

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL JOINT MEETING  
OF THE NEWPORT NEWS CITY COUNCIL  
AND THE NEWPORT NEWS SCHOOL BOARD  
HELD IN THE BANQUET ROOM  
DOWNING-GROSS CULTURAL ARTS CENTER  
2410 WICKHAM AVENUE  
September 10, 2019  
4:30 P.M.**

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PRESENT: David H. Jenkins; McKinley L. Price, DDS; Sharon P. Scott, MPA; Tina L. Vick; Dr. Patricia P. Woodbury; Saundra N. Cherry, D. Min.; and Marcellus L. Harris III-----7

ABSENT: None-----0

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Eley; Marvin L. Harris; Gary B. Hunter; Shelly Simonds; and Lisa Surles-Law-----5

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. George Parker, III; Cynthia Rohlf; Collins Owens; Mabel Washington Jenkins; Ralph Clayton; Alan Archer; David Freeman; Lynn Spratley; Leonard Wallin; Mary Lou Rouseau; Tiffany Moore-Buffaloe; Brian Nichols; Lisa Cipriano; Cory Cloud; Constantinos Velissarios; Maria Abilar; Keith Ferguson; Keith Webb; Venerria Thomas; Elaine Johnson; Darlene Bradberry; Rashard Wright; Tracy Brooks; Catina Bullard-Clark; Patrick Finneran; John McMillan; Billie Hart; Stephanie Hautz; Michelle Price; Angela Rhett; Nancy Sweat; Joseph Ellis; Felicia Barnett; Florence Kingston; Matthew Johnson; Eoghan Miller; Chief Steve Drew; Assistant Chief Michael Grinstead; Officer Brandon Maynard; Zina Middleton; Lora Graham; Joye Thompkins; Jane Hammond; and Josh Reyes

**Call to Order**

Mayor McKinley Price had called the Council Work Session of the Newport News City Council to order earlier at 3:00 p.m. He welcomed the members of the School Board and thanked the City Council and School Board for the opportunity to meet.

Mr. Gary Hunter, Chair, Newport News School Board, called the Special Joint Meeting of the Newport News School Board (and Newport News City Council) to order, and asked for a roll call. Ms. Tiffany Moore-Buffaloe announced a quorum. He thanked the members of the City Council and School Board and for the willingness to provide an opportunity to meet. The members of the School Board were appreciative of the opportunity for further discussion and collaboration, and believed that the children and families in the community deserved support and leadership. He was encouraged whenever the opportunity arose to discuss and resolve any issues that impacted the success of the Newport News Public Schools (NNPS).

Chairman Hunter introduced Dr. George Parker, Superintendent, Newport News Public Schools (NNPS). Dr. Parker thanked members of the City Council for the opportunity to meet jointly with the School Board. He advised that the School Board would make a presentation of the NNPS general capital needs. This was as a result of a request from City leadership prior to approval of the NNPS Capital Improvements Budget (CIP).

### **Brief on the Schools' Capital Needs**

Dr. Parker introduced Mr. Keith Webb, Executive Director, Plant Services, NNPS, who was recognized as the National School Plant Manager. The presentation was distributed to those in attendance (A copy of the presentation is attached and made a part of these minutes).

Mr. Webb shared details on the state of the NNPS Capital needs, which would shed light on what might come up. Mr. Webb shared a picture of 1960 science labs and a picture of an updated science lab. Other comparisons were made of Magruder Elementary School and the upgraded Magruder Elementary/Discovery STEM Academy, which showed the influence of money on capital projects.

Mr. Webb asked, Why Capital Investment Matters? Research from Pennsylvania State University in 2017 indicated the importance of school facilities on improving student outcomes. Facility conditions had an impact on the students, health, behavior, ability to learn, and growth in achievement. Research showed that there was also an impact on teachers; i.e., recruitment, retention, commitment, and effort.

Mr. Webb further indicated the impact of the facilities as follows: acoustics/noise, air quality, lighting, property temperature and control of temperature, as well as classroom size and space. Conditions impacted the air quality, lighting, temperature, and acoustics in a building. In 2019, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) did a study on indoor air quality and found that children were susceptible to less than ideal situations inside of buildings. The HVAC systems reduced the level of pollutants. Good physical conditions in a school with adequate ventilations helped reduce absenteeism, as well as, improved test scores.

