

# HAMPTON VA

## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Robin McCormick | [rmccormick@hampton.gov](mailto:rmccormick@hampton.gov) | 757-728-3276  
22 Lincoln Street | Hampton, VA 23669

## City Council Unanimously Endorses Crackdown on Crime Initiatives

**July 16, 2013** – City Council agreed to several measures designed to increase police action to prevent crime and apprehend criminals. City Manager Mary Bunting and Police Chief Thomas Townsend proposed the measures at a special City Council meeting on crime Tuesday.

Council agreed to spend one-time capital funds of \$325,000 to buy surveillance equipment, including cameras, and some technology that will allow officers to spend less time on reports and other administrative tasks. Additional spending on overtime was also endorsed.

The immediate efforts include: More neighborhood patrols; enhanced investigative surveillance; partnering with the housing authority to uncover unlawful activities in federally supported housing; partnering with probation and parole officials to catch violators; and door-to-door community policing and blight reduction. In the coming months, Council will consider ordinances on earlier curfews for younger teens, limiting hotel residency and inspecting rental dwellings.

“I think it’s time to send a message to the community that this is how we feel about Hampton, and we’re not willing to tolerate the level of violence that we’ve seen,” said Mayor Molly Ward.

Overall, crime is down in Hampton by 12.5%. Both violent and property crimes have decreased in 2013 so far, compared with the same time frame last year. However, there has been a recent spike in homicides. None were random, explained Townsend, saying that about half were related to drugs and/or gangs and the other half were cases in which victims and perpetrators knew each other. Eleven of the 12 were shooting deaths. Police have already arrested suspects in 75% of the cases.

In addition to the actions government plans to take, community leaders highlighted for council the work of a volunteer group. The Community Action Coalition for the Prevention of Youth Violence leaders described the process they are developing to create teams to tackle the problem. Nine teams will break the problem down by prevention, intervention and recovery for each of three age groups: birth-8 years; 8-14 years; and 14-21 years. The community group is tasked with utilizing a broad coalition of people and organizations to develop long-term solutions to the community, family and societal issues at the root of the problem. For information or to volunteer, go to <http://www.hampton.gov/youthviolence>.

The meeting will air on Channel 47 at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. through Sunday. You can also replay the live blog of the meeting at <http://www.hampton.gov/chat>.

###