

PETERSBURG
ANTI-POVERTY COMMISSION
OFFICERS AND ADVISOR

ADVISOR: Councilwoman Treska Wilson-Smith

2016 – 2017

President: Ms. Gerry Rawlinson
Vice President: Ms. Michael Edwards
Secretary: Ms. Janell D. Sinclair

2018 – 2019

President: Mr. Michael Edwards
Vice President: Mrs. Wanda Taliferio
Secretary: Ms. Barbara Hoosier

2019 – 2020

President: Mr. Michael Edwards
Vice President: Dr. Rosezelia Weaver Roy
Secretary: Ms. Barbara Hoosier/Mr. Linwood Christian

2020

President: Dr. Rosezelia Weaver Roy
Vice President: Pastor Michael Shannon
Secretary: Linwood Christian/Ms. Keitoya Taylor

2015

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING ANTI-POVERTY COMMISSION

WHEREAS, The Petersburg City Council, by the authority vested in them, hereby creates the **Anti-Poverty Commission**; and

WHEREAS, under this authority, the **Anti-Poverty Commission** is hereby established to develop strategies to address poverty that have demonstrable results for increasing employment and educational attainment, improving transportation, and enhancing healthy communities for Petersburg residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Petersburg seeks to identify the root causes of poverty in the City and develop policies designed to address these causes; and

WHEREAS, according to the *US Census 2013 American Community Survey*, 26.7% of Petersburg residents are below the poverty threshold set by the Federal government compared to 11.3% average for the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the *US Census 2013 American Community Survey* reports the median household income for residents of the City of Petersburg as \$34,424, while the median household income for the Commonwealth of Virginia is \$63,907; and

WHEREAS, according to the *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, February 2015 data, the unemployment rate in the City of Petersburg is 10.1%, while the rate of unemployment for the Commonwealth is 4.7%;

WHEREAS, the City of Petersburg seeks to promote economic parity and social justice for all of the citizens and residents of Petersburg, Virginia;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Petersburg, Virginia, hereby sets forth to develop an **Anti-Poverty Commission**, and do hereby Order that:

The Commission shall, by way of illustration but not limitation, consist of the following work groups: Job Creation, Workforce Development/Education, Policy/Legislation, Healthy Communities, Research/Evaluation, and Transportation. The Commission will provide recommendations on strategies to address poverty. The Commission will identify strategies consistent with making Petersburg a Tier One City, and develop a report detailing its recommendations within twelve (12) months of the establishment of the Commission.

Resolution 4
1/20/15

Minutes of the Anti-poverty Commission Meeting

May 1, 2015

In attendance:

Councillor Wilson-Smith, Pamela Bingham, Duron Chavis, Nathan McKenzie, Atiba Muse, Dr. Cheryl G. Riggins, Rev. Michael Shannon, Daniel Todd.

The Anti-poverty Commission met on Friday, May 1, 2015 at the Petersburg Library, 12:00 PM. The meeting was called to order by Council Member Treska Wilson-Smith who noted that this was the first of three meetings scheduled during the month of May in preparation for a presentation to the City Council on June 2, 2015. The purpose of this meeting was to develop a mission statement. As reported from the last meeting, members in attendance presented identified areas of concern as poverty is defined. These included Population/Demographics and a Definition of Poverty. A discussion followed regarding potential ways to get support for the June City Council meeting. Topics included:

- possible speakers
- the need to invite the media,
- the possibility of inviting John Moeser, a researcher on housing
- faith based initiatives
- getting buy-in from other groups
- energy into solutions/bringing in jobs
- working with children who have been disenfranchised
- looking at what is working as well as what is not working
- Those in poverty: How do we get into their psyche

Comments offered:

We must have all those vested and on the same page.

In terms of change, it must be from the inside out

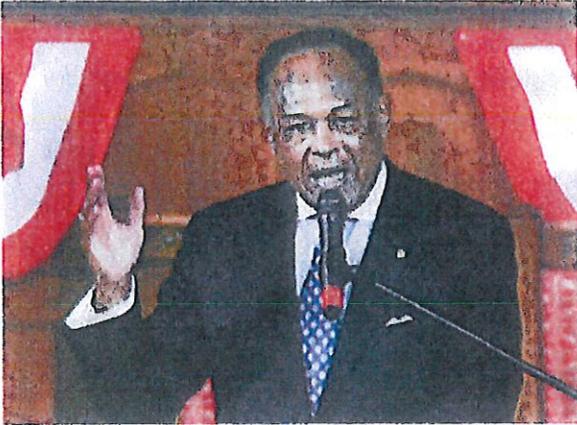
In order to effectively address council, developing friendships is essential

Do we want to change the image or do we want to change the reality?

Richmond's poverty commission finishes 'historic' report

BY ROBERT ZULLO

Richmond Times-Dispatch | Posted: Saturday, January 19, 2013 12:00 am



"The report rightly acknowledges that city government has limited resources and capacity to tackle this problem," Mayor Dwight Jones said in a statement.

