

Newport News

Breakthrough Expectations

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With forty-eight hours until a planned team retreat—and just several days after a school shooting that rocked the City of Newport News, Virginia—of the many tumultuous questions now facing the new Mayor Phillip Jones, a seemingly more workaday one was this: should he still hold the team gathering scheduled for January 14, 2023?

Just after his November election, Jones knew he wanted to convene the seven-member city council (on which the mayor held a seat), the city manager and her deputies, the department heads, the city clerk, and the city attorney.ⁱ He'd hoped to introduce a new era of governing together. "I wanted everyone involved," said Jones. He considered running through a 30-60-90-day strategic plan and putting together a transition team to launch everyone into a productive term ahead.¹

Before long, intrigue swirled around the retreat's purpose. Jones heard rumors that he wanted to fire every department head (which wasn't in his purview; only the city manager could hire and fire her department heads). Tamer assumptions were also brewing. One senior city official said, "Anytime you have organizational transition, people are watching, people are listening. They wonder, 'Where will I fit into this? Where will my department fit into this?'"²

Separately, concerns were emerging about the content of the retreat. Jones was made aware that the city manager's office didn't see the need for a transition team, an idea Jones wanted to present there. After all, city staff still ran operations whether it was December or January, whether it was under a prior mayor or a new one. Jones reflected, "Nobody said, 'This retreat is a great idea, we love this.'"

As the day approached, Jones also got pushback on the logistics. Most councilmembers held other full-time jobs and some had young children. He'd heard several didn't want to spend eight hours at his gathering. Maybe it could be trimmed by half, they'd inquired, or maybe they could come late or leave early. Wanting to share best practices from his business school and consulting days, Jones was initially "envisioning bringing in a guest speaker, doing a Myers-Briggs test, and sharing a consultant-like PowerPoint to structure the discussion," he said. He was aware that some might perceive these activities to be cliché. He still thought there was value to be gained for team building.

With the city in crisis, and with the proposed retreat's lukewarm reception, maybe it was time to reschedule or rethink the gathering.

ⁱ The gathering of three or more councilmembers constituted a quorum, meaning that the public would be notified of the retreat and permitted to attend.

Phillip Jones

Phillip Jones's military parentage had forged his path to military leadership and to Newport News. He was the son of US Air Force colonels, born in Okinawa, Japan, on a US military base in 1989.³ For much of his childhood, his family lived in Newport News, while his parents were stationed at the nearby Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia. After high school, he accepted a nomination to attend the US Naval Academy as an undergraduate in the neighboring state of Maryland, and he graduated in 2012 with a degree in history. He went on to earn what one reporter called a "glittering resume,"⁴ serving for six years in the Marine Corps, completing two tours of duty as an infantry officer across several continents,⁵ and leading roughly 200 marines in peacekeeping and security missions.⁶ "I loved every single day of leading [them]," he said.⁷ "I was used to leading from the front."⁸

Jones's professional and educational pursuits had taken him away from Newport News by distance, but never in spirit. In 2019, he enrolled in a joint master's degree program in public policy and business at Harvard University, and he worked as a management consultant for *Fortune* 500 companies. "I had my 100-day plan for my city from the first day I arrived at graduate school," he quipped. He had promised himself that after his master's, he would return to the Virginia Peninsula, home to Newport News. "I knew the goal was, I'm going to finish Harvard and I'm going to come back in some capacity," he said.⁹

The time came sooner than he had anticipated. When the COVID-19 global pandemic hit in 2020 and graduate courses moved online, he returned to Newport News and completed his graduate degree remotely in 2021. Simultaneously, he dedicated himself to reconnecting with the city. He began attending as many community functions as he could to speak to residents and understand their perspectives.¹⁰ "I went to three or four Black churches every Sunday for months," he said.¹¹

Riding a wave of positive feedback he was receiving from the community and donors, Jones announced his candidacy for mayor on April 19, 2022.¹² ". . . [T]hings just happened that accelerated [my plans]—COVID accelerated it, [the incumbent] Mayor Price not running accelerated it, and just everything came together," he said.¹³ Jones, who was thirty-two at the time, had no political experience and was running against three city councilmembers: Sandra Cherry (then-vice mayor), David Jenkins, and Tina Vick. Virginia State Senator and former mayor of neighboring Hampton, Mamie Locke, recalled that when he told her he would run for mayor, ". . . at the time I told him he looked about 10."¹⁴ Yet, Jones believed his background would resonate with the 185,000-person city that was predominantly Black and held close ties to the military. With no political baggage to manage, Jones traveled the campaign trail lightly and diligently. "Nobody wore out more shoe leather during that campaign," said Alan Whitt, the dean of a local university and a former councilmember.¹⁵

