

**HIGH POINT CITY COUNCIL  
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING  
December 8, 2014 – 6:00 P.M.  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – HIGH POINT MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**MINUTES**

**ROLL CALL and INVOCATION**

*Upon call of the roll, the following Council Members were present. Rev. Frank Thomas, Pastor, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, offered the invocation.*

**Present:** Mayor William S. Bencini, Jr., Mayor Pro Tem James C. Davis; and Council Members Cynthia Y. Davis (At-Large), Latimer Alexander (At-Large); Jeffrey Golden (Ward 1), Christopher Williams (Ward 2); Alyce Hill (Ward 3); Jay Wagner (Ward 4); and Jason Ewing (Ward 6)

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS OF OFFICE**

*The Oaths of Office were administered as follows:*

*The Honorable Judge Jan H. Samet administered Oaths of Office to:*

- Mayor William Snow Bencini, Jr. (Mayor) (wife and daughter stood with him)
- Council Member James C. Davis (Ward 5) (wife stood with him)
- Council Member Cynthia Y. Davis (At Large) (husband stood with her)
- Council Member Jason Patrick Ewing (Ward 6) (wife, son and daughter stood with him)

*The Honorable Judge John O. Craig, III administered Oaths of Office to:*

- Council Member Christopher Williams (Ward 2) (wife stood with him)
- Council Member Alyce Hill (Ward 3) (son stood with her)
- Council Member Jay W. Wagner (daughter and son stood with him)

*The Honorable Judge H. Thomas Jarrell, Jr. administered Oaths of Office to:*

- Council Member Latimer Alexander (At Large) (Capt. Steve Myers and Patrol Officer Brian Myers stood with him)
- Council Member Jeff Golden (Ward 1) (wife and daughter stood with him)

*Once the Oaths of Office were administered, the 2014-2017 Council took their seat on the dais.*

*[applause]*

## **Special Acknowledgements and Recognitions**

*At this time, the incoming Council Members were given an opportunity to share their comments and recognize special guests in the audience.*

**Mayor Bencini:** *The organizational meeting of the incoming Council will now come to order.*

*The first I'd like to do is to recognize some former High Point City Council Members that are in the audience tonight. I know that Mary Jarrell is here, not only was Mary a member of the City Council she was also a State Legislator. We also have with us tonight Lisa Stahlmann. I served with Lisa Stahlmann several years ago as well as David Wall. David Wall is with us tonight. Former Mayor Arnold Koonce was the Mayor when I first came to City Council in 1999, he's with us here tonight. And I believe Mary Lou Blakeney is still here too. I served with Mary--thank you Mary—on Council a few years ago. And we also have with us tonight Chairman of the Guilford County Commissioners Hank Henning. If we would, please give all these folks a big hand.[applause]*

*I was warned by Ken Smith, I saw him in the crowd a few minutes ago, to not speak too long and I'm going to make it short. I would like to first recognize a few folks in the crowd. You saw my wife Cathy and daughter Sarah. Without my family, this never would have been possible. My wife Cathy serves as my constant guide, best critic and is always with me in this journey, thank you Cathy.*

*I also have special family members here tonight. We have Cathy's mother and father who came to High Point in April of this year. We are so blessed to have them here close to us, Jo Corcoran and Blanca Corcoran.*

*Two very special guests that are here tonight with me, I've been doing this now since 1999 and I could not have done it at all without the patience, the understanding and the generosity of my two business partners, Shane Hoffman and Steve Hoffman. Guys, I've told you before, I'll tell you again, thank you so much for this opportunity.*

*I want to thank the 1400 plus employees with the City of High Point for bringing the City services to this City on a daily basis and all the staff that supports our employees. I want to thank the members of this incoming Council. Even at this stage I'm convinced, not just at the commitment of these members, but I'm equally convinced of your understanding that the success of the individual members on this Council will be measured almost entirely by our ability to work together. This is a great group of dedicated people who want to make a positive difference for our City. I am confident that we will do so. Thanks so much to everyone. Thank you.*