Potential air quality problems could lead to mold. Mold could cause allergic reactions and asthma attacks. Mold grew on any organic surface if enough moisture and oxygen were available. Mold could deteriorate building materials and lead to health problems for students and staff. Taking action to address mold and moisture problems protected against indoor air quality.

The National Council on School Facilities found many of the same in 2016. School Facilities affect health and performance: (1) Ventilation rates impact attendance, speed to complete tasks, respiratory illness; (2) Adequate lighting and good acoustics help students remain alert, hear teacher; and (3) Poor facilities associated with student truancy and higher rates of suspension.

Proper maintenance extends operational efficiency and expected lifespan of facilities.

### **Brief on the Schools' Capital Needs Continued**

In 2012-2013, the average age of a public school in the United States was 44 years. In Newport News, the average age was 47 years. Most building systems, components, and equipment did not last that long. During a building's life, districts had to upgrade and or replace all components – roofs, windows, doors, boilers, chiller, and ventilation systems; as well as plumbing and electrical systems.

Older schools built prior to the 1980s contained building materials known to be hazardous to human health; i.e. carbon monoxide, single-paned windows, air conditioning systems that did not introduce enough outside air and asbestos. Fresh air standards for ventilation had changed since that time. HVAC systems and the controls had improved.

Significant drivers for facilities alterations included new requirements for special education and physical accessibility, expansion of early childhood education, integration of technology for instruction, class-size reduction and heightened safety and security concerns. Computers now bring their own problems – hot, increased consumption of electricity, too much light, as well as class size consideration. The State funded the reduction of class sizes to increase educational enhancement. Violence became more of a concern in today's world.

#### Building Systems Life Cycle:

Building – 50 years

Roofs – 20 years

Heating – 20 years

Cooling – 15 years

Mr. Webb pointed out that none of the above mentioned systems had a 50 year life. Within the 50 year period, significant improvements may be required to the building. Many of the systems did not die from neglect, but had aged, and it was time to be replaced.

When were NNPS built? The oldest of the NNPS buildings were constructed in the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's. A school built in 1970 would be approaching the 50-year mark, and there were a significant number of schools that were older. The average age of NNPS was 47 years. If a catastrophic event were to occur, and all of the buildings were destroyed, it would take over \$1 billion to rebuild each facility.

Upon examination of the most recent Capital Appropriations (FY 2015 - 2019), totaling \$57.3 million; forty-one percent (41%) was spent for HVAC systems or roof replacements. Thirty-six percent (36%) was spent on building the Discovery STEM Academy, and the balance on miscellaneous items such as buses (17% or \$10 million); bus radios (15% or \$0.5 million); casework (2% or \$1.0 million); and learning cottages (2% or \$0.9 million).

### **Brief on the Schools' Capital Needs Continued**

In an effort to help themselves and the City's funding position, NNPS found alternative ways to secure some of its capital needs; i.e. paying for a roof out of operational savings; replace HVAC systems in two schools through performance contracting; and another HVAC system through operational savings, totaling approximately \$8.1 million.

Mr. Webb showed a slide of the comparison of the age of all of the NNPS equipment. HVAC had a life cycle of 15 – 20 years; currently there were 20 schools that were below 15 years, and 22 schools above 15 years of age. There was a great deal of work needed to bring the NNPS equipment up to an acceptable level. Looking at the past five years of capital funded roof projects, NNPS funded HVAC systems in several schools, totaling \$20.9 million, with Jenkins and Hilton Elementary being the most recent. Hilton Elementary had begun, but Jenkins Elementary could not be started due to a lack of funding. He showed several slides of the conditions of the HVAC systems, to include the old boiler in Hilton Elementary School (a mass of rust); Heritage High School constructed of stainless steel, which could last longer, and operated at lower temperatures, placing less strain on the utility budget and the equipment. Councilwoman Woodbury asked the age of Heritage High School. Mr. Webb replied that Heritage High School was constructed in 1996.

Mr. Webb showed slides of HVAC systems from An Achievable Dream Middle School/High School; Richneck Elementary School, with rusted rooftop equipment; an unsightly air-handling unit held from the ceiling in the cafeteria at Richneck Elementary School; Saunders Elementary, still using convection heat; Warwick High School, with rusting rooftop equipment, allowing water to seep inside, to potentially damage the circuitry/electrical equipment; Gatewood PEEP and Warwick High Senior Center, located in the same building, which included window air conditioning units, which did not last as long as central air units; and Newsome Park Elementary School, whose heating system took up the entire side of a room, removing spaces where students could sit, and removed spaces where other activities could take place.

