

Electronic Emergency Management Meeting of the Suffolk City Council on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. at the following locations:

**PRESENT**

Council Members -

Linda T. Johnson, Mayor, presiding, Suffolk City Council Chamber, 442 West Washington Street

Leroy Bennett, Vice Mayor, Fire Station Number 6, 300 Kings Fork Road

Michael D. Duman, Fire Station Number 6, 300 Kings Fork Road

Roger W. Fawcett, Fire Station Number 5, 3901 Bridge Road

Donald Z. Goldberg, City Council Conference Room, 442 West Washington Street

Timothy J. Johnson, Suffolk Executive Airport, 1200 Gene Bolton Drive

Curtis R. Milteer, Sr., Suffolk Executive Airport, 1200 Gene Bolton Drive

Lue R. Ward, Jr., Fire Station Number 5, 3901 Bridge Road

Patrick G. Roberts, City Manager

Helivi L. Holland, City Attorney

Erika S. Dawley, City Clerk

**ABSENT**

None

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order.

City Clerk Dawley called the roll, and all member of City Council were in attendance.

Mayor Johnson provided the following announcement: on March 12, 2020, Governor Ralph S. Northam declared a State of Emergency for the Commonwealth of Virginia, due to the rapid spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). Following that declaration, City Manager Patrick G. Roberts declared the City of Suffolk to be in a State of Emergency. Because of the catastrophic nature of the declared emergency, it is impractical and unsafe to assemble a quorum of City Council in a single location. In accordance with the code of Virginia and Suffolk City Code, this Emergency Meeting of Suffolk City Council will be held via video and video conference. The meeting will be broadcasted live on the City's local cable channel (Spectrum Channel 190) and stream via the internet at [http://suffolkva.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish\\_id=2](http://suffolkva.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=2)

**Public Hearing** - A public hearing to receive public comment on the Proposed Operating and Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and related Ordinances

City Manager Roberts provided introductory comments regarding the background information as printed in the official agenda.

Mayor Johnson opened the public hearing.

Mayor Johnson reviewed the instructions and process for the submission of public comment regarding the Proposed Operating and Capital Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 during the emergency electronic meeting.

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation and distributed handout, Finance Director Tealen Hansen gave a summation of the background information as printed in the official agenda. She added that all of the comments that have been received have been provided to all members of City Council and will be posted on the City's webpage.

The following individuals submitted comments via email regarding the Proposed Operating and Capital Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and are included as attachments to these minutes:

Jason Fawcett, no address provided, representing self.

Jessica Rockwell, 2019 Meade Parkway, Development Coordinator, Western Tidewater Free Clinic, 2019 Meade Parkway.

Patricia Cobb, 114 Niblick Circle, representing self.

Cheryl Gainer, no address provided, representing self.

Maria Lawson-Davenport, 303 Silver Poplar Court, representing self.

"Omm Mck", no address provided, representing self.

Carol Stoecker, 9394 Rivershore Drive, representing self.

John Wass, 1630 Holly Point Lane, representing self.

City Manager Roberts advised City Council that there was a technical issue with the transmission of the City Council meeting via the webstream, City Council recessed at 2:21 p.m. and reconvened at 2:53 p.m.

Hearing no additional comments, the public hearing was closed.

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Finance Director Hansen resumed the summation of the background information as printed in the official agenda. City Manager Roberts addressed the feasibility of the possible delay in the implementation of the proposed increase in the refuse fee for six months. He added that he has spoken with City Treasurer Ronald Williams about the possibility of a payment plan program for real estate tax collection relief. He concluded with presenting the following resolution for City Council's consideration – a resolution to encourage compassionate real estate tax collections due on June 5, 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic; to direct the City Manager to make certain amendments to the proposed Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Operating and Capital Budget; and develop a utility bill relief program.

Council Member Duman opined about the feasibility of waiving the interest and penalties for the non-payment of real estate taxes for 60 days. He also opined about the possibility of the extension of payment for meals taxes for 60 days.

Members of City Council opined about the proposed resolution.

Mayor Johnson called for a future work session regarding the Utility Fund and the Information Technology Fund.

Vice Mayor Bennett moved to approve the proposed resolution, as presented. The motion failed to receive a second.

Council Member Duman moved to amend the proposed resolution to include the extension of payment of meals taxes for the months of April and May. The motion failed to receive a second.

Mayor Johnson called on City Attorney Holland to provide information about the legality of the extension of payment of meals taxes. City Attorney Holland explained that there is discussion around the Commonwealth regarding this matter. She added that the early consensus is that the meals taxes do not belong to the individual restaurants, which are to pass revenue through the customer to the locality.