Capping nearly two years of work, the Anti-Poverty Commission assembled by Mayor Dwight C. Jones said Friday that Richmond should battle inner-city poverty by improving transportation options, workforce development, job creation, education and legislation and policy initiatives, among other recommendations.

The commission was tasked with examining ways to tackle Richmond's 25 percent poverty rate and the array of consequences it imposes on the city.

Composed of dozens of people from academia, local and state government, community and faith groups and business leaders, among other organizations, the commission delivered its recommendations to the mayor in a 129-page report Friday.

"The report rightly acknowledges that city government has limited resources and capacity to tackle this problem," Jones said in a statement. "That's why the work of this commission has been so important in that this report can provide a roadmap for us to create a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy involving all stakeholders. I believe we can make a meaningful difference over time if we all work together."

John Moeser, a longtime Virginia Commonwealth University professor of urban studies and planning who is now a senior fellow at the University of Richmond's Bonner Center for Civic Engagement, said the report is a historic step toward addressing a crisis.

The second tier of recommendations, described as generally "lower-impact" initiatives "with lower political difficulty," include improving access to banking and financial literacy for the urban poor; alternatives to incarceration; living-wage ordinances; and youth initiatives.

The report also recommends creating a permanent, independent citizen commission to "monitor and evaluate progress of this agenda and provide research, advice and consultation to City Council and the mayoral administration."

City staff will develop a timeline "showing what can be done for the upcoming fiscal year, what recommendations are currently under way and what recommendations will take longer to implement," a city news release says. City Council Vice President Ellen F. Robertson, who served as chair of the commission, will present the report to the council Jan. 28.

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Recommendations of Report:

Recommendations of the Anti-Poverty Commission

- Investing in workforce development targeted toward low-skilled and long-term unemployed and underemployed residents, while integrating workforce development with economic development strategies.

- Recruiting or developing one or more major employers capable of creating hundreds of jobs accessible to underemployed Richmond residents.

- ✱ • Creating a regional rapid-transit system, so as to make thousands more jobs accessible to metropolitan Richmond residents by effective public transportation and to better link the regional economy together.

- Developing an effective educational pipeline that prepares Richmond Public Schools graduates for either college or the workforce.

- Achieving the redevelopment of much of the city's public housing without involuntarily displacing residents, with the aim of improving the physical and social environment of public housing residents.

Becky Brown · Top Commenter

Does all this Outsourcing seem like others are running Government by invite and political/special interest agendas?

Mike Tyler · Top Commenter · HS Math Teacher at New Town Public School

The City of Richmond is about as interested in preventing poverty as Donald Trump is about losing money.

Linda Moore

I commend the Mayor and the Anti-Poverty Commission for looking into this crisis. It is great to see this group of leaders from all levels of government, community and faith groups come together for this city. I am grateful to those who look to the people of Richmond, as fellow men and women who are needing help from their fellow city dwellers. Nobody should be made to feel like scum and undeserving of help, when it's not their fault to begin with. Times are tough and when 35% of the people are making under \$25,000, we need to help. Grateful for hearts that are full of compassion and understanding. Thank you Mayor. Thank you Commission. Thank you to all of those who care.

Steven P. Hanna · Top Commenter · Works at Sole practitioner

I agree that no one should be made to feel like scum because of their economic situation. However, people make choices. When a young girl with minimal job skills has 1 or more children out of wedlock, she has further sunk herself and her children into the swamp of poverty. That is a choice she has made and it is rampant in this area. When a young father abandons his child(ren), he has cast them into poverty and that is the choice he has made. Thus, these actions were not thrust upon them by some external mysterious force but are the free choices they have made. There are consequences to these choices. Also, many people in the area choose to get involved with dope and alcohol whichs utterly debilitates them. There are untold thousands of people in this area who have CHOSEN to shoot themselves in the foot over, and over, and over again. Sweeping this reality under the rug is not helpful to anyone.

Buddy Fowler · Top Commenter · Legislative Aide at VA House of Delegates

City works to tackle poverty with commission

By From Staff Reports

Posted Aug 2, 2015 at 4:50 PM

Updated Aug 2, 2015 at 4:50 PM

PETERSBURG - The City Council has taken a step toward improving quality of life in Petersburg by establishing the Anti-Poverty Commission.

Councilwoman Treska Wilson-Smith, Ward 1, said that Council will discuss the process of appointing commissioners, and the role of the group, on August 7, during its annual retreat in Smithfield. Council formally established the commission on July 7.

Petersburg's new commission comes after Richmond established its own Anti-Poverty Commission with a proclamation from the office of Mayor Dwight Jones on March 18, 2011.

According to the 2013 U.S. Census, 26.7 percent of Petersburg residents live below the federal poverty level, compared to 11.3 percent statewide. The Census also states that the median household income for Petersburg residents is \$34,424 and the median for Virginia residents is \$63,907.