

CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA
Special Meeting of City Council
Tuesday, September 19, 2023

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Kochuba called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

2. Roll Call

**Present: Councilwoman Elizabeth G. Luck
Councilman John E. Piotrowski
Vice-Mayor Robert W. Wade
Mayor T. Gregory Kochuba**

**Absent: Councilman Kenneth B. Frenier
Councilwoman Dr. Laura F. Poe (arrived at 6:14 P.M.)
Councilman John T. Wood (arrived at 6:10 P.M.)**

**Also Present: Mr. Douglas E. Smith, City Manager
Mr. Hugh P. Fisher, III, City Attorney
Mrs. Pamela B. Wallace, Clerk**

3. Declarations of Personal Interest

There were none.

4. A Work Session on the Following Items:

A. Economic Development Update

Mrs. Epps provided comments relative to new economic development projects at the mall which included, but were not limited to, the ongoing renovations to the upcoming Delta Colonial Heights, currently the Holiday Inn. Additionally, Mrs. Epps provided information on the new restaurant brochure and hotel brochure, and tourism ARPA funding received from Richmond Regional Tourism to be shared between the City and PART. The ARPA funding was used to develop a promotional video featuring the Tri-City Chili Peppers, which was aired on two local television stations. Additional promotional events included the Keystone Truck and Tractor Museum train show held in July and the I-85 Bracey Welcome Center showcase featuring items from PART participants displayed at the Welcome Center.

Continuing, Mrs. Epps provided additional comments relative to the new Home2Suites hotel and provided photos of the proposed hotel rooms. Mrs. Epps advised that construction had not yet begun.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mrs. Epps addressed several questions from Council members. There was no request for official action by Council.

B. Office on Youth Student Survey Presentation

Ms. Becca Lynch provided Council with the results of the Colonial Heights Public Schools Pride Survey, which was administered to 8th, 10th, and 11th grade students in February 2022, advising that 590 surveys were distributed with 353 surveys returned.

Ms. Lynch advised Council of the importance of the survey stating that it provided school administration the ability to plan and evaluate programs and continue future programming, rationalize behaviors and challenges of students, and develop meaningful goals and objectives to address the findings.

Continuing, Ms. Lynch shared the survey findings relative to student uses of tobacco E-cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and other prescription and illegal drugs. Additionally, Ms. Lynch provided information relative to student suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts, and student perception of available help at school to address their mental health needs.

Ms. Lynch advised that to move forward to improve the issues presented in the survey findings, there must be partnerships between schools, police, courts, community services boards, and Recreation and Parks.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mayor Kochuba thanked Ms. Lynch and advised of the upcoming presentation of the PRIDE survey to the School Board at their next meeting.

Addressing Mr. Piotrowski's concern relative to the ongoing opioid epidemic and its effects on school-age children, Ms. Lynch advised that, in her opinion and in line with the findings of the survey, the opioid epidemic lies with adults and not school-aged children.

C. Public Works Update

At the request of Mr. Smith, Todd Flippin provided Council with quarterly public works updates which included active construction projects slated for completion by the end of the year. These projects included, but we're not limited to, the following:

- Pavement Preservation 2023 (completed)**
- Branders Bridge Road right-turn lane (complete)**
- North Elementary sidewalk Phase II**
- Boulevard Paving (Birch Avenue to the Swift Creek Bridge)**
- Westover Avenue right-turn lane**
- Lakeview Avenue Modernization Project**

Addressing Mr. Piotrowski's question relative to the completion of the Lakeview Ave. project, Mr. Flippin advised there had been modifications to the project; however, construction may be completed by mid-October.

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Mr. Wood reminded Council that most of the funds used to complete the Lakeview Modernization Project were from outside sources which were pursued by the Metropolitan Planning Organization and Public Works staff.

Continuing, Mr. Flippin provided comments relative to non-transportation projects and infrastructure projects. Nontransportation projects included the Lakeview Dam, Lexington Avenue drainage project, Main Pump Station valves, TMDL Nutrient Credits, and Temple Avenue/I-95 gateway signage.

Mr. Smith advised that the proposed amount presented to the state legislature by Delegate Cherry was not included in the currently approved state budget; however, Mr. Smith stated staff would request funding during the upcoming city budget session.

Relative to the Temple Avenue/I-95 gateway signage project, Mr. Flippin advised the subject area was VDOT property; however, staff was continuing to work with VDOT relative to the proposed project. Additionally, Mr. Flippin provided information relative to the placement of the flagpoles and plantings in the roundabout as requested by the Beautification Committee.

Continuing, Mr. Flippin provided information relative to sewer and water infrastructure projects. Sewer projects included work to address up to \$3.4 million of sewer line rehabilitation work, Sherwood Hills Pump Station pump replacement, and several issues at the Main Pump Station.

Mr. Smith advised staff will allocate funding to address emergency issues at the City's pump stations.

Mr. Flippin provided information relative to the City's Lead Service Line inventory and grant opportunities. Relative to Lead Service Inventory, Mr. Flippin advised staff to work to collect all available information around the City. This information will need to be obtained on the public and private sides of service lines. Concluding the presentation, Mr. Flippin provided information relative to available funding options through grants to assist with the planned projects within the Public Works Department.

5. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Vice-Mayor Wade, seconded by Dr. Poe, to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 P.M.

APPROVED:

T. Gregory Kochuba, Mayor

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ATTEST:

Pamela B. Wallace, City Clerk