Election night 2022 ushered in not only Jones as Newport News' mayor-elect (see Appendix 1 for mayoral election results), but also three new members to city council: Curtis Bethany, III; Cleon Long; and John Eley, III, who had previously served on the school board. (See Appendix 2 for 2023 city councilmembers.) Newport News' previous mayor, McKinley Price—who Assistant City Manager Bo Clayton called "tremendously well-respected"—had served for twelve years, while Price's predecessor had served for fourteen. Jones represented a shake-up.

Curtis told one reporter, “Before us, the average age of the council was 65 . . . Now, it’s about 40.”¹⁶ Between the outgoing mayor (Price, 73) and Jones, there was an age difference of forty years.

On a victorious election night, Jones vowed, “The first thing we are going to accomplish is we are going to . . . look at best practices from all cities across the country, so we can ensure that we can compete in a global economy. That plan is going to come out in the next two weeks or so.”¹⁷ He also planned to name a chief innovation officer; leverage his personal and professional networks in Washington DC to bring in federal money; and mend relations between city council and the school board, as they had ceased convening joint sessions.

The day after his election, a local news reporter asked Jones how he had spent his day. He replied, “. . . [T]he majority of today [was] calling new council members and setting up times to talk to current ones. I think unity is the most important thing, especially when we have so many new council members.”¹⁸

Jones also said the day after his election: “The way [the council is] split [across districts] . . . there could be different priorities per district, but at the end of the day, I want the council to work together.”¹⁹ He said his top priorities were mental health, public safety, prosecuting crime, and schools. He added that neighboring “Hampton City Schools are 100% accredited and Newport News Public Schools are not. Some could say that’s a school board issue, I disagree. As mayor, everything is under your mandate, and it’s [your job to] work hand-in-hand with them.”²⁰

Newport News

Newport News was long and thin, fronting the James River, which opened to the Chesapeake Bay, an estuary off the Atlantic Ocean. The city was a historic port town. Algonquin-speaking tribes had populated the area and Pocahontas’s father, called Chief Powhatan by colonists,ⁱⁱ had ruled the region.²¹ European settlers arrived by ship around 1607. Even in 2022, the largest employer was a shipbuilding company, while the third-largest was the city’s school system, the fourth-largest was the US Department of Defense, and the fifth-largest was the city itself.²²

Newport News had a council-manager system of government, so Mayor Jones held an at-large seat on city council, alongside two councilmembers from each of the south, central, and north districts. (See Appendix 3 for population by district and Appendix 4 for a map.) “Out of three Black mayors of Newport News, I’m the first not to grow up in the south district,” he said.

The mayor could set the agenda for meetings and had a seat on a regional board representing roughly 1.5 million people across seventeen local governments, including seven cities. “I thought the mayor had more power when I was running,” said Jones, “but the power of the mayor is—how do I put this—it’s really personality-based.” For example, he could choose to sit back with a laissez-faire style or could choose to have a strong voice at the table. “It’s not only dictated by codes, but also ‘This is how we’ve done things,’” he said. The council was responsible for appointing a city manager to helm operations.²³

ⁱⁱ Chief Powhatan’s proper name was Wahunsenaca; his daughter was nicknamed Pocahontas, meaning playful, but was born with the name Amonute and a more private name of Matoaka. (Source: “Pocahontas: Her Life and Legend,” National Park Service, September 4, 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/mvvpuyufe>, accessed October 2023.)

Jones's recollection was that often the mayor had quite a strong hand in picking the city manager. Cynthia Rohlf, who was the first woman to be city manager in Newport News, had held the indefinite appointment since 2017.²⁴ She and her team of 3,600 employees were responsible for managing day-to-day operations of the city's departments, such as police, fire, and public works. (See Appendix 5 for an organizational chart.) The city manager's office also managed communications, administered the city's contracts, and submitted the annual budget to council.

