

A Joint Work Session of the Chesapeake City Council and the Chesapeake Legislative Delegation was held November 1, 2007 at 7:56 a.m., at the Chesapeake Conference Center.

Present: Council Member Bryan L. Collins
Mayor Dalton S. Edge (arrived at 8:00 a.m.)
Council Member Clifton E. Hayes, Jr.
Vice Mayor Dwight M. Parker (excused at 8:30 a.m.)
Council Member Patricia Pritchard Willis

Absent: Council Member Rebecca C. W. Adams (excused)
Council Member John M. de Triquet (excused)
Council Member Alan P. Krasnoff (excused)
Council Member Ella P. Ward (excused)

Present from Administration: City Manager William E. Harrell, City Attorney Ronald Hallman, Deputy City Manager Wanda Barnard-Bailey, City Clerk Dolores Moore, Budget Director Betty Meyer, Assistant to the City Manager Mary Ann Saunders, Assistant to the City Manager Anna D'Antonio, and other staff members.

Also Present: Senator Harry Blevins, Senator Yvonne Miller, Delegate John Cosgrove, Delegate Lionell Spruill, and Delegate Algie Howell, Jr. Also present, Sandy Richardson representing Delegate Terri Suit and Christie Craig, Legislative Assistant to Delegate John Cosgrove.

TOPIC OF DISCUSSION: Review of the City of Chesapeake's 2008 Legislative Package

In the absence of the Mayor, Vice Mayor Parker called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

The invocation was offered by Delegate Algie Howell, Jr.

Mayor Edge arrived and welcomed all present before initiating roundtable introductions of everyone present. Mayor Edge recognized City Manager Harrell for comments.

City Manager Harrell asked Assistant to the City Manager Anna D'Antonio to review the City's 2008 Legislative Package.

Ms. D'Antonio briefly discussed the Initiatives contained within the City's Legislative package.

November 1, 2007

Delegate Spruill asked for clarification of Initiative #2 - Recreation/Community Centers and Libraries – Added to Those Places Where Persons Convicted of Certain Offences May be Prohibited. Ms. D'Antonio provided information to Delegate Spruill.

Delegate Cosgrove expressed concern with the requested implementation date of July 1, 2008 and suggested that the date should be changed. He also expressed concerns with the number of individuals already on the offenders' list.

Council Member Hayes stated his reservations with the denial of business licenses sought in Initiative #3 – To Amend Appropriate State Laws to Provide Uniform Authority for Limiting Local Government Services to Illegal Immigrants. City Attorney Hallman responded to Mr. Hayes' concerns.

There was additional discussion on the proposed Initiative #3 between City Council Members Willis and Hayes, Delegate Spruill and City Attorney Hallman concerning the denial of services, licenses and privileges for illegal immigrants contained in the language of the item.

Delegate Cosgrove questioned the City Council's agreement as a body on the initiative; Mayor Edge responded to Delegate Cosgrove's questions.

Additional dialogue ensued among Council Members and legislative representatives on the issue, with Senator Blevins pointing out that the same questions would be raised during discussion by the General Assembly in the upcoming session.

Delegate Spruill inquired about the amount of funding being sought by the City in Initiative #4 – Bridge Funding. City Manager Harrell advised that the figure would be provided to the Delegation members.

Delegate Spruill asked about the savings or costs to localities of Initiative #5 – Classification of Energy-Efficient Buildings for Tax Purposes. Ms. D'Antonio stated that while localities already have the ability to tax certain energy-efficient buildings at a rate lower than that of the general class of real property, the current legislation passed in 2007 is so broad that the City is requesting a better definition for energy-efficient buildings. City Manager Harrell added that the City wants to see the State regulations tightened up so localities can weigh whether or not to participate in the tax incentive program.

Discussion moved to the City's Policy Positions contained in the 2008 Legislative Package.

Delegate Spruill requested an explanation of the Payday Lending Policy Position. Ms. D'Antonio stated that the City was urging a State-wide cap on the annual interest rate for consumer loans made in Virginia, as currently allowed, to protect citizens from exploitation.

November 1, 2007

Delegate Cosgrove inquired about the Policy Position on State Funding for the Chesapeake Adult Drug Court stating that when the legislation was passed, it was with the understanding that the Circuit Court would absorb the costs of the Drug Court. Assistant to the City Manager Mary Ann Saunders stated that the funding was needed for drug testing and staff, and that the State Supreme Court had applied to the State for a grant to cover the non-funded Courts (Chesapeake being one), but did not receive the funds.

Delegate Cosgrove asked that the information be provided to the Delegation members; Ms. Saunders advised that she would send out an updated report.

Delegate Spruill stated that it was his understanding that the Drug Courts were to be self-sustaining by the Court. Ms. Saunders advised that without the grant funds, it was unlikely that the Drug Court could survive without a designated revenue stream.

Mayor Edge advised that funding and support was needed for Tidewater Community College's Chesapeake Campus, adding that the City felt that the Chesapeake Campus had been neglected by the State. Delegate Spruill asked if the school had come before the General Assembly for funding. Delegate Howell stated that he would look at that.

There was additional discussion between Mayor Edge, Delegates Cosgrove and Spruill, and Council Member Hayes on the funding issue for the Chesapeake Campus of Tidewater Community College.

Council Member Willis told the Delegation Members that she planned to present an item to ban smoking in restaurants and bars in the City to the City Council in the next few weeks for inclusion in the City's Legislative Package. She wanted the Delegation Members to be aware of the possible addition to the package.

Council Member Hayes added that, as one of the Economic Development Liaisons, feedback he had received from the business community was that this type of ban should be a State-wide action.

Delegate Cosgrove stated that there needed to be a comprehensive approach to define a restaurant and a bar; that type of definition was not currently in the State Code. He added that it was unlikely that an outright State-wide smoking ban would happen. He suggested that a regional initiative on the issue should be presented to the General Assembly.

Council Member Willis stated that she would talk with Virginia Beach and Norfolk about that type of approach.

Mayor Edge thanked the Delegation members for attending and sharing their comments with City Council. He adjourned the Joint Work Session at 8:58 a.m.

/dam