

# TOWN AND GOWN COMMITTEE MEETING

12:00pm Tuesday – January 13, 2026  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE ROOM

## MINUTES

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### I. Call to Order:

Chair Tracy Staten welcomed members and guests and called the meeting to order at 12:10pm. She noted that a quorum was present.

### II. Roll Call:

Chair Staten asked the Clerk to call the roll:

Members Present: Tina Banks-Gray, Nicole Clark, Novelle Dickenson, Mary Fugere, Carolene Goodwyn-Harris, Kellie Goral, Eric Harrell, Jennifer Oliver, Richelle Payne, Leonard Sledge, Tracy Staten

Staff Present: Jenn Green, Angelique Shenk, Annette Oakley (City Manager's Office)

Annette Oakley announced she would be retiring from the City of Hampton at the end of the month and that Jenn Green, Executive Operations Manager, will be temporarily assisting the Town & Gown Committee.

### III. Approval of Minutes:

Chair Staten stated the Committee will need to approve the minutes from October, since there was no meeting in November and there was no quorum present in December. It was noted that the October (draft) minutes were previously distributed for review. She called for a motion to approve.

**ACTION:** Tina Banks-Gray made the motion to approve the October 14, 2025 minutes, and Eric Harrell seconded. A vote was taken and motion passed.

### IV. Key Updates:

- Hampton University (HU) – Richelle Payne reported on the following:
  - ❖ The HU President's Annual Report just came out and is in route to various organizations.
  - ❖ Leonard Sledge will be the keynote speaker at the upcoming MLK Observance event.
  - ❖ During Hampton's State of the City, an HU Lunch & Learn flyer was in the giveaway bag and she reminded all they are welcome to attend.
  - ❖ January 25 - Founders Day, along with America 250 – will be a joint celebration. The event will be held partly at the Fort Monroe museum. It will be a great day and all are invited to attend. Information is also on the HU website.
- Human Resources (HR) – Nicole Clark reported on the following items, which she will also email the information to the committee:
  - ❖ Career & Community Engagement at the HRCC on February 3, 2026 from 3:00-7:00pm. There will be on-site interviews and department representatives will be available to discuss City of Hampton operations.

- ❖ 2026 CHIP – There will be a kick-off for this year’s City of Hampton Internship Program (CHIP). They plan to have twenty students participate, as they want to maintain a quality experience. The program will launch the first week of February and hope to get traction at the Career Fair. She noted they are looking for ‘new’ participants, and want to open the experience to everyone.
- Conventions & Visitor Bureau (CVB) – Mary Fugere reported on the following:
  - ❖ January 15 - Hampton VA250 Community Planning event at Oozlefinch. They will air the series ‘American Revolution’ in the Barrell Room. The event is open to the public and will be aired every Thursday evening until the 250 Celebration.
  - ❖ January 19 - MLK–Hampton Heroes event honoring nine (9) former NASA employees; Judge Bonnie Jones; and Raymond Washington. The event will be at the HRCC at 1:00pm.
  - ❖ January 23 - Future Phoebus/Fort Monroe Coalition will hold a Community Conversation from 11:00am-1:00pm at St. Mary’s Star of the Sea School. There will be discussion on the relationship between Phoebus and Fort Monroe. There will also be another conversation in February.
  - ❖ The Freedom Dinner moved to May 29, 2026 to allow more time for greater public awareness.
  - ❖ The Aquaplex and Hampton Roads Convention Center (HRCC) is gearing up for many events; swim meets, conferences, tournaments, etc.
- Hampton City Schools (HCS):
  - ❖ Tina Banks-Gray reported on the following:
    - January 19 - All schools/offices are closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
    - Gave recognition to former Superintendent, Jeffrey Smith, who has been appointed as the Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth. She also mentioned that Dr. Smith will be the guest speaker at the upcoming CHUMS Breakfast.
  - ❖ Jennifer Oliver reported on the following:
    - Thanked Hampton University for giving out over sixty tickets to military families for the football game and tailgating. It was a great celebration; the families had a blast and it was very meaningful!
  - ❖ Kellie Goral reported on the following:
    - Provided fliers and mentioned the State released the following announcements:
      - ✓ On-Time Graduation Rate – 98.88%
      - ✓ Drop-out Rate – 0.2%

Kellie noted HCS is very proud of their students! She mentioned accreditation has now been revamped by the State to include accountability, which is based on resources, such as number of qualified teachers in the classroom. They will also measure student accountability by category, for example, distinguished, on track, off track, etc. She mentioned a federal indicator were added, which affects some schools that may have been on track, but may have gone off-track. Such schools are working on getting back on track and things are still on a good track. Kellie also mentioned the JLARC Study came out, which could change things again. Tina noted a presentation was given regarding this at the HCS School Board meeting, which is on the website and explains the information in more detail. Kellie also noted the new model looks at every student and that all four high schools made ‘distinguished’.
- Bryant & Stratton:
  - ❖ Eric Harrell reported on the following:
    - Classes start tomorrow and go through the end of April.

- Lady Bobcats sports is nationally recognized!
- ❖ Carolene Goodwyn-Harris reported on the following:
  - Bryant & Stratton are now offering Certifications Programs for Phlebotomy and a new Associates Degree path in Organizational Management. They are excited and the workforce will provide funds to assist. Both programs kick-off with this semester. Eric noted there will also be an Occupation Therapy Assistance field.
  - Bryant and Stratton Esports are national champs!
  - Bryant and Stratton will try to do a Career Fair and other events for career and educational opportunities.
- Economic Development – Leonard Sledge reported on the following:
  - ❖ Regarding the Hampton City Schools announcement by the State, Leonard noted the results speak for themselves! He mentioned that in the past, the performance of HCS was a negative resulting in people not visiting and living in Hampton, but that is no longer the case. He noted the accomplishments have involved many – a successful collective effort!
  - ❖ Commented on the HU Annual Report, which is great information. He congratulated Richelle Payne, as she was recognized in the report for her outstanding services.
  - ❖ Hampton recently celebrated the grand opening of Geno’s Cheesesteaks at Power Plant.
  - ❖ The former Boston Market will be Habit Burger and Grill (about 3-6 months out).
  - ❖ Yesterday HRT launched their MicroTransit, which is a ride share-like opportunity. This is great for under-utilized areas.
  - ❖ January 21 - Opening of Phenix Commerce Center (new Workforce Development Center).
  - ❖ Red Roof Inn - Working on demolition of the building.
  - ❖ The VPCC Mary T. Christian Auditorium has officially opened.
  - ❖ January 22 - Community Plan Checkpoint will be held at the HRCC at 6:00pm to get public input on the Strategic Plan. The keynote speaker will be Mitchell Silver. All are invited and encouraged to attend. Leonard also mentioned the draft plan will be given to City Council tomorrow. He provided a flyer (copy on file) for the Committee’s information and noted Angelique will also email the flyer.
  - ❖ Thanked HU for inviting him to speak at the Martin Luther King, Jr. event on Monday.

Eric Harrell reminded all that the Coliseum Central BID Annual Meeting and Award Dinner will be held on February 24, 2026 at the HRCC. He will get the exact time of the event to the committee.

Chair Staten mentioned she is with Fatherhood First as a Resource Coordinator. She provided information about the organization, stating there are several resources available and she would like to get with some of the Committee members to discuss further.

Richelle Payne mentioned HU alumni Wanda Sykes was recently on the Golden Globe Awards. She will be on the HU campus in February for the Wanda Sykes Live at Ogden Hall. Richelle will keep the Town & Gown Committee posted.

**V. Adjourn:** There being no further business, Chair Staten adjourned the meeting.

**VI. Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 10, 2026.