The seven-member school board was a separate entity responsible for the city's forty-one public schools serving nearly 27,000 students. In the 2022-2023 school year, fifteen schools were flagged as "accredited with conditions," meaning they were below the accepted levels in one or more of the indicators of academic achievement (as measured by tests in English, math, and science) and student engagement (e.g., chronic absenteeism and dropout rates).²⁵

Meanwhile, crime was also a challenge, and some had called the city "Bad News" for its gun violence. The city's website showed the highest murder rates in the north and south districts.²⁶ Jones said of the city, "There's sometimes a lack of hope here. It's a great place to live, but people have felt like they wake up in the morning, and whatever happens to them, so be it."

To Jones, one antidote to the lack of hope was to enliven the local economy, which he believed was due for a breakthrough. In 2022, the median household income in Newport News was estimated to be lower than the national average by nearly \$12,000 per year with a poverty rate over 4 percent higher than the US average.²⁷ Yet Jones knew the city also had a long history of achievements; it was home to the largest military shipbuilding company in the country and a US Energy Department research center that housed a world-renowned particle physics laboratory. In fact, the city had been trying to articulate this narrative: in November 2022, it had launched a new branding campaign called "Newport News: Built on Breakthroughs." Everywhere he went, Jones tried to remind people of the city's potential.

The Retreat

Jones's intuition was to organize a team retreat within the first few weeks of taking office: "That's what we did in the military—when there's a new change of leadership, you gather all your key leaders together, you try to build a team, the vision, and everyone has something they're good at. You try to sit in a room and figure it out. . . . What the Marine Corps taught me was that if you don't come in with a vision, then you just sort of get tossed around and eventually, you look back eight, nine months later, and you haven't really done anything."

The mayor had several goals for the retreat. "I wanted a chance for everyone to put egos aside," he said. In this environment, he wanted to: lay out his vision for the city; agree on how best to work together based on people's preferences and an established set of norms; hear the councilmembers' priorities; and formally introduce his plan for a transition team, which he called an "opportunity team" that would dissolve after six months.

Jones felt that part of the retreat could be run by outsiders. He tasked several graduate students to run the team-building portion,ⁱⁱⁱ in which individuals would get to know each other through a set of icebreakers and questions about interpersonal communication preferences.^{iv} The students would also present several examples of transition teams from cities around the country to help contextualize what Jones had in mind for the opportunity team. “I was planning to run some of the more heavy-handed, standard operating procedures discussion,” said Jones.

Thrust into the Role

As Jones planned a January gathering, his mayoralty was underway in ways positive and then tragic.

On December 16, 2022, before taking office, Jones, and a dozen other mayors, was invited to the White House to discuss city issues.²⁸ Reflecting on the meeting, Jones said, “We have a lot of great things . . . happening [in our city], but you have to sort of shape the narrative and make sure that the right people hear about it. . . . People are really excited about what’s happening in Newport News.”²⁹

On January 1, Jones’s official mayoral term commenced. He and the new councilmembers would take their oaths of office a week and a half later. (See Appendix 6 for a timeline.)

On Friday, January 6, the mayor had just returned from a run, when he saw he had a dozen missed calls and messages from City Manager Rohlf.³⁰ He knew something bad had happened—he wondered, *had the port been attacked? Had something at the shipyard exploded?* Rohlf soon told him what had transpired: a six-year-old had shot his teacher in their classroom. Jones immediately left for Richneck Elementary, the scene of the shooting, and called Councilman Bethany, who represented the north district where the school was located. He asked Bethany to come to the school with the other councilmembers—three would go to the hospital with the teacher, three would stay back with Jones.

When Jones arrived at Richneck in his car, police holding the perimeter refused to let him through—many didn’t know who he was.³¹ Jones parked about 800 meters away and returned on foot. He was able to connect with the police chief, and asked where he was needed. Amidst the chaos, the police chief asked him to speak with the children. “It was all very emotional—the kids had seen a lot of blood, there were helicopters in the air,” said Jones. He also talked to the school board and the other teachers. He and the police chief spoke with the parents who were agitated for not having been connected with their children yet. “We told them that no children had been injured,” he said, and that they couldn’t come in the building because the school needed to take time to account for all child dismissals. “That’s when people wanted to know, ‘Who’s that guy? Who’s that young guy?’” recalled Jones. “And someone said, ‘I think that’s the new mayor.’ They said, ‘That’s the Boy Mayor.’”^v

ⁱⁱⁱ The graduate students were from the Harvard Kennedy School’s Transition Term program, a fellowship that ran for several weeks in January to support to newly elected governors, mayors, and county executives as they assumed office.