Regarding roofs, they were considered the most important part of the building. There were 34 schools with roofs below the 20-year life cycle, 44 schools had roofs at 20-years, and 12 schools had roofs above the 20-year life cycle. He shared that \$2.7 million was spent on roofs for the following schools: (1) Deer Park Elementary School; (2) Gatewood/Warwick High School Senior Center; and (3) Lee Hall Elementary School. Mr. Webb showed slides of the roofs. Mr. Webb displayed pictures of roofs from the following: (1) Richneck Elementary School, which had a largely black roof, which should be white, but all of the granules had washed away. Once granules were gone, the UV light from the sun killed the asphalt; (2) Woodside High School, which had a ballasted roof, which was covered with stone and were no longer allowed; (3) Saunders Elementary School, where the roof had expanded and cracked from heat and snow; (4) Epes Elementary School, which had similar concerns; (5) Denbigh High School, which had experienced consistent problems with the expansion joints; and (6) An Achievable Dream Academy, experienced standing water, which would degrade the roof.

### **Brief on the Schools' Capital Needs Continued**

When roofs did not do its job, the ceilings inside of the buildings began to show problems from too much water on the roof. Mr. Webb shared that pictures of ceilings in the following schools: (1) Woodside High School and (2) Sanford Elementary School, which showed rust from the amount of water on the roof.

Mr. Webb shared the following CIP projects for consideration: (1) Learning Cottage Replacement. An outside consultant was hired in 2017 to complete an extensive assessment of all of the NNPS properties. A recommendation was made that all of the trailers (learning cottages) be replaced, at an estimated total replacement cost of \$63 million; (2) Paving /Concrete Maintenance. NNPS had \$125,000 in its operating budget for pothole repairs, which would allow pothole repairs through the winter season; other needs would be addressed as funding permitted; (3) the Future of the Aviation Academy, which was unique to the area, in the State and Nation. The Aviation Academy was originally located in the old terminal building at Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport (NNWIA). The Aviation Academy inherited a building constructed in 1949. The lease showed that the NNWIA was responsible for a large ticket items, with the NNPS responsible for the day-to-day incidentals. A new lease was to be constructed. As consideration was made on how to allocate future CIP funding, the cost of a facility for a new Aviation Academy on property owned by the NNWIA, may total approximately \$20 million; and (4) Warwick High School. The facility condition assessment recommended renovation or replacement of the school, which was constructed in 1969, on 25.2 acres. The State recommended that most high schools sit on at least 100 acres. The softball fields were not located at the school, and tennis courts were spread over different areas, which impacted the NNPS' ability to use Warwick High School. Anything done would have to be done with constrained acreage, which would lead to a higher, rather than wider, building.

Mr. Webb shared pictures of the trailers (learning cottages). He advised that seven classrooms housed in the trailer located at Riverside Elementary School. When learning cottages were originally placed, they were located in a place with the best access to the building. Getting rid of the trailers would entail moving the trailers someplace else while building an addition. Mr. Webb indicated that trailers were not the most cost-effective structure. NNPS experienced leaky roofs, drafty and leaky windows and doors in their trailers, which often led to damage. He displayed pictures of NNPS trailers at the following: (1) Hines Middle School, which had roof leaks; (2) Riverside Elementary School, with massive leaks, and peeling paint. Often time the water is hidden; (3) Warwick High School where water was coming through the ceiling and passing through the wall cavity, and was not discovered until the floor rotted; and (4) a four classroom modular at Menchville High School, where the siding and windows leaked. The exterior siding had to be removed, the substring (plywood) replaced, and new windows installed. When those expenses were factored in, it was discovered that these were not the most economical solutions to the problems.

Regarding pavement and concrete, Mr. Webb shared the following pictures: (1) parking lot at Warwick High School that had a storm drain beneath the parking lot. The joints

**Brief on the Schools' Capital Needs Continued**

and pipes began to leak and the pavement had begun to collapse; (2) Deer Park Elementary School, where the pavement had collapsed due to excess standing snow and water; (3) Dozier Middle School, and (4) Carver Middle School, with alligator type concrete due to different types of pavement failure.

Regarding the pavement and concrete of the tennis courts, NNPS had replaced all but the courts at Warwick High School and Menchville High School. Mr. Webb noted the cost of replacement as follows:

Asphalt Play Court:	\$ 37,000
Each Elementary School was required to have two.	
Tennis Court:	\$156,000
School Parking Lots:	
Elementary Schools	\$225,000
High Schools	\$425,000

Mr. Webb advised that the \$125,000 would not cover the above projects.

