**Present Council Members:** Mayor Robert Brown

Mayor Pro-Tem Beth Chafin

Councilman Kevin Brown

Councilman Marvin Love

**Others Present:** Perry McAlhaney, Police Chief

Lewis Ramsey, HFD Chief

1. **Call to Order:**

The Town of Hampton Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor Brown at 7:00 pm.

The meeting was held in the Hampton Town Hall Council Chambers.

1. **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:**

Mayor Brown gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **FOIA Compliance:**

Mayor Brown reported the Town is in compliance with the FOIA.

1. **Agenda Adoption:**

Councilwoman Chafin motioned to adopt the agenda. Councilman Brown seconded. All were in favor, motion passed.

1. **Approval of Minutes for February 21, 2023:**

Councilwoman Chafin motioned to approve the February 21, 2023, minutes as presented. Councilman Brown seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the February 21, 2023, meeting as presented. Councilman Love asked for clarification on the motion made by Councilman Brown in regards to the donation request from American Legion for Boys and Girls State. Councilman Brown explained his motion and confirmed that is was as stated in the minutes. Councilman Love also asked for clarification on the vote for the motion, it was confirmed that all were in favor except for him. Mayor Brown stated there was a motion and a second on the floor and called for a vote. All were in favor, motion passed.

1. **Public Hearing – Fiscal Year 2024 Budget:**

Councilman Brown motioned to go in to a public hearing period for the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. Councilman Love seconded. All were in favor, motion passed.

* Councilman Love asked Shannon to explain the business license listed for $890,000. Shannon explained that this is the projected collections amount for business licensing for the 2024 year. For 2023, it was slightly over this amount.
* Councilman Love asked if we are still considering a fire fee. Mayor Brown stated that it is one option to help balance the budget and would be open to any other ideas that council might have to help balance the budget.
* Councilman Love asked how long we have had the current audit firm, Shannon stated that she knows the town has used the same firm for at least the last 5 years. Councilman Love stated that it is good practice to change up the audit firm.
* Councilman Love asked if the reduction in the police department would be a permanent one; Mayor Brown stated that nothing has to be permanent but for now feels like it is necessary to balance the budget.
* Shannon stated that the interest income should be listed as $1187 and the Misc. Receipts should be listed as $131622. This was a typo and does not change the overall totals.
* A question from the audience was posed as to why the police department budget was still over $1million after cutting the two officer positions and how many employees in the department are officers. Shannon answered that all employees in the police department are sworn officers. It was then asked how many are salaried; Shannon answered that the only salaried position in the police department is the Chief. Mayor Brown explained that the total budget is composed of all expenses for the department, not just salary.
* Councilman Love asked Shannon to explain what makes up the Clerk of Court/Municipal Court budget amount of $224732. Shannon explained that it is made up of all salaries, health insurance benefits, supplies, retirement, phone and any other expenses needed to run the department. The only expense not split out to each department is the liability and worker’s compensation expense, it is all classified in the administration department. Councilman Love asked what amount of revenue is from the court department, Shannon explained that it is the amount listed as police fines, $168170.
* Councilman Love asked why raises have not been considered for all departments. Mayor Brown stated that council went with the recommended expenses by each department and when totaled, this put us at a loss of around $200k, adding raises in on top of that would create a bigger loss.
* Councilman Love questioned why there was a raise given in the administrative department last year. Mayor Brown explained that the building department was eliminated and that put a good many additional duties on the administrative department and the employees have taken on the extra duties with no complaints.

Councilwoman Chafin motioned to come out of the Public Hearing for the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. Councilman Brown seconded. All were in favor, motion passed.

1. **Public Comment:**

None at this time.

1. **Sharon White – Old Magnolia (Coca Cola Building)**

Sharon presented to council as the owner of Old Magnolia (Coca Cola building) on the corner of Lightsey St and Magnolia St West. She stated that she purchased this building in 2020 and has had many challenges with getting approvals for plans and permits. She initially met with the former Building Official for the Town. This project was later referred to the Hampton County building department when the Town Building Official resigned. SafeBuilt reviewed the plans provided to them at the request of the county building office. The Town of Hampton has since hired CC&I to provide building services for the Town. All plans and communications were forwarded to them for review. CC&I gave a list of items needed to complete a review for permit approval. She is requesting that the project be turned back over to SafeBuilt to handle all of the permitting and inspections once she has a contractor and a permit application has been made.

Shannon will reach out to CC&I, SafeBuilt and the Town attorney, if needed to see if this is an option.

1. **Elaine Faison – Old Ben Hazel Colored School Museum:**

Mrs. Faison was not in attendance. Mayor Brown stated that the Black History month event recently held there was a very good event and thanked all of those that had a part of it and attended.

1. **Old Business:**

* **2024 Budget Second Reading:**

Councilman Brown motioned to approve the 2023-2024 Budget, ordinance# 2023-01, with revenues of $3,172,937 and expenses of $3,172,937. Councilwoman Chafin seconded. All were in favor with the exception of Councilman Love. Motion passed.

1. **New Business:**

No new business at this time.

1. **Supervisors’ Report:**

* **Police Department:**

Chief McAlhaney reported that there has been an influx of fentanyl in the area and encourages everyone to be involved in the lives of the young people around you, educate them on the dangers and know what is going on in their lives. There were 2 overdoses within the county over the last week.

Mayor Brown asked about the sale of the older, unused vehicles, Chief McAlhaney stated he would check with the Major to see where they are with getting those sold.

Councilman Love asked about the effects of the 2 positions in the police department not being filled. Chief McAlhaney explained that other positions will have to pitch in when needed and that there will still be overtime when there are special events and when there is a situation (crime) that happens.

Chief McAlhaney stated that he would like to see each of the councilmembers work together and create a plan for where they would like to see the Town in the next 3 years. He believes that if Mayor, Council and employees all work together they can make things for the Town better.

Councilman Love stated that he feels like Mayor and Council need to be more involved with each other.

* **Fire Department**:

Chief Ramsey had no reports at this time.

* **Administration:**

Shannon Altman had nothing to report at this time.

1. **Mayor’s Report:**

* Mayor Brown opened it up for any Councilmember comments and discussion.
  + Councilwoman Chafin had nothing to report at this time.
  + Councilman Brown reported that the load of crush and run had been delivered to the soccer field and he has been in contact with the county to repair the hole in the road leading up to the parking lot.
  + Councilman Love had nothing to report at this time.
  + Councilman Mixson not in attendance.
* Mayor Brown reported:
  + There is a group from the leadership academy at the College of Charleston that is working with the MASC to help towns such as ours with special projects.
  + Beaver dams at Sanders Branch have been busted up and traps are out to catch the beavers.
  + The Hampton sign damaged by a car accident is being repaired and repainted.
  + Kimberly Mullinax did a walkthrough of all of the parks last week to see if there are any grants out there that can help with updates and/or repairs.
  + Gave each councilmember a packet of information to review for the next council meeting.

1. **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilwoman Chafin. Councilman Love seconded. All were in favor, motion passed. The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Brown at 7:57 pm.

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Mayor Robert J. Brown

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Councilman Kevin A. Brown

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Councilwoman Beth Chafin

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Councilman Marvin Love

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Councilman Travis L. Mixson

Shannon Altman (Recorder) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_