

**CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA**  
**Special Meeting of City Council**  
**Tuesday, May 17, 2022**

**1. Call to Order.**

The Special Meeting of City Council was called to order by Mayor Kochuba at 6:05 P.M.

**2. Roll Call.**

**Present:** Councilman Kenneth B. Frenier  
Councilman John E. Piotrowski  
Councilwoman Dr. Laura F. Poe  
Councilman Robert W. Wade  
Councilman John T. Wood  
Vice Mayor Elizabeth G. Luck  
Mayor T. Gregory Kochuba

**Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Mr. Douglas E. Smith, City Manager  
Mr. Hugh P. Fisher, III, City Attorney  
Mrs. Pamela B. Wallace, City Clerk

**3. Declarations of Personal Interest**

Declarations were read by Mrs. Luck, Dr. Poe, and Messrs. Piotrowski, Wade and Frenier.

**4. A Work Session on the following item:**

- A. Review and Discussion of the Proposed FY2022-2023 City of Colonial Heights Annual Operating Budget.**

Mayor Kochuba thanked staff and constitutional officers present for their efforts in assisting the City Manager with preparing the annual operating budget. Mayor Kochuba advised that the budget was predicated on the real estate rate of \$1.20 and asked if it was Council's opinion to leave the rate as currently set. Both Dr. Poe and Mrs. Luck expressed their opinions relative to leaving the rate at \$1.20 with the remaining Council members agreeing to the same. Continuing, Mayor Kochuba asked that Mr. Smith provide information supporting his recommendation for additional employee compensation.

Mr. Smith provided the following:

- City employees 5% cost of living adjustment (COLA)

**Special Meeting Minutes**

**May 17, 2022**

**Page 2**

- 5% cost of living adjustment for full-time employees who are not included in the Public Safety Step Plan effective July 1, 2022.
- General City Pay Plan salary ranges to be increased by 2%.
  
- **Additional pay adjustments for Public Works Maintenance staff (up to grade 14), Recreation and Parks Facilities/Groundskeeper positions, and Meter Reader staff.**
  - Following the 5% COLA, increase salary to proposed new minimum, if below, on updated pay plan.
  - Provide an additional base salary increase based on years of service for various positions.
  - Provide for targeted additional increases in limited cases as approved by the City Manager.
  
- **Explanation of Public Safety Step Plan**
  - Proposed for Police, Fire, Emergency Communications, and Animal Control personnel that are included in the updated Step Plan Salary Grade Structure.
  - The Step Plan is structured with 21 steps and provides the opportunity for staff to see an outline of future planned increases.

**The Proposed Step Plan provides for the following:**

- ✓ Employee salaries to be increased by a 2% cost of living increase
- ✓ Pay Plan starting salaries increased by 2%
- ✓ Employee salaries are then added to the step plan by placing salaries at the next highest step in the plan
- ✓ Employee salaries are then moved forward by one 2.5% step

**Estimated salary/benefit costs for the above adjustments are as follows:**

➤ City employees 5% COLA	\$492,000
➤ Additional pay adjustments for maintenance staff	\$ 45,000
➤ Public Safety Step Plan	\$466,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$1,003,000</b>

**Mr. Smith provided Council with a handout further explaining adjustments to cover costs associated with the proposed COLA and step plan.**

**Addressing Mrs. Luck's question relative to VRS increases, Mr. Smith advised that those adjustments were already factored into the budget. Continuing, Mr. Smith addressed Mrs. Luck's concern relative to the sustainability of the proposed increase by advising that the step increases would have to be addressed on a yearly basis.**

**Addressing Mr. Frenier's question relative to specific compensation for specific years of service, Mr. Smith advised compensation would be different for each employed based upon their salary. Continuing, Mr. Smith provided clarification relative to continuing career development.**

**Special Meeting Minutes**

**May 17, 2022**

**Page 3**

**Both Major Ruxer and Chief Hoover addressed Mr. Piotrowski's question relative to active recruitment, vacancies, and upcoming retirements within their departments. Additionally, Chief Hoover provided comments addressing Mr. Wade's question relative to the overall mood among the Fire and EMS staff.**

**It was the recommendation of Mayor Kochuba, with the approval of the budget and in an effort to be transparent, a detailed presentation be made of the proposed employee compensation and step plan.**

**There being no more comments relative to the proposed Employee Compensation Plan, Mayor Kochuba unofficially polled Council requesting their approval to move forward with staff's recommendation:**

**Poe – Yes**

**Frenier – Yes**

**Wade – Yes**

**Kochuba – Yes**

**Wood – Yes**

**Piotrowski – Yes**

**Luck – Yes**

**Council reviewed the budget by department with no major changes. Discussion items are as follows:**

- **Economic Development – Clarifying for Mayor Kochuba, Mr. Smith stated that the requested position was currently shared by Planning; however, the position would assist the Director in a variety of areas such as, but not limited to, development of the Economic Development website, Business Retention and Expansion Program, update and maintaining building and sites program, etc.**

**It was the opinion of both Mr. Wade and Mr. Wood that the position includes more than administrative duties.**

- **Public Safety**
  - **Fire/EMS – Addressing Mayor Kochuba's question relative to the increase in overtime rates, Chief Hoover advised the increase was due to FLSA and costs associated with covering additional shifts.**
- **Public Works**
  - **Street Paving – Mr. Smith clarified funding for the City's paving program with Mr. Flippen, Public Works Director, providing additional information relative to the City's current and future plan for the street pavement program.**
- **Culture and Recreation**

**Special Meeting Minutes**

**May 17, 2022**

**Page 4**

- Mr. Skalak addressed questions relative reserved funding for the roundabout and advised in the decrease in numbers of youth participants in recreation activities due to COVID. Mr. Wood stated he felt should the number continue to decline, funds utilized for these activities should be used else ware.
- **Library**
  - Mr. Hansen addressed questions relative to the hours of the library stating that evenings hours were Monday through Wednesday until 7:00 P.M.; however, the hours could be extended should Council feel it necessary. Continuing, Mr. Hansen advised that the necessity for using the library has changed over the years; specifically, where students are concerned.
- **Non-Departmental**
  - Addressing Dr. Poe's comments relative to allocations for Virginia State, Richard Bland, and John Tyler, Mr. Wood explained that funding was based upon the number of students per institution. Mr. Fisher added that the Commonwealth mandated funding for John Tyler.
  - Mr. Smith clarified the addition of new accounts in the Information Technology Services Fund were to accommodate funding for the purchase of additional computers and outside third-party assistance.

**There being no further discussion, Mr. Smith advised of the upcoming May 24, 2022 Budget Work Session at which time a public hearing would be held on the Annual Operating Budget.**

**7. Adjournment.**

**There being no further discussion, a motion to adjourn the Special Meeting was made by Mr. Wade, seconded by Dr. Poe, and carried unanimously on voice vote at 8:36 P.M.**

**APPROVED:**

---

**T. Gregory Kochuba, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

---

**Pamela B. Wallace, City Clerk**