**Council Member Williams:** *Yes, I'd like thank everyone for coming out and showing your support here. I'd like to recognize my wife, of course, because she is like my biggest cheerleader, my champion, the best, I guess the best Campaign Manager in the City of High Point, according to the numbers. I'd like to thank.... I have a lot of family here that kind of stepped out, all my children and some of my grandkids were here. Believe it or not, I have grandkids. And my brothers and some sisters-in-law, so I had plenty of support from my families. There's too many of them to name, but you know who you are. I just want you to know I love you and I'm grateful for the opportunity. I couldn't do what I'm doing now without you.*

*I'd like to thank, of course, my constituents and all supporters who came through. And just like I had the best Campaign Manager in the City of High Point I had some of the best volunteers in the City of High Point. They really did everything properly and no matter what came against them they were there for us. So I'm grateful for that.*

*And I'd like to thank my God most of all for this opportunity to serve. I look forward to working with this Council. I may be the new kid on the block, but just the same, everyone has welcomed me so far and I'm very grateful for it. Thank you all.*

**Council Member Alexander:** *I would like to recognize my wife Robin Alexander and my sister-in-law Renee Tevepaugh. These two fantastic women I work with every day and we share a home over on Sweetbriar Road and I make a promise and a pledge to you that I will break, but I will try and keep, that whatever happens at this dais and whatever happens in government in the day I'll try and tone it down by the time I get home. And the next day I promise I've forgotten it altogether.*

*I also would like to thank again Captain Steve Meyers and Patrolman Brian Meyers. Brian is like a son to me. He was best friend of my son Latimer and when my son Latimer wasn't at our house he was the Meyers' home and when Brian wasn't at their house he was at our house. So he's truly a son and a brother with his father and I respect both of those men because we style our hair exactly the same.*

*I look forward to serving with this Council and look forward to working together with each one of you and I respect each of you and everything that you have done to get to this point. Thank you.*

**Council Member Golden:** *First things first, I want to thank everybody that has supported me over the last couple of years and continue to support me and allow me to do this once again. I want to give thanks especially to my wife who always supports me. Sometimes the things I do keep me away from the house a little more than I like to be, but I chose this charge and I accepted this charge and we both understand that.*

*I'd like to recognize my children who are in the house today, my son and my daughter. My mother-in-law is here. She's always been an inspiration to me. She keeps me encouraged when a lot of people wouldn't. My brothers are not here today, work calls. But I want to thank my brothers because my brothers were my campaign team. I was able to get work out of them every single day at no charge. So that's fiscal responsibility for you right there.*

*But again, I just thank everybody who has supported me and I pray you guys continue to support me and keep me encouraged and I'll try to do the best job I can for you guys. Thank you.*

**Council Member Wagner:** *First, I want to thank my family. Quite a few of them are here, My mother, Patsy, and my sister, Adrienne, and my wife, Leigh. My son, John, and daughter, Sarah. They are really the ones that endure the brunt of my service. They are the ones who listen to me when they don't want to hear me talk. They are the ones who pick me up when I'm feeling down and they're the ones who celebrate with me when good things happen. The celebrations are fun, but the rest of it is not very easy, so I want to thank them for all that they do.*

*And also to all of my friends out there as well who really do the same thing. There are so many of you who have supported me through this at times when I'm frustrated and at times when I'm happy and I want to thank all of you for doing that.*

*I want to thank those who have put their trust in me for giving me another term to try to make positive change for our City. I'm looking forward to the next three years and I'm hopeful that great things are going to happen. Again, I just want to thank everyone that's out there and everyone who believes in me and I hope that I can live up to that.*

**Council Member Hill:** *I'd like to start by thanking my family. With me today I have my son, Alex. My mom and stepfather, Betty and Rich Haggerty, and my brother, Chris. And with me in spirit are my husband, Eric, and son, Andrew, who are at a very, very important middle school basketball game.*

*I also see faces of a lot of other friends and supporters out there. Some of whom are still here, some of whom had to slip out. But the support's been overwhelming and I genuinely appreciate it and am*

*grateful for the opportunity to serve and look forward to working with all of you on Council and staff and our new Manager as well. Thank you.*

**Council Member Ewing:** *Thank you. I want to thank my wife for the patience that she's had for the last two years and knowing now that this is going to be three years. As many have said, our families bear the good times and the bad times and I'm very thankful for her. Especially having two younger children at home and taking time to be involved throughout the different city activities and trying to keep my ear to everything that is going on throughout High Point. That certainly puts a heavy burden on her so I'm very appreciative of her support of my service and of course the support of everyone in High Point. Thank you.*

