

Work Session of the Suffolk City Council was held in the City Council Chamber, 442 West Washington Street, on Wednesday, January 5, 2022, 4:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Council Members -

Michael D. Duman, Mayor, presiding

Leroy Bennett, Vice Mayor

Shelley Butler Barlow

Roger W. Fawcett

Donald Z. Goldberg

Timothy J. Johnson

Lue R. Ward, Jr.

LeOtis L. Williams

Erika S. Dawley, City Clerk

William E. Hutchings, Jr., City Attorney

Albert S. Moor, City Manager

**ABSENT**

None

**UPDATE ON 2021 REDISTRICTING**

City Attorney Hutchings introduced Robert Loftin, McGuire Woods, LLP, the City's redistricting consultants. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Loftin gave an update about the above referenced item.

Referring to the presentation, Council Member Goldberg inquired about the timeline regarding the completion of the redistricting process. City Attorney Hutchings reported that the redistricting process needs to be completed as soon as possible.

Referring to the presentation, Council Member Fawcett called for clarification about the numeration of the proposals. Mr. Loftin stated that proposal number one is map number one and proposal number two is map number two.

Members of City Council opined about the proposed maps as presented.

Council Member Ward inquired about the borough with the smallest percent of minority voters in 2011. Mr. Loftin advised that he did not have that information.

Mayor Duman sought clarification about the next steps that would be required by City Council at this time, should City Council not be prepared to take action on any of the proposed maps. City Attorney Hutchings said that Mr. Loftin works for the City Council, therefore, in order for him to receive direction about the preparation of alternative maps, the City Council would need to vote on a motion.

Council Member Ward moved to that City Council refrain from voting on map number one or map number two and direct Mr. Loftin to present alternative redistricting maps. The motion failed to receive a second. Mayor Duman announced that City Council needs to address scheduling a public hearing about the proposed redistricting maps. He added that that no final decisions regarding any of the proposed maps were under consideration at this time. Mayor Duman outlined the following motion for Council Member Ward's consideration – a motion to direct Mr. Loftin to prepare a third redistricting map for City Council's consideration.

Mayor Duman queried about the feasibility of receiving another redistricting map. Mr. Loftin advised that was a feasible option.

Council Member Williams asked about the possibility of including all of the street names, should another redistricting map be prepared. Mr. Loftin replied in the affirmative.

Council Member Ward, on a motion seconded by Council Member Williams, moved to refrain from voting on map number one or map number two and direct Mr. Loftin to present additional alternative redistricting maps.

Referring to the presentation, Council Member Goldberg requested about the legal defensibility of both map number one and map number two. Mr. Loftin reported that both maps are legally defensible and would require approval from the Office of the Attorney General.

Mr. Loftin asked Council Member Ward if he had an additional redistricting map. Council Member Ward indicated that he was unsure if it was legally permissible to provide a redistricting map. Mayor Duman outlined the following motion for Council Member Ward's consideration – a motion to direct Mr. Loftin to prepare a third redistricting map for City Council's consideration.

Council Member Johnson opined about the feasibility of preparing a third map within the parameters as outlined by City Council. Mr. Loftin advised that a third map could be prepared, but it is doubtful that it would result in many changes from map number one and map number two.

Council Member Fawcett queried about the relocation of incumbents, should a third map be prepared for City Council's consideration. Mr. Loftin stated that incumbents would not be relocated if a third map was prepared for City Council's consideration.

City Clerk Dawley called for clarification of the motion. Mayor Duman stated that Council Member Ward, on an amended motion seconded by Council Member Williams, moved to direct Mr. Loftin to prepare a third redistricting map for City Council's consideration. City Attorney Hutchings stated that in order for the City to adopt a redistricting plan the City Code requires that the City advertise the changes for two weeks in a newspaper and other places to include a map and the written descriptions of each election district for review in the Office of the City Clerk for public review before City Council can take a vote on any map. He concluded that after that two week period, City Council would have to conduct a public hearing on all maps and then vote on the final map, all within the timeline of the end February 2022

Council Member Ward, on an amended motion seconded by Council Member Williams, moved to direct Mr. Loftin to prepare a third redistricting map for City Council’s consideration, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Mayor Duman, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Butler Barlow Fawcett, Johnson, Ward and Williams	7
NAYS:	Council Member Goldberg	1

Council Member Fawcett clarified that he voted in opposition. City Clerk Dawley restated that the motion to direct Mr. Loftin to prepare a third redistricting map for City Council’s consideration was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Mayor Duman, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Butler Barlow Johnson, Ward and Williams	6
NAYS:	Council Members Fawcett and Goldberg	2

**CLOSED MEETING**

City Clerk Dawley presented the Closed Meeting motion for City Council’s consideration:

1. Pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711(A)(8) and (A)(1), the consultation with legal counsel employed by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the legal advice of such counsel, and the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for appointment and the assignment, appointment, and performance of specific public officers or appointees of the City, specifically the appointments as shown on the attached list for vacancies or term expirations for the Clean Community Commission, Early Childhood Development Commission, Economic Development Authority of the City of Suffolk, Fine Arts Commission, Historic Landmarks Commission, Human Services Advisory Board, Local Board of Building Code Appeals, Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, Sister Cities Commission, The Planning Council, Tidewater Youth Services and Western Tidewater Community Service Board; and
  
2. Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(8), consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, specifically regarding proposed redistricting plans.

Council Member Williams, on a motion seconded by Vice Mayor Bennett, moved that City Council convene in a closed meeting for the above referenced purposes, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Mayor Duman, Vice Mayor Bennett, and Council Members Butler Barlow Fawcett, Goldberg, Johnson, Ward and Williams	8
NAYS:	None	0

City Council convened in Closed Meeting at 4:54 p.m. The Closed Meeting concluded at 4:55 p.m.

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

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michael D. Duman, Mayor

APPROVED: JULY 6, 2022