

Minutes of the February 10, 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 6:00 p.m. The workshop was also offered electronically through Zoom and YouTube. Council members in attendance were Kevin Blanford, James Davies, Bill Hodge, Jerre Grefe, Barry Lamos, and Patrick Palmer. Also, present were Police Chief Mark Morrison, Public Works Director Doug Tarr, and City Manager Ron Dunt. Mayor Birdsall invited those present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag.

Mayor Birdsall offered time for public comment. Seth Johnson addressed the council regarding the previous concerns he has brought to the council and his feeling of lack of response. Janette Acolt, Dale Schirmer, and Joslyn Stock addressed the council regarding concerns over what they felt were inappropriate racist remarks made by Council member Bill Hodge at the previous Budget Workshop. Council member Jerre Grefe read letters from citizens Robbi Stevens and Jan Johnson regarding Hodge's inappropriate remarks. Ms. Grefe also voiced her concerns with Hodge's statements and previous inappropriate comments to her.

Council reports given by Jim Davies, Kevin Blanford, Barry Lamos, Pat Palmer, Jerre Grefe, and Bill Hodge. Mayor report given by Mayor Steve Birdsall.

Doug Tarr reported that court last week for the property at 321 5th St SW ruled in the city's favor, and he is expecting to have the court order soon. Chief Morrison reported that the Police Department has issued 11 new notices and has 3 citations waiting to be served.

City Manager Dunt presented the FY26 levy to the council showing an increase of \$0.73, unchanged since the last budget workshop. The increase is due to the downtown old pharmacy rehabilitation project. Dunt also mentioned the proposed budget had been updated to reflect the change in library funding that was decided at the last budget workshop. The consensus of the council was to discuss options for Christmas light replacements at a future workshop.

The workshop concluded at 6:52 p.m.