Vice Mayor Bennett, on a motion seconded by Council Member Fawcett, moved to approve the resolution, as presented, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Mayor L. Johnson, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Duman, Fawcett, Goldberg, T. Johnson, Milteer and Ward	8
NAYS:	None	0

**A RESOLUTION TO ENCOURAGE COMPASSIONATE REAL ESTATE TAX COLLECTIONS DUE ON JUNE 5, 2020, DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC; TO DIRECT THE CITY MANAGER TO MAKE CERTAIN AMENDMENTS TO THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET; AND DEVELOP A UTILITY BILL RELIEF PROGRAM.**

**Public Hearing** - A public hearing to receive public comment and a resolution to adopt the Fiscal Year 2020-2025 Consolidated Plan and the 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan for the City of Suffolk Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) and the Western Tidewater Home Consortium (HOME)

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Planning and Community Development Director David Hainley supplied a report of the background information as printed in the official agenda.

Mayor Johnson reviewed the instructions and process for the submission of public comment regarding the Fiscal Year 2020-2025 Consolidated Plan and the 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan for the City of Suffolk Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) and the Western Tidewater Home Consortium (HOME) during the emergency electronic meeting.

Hearing no speakers, the public hearing was closed.

Council Member Milteer, on a motion seconded by Council Member Goldberg, moved to approve the resolution, as presented, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Mayor L. Johnson, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Duman, Fawcett, Goldberg, T. Johnson, Milteer and Ward	8
NAYS:	None	0

**A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE FISCAL YEAR 2020-2025 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND THE 2020-2021 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF SUFFOLK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG) AND THE WESTERN TIDEWATER HOME CONSORTIUM (HOME)**

**Ordinance** - An ordinance to accept and appropriate COVID-19 relief funding from the Federal Transit Administration for Suffolk Transit

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Public Works Director Louis Hansen provided a summary of the background information as printed in the official agenda.

Referring to the presentation, Council Member Duman called for clarification about the potential eligible expenditures, as it relates to the proposed ordinance. Public Works Director Hansen replied that while the funding has been allocated, currently there is not a definitive determination about the possible expenditures.

Referring to the presentation, Vice Mayor Bennett queried about the feasibility of using the funding to compensate for the loss of revenue in fares. Public Works Director Hansen stated that the funding cannot replace the lost fare revenue, but the monies can be used for normal expenditures.

Vice Mayor Bennett, on a motion seconded by Council Member Fawcett, moved to approve the ordinance, as presented, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Mayor L. Johnson, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Duman, Fawcett, Goldberg, T. Johnson, Milteer and Ward	8
NAYS:	None	0

**AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDING FROM THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION FOR SUFFOLK TRANSIT**

**Ordinance** - An ordinance to accept and appropriate funds from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation for Suffolk Transit COVID-19 Response

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Public Works Director Hansen offered a report on the background information as printed in the official agenda.

Council Member Johnson, on a motion seconded by Council Member Ward, moved to approve the ordinance, as presented, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Mayor L. Johnson, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Duman, Fawcett, Goldberg, T. Johnson, Milteer and Ward	8
NAYS:	None	0

**AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE FUNDS FROM THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FOR SUFFOLK TRANSIT COVID-19 RESPONSE**

**Ordinance** - An ordinance to amend and re-ordain the Adopted Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Fee Schedule for the City of Suffolk, Virginia to temporarily waive transit fares during the State of Emergency

Utilizing a Power Point presentation, Public Works Director Hansen gave a review of the background information as printed in the official agenda.

Council Member Fawcett, on a motion seconded by Council Member Duman, moved to approve the ordinance, as presented, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Mayor L. Johnson, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Duman, Fawcett, Goldberg, T. Johnson, Milteer and Ward	8
NAYS:	None	0

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND RE-ORDAIN THE ADOPTED FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE CITY OF SUFFOLK, VIRGINIA TO TEMPORARILY WAIVE TRANSIT FARES DURING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY**

**Coronavirus Update** - The City Manager or designee will provide an update related to COVID-19

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Deputy Fire Chief Brian Spicer, Economic Development Director Kevin Hughes and Finance Director Hansen gave a summation of the above referenced item.

Mayor Johnson queried about the locations for mask disinfections. Deputy Fire Chief Spicer indicated that he was aware of those facilities in Newport News or Hampton, but access to those facilities is not available for the general public, only localities.

Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Economic Development Director Hughes and Finance Director Hansen provided supplementary information.

Mayor Johnson announced that the City Council will have an electronic or regular meeting on the regularly scheduled City Council meeting date of May 20, 2020, at 7:00 p.m., unless cancelled. The decision of the type of meeting will be governed by the state of the local emergency or any federal or state order. Notice of the meeting will be provided to the public as soon as practical. Instructions on how citizens may participate in scheduled public hearings for electronic meetings will be provided in the public notice of the electronic meeting

Council Member Fawcett, on a motion seconded by Council Member Goldberg, moved to adjourn, by the following vote:

AYES:	Mayor L. Johnson, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Duman, Fawcett, Goldberg, T. Johnson, Milteer and Ward	8
NAYS:	None	0

There being no further business to come before City Council, the regular meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Teste: \_\_\_\_\_  
Erika S. Dawley, MMC, City Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Linda T. Johnson, Mayor

APPROVED: AUGUST 5, 2020