her to do that without a motion.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “Under the economic development budget, in the PowerPoint I suggested that we can save \$7,000 with registration, training and travels expenses. Since then those line item budgets has been reduced and I still question the lodging, registration, training and lodging expenses rather than go with that motion tonight I would like the City Manager to come back with more clarity so that we know whether or not we can save that amount of money. We have \$2,333 allotted for beautification supplies on the grounds budget. I have concerns about that. Is this the same beautification that is on the City Manager’s budget? And if so do we need both of them?”

Ms. Belton stated, “Currently the \$2,300 that is listed in the public works is for the projects when they need supplies for certain cutting of hedges and things that take place sometimes at some of the museum sites. Again, it’s at council’s discretion that if they think that we can leverage the use of the beautification in the City Manager’s budget along with the DEQ grant if it is necessary to remove the \$2,300. I would then suggest leaving the \$2,300 and taking an additional \$2,300 out of the City Manager’s budget.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “Thank you. I apologize for taking a lot of time. I have been very concerned about recreation and Parks & Leisure budget and the amount of money that they will not have to work with the children. I am noticing that they too have \$7,000 for registration, training and travel expenses and

dues and subscriptions. I wonder if we can take that from those line items and use it towards the children, the youth in the City. Would this be in the jurisdiction of the City Manager or is this something that council would need to vote on?"

Ms. Belton stated, "The monies that are currently in the line item for the parks and leisure department. I can direct the director to reallocate those funds to youth programs via versus lodging and travel. Although, I would ask that I be able to provide clarification on exactly if the lodging and travel can all be removed for that the same that you proposed for the economic development and finance department."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "Thank you. I am coming to the end. One of the last things that I talked about in the PowerPoint was that I felt that with all that is going on that with any organization who has issues with any kind we should come up with a plan of correction. In that plan of correction we did receive an updated policy from Mrs. Innis and Ms. Belton about City vehicle replacement. But I did want to ask one thing about that policy. One thing about that policy as a matter of plan of correction on page 6, item 7. The last statement in the second paragraph says 'any exception to the regulation of assigned parking at the location of the assigned department should be reported to the finance department in a manner similar to the reports for take home vehicles.' I am wondering with that could you insert another paragraph which would be item 8 I believe which would talk about take home vehicles. It would say something such as 'vehicles are allowed to be driven home on a daily basis by' and then give us a list of who will be driving and who will have those vehicles. It should also say 'those who receive approval by the City Manager and persons established as essential personnel.' And can you also stipulate a policy with the difference in an accident and an incident. Another matter for council to consider is that I made a motion some time ago. We have heard it a little bit lately and we did hear from a citizen tonight on it that it is within our charter to reinstate the CCRA. I would like to make the motion that City Council takes the necessary steps to reinstate the CCRA. And that is a motion."

Council Member Wilson-Smith made a motion that City Council takes the necessary steps to reinstate the CCRA. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hart. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Coleman, Hart, Hill, Moore, Wilson-Smith, Parham and Myers

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "And the last thing that I would like to ask the City Manager to do is that we had voted to have a spearhead volunteerism in the City and it was formed by our former HR person. This council had approved the motion to formulate a volunteer bank which is what we called it. My directive is to please ask HR to reinstate and get the ball rolling on the volunteer group. I have no further items."

Council Member Hart stated, "Good afternoon everyone. Couple of questions that I have from the community and one is the recycle pick-up. There is an issue with recycle products being picked up on time. So if we can get some information on that so that we can give to the citizens. The second thing is on Young's Road over the past weekend there was some major flooding going on. A lot of that is due from drainage back-up. We have a storm coming in this week. I actually had a whole neighborhood in ward that flooded. We have to work on cleaning the drainage throughout the City. There will be a Ward 7 meeting to be determined in October. I think that Mrs. Brown touched on it earlier about communications. I know that it is not necessarily council's place to hold meetings with City employees however there is a huge breakdown of communication when it comes down to what is happening in the City. And there are things that employees are going out and doing and there are things that council does not know until the last minute. There needs to be some type of meeting that we can all kind of get on the same page into moving this City forward. If the left does not know what the right is discussing then we are lost. I think that it is time for us to get those two in the room and just have conversation."