**Council Member J. Davis:** *Thank you Mr. Mayor. I want to take an opportunity first of all to thank the outgoing members of Council. If it wasn't for Becky and Judy and Britt and Foster's guidance this last two years I don't know how as a new Council Member how we'd have made it through. So I just want to say thank you, first of all, to those people. It means a lot. There are some true mentors in that group and they know who they are.*

*It's also been my privilege and honor to serve as a member of City Council representing Ward 5. And I appreciate the opportunity to serve the next three years as a member of City Council for Ward 5.*

*It's also been my honor and privilege to serve as your Mayor for 89 days. I did the math. I appreciate the confidence and support of the Council who appointed me as Mayor. From staff, I couldn't have done it without staff, the citizens and our management team.*

*I'm truly humbled by the 51 voters who wrote my name in as Mayor. That was the greatest compliment you could give me and I really appreciate that.*

*I owe a great big debt of gratitude to my family, my wife. This is a difficult job. You've allowed me to fulfill my dreams and I appreciate you. Thank you.*

**Council Member C. Davis:** *Thank you Mayor. I'd like to thank first and foremost God for directing my footsteps because I never dreamed I'd be sitting on a dais in local government at any given point in my life's journey. I've been in High Point nearly 19, pushing 20 years, and I've been serving for 18 and that's what has gotten me to where I am now. And I'd like to thank my husband who went out and put my signs in behind guard rails, on curbs and places that you could all see my face. I'm asking to be your voice, so now I get that opportunity and I hope that I serve you well.*

*Know this, that any decision that I make, any vote that I cast, it's going to impact me and my household the same as it does yours. And for me, I take that very seriously. So I will be reading, I will be researching, and I will be prayerfully seeking the answers that I feel I need to make on your behalf. So for me this is a very serious position and I want to thank everyone that voted for me, everyone that held a sign, every one that passed out literature.*

*And I know that there will be times that you don't agree with the decisions that I may make, but I want to thank you in advance for understanding that we're not always going to agree. But I promise that I'll give you the very best that I have to offer this community in service.*

*I'd like to thank the outgoing Council Members that had enough confidence in me to put me on the Planning and Zoning Commission. First it was Mike Pugh and then it was Foster Douglas because they saw someone who was willing to serve with all that I had. And that's the promise and commitment that I give you. Thank you very much for this confidence and thank you very much for your support.*

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**140374      Election of Mayor Pro Tem**

Consideration of the election of Mayor Pro Tem. Term to be effective immediately and will expire on year from the date of election.

*Mayor Bencini opened the floor for nominations.*

**Council Member C. Davis moved to nominate Council Member J. Davis to serve as Mayor Pro Tem. Council Member Golden made a second to the motion.**

*Mayor Bencini asked if there were any additional nominations. There being none, the nominations were closed and Mayor Bencini called for a vote on the motion.*

**The motion to elect Council Member J. Davis to serve as Mayor Pro Tem passed unanimously. [9-0 vote]**

Elected Council Member J. Davis to serve as Mayor Pro Tem effective immediately; term will expire one year from the date of election.

**140375      Consideration of Appointments to Committees of City Council (2014-2017)**

Council is requested to confirm the appointments of respective Council Members to serve on the various Standing Committees of the City Council for the period of 2014-2017.

Approved the appointments of respective Council Members to serve on the various Standing Committees of the City Council for the period of 2014-2017. *[copy will be attached in Legistar as a permanent part of these proceedings].*

**A motion was made by Council Member Ewing, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Davis, to approve the Standing Committees of the High Point City Council (composition, meeting dates and times). The motion PASSED by a 9-0 unanimous vote.**

**140376      Confirmation of Appointments of Council Liaisons to the Various Boards and Commissions for the period of 2014-2017**

Council is requested to confirm the appointments of the respective Council Members to serve as liaisons to the various boards and commissions. Appointments to be effective immediately and liaisons will serve until the next organizational meeting of the Council in 2017, or until further action is taken by Council.