Regarding work on the Aviation Academy, the roof was in need of repair. The roof structure was rusted so badly, a Structural Engineer was called. The chiller and the cooling system was replaced, which called for tearing off a large portion of the roof to make replacements to the bar joists, which turned into a lengthy process. Councilwoman Scott inquired whether the NNPS had assisted in the cost of repairs. Mr. Webb replied no.

Newport News School Board member, Ms. Shelly Simonds, questioned whether the NNPS was responsible for roof and the HVAC repair/replacement at the Aviation Academy. Mr. Webb responded that the NNPS was without a valid lease for the Aviation Academy. Under the old lease, the NNWIA would have taken responsibility for the costs, but under a new lease, the NNPS would be responsible. He shared pictures of the ceiling and HVAC system at the Aviation Academy, which showed extensive rust. He reminded where there were roof problems, there were ceiling problems. The classrooms in the Aviation Academy had signs of extensive roof leaks.

Mr. Webb advised that Warwick High School was in need of renovation or replacement within the next ten-year period. Within the next five years, he noted the following system replacements needed: (1) Roof replacement at \$4.6 million; (2) HVAC replacement at \$8.0 million; and (3) Gatewood/Senior Center HVAC at \$1.0 million, for a total of \$13.6 million. The aforementioned projects would be included in the NNPS CIP to be submitted to City Council. Until NNPS decided what to do with Warwick High School, money would continue to be spent.

**Brief on the Schools' Capital Needs Continued**

Mr. Webb shared the FY 2020-2024 School Board Capital Request which City Council recently acted on totaling \$139.4 million:

Huntington Middle School – New Building	\$50.0 million or 36%
Bus Replacement	\$13.9 million or 10%
Building Addition – Riverside	\$ 4.9 million or 4%
Ceiling Replacements	\$ 6.1 million or 4%
Paving	\$11.0 million or 8%
Roof Repair/Replacements	\$19.7 million or 14%
HVAC Replacements	\$31.8 million or 23%
Building Security	\$ 2.0 million or 1%

Councilwoman Cherry indicated, being that Woodside High School was the newest school, and questioned what lessons were learned. Mr. Webb replied the typical life cycle of a roof was 20 years; Woodside High School was 23 years old. He indicated that Woodside was not quite the newest school, given the Discovery STEM Academy. He advised that supplies and materials were different than those used in 1996 when Woodside High School was built. Oftentimes there was a 20, 25, and sometimes 30-year warranty with new roofs. Looking at the costs of replacing HVAC systems and roofing, and paving, in every school, Councilwoman Cherry inquired how to find a balance if the funding was not available. She questioned what were the top three priorities for the NNPS because the City did not have the funding to do everything that was presented. She added that everything presented possibly represented a problem for teaching the children. She stated that funding was impossible with the funding the City had. Councilwoman Cherry reiterated the City did not have \$1 million to invest in everything presented. She asked how long Mr. Webb had been in Building Maintenance. He responded that he had been in Building Maintenance for 27 years. Councilwoman Cherry questioned how the NNPS reached this point if the buildings were being taken care of.

Vice Mayor Vick encouraged the NNPS to work on finalizing a lease with the NNWIA for the HVAC system.

Dr. Parker reiterated that City Council had asked for a presentation on the capital needs of the NNPS and the status of its buildings. The projects/needs were not prioritized because the purpose of the presentation was only to inform City Council of the NNPS challenges to maintain many of their facilities. He advised a schedule was presented in November which prioritized the replacement cycle for NNPS roofs and HVAC systems. The condition of the pavement moved up to the highest priority. Priority was day-to-day based on system failures and life expectancy of the items presented. A 20-year roof with a 20-year warranty in a building constructed 23 years prior would begin to deteriorate, and was the NNPS responsibility because the warranty was no longer valid, and it moved up in terms of priority. Dr. Parker advised that the School Board did not plan to prioritize projects, but only to inform City Council on what the

### **Brief on the Schools' Capital Needs Continued**

deteriorating conditions were – most was due to use and wear. Roofs and HVAC systems wear out. They have a life expectancy, and the NNPS must replace those items.