^{iv} “Icebreakers” refer to activities or a series of questions designed to help people build rapport.

^v Barry DuVal, Newport News mayor in the 1990s at 31, was nicknamed “the Boy Mayor.” (Source: Jim Spencer, “Price Tag for Paris Air Show Travels A Royal Debacle,” *The Virginian Pilot*, June 18, 2002, <https://www.pilotonline.com/2002/06/18/price-tag-for-paris-air-show-travels-a-royal-debacle/>, accessed Sept. 2023.)

The school closed indefinitely as the community dealt with the aftermath. In the hours and days following the tragedy, Jones tried to support the school board, which was at the center of the storm. The city council and school board quickly agreed to jointly fund school safety measures, allocating \$760,000 for purchasing metal detectors and an additional \$1.5 million for enhancing other safety features for both school and city facilities. Shortly thereafter, the head of the school board announced that ninety new metal detectors would be spread among the schools, prioritizing their installation at Richneck Elementary School first.³²

At the same time, Jones noticed what he felt were subpar communications processes. The school board held a press conference about the shooting without looping in Jones, and he held a separate one. “There wasn’t a unity of command,” said Jones. “There were multiple voices speaking—the sheriff would talk, then the police chief, then I would, then the schoolboard. . . . we had city councilmembers doing CNN interviews. . . . The state was here, the feds were here.” He described it as having no clearinghouse for messaging, and questions arose about who was in charge.

In the wake of the crisis, he added a major agenda item to the retreat: he wanted to get across that “there’s one voice in this city, and even if it’s mine, it still goes through the communications department, so that they can vet it.” In his mind, the crisis was more of a reason to hold the retreat: “We have to codify internal communication, external communication, what is our press policy—basic things that I thought already should have had rules and procedures.”

Another item that Jones wanted to cover at the retreat was how the city and the school board should work together. Some had the impression that over the past decade, the city councilmembers and school board members would not speak to each other; at the state of the city address, the city had even stopped reserving seats for the school board. As Jones put it, “It was very, ‘you have the schools, we have the city, we are not the same.’” He wanted to move beyond that dynamic and have them see each other “as sister-brother boards.” Although Jones had not invited the school board to the retreat, he wanted to at least achieve buy-in from those present to get a joint meeting on the books.

On January 10, Jones and his fellow councilmembers were formally inaugurated. They quickly voted to elect one of Jones’s allies and newly-elected councilmember, Bethany, as vice mayor. Councilmember Patricia Woodbury was the sole dissenter. Jones told the local newspaper that day, “I’m really excited to work with this council. . . . We’re not always going to agree on everything, but we have an amazing council, we have an amazing staff.”³³

Ahead of the retreat, Jones sent the agenda out to key attendees for comment.³⁴ Clayton said later of the programming for the retreat, “Typically, if you were the new mayor, you would turn it over to the city manager and the staff. You’d say, ‘Provide us with what we need to know.’ This was different because the mayor served as the facilitator.” (See Appendix 7A for the retreat’s proposed agenda and 7B for select details.)

To Advance by Retreat?

Since the mayor was the only councilmember elected at-large,^{vi} Jones felt the duty to build consensus. “If you’re elected in the south district, you only care about the south, because they get you elected, and you don’t want to hear about development in the north, and vice-versa,” he explained. Several of the schools in the city needed to be rebuilt in the coming years, and “we’re going to have to make some tough choices,” he said. “In which district will we build the first one?”

Even amid a city reeling from crisis, Jones felt strongly that a retreat was the necessary first step in navigating the road ahead. “People are Googling Newport News and all you see is ‘six-year-old shoots his teacher.’ We have to have a retreat to fix the communication procedures. And just some basic team building,” he said. “We didn’t have a good team or a bad team. It just felt shaky—a lot of egos, a lot of personalities, including my own. I just wanted to level-set and bring everyone together, especially after the shooting.” He also wasn’t pleased that the council’s first vote of the term—to decide the vice mayor—was not unanimous: “I don’t need that negativity on the board.”

Going ahead with the retreat made more sense than ever, in Jones’s mind. Less so, in others’. At such a fraught moment, was forging ahead with the retreat at all or in its current form the best way to lay the groundwork for collaboration?

^{vi} Being elected “at-large” meant being elected by all voters in the city and representing all districts.