Approved the appointments of the Council Liaisons to the various boards and commissions for the period of 2014-2017. *[copy attached in Legistar as a permanent part of these proceedings]*

**A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Davis, seconded by Council Member Williams, to approve the appointments of respective Council Members to serve as liaisons to the various boards and commissions. The motion PASSED by a 9-0 unanimous vote.**

**140377      Ordinance Establishing Dates and Times for Official Sessions of the High Point City Council**

Consideration of an Ordinance Establishing Dates and Times for Official Sessions of the High Point City Council. Meeting schedule to be effective December 8, 2014.

Adopted Ordinance Establishing dates and times for Official Sessions of the High Point City Council.

**A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Davis, seconded by Council Member Ewing, that this Ordinance be adopted. The motion PASSED by a 9-0 unanimous vote.**

**Ordinance No. 7114/14-93  
Introduced 12/8/2014; Adopted 12/8/2014  
Ordinance Book, Volume XVIII, Page 145**

**RECESS- RECEPTION FOR THE 2014-2017 HIGH POINT CITY COUNCIL**

*The meeting was recessed at 6:45 p.m. for a reception that was held in the 2nd Floor Lobby of the High Point Municipal Building.*

*A reception honoring the outgoing Council Members Douglas, Smothers, Moore and Mendenhall, as well as former Mayor Bernita Sims was held from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Main Gallery of the High Point Theatre.*

**OTHER NEW BUSINESS****140378      Rules of Procedure- Remote Participation/Voting by Council Members**

Consideration of formal action that would prohibit a council member who is not physically in attendance at a meeting from voting on any issue that is being discussed.

*Council Member Alexander asked for Council's consideration regarding some procedural issues. He suggested those Council Members who could not be physically present during a meeting, should not be allowed to vote remotely. Mayor Bencini agreed and felt if a Council Member is not able to fully participate, they are not keeping with the purpose of the statute. It was noted that this would not prohibit a Council Member from participating in the discussion remotely, but they would not be allowed to vote on any issues remotely.*

**A motion was made by Council Member Alexander, seconded by Council Member Wagner, to add this provision to the Rules of Procedure that would prohibit a Council Member from voting remotely if they are not able to be physically present at a meeting. The motion PASSED by a 9-0 unanimous vote.**

**140379      Rules of Procedure- To Suspend the Rules**

Consideration of a revision to the Rules of Procedure, 6. Procedural Motions (3) To Suspend the Rules.

*Council Member Alexander shared that many times items are dropped on the dais that are not on the printed agenda and he suggested this no longer be allowed unless there is unanimous consent from Council or in the case of some type of emergency action that might be needed.*

*Council Member C. Davis asked if the intent was to do away with old or new business on the agenda and Council Member Alexander replied that it was not, but items to be considered should be on the printed agenda. He stressed this rule was important because it promotes transparency for the public, and the Council and the public need to know what is being considered beforehand. Council Member Alexander stated he had no problem with listening to something and consideration to put it on the agenda, but does find it difficult when someone drops something at the last minute that is not an urgent or emergency matter and wants immediate action from Council when Council is faced with inadequate information to make an informed decision.*

*Mayor Pro Tem Davis asked if these items should not be vetted through the committee structure first. Council Member Alexander felt it should where appropriate, and pointed out many things would go through the committee structure, but other items may come directly to the City Council. Mayor Pro Tem Davis then asked for clarification if this includes items that have been placed in committee numerous times and the time has come for a decision to be made. It was clarified that if an item has been referred to a committee and comes out of the committee, it would be on the printed agenda anyway. Council Member Ewing felt there was not anything that would prohibit Council from not taking final action on a matter and putting it in committee. Council Member Alexander reiterated that Council should listen to proposals, but as far as final action, Council should not be put on the spot and asked to vote on a matter without the opportunity to do some research and gather additional information.*

*Council Member Wagner stated he would definitely support this change because it is important in terms of Council's relationship with each other and how the city's business is conducted so that everybody on Council and the general public is aware of the actions that are being considered.*

