

MINUTES OF THE JOINT RETREAT OF THE
NEWPORT NEWS CITY COUNCIL AND THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

Mayor Phillip Jones and EDA Chair Howard Hoege brought the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on October 3, 2024, in the Riverside Board Room, 701 Town Center Drive, 10th Floor, Newport News, Virginia.

Those EDA Board members present were:

Howard H. Hoege III, Chair
Cathy T. Williams
Faye P. Gargiulo
Jonathan P. Skinner
R.C. Miller
Alan Archer, City Manager, ex-officio
Florence G. Kingston, Secretary/Treasurer, ex-officio

Absent:

Alonzo R. Bell, Jr., Excused
Jameka R. Johnson, Excused

Legal Counsel:

Raymond H. Suttle, Jr.

City Council Members present:

Phillip D. Jones, Mayor
Curtis D. Bethany III
John R. Eley III
Marcellus L. Harris III, D. Div
Cleon M. Long, P.E.
Tina L. Vick
Dr. Patricia P. Woodbury

EDA Staff:

Joy E. Robison, Assistant Secretary
Christopher A. Morello, Assistant Director
Derek E. Perry, Assistant Director

Also present:

Ralph “Bo” Clayton, Assistant City Manager for Public Safety & Operations
Ginger Blount-Moore, Assistant City Manager for Community & Wellbeing
Robert Pealo, City Attorney
Mabel Washington Jenkins, City Clerk
David Freeman, Chief of Management Services
Eoghan Miller, Chief Strategy Officer
Sheila McAllister, Director of Planning
Virginia Lovell, Director of Finance
Lisa Cipriano, Director of Budget & Evaluation
Craig Gallant, Director of Engineering
Cleder Jones, Director of Communications
Joshua Janney, Reporter, Virginia Media

At 9:30 a.m., Mayor Phillip Jones welcomed all who were gathered for the retreat and thanked the City Council members, EDA Board members and staff who had made it possible. Mayor Jones stated the main goal of the day was to strengthen the connection between Council and EDA so all could work toward fulfilling a unified vision for the City’s growth and development.

Howard Hoege, serving as the facilitator, asked the group to inventory the assets on which the City’s economy and community are built so that both public bodies are operating from a common understanding of the excellent reasons that businesses and families should locate, enjoy and remain in Newport News. Assets listed included the city’s diverse inhabitants and neighborhoods; cultural assets such as the Mariner’s Museum, Virginia Living Museum, Ferguson Center and many others; the City’s rich history rooted in shipbuilding and its vast waterfront and waterways; it’s abundance of green spaces and parks; plentiful healthcare and educational institutions; and strong mix of business and industry ranging from Newport News Shipbuilding to Jefferson Lab.

The group acknowledged that promoting, growing and reinforcing these assets would help the City thrive with an excellent quality of life for its residents and grow civic engagement. Meaningful recent accomplishments were enumerated such as the All-American City designation by the National Civic League, the opening of the new transportation center, and increased attendance at the City Council meetings held in the northern and central areas of the City.

A variety of challenges and areas for improvement were also discussed including improving the K-12 outcomes for students, better coordination with the Newport News School Board

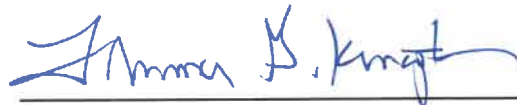
and with Hampton City Council, optimizing the use of the airport, promoting sustainability and environmental justice, and better supporting the City's SWAM businesses, entrepreneurs and broader business and development community. Council members expressed a desire to be more engaged in the opportunities the EDA is pursuing, and EDA Board members expressed a desire to work in partnership and collaboration with Council to implement the City's strategic priorities.

The group discussed how economic investments being made in each District of the City need to be promoted as success stories so that citizens can be excited about the progress being made. The City, the EDA, Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority, along with private sector partners, have been developing housing, amenities, businesses and training and job opportunities. Council members agreed that although they each push for improvements for their own Districts, they were all inspired and encouraged by the great things happening in the City as a whole.

A presentation by Doug Smith, President and CEO of the Hampton Roads Alliance focused on the strategic opportunities that can be seized upon as a region to bring businesses and jobs to Hampton Roads. Mrs. Kingston followed up on the regional discussion noting that the Alliance represents the region well and is an advocate for the region's and City's priorities and assets.

There was discussion about the viability of moving City offices to the City Center central business district, with members expressing the need for city services to be more accessible to citizens. Mrs. Kingston shared about early concepts of the potential expansion of City Center that could be revived to take advantage of the synergies now happening at Jefferson Lab with its new \$300 million High Performance Data Facility and the opening of Tech Center's Building II and the Drillfield.

Mayor Jones and City Council members committed to future joint meetings with the EDA, Newport News School Board and other entities to ensure better alignment around strategic priorities and supporting positive outcomes in the City. Both Council and Board members expressed enthusiasm about the retreat's discussions and outcomes.



Florence G. Kingston
Secretary/Treasurer