Appendices

Appendix 1 November 2022 Mayoral Election Results

Candidate	Votes	Percent Won	Dollars Spent
Phillip Jones	19,441	40.3%	\$238,708
David Jenkins	11,637	24.1	41,297
Tina Vick	9,055	18.8	26,723
Saundra Cherry	7,868	16.3	40,548
Write-in	251	0.5	-
Total	48,252	100%	\$347,276

Source: Virginia Department of Elections, 2022 November General Official Results, https://results.elections.virginia.gov/vaelections/2022%20November%20General/Site/Locality/NEWPORT_NEWS_CITY/Index.html; Virginia Public Access Project, Newport News City local elections, <https://www.vpap.org/localities/newport-news-city-va/elections/>, both accessed September 2023

Appendix 2 Newport News City Council, 2023

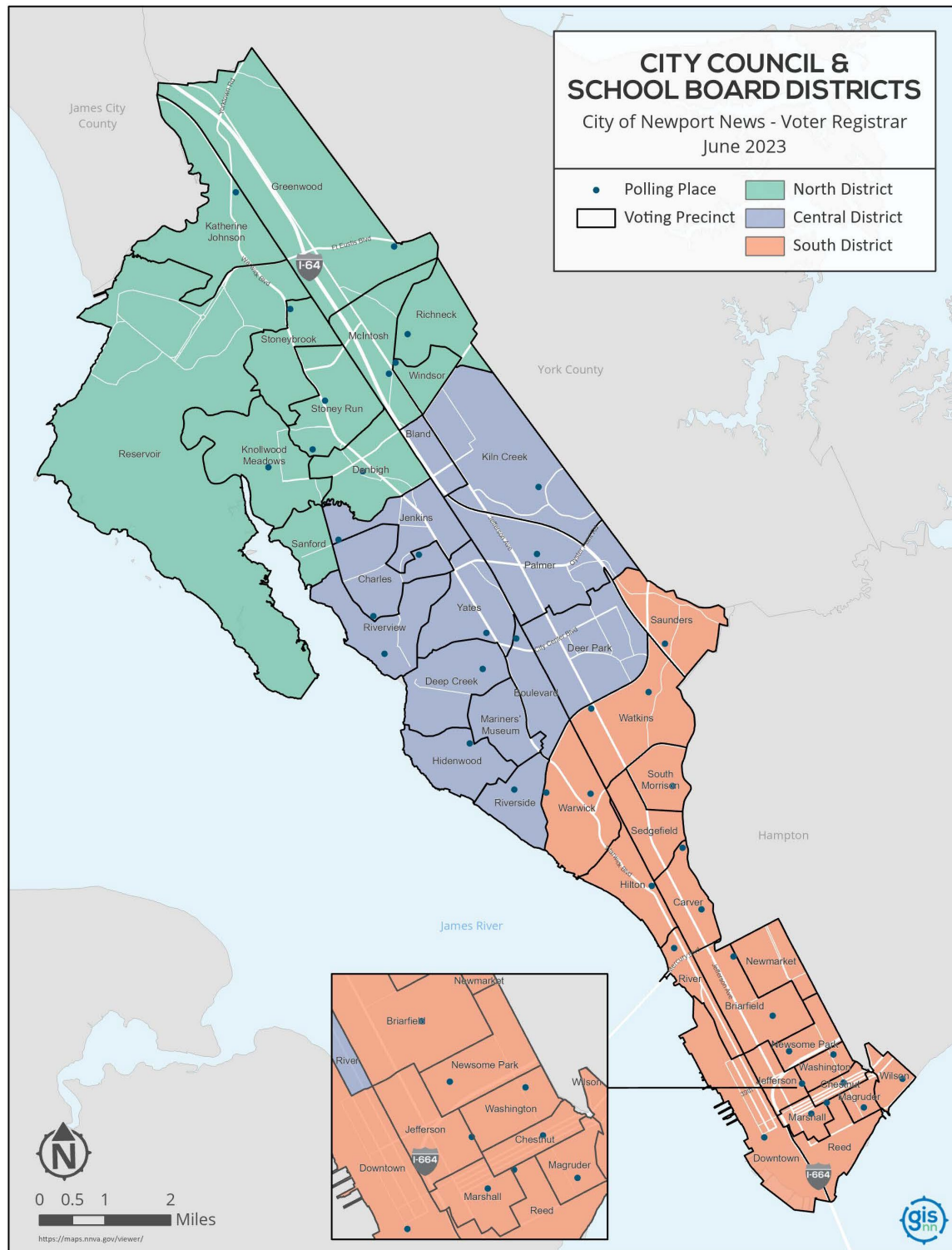
							
Name:	Phillip D. Jones	Curtis D. Bethany, III	Marcellus L. Harris III, D. Div.	John R. Eley, III	Tina L. Vick	Cleon M. Long, P.E.	Dr. Patricia P. Woodbury
Office:	Mayor & Councilmember	Vice Mayor & Councilmember	Councilmember	Councilmember	Councilmember	Councilmember	Councilmember
Year elected:	2022	2022	2016	2022	2008	2022	2008
District:	At-large	North District 1, Seat B	North District 2, Seat A	South District 3, Seat B	South District 3, Seat A	Central District 2, Seat B	Central District 2, Seat A

Source: Newport News City Council Members, <https://www.nnva.gov/1011/City-Council-Members>; Newport News City local elections, <https://www.vpap.org/localities/newport-news-city-va/elections/>, both accessed August 2023