Regarding Councilwoman Cherry's question, how did the NNPS reach this point. He advised, City Council and the School Board had spoken on numerous occasions about how the NNPS had to use operational dollars and capital dollars from the City to keep the facilities in an operational state, particularly when the money was not in the CIP budget, such as paving. The NNPS had to use a mix of both operational dollars and capital dollars. When there were 40 plus aging buildings in which were used to continue to educate children, the issues would continue to come up to be addressed due to normal wear and tear. Water and moisture were the NNPS large problems when it dealt with maintaining the facilities. They maintain the buildings in a state to ensure the children were receiving a good quality education in a healthy environment. A quality education and safety and health was on what the NNPS balanced their success. Dr. Parker added the NNPS had challenges that had to be prioritized.

Regarding the Aviation Academy, Dr. Parker indicated that NNPS was working with the NNWIA to work out a lease. In the original agreement with the NNWIA, NNPS paid for most of the minor capital items but have had to take care of some of the major facilities because of the fiscal management of the facility was not the greatest priority. The NNPS was doing the bulk of the work on the Aviation Academy to keep it up and operational out of its operational budget.

Councilwoman Scott, who served as Chair of the Peninsula Airport Commission (PAC), indicated that the lease had expired. The PAC's Real Estate Committee was reviewing the lease. She advised there was a lot going on with the building and she did not know the outcome of the lease, but it should reflect the best interest of the students. She indicated she should have an idea within a 30-day period. She believed it important that the Aviation Academy remain at the NNWIA, which was an important part of the community. The students enjoyed it. She recalled years prior, when there was discussion about moving the Aviation Academy from the NNWIA - parents showed up in droves to voice their opinions against moving the Academy.

Councilwoman Woodbury inquired about the old building. Mr. Webb replied the Aviation Academy was in the same building it always inhabited. City Manager Rohlf agreed with Councilwoman Scott that the Aviation Academy was a wonderful asset. She offered to meet with Dr. Parker regarding other funding sources that may be available. Councilwoman Scott advised that other localities had expressed an interest in being involved with the Aviation Academy, which opened other opportunities.

Mayor Price advised that discussion would shift to the Southeast Community Resource Area.



### **Update on Southeast Community Resource Area – Master Plan Study**

City Manager Rohlf advised that City Staff had done several months of research. The last part of this phase was to receive public input. She introduced Ms. Sheila McAllister, Director, Department of Planning, and Mr. Brian Pierce, Senior Planner, Department of Planning, to share the information they heard in the community.

Mr. Pierce advised that the Southeast Community Resource Area Master Plan Study (SECRA MPS) involved doing a study to investigate doing a master plan for the entire site. The site encompassed 35<sup>th</sup> Street to 28<sup>th</sup> Street, was bound by Wickham Avenue and Orcutt Avenue, and included the C. Waldo Scott Center for Hope, the Huntington Middle School site, the Doris Miller Community Center, and Pearl Bailey Library as a part of the study. The study analyzed the possibility of co-locating all of the programs on the seven-block site.

The vision for the area was that the Southeast Community Resource Area would be a 21<sup>st</sup> century one-stop shop that supported all residents, educated the mind, body, and spirit, and created a distinctive community gathering place.

The process began in the summer of 2019 and included the following three phases: (1) Stakeholder Interviews/Research; Seeking each facilities' needs and desires for the future. Facility plans were viewed, and interviews conducted with representatives from the facilities to seek each facilities' needs and desires for the future; (2) Open House. Two Open House Sessions were conducted with more than 118 participants; and (3) Community Survey. Seventy-nine participants completed a survey with over seventy percent (70%) from the 23607.

The following programs provided a list of design considerations:

C. Waldo Scott Center: Mission – to provide HOPE to families while developing the whole child. This was achieved by providing comprehensive services to educate and foster the growth and development of youth and families. Participants requested five (5) classrooms, office space, and a gym or recreation space. The participants shared they would love to be co-located within another building.

Pearl Bailey Library: Mission – to connect, inspire, enrich and empower. Participants requested an expanded library – increasing from 13,500 square feet to 20,000 square feet, to meet the demand of the community. In a previous study, the library found a need for additional meeting and study rooms, more defined teen space, an expanded children's area, and an interactive display and exhibit space. The program spaces were included in calculating the overall building footprint.

Huntington Middle School: Mission – to ensure that all students graduate college, career and citizen-ready. The Huntington Middle School design called for the existing building to be demolished and replaced with a space large enough for 600 children and provided

### **Update on Southeast Community Resource Area – Master Plan Study Continued**

space for contemplation, collaboration, communication and community, to include a community wing.