Council Member Coleman stated, "Last Thursday night if you were watching Channel 6 they reported that Ray Coleman had not paid his water bill which was very incorrect. I did contact Channel 6 and they had another Ray Coleman and they retracted that statement Friday. However, the damage has been done. Thank you."

Council Member Moore stated, "In reference and this ducktails Ms. Wilson-Smith discussion on Virginia Municipal League if we are no longer members, I know Risk Management and Petersburg Attorney's come

from them, if we are no longer a member of VML will we have to find monies for legal defense?"

Mr. Flynn stated, "First of all VML has a grace period through the end of the calendar year so Petersburg will remain a member from my understanding. VML Insurance does provide coverage to a number of entities that are not members of VML itself. I will take a look but there are a number of special authorities that are insured by VML Insurance but are not members of the league itself. I will follow-up on that and report to council."

Council Member Moore stated, "So what do we need to follow-up and redo the particular documents or reapply as a separate entity and not as a locality."

Mr. Flynn stated, "I will check on that it's my guess is that the insurance program will just continue providing the same coverage I expect but I don't know that definitively but I will get with the risk folks and get back with you. The insurance is provided through VaCorp and then Risk Management also has coverage for other stuff. As a result of that the membership of VML should not be a factor whatsoever. We will double check that and make sure. And work with the Risk Manager to make sure that the policies are in good shape."

Council Member Moore stated, "My second question of the night is in reference to Mr. Hart's question and Mrs. Brown statement with the water bill. I know I had to ask you to speak to the Subsection 19.2-201. This would basically describe to us what the special grand jury process would be."

Mr. Flynn stated, "The special jury process works typically through the Commonwealth Attorney's Office. The request to the Commonwealth Attorney with an allegation of some evidence of criminal wrong doing and ask either per presentation convenient special grand jury or possible go to a regular grand jury when it convenes. It would be one of the matters that the regular grand jury takes up. I would recommend that it be something that we work with the Commonwealth Attorney. It is the Commonwealth Attorney's responsibility of those actions."

Council Member Moore stated, "If you can bring that information back at the next meeting or however that is. If the current Commonwealth's Attorney is conflicted out will this move to a different locality."

Mr. Flynn stated, "It would be a petition of appointment of a special prosecutor to handle this. Typically, it would be a Commonwealth Attorney from another jurisdiction."

Council Member Hill stated, "Good evening. We have been talking about transparency and communication. I would like for us to start extending the olive branch and maybe if they so choose to give a report every second meeting of the month to the treasurer's department. And to the Commission of Revenue to give us a report of what is going on in their office. So all three entities will be able to talk and find out what is going on. We understand that you all are constitutional officers but as we talked in the past if we can allow a segment on the agenda for those two individuals to come and give a report on what is being taken in and what is being billed out. The City Manager will let us know that bills that we have coming up. That is the reason why we can show the transparency and then everybody will know what is going on and not just one individual because the money goes through two to three hands and not just City Council. They come to us and let us know everything and if they so choose and now we are extending that olive branch to you all to be on our agenda. I do not think that we need a motion for that. Also we have groups in the past that have adopted streets. I would like for us to follow up with them and if we can come out with a list that we can adopt a street to keep Petersburg clean. See if we can encourage the different organizations to come out and help keep the City clean. Also there needs to be more attention to our exits as far as keeping them clean. VDOT has cycle when they clean theirs up but if we can get ours to come by at least once or twice a day to clean up as well. Thank you."

Vice Mayor Parham stated, "I would like to start off with first we had a goal of getting all our fire hydrants checked by October 1<sup>st</sup>. I would like to get an update on where we are in that process."

