

FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Hampton Clean City Commission

February 8, 2022 ~ 3:30pm



Board Members Present: Barb Abraham; Jackie Cannan; Chris Grady; Grady McLean; Gayle Mooney; April Receveur

Also Present: Councilman Chris Bowman; Angela King, Asst. City Attorney (Zoom); Linda & Robert Boone; Cris Ausink; Wendy Iles; C. Harris

Absent: Ryan Adams, Alex Maness, Liam Thurkettle

Opening Business

Welcome and Time Sheet: C. Harris called the meeting to order, welcoming everyone and asking all to sign in.

Roll Call, Protocol, and Approval of Notes/Minutes: Roll was called, and a quorum was present. Protocol was read. After review, Jim Williams noted that he was present at the January meeting. April Receveur made a motion to accept the October minutes with revision. The motion was seconded by Jackie Cannan, and approved by the board.

Hampton City Council: Councilman Chris Bowman announcement the passing of Mr. Will Moffett, a former Hampton Councilman and, and Chris noted, a mentor to many, including him. Mr. Moffett's funeral will be Saturday, February 12 at Bethel Church on Todd's Lane, and burial will be at Hampton Memorial Gardens. The repast will take place at 4pm that day at YH Thomas Recreation Center.

He added that discussions and planning is underway for two Resilient Hampton projects: Big Bethel Blueway and Lake Hampton, and encouraged members to monitor the events and to become involved in community discussions.

Hampton City Attorney: No report. Ms. King noted only that this was her second meeting and that she was excited to be a part of the Commission.

Hampton Parks, Recreation, & Leisure Services: No report

Hampton Public Works: No report

Financial Overview: Cynthia talked about the FY22 DEQ grant award of \$26,062 and that funds were finally loaded into the budget and ready for use before the end of this fiscal year. She asked members to think about how best funds could be used and to be ready to discuss at the March session.

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Proposals, Discussion, Voting Items & Updates

Board Member Commitment: Cynthia spoke of what was now the third absence of Mr. Thurkettle and asked members to be wait until the March meeting when the Chair and/or Vice Chair is present to act on a formal request to remove Mr. Thurkettle.

2022 Earth Day Celebration: Cynthia noted that board members agreed to hold an Earth Day event on April 23 and asked that members now make a motion to proceed with planning and preparation. A motion was made by Barb Abraham and seconded by April. The motion carried. An ad hoc committee with member April Receveur and staff members Cris Ausink, Wendy Iles, and Cynthia was formed and a meeting will be scheduled during the week. All board members, however, are expected to participate in the planning and execution of the event.

January Work Session Update: Cynthia thanked members for being present and vocal at the session and for coming up with great ideas and projects/events on which to work. Barb stated that she would have preferred a Saturday session, but Cynthia reiterated the \$400 rental cost of using Sandy Bottom Nature Park's facility on a weekend day was something she felt was not necessary. She reminded members that the facility is free of charge to city agencies on a weekday but that weekends generate income for the park due to public usage.

Wendy suggested looking into the sixth floor space at the new Old Pointe Bank on Queensway, with others stating that it is a great space for meetings and was free of charge. Jim, however, stated that he believes there are new stipulations on its use now, and that's why the Clean Business Forum is no longer being held there.

Chris Bowman said he was a member of the FOP Lodge #26 on Wine Street that is very close to City Hall. It will hold 2 30-40 people and he will check into its Saturday availability and may be able to secure free of charge.

Creative Care Day – Fox Hill First UMC: Wendy talked about Clean City partnering with the church's sustainability event with Bee City USA-Hampton and Hampton Waterways Restoration Project committees already participating. She asked if other subcommittees would like to have a display table to contact her. The event, on March 12 requires masks and will be kid-friendly. Hampton University's Dr. Shawn Dash will also make a presentation. A flyer will be emailed to those wanting more information.

Committee & Partner Updates

Beautification: Wendy announced that the YARDS Program judges training would be Monday, March 7, 9am-3pm and encouraged interested members to participate. The committee is striving for a more professional look, with Gayle Mooney adding that the criteria is being streamlined and regulated. The judges will meet on Mondays each month to judge nominated yards.

Bee City USA-Hampton: Barb spoke of the committee's participation in the HPRLS December Wonder Walk by decorating a tree for the event. The first of a series of Bee webinars began January 20, with Mr. Al Banwell who talked about bee keeping. The February 17 webinar features Ms. Marty Wood's presentation on solitary bees. Upcoming webinars are the third Thursday of each month from 7-8pm. Wendy stated that there were nine attendees at the January webinar, and 14 are currently registered for February 17. Please contact Wendy Iles for registration information. The committee's annual activity report has been submitted.

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Wendy added that Barb will be speaking at the Willow Oaks Garden Club, and with a Kingsmill Garden Club on February 15 about spiders. Finally, she'll be talking about Bee City to the Peninsula Networking Exchange Club on March 18.