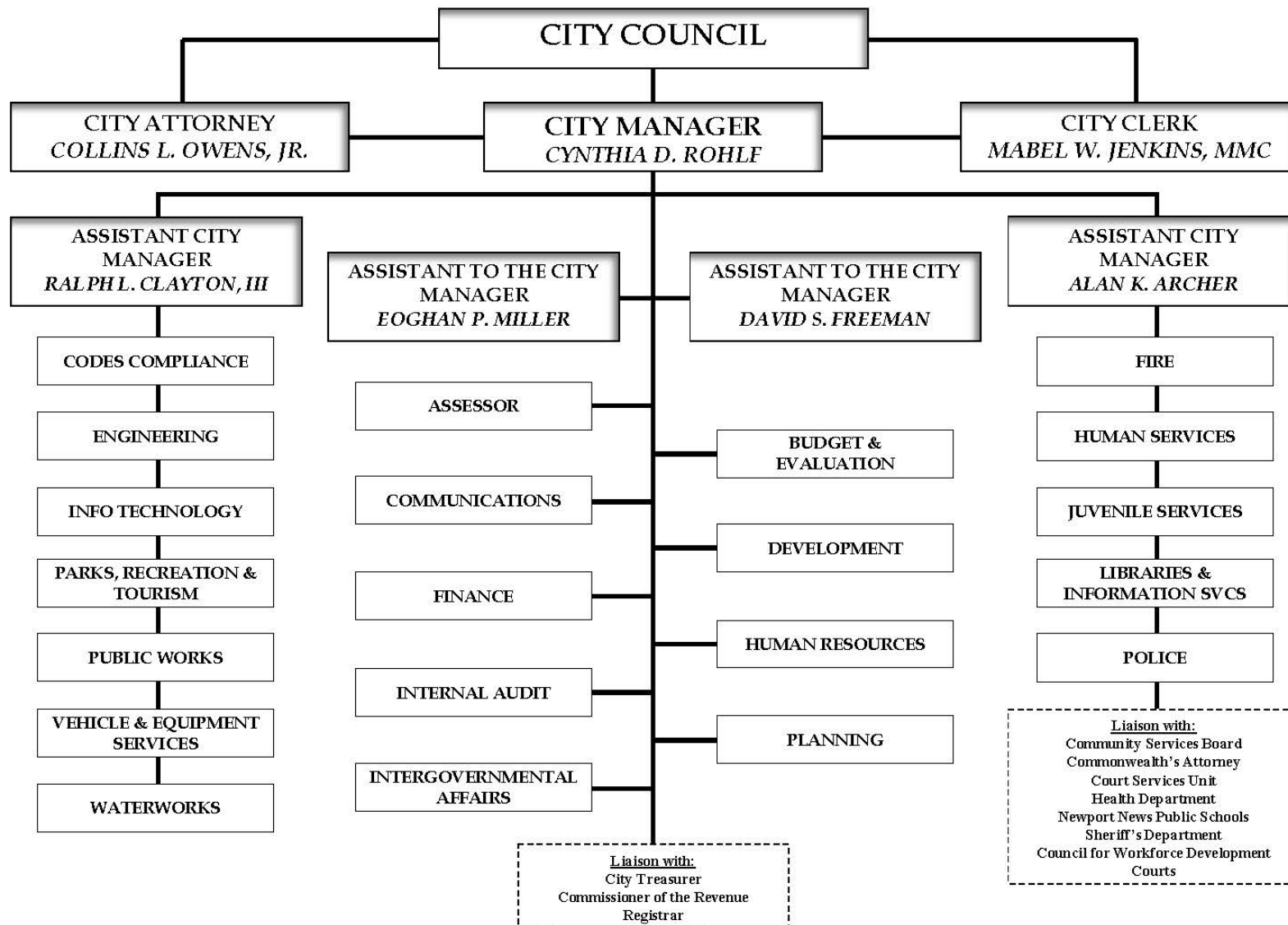
Appendix 3 Population by District, 2022

District	Total Population	Black	%	White	%	Hispanic	%	Asian	%	Some Other Race	%
North	61,913	26,873	43.4	20,680	33.4	8,208	13.3	3,443	5.6	2,709	4.4
Central	62,357	19,990	32.1	30,188	48.4	6,767	10.9	3,142	5.0	2,270	3.6
South	61,977	33,406	53.9	20,382	32.9	4,313	7.0	1,390	2.2	2,486	4.0
Total	186,247	80,269	43.1	71,250	38.3	19,288	10.4	7,975	4.3	7,465	4.0

Source: Newport News Redistricting City Council & School Board Districts, <https://www.nnva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30678/Ordinance-No-7776-22?bidId=>, p 14, accessed September 2023; case writer calculations

Appendix 4 City Council and School Board Districts Map, 2023

Appendix 5 Newport News Organizational Chart



Source: City of Newport News, <https://www.nnva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/439/City-of-Newport-News-Organization-Chart-PDF?bidId=>, accessed September 2023

Appendix 6 Case Timeline of Events

Date	Event
November 8, 2022	Jones wins the mayoral election.
December 16	Jones visits the White House to discuss federal funding.
January 1, 2023	Mayor Jones begins his four-year term.
January 6	Student shoots teacher at Richneck Elementary School.
January 10	Mayor and newly-elected councilmembers take oaths of office.
January 12	The school board announces its purchase of 90 metal detectors.
January 14	City government retreat is proposed for this day.

Source: City of Newport News

Appendix 7A Newport News City Council Proposed Retreat Agenda, Saturday, January 14, 2023, 9 AM-3 PM

James Room, City Center - Newport News

9:00 - 9:30	Introductions <i>Mayor Phillip Jones</i>
9:30 - 10:15	Team Building <i>Harvard Fellows lead discussion</i>
10:15 - 10:25	Break
10:25 - 11:10	Internal Communications and Norms <i>Mayor Jones leads discussion</i>
11:10 - 11:20	Break
11:20 - 12:05	External Communications <i>Mayor Jones and City Communications Team</i>