Doris Miller Community Center: Mission – to enhance the quality of life for the residents and visitors of Newport News through the provision of quality recreational services, programs, and facilities. The participants requested the building be increased to 52,800 square feet from 40,000 square feet, and desired more afterschool and teen spaces, computer labs, adult space for the Active Lifestyles Program, office space, storage space, and a gym.

Two (2) Open Houses were held, with 118 participants, and 120 comments. Participants were able to leave feedback, vote on preferences, and take a survey. Some of the comments sought to re-use Huntington Middle School's façade. The C. Waldo Scott Center for HOPE was listed as extremely important. Many were in support of a shared-use facility between the C. Waldo Scott Center, Doris Miller Community Center, and the Pearl Bailey Library. Some of the participants requested the NNPS be combined, and a few requested all of the resources to be located in separate buildings. Several options showed the closure of 30<sup>th</sup> Street in order to create a connected campus. Some were okay with the street closure, if there were walking trails installed.

Seventy-four percent (74%) desired more green space. Seventy percent (70%) were in favor of the adaptive re-use of the existing Huntington Middle School.

Mr. Pierce notes the following survey results, which had 70 respondents (sixty-nine percent of the respondents were over the age of fifty (50); ninety percent (90%) were identified as African-American, with seventy-two percent (72%) living in the 23607 zip code):

Most residents selected driving as their method of transportation, followed by walking.

Participants identified the following top three priorities to make the area more appealing: (1) additional recreational facilities; (2) walkable streets; and (3) a civic plaza.

Participants indicated being able to walk to a community center, having a closely located school, library, and community center as important.

Participants identified the top places to visit were a café, maker space, and a computer lab. Outdoor recreation facilities were least likely to be used.

Comments regarding the advantages/disadvantages of a shared-use facility: Ninety-two percent (92%) were in favor and twenty-three percent (23%) like the one-stop shop,

### **Update on Southeast Community Resource Area – Master Plan Study Continued**

with nine percent (9%) saying it provided greater access. Forty-one percent (41%) saw a disadvantage with the most common reason being safety, and fourteen percent (14%) using noise as the reason, and two percent (2%) were opposed due to over-crowding.

Common trends from the Study included the following:

Most residents supported a co-located Recreation Center, Youth Center, and Library on a walkable, shared campus. Other comments included: “Loved the share space and co-mingling,” “Add walking paths with benches,” and “a campus area should be conducive for people intermingling.”

Most residents wanted to keep the historic façade of Huntington Middle School and be located in a building separate from other community amenities.

The recommendation based on the survey results – hire an architecture firm to create a campus master plan, with a co-located library (Pearl Bailey), community center (Doris Miller), the C. Waldo Scott Family Center; and finally a walkable pathway to a new Huntington Middle School which retained the historic façade.

A copy of the Southeast Community Resource Area Master Plan Study is attached and made a part of these minutes.

School Board member, Ms. Lisa Surles-Law, referenced the map of the Site Plan, and observed that the Pearl Baily Library was not included, and questioned whether it would be a total relocation into the campus area. Mr. Pierce replied, yes. When looking at the space and how facilities would be laid out, there would be space for the Library with the closure of 30<sup>th</sup> Street, located at the site of the Doris Miller Community Center. The Recreation Center and the C. Waldo Scott Center would be re-located on the site as well. Mr. Pierce indicated, participants also requested one-story buildings for staffing concerns and accessibility. The facility would total approximately 75,000 square feet based on all of the requests and the closure of 30<sup>th</sup> Street.

School Board member, Mr. Marvin Harris, inquired what parameters were used in the survey, particularly with only 79 respondents.

Mr. Pierce advised that the survey was distributed at the Open House, was also made available on-line for two weeks, and was advertised via social-media. City Manager Rohlf indicated the survey was not intended to be a scientific survey. School Board member Harris indicated it seemed there would have been more respondents to a project of this magnitude. Vice Mayor Vick inquired for clarification whether the survey was only distributed at the Open House as opposed to being mailed to the residents. Mr. Pierce responded that the survey was not mailed, but was made available on-line, and distributed at the meeting as a paper copy. School Board member Surles-Law inquired whether school was closed at the time of the Open House when the

### **Update on Southeast Community Resource Area – Master Plan Study Continued**

surveys were distributed. Mr. Pierce responded, yes, school was out. The Open House was held during the summer. School Board member Harris inquired whether a concerted effort was made to reach a larger audience, businesses, parents, Ft. Eustis-Langley, etc., to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to participate in the survey.