Clean & Green Workplaces: Jim spoke with Hampton's Clean Business award winner Mr. Chris Simmonds of Less Than Zero Waste shop at 24 S. King Street. A formal award presentation will take place on March 2 and Mr. Simmonds has agreed to a recording of his business, detailing why he chose to start such a business and his best practices for sustainability, particularly during the pandemic.

Jim added that Mr. Moffett was instrumental in the renovation of the YH Thomas Community Center and the installation of its playground. Noted that Mr. Moffett was once the Council liaison to Clean City with Chris Bowman adding that he was also a former executive director of the center and took no salary while serving as such.

Jim closed by saying the committee's next meeting will be Tuesday, February 15, 3:30-4:30pm at Clean City.

Community Gardens: Wendy announced that the February 5 Herb Workshop, featuring Ms. Jill Davis, had 17 attendees, 13 of which had never heard of Clean City.

The seed library, housed in her office, will be moved to Northampton Library. A class on beginner's gardening is tentatively scheduled for March 5 at this library. She is also looking for speakers/presenters.

3

Hampton Waterways Restoration Project: Linda Boone stated that the last official meeting was January 13 with Cris Ausink adding that the committee voted to hold bi-monthly meetings. During off meeting months, cleanups will be conducted. Last December, they participated in decorating a tree for the HPRLS Wonder Walk event and held their holiday party. A cleanup was done at Gosnold's Hope Park in December. During their January cleanup that occurred after that winter storm, they found a campsite that looked operational. On February 19, HWRP will do a cleanup near the Home Depot on Armistead from 10-11:30am.

Cris added that they reviewed their 2018 HWRP survey of what their priorities as a committee were.

HWRP is currently working with Adam Newland of Bluebird Gap Farm on a project.

Jim encouraged HWRP and all members to recommend and nominate businesses for the Clean Business that they see are involved in sustainability efforts. Once nominated, his committee will contact the business to acquire more in-depth information.

Linda went on to add that Home Depot in Hampton does not take back fluorescent lightbulbs; only the store in Williamsburg. Cris announced that the Household, Chemical and Electronic Recycling event, sponsored by the Virginia Peninsulas Public Service Authority, would be March 19 in the Coliseum parking lot from 8am-12pm.

Chris Bowman stated that he hasn't been getting information about cleanups, so it was asked if he could be added to each subcommittee's mailing list in order for him to be informed of upcoming meetings and activities.

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Litter & Recycling Awareness: Cris stated that the committee's greeting card program is coming along with several cards already donated to an area nursing facility. They are considering reaching out to the VA hospital to expand on the program.

Ryan Adams is working with Hampton Police and Fire Departments for a May 21 cleanup at Bluebird Gap Farm. A recent community cleanup was done along Barrack & Pine Chapel Streets on February 5 with 13 participants. The next community cleanup will be in the area of the Moton Early Childhood Center on Old Buckroe Road on March 5, 10am. Cris reminded everyone of the need to wear proper shoes/clothing and to be mindful of the terrain when walking.

Comments: Jackie asked about the MLK, Jr. Day of Service book and Peninsula Regional Animal Shelter (PRAS) donation drives. Wendy stated that PRAS was very pleased with the donations received. They will be launching a rolling donation cart program where the cart may be loaned to different organizations/businesses for donations. PRAS will deliver and pick up the cart.

Barb said numerous books/DVDs were donated, with the majority taken to the public library. She informed everyone that the library does not accept magazines or textbooks. Grady McLean, who also works for the Virginia Department of Corrections, will deliver donated children's books to be used in an inmate-reading program. Inmates may either read books to their children via in-person visits or zoom. He added local business Dog-Eared Books is also supplying new and gently used books for this statewide program. Jim stated that Goodwill would accept book donations, with Barb adding that DAV also accepts books.

4

School Pride in Action: April stated that most schools are talking about how to get their ecology/recycling programs up and running again due to COVID protocols that limited earlier practices. Wendy and HCS STEM teacher Betsy McAllister met with Public Works Jason Mitchell, Barry Dobbins, and William Heckstall about obtaining recycling bins for schools. They will be meeting again to determine which schools will be part of this program.

Jim asked if the schools still participated in the plastic bag contest. April noted that while statistics are still being recorded and bags still accepted, the corporate office of sponsor Kroger has moved to Richmond, and a point of contact has not yet been named. Jim asked that a list of participating schools be circulated.

SPiA's next meeting will be Thursday, February 10, 4:15-5:15pm, at HCCC.

Comments: Wendy informed everyone of recent legislation that became effective January 1 of this year where localities can impose a five cents bag fee. The fee this year would return two cents to the vendor and three cents to environmental efforts. In 2023, it would then be one cent returned to the vendor and four cents to environmental efforts. The City of Fredericksburg is already implementing this program, and Wendy has asked leadership for input. She will email Angela King a copy of the plastic bag legislation.