12:05 - 12:10	Break and Get Lunch
12:10 - 12:40	City Manager Introduction <i>City Manager Cindy Rohlf</i>
12:40 - 1:40	Councilmember Introductions and Priorities <i>Councilmembers (10 minutes each)</i>
1:40 - 1:50	Break
1:50 - 2:30	Opportunity Team <i>Harvard Fellows & Mayor Jones</i>
2:30 - 3:00	Next Steps <i>Open Discussion</i>

Source: City of Newport News

Appendix 7B Select Proposed Presentation Details**TEAM BUILDING***Ice-breakers:*

- Tell us about your family and what you love about your family?
- Do you have fun hobbies or activities outside of work?
- What's your favorite restaurant in Newport News?

Live survey questions:

- If needed, would you rather work longer during the week or work on the weekend?
- When working on a large project, would you rather push through a project or take a break and come back?
- When working on a large project, would you rather start early or finish late?
- When working with others, would you rather have scheduled meetings or corridor conversations?
- If communication has to happen after hours, would you rather receive an email or a phone call/text?
- When receiving feedback, do you prefer it in real time or at a structured, scheduled time?
- Do you prefer feedback sessions in city hall or off of city property?
- Are you very comfortable or quite uncomfortable giving feedback?
- Any other things we should consider as we decide how to work together as a team?

Work Style discussion:

- What gives you energy?
- What takes away your energy?
- What's important to you at work?
- What are things outside of work that you try to protect during the week?

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION & NORMS

- What are the best ways to communicate with citizens that contact council / the Office of the City Clerk?
- How are emails and/or telephone calls tracked?
- Should there be a City Council telephone tree for times of crisis?