*City Attorney JoAnne Carlyle pointed out the current Rules of Procedure permit the city manager and any council member to put an item on the agenda and mentioned sometimes when matters are added, printed addendums are prepared by the clerk and placed on the dais. Mayor Pro Tem Davis thought the rules state that the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, or any other Council Member could place items on the agenda. Mayor Bencini felt the procedure of having the city manager prepare the agenda with the opportunity for council members to place items on the agenda provided they meet the specified deadline should remain in place*

*Council Member Ewing expressed concerns regarding what would be deemed as an "emergency" and how it would be identified. Council Member C. Davis preferred it be a majority vote instead of a unanimous vote of Council. As a matter of compromise, Mayor Bencini suggested a two-thirds vote of Council. Council Member Alexander agreed to the two-thirds, as well as Council Member C. Davis.*

*Approved a revision to the Rules of Procedure that would not allow Council to suspend the rules to add items on the agenda for final action unless there is a two-thirds favorable vote from Council to do so.*

**A motion was made by Council Member Alexander, seconded by Council Member Wagner, to revise the current Rules of Procedure that would require a two-thirds vote from the City Council to suspend the rules to add items to the agenda for final action. The motion PASSED by a 9-0 unanimous vote.**

**140402      Rules of Procedure- Agenda**

Consideration of a revision to the current Rules of Procedure requiring Council Members to go through the Mayor to add an item to the Agenda. Should the Mayor not be available, then the Mayor Pro Tem.

*Note: Since discussion on this matter was mixed with matter # 140379 (above), please refer to that matter for specific comments made.*

*Approved the revision to the Rules of Procedure, Section 2. Agenda that would require any Council Member desiring to place a matter on the agenda to go through the Mayor and should the Mayor not be available, then it must go through the Mayor Pro Tem. As a point of clarification, it was noted that the same deadline would apply which requires the request to have an item placed on the Monday agenda to be received by the City Manager's office by the Tuesday prior to the meeting.*

**A motion was made by Council Member Wagner, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Davis, to revise the Rules of Procedure Section 2. Agenda first paragraph to read as follows: "The city manager shall prepare a proposed agenda for each meeting. Any council member may have an item placed on the proposed agenda. To place an item on the agenda, council members should go through the Mayor and should the Mayor not be available, then the Mayor Pro Tem." The motion PASSED by a 9-0 unanimous vote.**

**140380      Cell Phone Use During a Meeting**

Council Member Alexander is asking for Council's consideration of not allowing cell phone use during meetings.

*Council Member Alexander asked for Council's consideration in prohibiting cell phones in hand or on the dais during meetings to send a message to the public that Council is focused and listening to them and what is being said. Mayor Pro Tem Davis pointed out this has not been an issue with the prior Council. Mayor Bencini hoped this would not be an issue moving forward.*

**Council Member Alexander then made a motion to that effect. The motion died from the lack of a second.**

**CONSIDERATION OF SUSPENDING THE RULES TO ADD A MATTER TO THE AGENDA AT THE REQUEST OF DOROTHY DARR**

*At this time, Mayor Bencini mentioned that Dorothy Darr was in the audience and had something she would like to bring before Council. Mayor Pro Tem Davis questioned this based on the rules that were just passed and asked if it could even be considered. Mayor Bencini explained that Council could take a vote to suspend the rules and pointed out it would require a two-thirds vote to suspend the rules to add it to the agenda.*

*Ms. Darr apologized for having to bring this matter to Council when it is supposed to be a night of celebration, and proceeded to inform Council about an opportunity.....*

*Mayor Bencini asked Ms. Darr to hold any further comments until after the vote was taken on whether or not Council would be considering it.*

**Council Member Wagner moved to suspend the rules to hear Ms. Darr's request. Council Member Ewing made a second to the motion. The motion to suspend the rules received only five votes (six votes were required), so the motion failed.**



**Those voting in favor of the motion to suspend the rules were Wagner, Ewing, Hill, Golden and Williams.**

**Mayor Bencini, Mayor Pro Tem Davis, and Council Members Alexander, and Davis voted No.**

*Mayor Bencini advised Ms. Darr that the next Council Meeting would be held on Monday, December 15th and it could possibly be heard at that time.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m. upon motion duly made by Council Member Alexander and seconded by Council Member Ewing.

Respectfully Submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
William S. Bencini, Jr.

Attest:

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Lisa B. Vierling, MMC  
City Clerk