Dr. Parker indicated the initial assessment of the façade in the front of the building showed some level of encouragement. He was familiar with attempts to match up 1930s brick work with existing brick – it could not be done. As a point of clarification, Dr. Parker stated the survey indicated the Huntington Alumni residents wanted to keep the façade, and inquired whether this was the existing façade. Mr. Pierce replied, at the Open House, participants were given an option between new construction, keeping the existing façade or brick, adaptive re-use, or complete renovation and 70% wanted to see the adaptive re-use of the building (Huntington). Dr. Parker reiterated the question – how did buildings reach this point? The re-use of a building that was old and would cause problems later because it was in a state of deterioration. He questioned whether the City assessed the façade, condition of the brick on the façade in front of the building to determine whether it was salvageable. Mayor Price indicated the responses were as a result of the community's response to the survey.

Dr. Parker inquired what was communicated to the residents. He advised, when an architect was hired, and the architect says the façade is not salvageable, contrary to what the survey says, but could do a rendering of the façade – he did not want the School Board to be the “bad guy” because the façade was not salvaged. It needed to be decided whether or not the brick could be used on new renovation.

Councilwoman Cherry advised that the presentation was showing the response from the community. She advised that had not been discussed in any of the meetings with the community that she had attended. No one had addressed the issue of keeping the existing façade. The determination had not been made.

Dr. Parker recalled discussion of the brick being repurposed, rather than using the the existing façade, since it was in a state of deterioration. He wanted the community to know, before moving forward, if something could not be done. The NNPs would have to hire an architect and did not want the School Board to have the reputation of not being supportive. Realistically, they needed to ensure the façade would not fall apart within a ten-year period on a new building. Councilwoman Cherry concurred, and did not want City Council to have the reputation of not being supportive of any recommendations coming forward.

School Board member, Ms. Shelly Simonds, inquired whether it would be possible to move the site of Huntington Middle School or possibly move the buildings around.

Mayor Price extended thanks to the NNPS for the presentation on the status of the facilities. He was appreciative of the photographs and the update, which would be instrumental to City Council in determining how to proceed.

### **Update on Southeast Community Resource Area – Master Plan Study Continued**

Regarding the update on the Southeast Community Master Plan, Mayor Price advised, this was a one-time opportunity to decide where the School was to be located, what was done with recreation, what was done with the facilities, and how it was done, etc. He indicated there would not be another opportunity. He urged everyone to give some thought, in a manner that, when something is done, it was done correctly. He realized that everyone was being pulled in different directions, about the immediate need for a school, the community stating their wishes and the existing conditions of the building. He suggested, since a committee was already established (City and School Advisory Committee), they should be given an opportunity to look at this; they may come back with a cohesive recommendation of both bodies that may be agreeable to everyone.

Mayor Price shared that he toured the old Whittaker Memorial Hospital (1003-28<sup>th</sup> Street), originally built in 1947, which was being renovated to construct Whitaker Place Apartments. He mentioned that some of the original tile was kept. It was a sound building. The architects had done a great job. He did not want to rule out the possibility of having experts examine what was possible, with options for what a new middle school could or could not be – whether a new façade, similar façade, or existing façade. He suggested the possibility of a new school versus considering the existing architectural design of Hines Middle School was considered. The community came to City Council with various options in an effort to offer help and to save money. The three options to be considered were (1) using a façade; (2) using existing plans; or (3) remodeling/re-purposing. He spoke with a construction worker that advised there was approximately \$22 million that was available if the City were able to re-purpose the building. Mayor Price urged the members of the City Council and the School Board to consider the options in an attempt to reach a cohesive agreement on an approach. He believed the following would have an effect should the decision be reached to build Huntington Middle School: (1) Do we build a traditional middle school; (2) If we moved the library, do we need a traditional library?; If a library were to be placed on the campus, do we need the same size library? Businesses had seen the plans of the possibilities and wanted to do a workforce development center. The YMCA had shown interest in the possibility of building facility. Perhaps the City could consider partnering with the YMCA to do a gymnasium. Mayor Price asked for more time and to allow the committee to bring others in to come in and talk about the various options, look at community space. There were organizations that wanted to assist with the students, but were charged to rent the school. Would a community facility be feasible? He conceptualized a facility that would be unique – not only build a school, but be transformational to the community. Mayor Price felt that both could be done if all of the options available were considered, and be open to partnering with businesses and organizations that would be of help. He reminded that the City was in the midst of a CNI Transformational Grant that would help the community. Compound the \$30 million from the HUD CNI Grant with others who wanted to help the community, an outstanding plan could be created that would benefit not only the NNPS, but would be transformational to the community. He asked City Council to allow a little time to bring this together in an effort to come up with a joint solution. The City and School Advisory Committee could share their ideas with an architect that attended Huntington and wanted to return to the community to do some things at a reduced cost.