Ms. Belton stated, "Pardon me for not having the exact number on the update but we were based on

the staff that we have with the utilities division we were able to have a specific person designated to this doing approximately 14-20 fire hydrants per day to expedite the process. This is currently been going on now for about seven working days. We did reach out to the fire department but based on the unavailability for personnel reasons that person has yet to work on the fire hydrant project. But that they are clock rating and we hope to have them in the upcoming weeks working with the utility department.”

Vice Mayor Parham stated, “Second of all we have a lot of properties that are vacant. We as a City cannot cut the grass on these private lots. I would like to check with the City Attorney to see if there is anything that we can do. I have a number of volunteers who would like to cut grass on some of these private lots to at least keep the City looking good but we need to get around that red tape of private property. Can you advise Mr. Flynn on that?”

Mr. Flynn stated, “I will take a look into it to make sure what the City Code is. I believe that the City has a provision for cutting grass and charging the owners. I think that you have full authority with volunteers also but I will follow-up on it.”

Vice Mayor Parham stated, “Also I would like to let everyone know that Ward 3 will be having a meeting on October 31<sup>st</sup>. It will be a joint meeting with myself and Ken Pritchett of the school board. Again that is October 31<sup>st</sup> at 6:00pm at Walnut Hill Elementary School. Thank you.”

#### **10. CITY MANAGER’S AGENDA:**

Ms. Belton stated, “Thank you. I would like to first start my report by saying that the citizens are really showing that they are supporting the City by paying their bills on time. I am very thankful for that and for those actions. Also I would like to thank staff for all the work that they are currently doing and not only their everyday jobs but taking on some of the other jobs as well as for the treasurer staff for the first quarter of exemplary revenues. We are very happy with the outcome thus far.”

- a. City Manager’s Report
  1. What is the status of the forensic audit?
    - a. The evaluation committee interviewed the firms with the highest scores. The City is currently in the negotiation stage.
  2. Can something be done regarding the over growth of trees and grass in Delectable Heights?
    - a. A request was received by Public Works to remedy the overgrowth in the Delectable Heights area. The department had begun by cutting back brushes on High Pearl Street and North Carolina Avenue.
  3. What is the status of the joint partnerships for Museums?
    - a. The City of Petersburg has received an unsolicited proposal for managing and operating city-owned museums. The City also welcomes additional proposals for these sites by Friday, October 14, 2016 at 5:00pm Proposals should be mailed to the Office of Economic Development, 400 E. Washington Street, Petersburg, Virginia 23803. Proposals may also be faxed to (804) 733-1276 or emailed to [tjohnson@petersburg-va.org](mailto:tjohnson@petersburg-va.org). For information about the property and guidelines for proposals, please contact the office by telephone at 804-733-2352 or email.
  4. How much does the City receive from Curb-side recycling?
    - a. The City does not receive money from curb-side recycling; it is a part the refuse revenue which is a user fee.

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

No items for this portion of the agenda.

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

Mr. Flynn stated, "I have some potentially good news. If you recall that the very long public hearing that City Council had that resulted in City Council taking the actions to begin the process of balancing the budget. This is prerequisite to going out for interim financing as a part of an overall program that you all have the City Manager working with PFM and bond counsel to move forward. At this point the bond counsel and Davenport are ready to go out to the financial markets with an RFP for the interim financing. You have to see what proposals you get but then the public finance act requires advertising two weeks in the newspaper and a public hearing. I believe the next meeting is the 18<sup>th</sup>. This would be too early so it would have to be November 1<sup>st</sup> for a public hearing. I would ask for that public hearing and I would ask Ms. Jackson to do the necessary advertising on getting the right language for the ad. This would be the City and City Council moving forward.

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

No items for this portion of the agenda.

**14. ADJOURNMENT:**

City Council adjourned at 8:14p.m.

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Clerk of City Council

APPROVED:

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Mayor