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- What is the brand and narrative of the city?
- As stewards of the culture of Newport News, how could council ensure a unified vision?
- How could council ensure a unified voice?
- How should council work effectively with the school board?
- Who should schedule and what should be the frequency of Town Hall meetings?

Source: City of Newport News

Endnotes

- ¹ Zoom interview with Harvard Transition Fellow, Phoebe Canagarajah, conducted by case writer on August 18, 2023.
- ² Unless otherwise noted, quotes from Ralph “Bo” Clayton are derived from an in-person interview on August 15, 2023, conducted by case writer.
- ³ Phillip Jones, “VIDEO BLOG: MY EXPERIENCE AS A VETERAN IN THE HBS/HKS JOINT DEGREE,” Harvard Business School, September 17, 2023, <https://www.hbs.edu/mba/blog/post/video-blog-phillip-jones>, Accessed September 2023.
- ⁴ Alan Greenblatt, “Leadership Lessons from a 33-Year-Old Mayor,” *Governing*, May 30, 2023, <https://www.governing.com/politics/leadership-lessons-from-a-33-year-old-mayor>, accessed September 2023.
- ⁵ Josh Janney, “Mayor-elect Phillip Jones hopes to bring change, fresh perspective to Newport News,” November 16, 2022, <https://www.dailypress.com/2022/11/16/mayor-elect-phillip-jones-hopes-to-bring-change-fresh-perspective-to-newport-news/>, accessed September 2023.
- ⁶ Phillip Jones, “Perspectives,” undated, <https://www.hbs.edu/mba/student-life/people/Pages/perspectives.aspx?profile=pjones>, accessed September 2023.
- ⁷ Phillip Jones, “Perspectives.”
- ⁸ In-person interview with Mayor Phillip Jones conducted by case writer, July 23, 2023.
- ⁹ Josh Janney, “Mayor-elect Phillip Jones hopes to bring change.”
- ¹⁰ Josh Janney, “Mayor-elect Phillip Jones hopes to bring change.”
- ¹¹ Zoom interview with Mayor Jones conducted by case writers, August 14, 2023. Unless otherwise noted, quotes from Mayor Jones are derived from this interview.
- ¹² Phillip Jones (@MayorPhilJones), Twitter (X), April 19, 2022, <https://twitter.com/MayorPhilJones/status/1516546277600858113?s=20>, accessed September 2023.
- ¹³ Josh Janney, “Mayor-elect Phillip Jones hopes to bring change.”
- ¹⁴ Alan Greenblatt, “Leadership Lessons.”
- ¹⁵ Alan Greenblatt, “Leadership Lessons.”
- ¹⁶ Alan Greenblatt, “Leadership Lessons.”
- ¹⁷ Web staff, “Phillip Jones declares victory in Newport News mayoral race,” 3WTKR, November 9, 2022, <https://www.wtkr.com/news/phillip-jones-declares-victory-in-newport-news-mayoral-race>, accessed September 2023.
- ¹⁸ Alex Littlehales, “Newport News’ newly elected mayor speaks 1 day after election,” *13 News Now*, November 9, 2022, <https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/politics/elections/newport-news-newly-elected-mayor-phillip-jones/291-31070033-ebd9-479d-bff6-641975fb2fc4>, accessed September 2023.
- ¹⁹ Alex Littlehales, “Newport News’ newly elected mayor speaks.”
- ²⁰ Alex Littlehales, “Newport News’ newly elected mayor speaks.”
- ²¹ “Newcomer’s Guide,” City of Newport News, <https://www.nnva.gov/313/Newcomers-Guide>; “Pamunkey Tribe,” Encyclopedia Virginia: Virginia Humanities, December 2020, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/pamunkey-tribe/>, accessed September 2023.
- ²² “Hampton Roads Major Employers,” Hampton Roads Alliance, https://hamptonroadsalliance.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Major-Employers-100_updated-Mar-2022.pdf, accessed September 2023.
- ²³ Newport News City Charter, Version September 5, 2023, https://library.municode.com/va/newport_news/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CD_ORDCINENEVI, accessed September 2023.
- ²⁴ “Rohlf tapped as next Newport News city manager,” *Daily Press*, March 28, 2017, <https://www.dailypress.com/2017/03/28/rohlf-tapped-as-next-newport-news-city-manager/>, accessed September 2023.
- ²⁵ “Accreditation 2022-2023,” Virginia Department of Education, <https://www.nnschools.org/sol/accreditation/accred-2022-23.pdf>, accessed September 2023.

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