### **Update on Southeast Community Resource Area – Master Plan Study Continued**

Councilwoman Scott inquired whether there was a member of the NNPS on the City and School Advisory Committee. Mayor Price replied yes, there was a member from the NNPS, Vice Mayor Tina Vick, Finance, the Superintendent, the Chairman of the School Board, and business leaders. His hope was to allow the committee to invite various professionals in to investigate and look at some of the options available. Mayor Price stated this could be something amazing and was too big of a deal to rush into.

School Board member Ms. Simonds stated there should not be a great deal of duplication, but felt that Huntington Middle School must have a good library facility. She could envision community spaces could be co-located. She believed there was potential with the Doris Miller Community Center possibly partnering with the YMCA. She definitely wanted a library and computer lab space in the middle school, perhaps in the direction of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), giving the students an opportunity to learn coding and computer programming.

School Board member, Mr. John Ealey, asked about a time-line and questioned what was next? This was an urgent matter. Other schools in the district, such as Hines Middle School, could not take on any more students. Parents, teachers, and students were waiting and wanted to know. He would hate for them to leave the district. He inquired when the community could be told a start date.

Vice Mayor Vick commended the Department of Planning for the presentation on the Southeast Community Resource Area Master Plan Study. She indicated there were citizens that felt the school should be separate. She was anxious about the funding. Would we have all of the dollars to accomplish everything at one time? She concurred with School Board member Mr. Eley about the urgency of moving forward, but felt the school should be kept separate for the safety of the students.

Mayor Price advised that he attended a conference in Columbia, South Carolina, and there was an Architectural Design Institute that was dedicated to schools and safety. He suggested extending an invitation to members from the Architectural Design Institute. They could share examples where there was co-mingling of different types of facilities.

School Board Chair, Mr. Gary Hunter, expressed his largest concern – he advised that all sixth, seventh, and eighth graders would be located into two middle schools in 2020. He received calls from teachers inquiring about the size of their classes. It began with sixth graders, who were separated. Mayor Price responded that it would be two years if the school were started today. He suggested looking at the big picture and to do the very best with the plan. School Board Chair Hunter advised there was a consensus to move forward. He wanted this to be done right. This was a priority as time was of the essence.

### **Update on Southeast Community Resource Area – Master Plan Study Continued**

Dr. Parker commended the Department of Planning for the presentation on the Southeast Community Resource Area Master Plan Study. He believed there were thoughtful questions asked of the community in the survey, some of which were different than those asked in the NNPS Design Study. He expressed appreciation for the information received and advised it would be helpful moving forward.

Dr. Parker indicated the genesis of when the work could be done would be as soon as agreement was reached on the campus design. There was a budget that had the general dollars for building a facility. Once NNPS knew what the campus design would be, the NNPS could move forward with the blessing of the City to start – hire an architect and to make preparations to design the school. It would take approximately one year to design the facility – which would also involve the community – to do the subsequent work of designing the school for construction, and wondered when they could receive the green light.

### **Closing Comments**

Dr. Parker extended thanks to Mayor Price for being a good facilitator of the City and School Advisory Committee.

Vice Mayor Vick questioned what the NNPS needed from the City. Mayor Price replied the NNPS needed to know the design and scope of the building so they could hire an architect. School Board member Ms. Surles-Law added the NNPS needed to know the location of the campus.

### **Adjourn**

Mayor Price thanked both the members of the School Board and City Council for their attendance and their input. Mayor Price adjourned the meeting of the Newport News City Council.

Chairman Hunter adjourned the meeting of the Newport News School Board.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS,  
ON MOTION, COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 6:01 P.M.

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Minutes of Special Joint Meeting of  
Newport News School Board/City Council  
September 10, 2019

*Mabel Washington Jenkins*

Mabel Washington Jenkins, MMC  
City Clerk

McKinley L. Price, DDS  
Mayor  
Presiding Officer

A true copy, teste: