

Minutes of the January 6, 2025, Hampton City Council Budget Workshop

The Hampton City Council Budget Workshop was called to order at the Hampton City Council Chambers by Mayor Steve Birdsall at 6:01 p.m. The workshop was also offered electronically through Zoom and YouTube. Council members in attendance were Kevin Blanford, James Davies (arrived late), Jerre Grefe, Bill Hodge, Barry Lamos, and Patrick Palmer. Also present were City Manager Ron Dunt, Police Chief Mark Morrison, and Public Works Director Doug Tarr. Mayor Birdsall invited those present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag.

Mayor Birdsall offered time for public comment. There was none.

Public Works Director Tarr and Police Chief Morrison updated the council on nuisance properties. Mr. Davies arrived at 6:02 pm. Morrison and Tarr have several court orders and hope to complete some court-ordered cleanups next week. The council asked questions regarding properties they have observed around town.

City Manager Dunt presented a water tower lease renewal with Woolstock Mutual Telephone Corp. The only change to the agreement is an increase in rent from \$950 to \$1000 per month. The consensus of the council was to put this item on the Thursday, January 9 agenda.

City Manager Dunt presented a high-level view of FY2026 Budget Considerations. A result of State Legislature House File 718 is that Hampton's 3% growth puts our city in Tier 1. This means that potential revenue growth for the combined general fund levy is capped at 2% instead of 3%. Also, a top priority for this 2025 legislative session is property tax reform, which is expected to further restrict property tax abilities for cities and counties. Dunt encouraged the council to contact our local legislators and explain to them how their policies affect small, rural communities like Hampton. The council reviewed a draft Capital Improvements Plan and discussed budget plans for FY2026. Discussion will continue at further budget workshops.

The Workshop ended at 6:42 pm.