Jim suggested a media blitz and marketing campaign to promote this legislation, giving reasons why plastic bags are detrimental to the environment. Linda said there are pros and cons to cloth bags also in that they are great but people forget that the bags need to be kept clean because they do harbor germs. She noted that having photos of plastic bags in different situations would work wonders and could be placed on social media and in the newsletter.

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He said that showing people what happens when plastic bags are allowed to blow free versus what happens to them when properly disposed could be of great value.

Wendy added that Trex currently contracts with Food Lion on plastic bag collections while Kroger contracts with another company. She stated that for Earth Day, she'd like to bring her trailer to the site filled with 500 pounds of plastic bags for visual impact. She also said that a TFC Recycling truck recently caught on fire from someone placing a hazardous item in their recycling bin. It was suggested that attendees to the event all bring plastic bags, but added that there had to be some way to insure that the plastic is not compromised.

Peninsula Master Gardeners: Gayle said that the semi-annual plant sale will be April 30 at Bluebird Gap Farm.

Peninsula Master Naturalists: Linda noted that a new board is now in place and basic training and education begin this semester at Thomas Nelson Community College (TNCC). Additionally, the Peninsula Master Naturalist were the #1 in participation (96% member participation). She stated that they now have a new volunteer management database called Better Impact that is being used statewide and tracks volunteer hours, can share contacts, and has an event calendar. She suggested that Cynthia contact coordinator Laura Marlowe to see if it's something that can be tailored for Clean City volunteers. She provided a link to a training video at www.MyImpctPage.com for viewing.

Staff Reports:

Cris announced rain barrel workshops for March and April, dates to be determined. The annual Walk Hampton Clean event will take place the entire month of April with waterway cleanups beginning in May. A Tour de Trash Express to the NASA Steam Plant will be this Friday, February 11, 9-11am. A Tour de Trash Express to the Yard Waste Facility will be Wednesday, March 9. Cynthia noted that transportation is an issue for many of the tours simply because of the unavailability of bus drivers. School buses and drivers have been used in the past, but for now, tour groups are smaller due to having to use van transportation and the need to adhere to COVID guidelines.

Wendy passed out Bee City cards produced by the HCS Print Shop. These cards will have a few lines about the committee and will have a QR code that will link people to the Bee City website for more information. These new cards will have the new Clean City logo. She welcomed other committees to put have cards made. She then thanked April for her contribution to the 2022 YARDS program.

Cynthia then explained the reasons for the new logos. Because the City of Hampton is working towards a unified look, each department is using any one of several available icons along with a Hampton banner. Agencies with the word "Commission" attached (HCCC and The Unity Commission as examples) had to also be reimagined in order to fit the new protocol. Cynthia stated that the current HCCC logo will remain as is for any business/documents pertaining specifically to the Commission. All information pertaining only to Clean City as a city agency will have the city of Hampton logo, along a century tree icon, and be listed as Clean City. The Unity Commission is now the Office of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, and has the Unity Commission under its umbrella. This agency is now Clean City and has the Hampton Clean City Commission under its umbrella. She then reiterated that the current logo, because the commission is an approved affiliate of the national Keep America Beautiful, Inc. organization, will remain as is.

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Wendy announced that members of the Litter & Recycling Awareness Committee will be at Foxhill United Methodist Church (1 Salt Ponds Road) from 10am-12pm providing a workshop on how to make mats for the homeless out of plastic bags.

Cynthia announced that sailors from the USS John C. Stennis will be working on several projects with Clean City during the Great America Cleanup Campaign on Saturday, March 26.

Lastly, Cris Bowman asked that the Kenny Wallace Center on Victoria Blvd. and the New England Community Center on Kecoughtan be considered for future retreats and special meetings.

Meeting adjourned

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously carried at 4:57pm.

Announcements

- Will Moffett Funeral Services, Bethel Temple, February 12, 11am; Repast, YH Thomas, 4pm
- Clean & Green Workplaces Meeting, February 15, 3:30pm, HCCC
- Bee City USA-Hampton Meeting, February 17, 3:30pm, HCCC
- Bee City, February 17, "Starting Seeds & Planting Pollinators" Webinar, 7pm
- School Pride in Action Meeting, February 10, HCCC, 4:15pm
- Clean & Green Workplaces Meeting, February 15, HCCC, 3:30pm
- Bee City USA-Hampton Meeting, February 17, HCCC, 1pm
- Bee City USA-Hampton Webinar Series, February 17, 7-8pm
- Beautification Meeting, YARDS & Hampton Master Gardeners, February 19, 10-11am
- Presidents Day Holiday, February 21, HCCC Closed
- YH Thomas Black History Event, HCCC Display, February 22, YHT, 5-7pm