

Officers present:

Chuck Flowers, President

Arthur "Butch" Eason, Vice President

Larry Harris, Treasurer

Guest Speaker:

Vice Mayor Martin Thomas

- City Council Meeting (Jan 14, 2024)

Your board members and a long-time association supporter retired NPD Sgt. Steve Taylor, spoke to council Jan 14<sup>th</sup>. We provided all city leaders with a packet outlining our FY 2026 Budget request for a 2% COLA for all retirees including widows and widowers. We also provided a COLA and Supplement history from 1980-2023. Along with a summary of area compensation for NON-VRS retirees. Feedback so far has been that was "Very Well Received".

The Retired Firefighters association will be speaking to the council on the next regular meeting date.

- Meeting with Norfolk City Manager

We finally got a meeting with Norfolk City Manager Pat Roberts. VP Butch Eason & I met with him away from city hall. He received the same info we gave to the council on the 16<sup>th</sup>. He discussed our plan to speak to the council in small groups January through February, he agreed concerning that approach. COLAS are expensive, I think he understands our need for a COLA but will need some support from council to budget for it.

- January 16 Meeting

Vice Mayor Martin Thomas was our speaker on the 16<sup>th</sup>. I was very disappointed with the attendance. 20 members showed up. He seemed to understand the weather and cold/flu season effected the turn out. While usually very reserved in COLA question answers, he did say our plan to have a few retirees' speak at the council meeting was a good approach and confirmed the 14<sup>th</sup> speakers were very well received. He discussed the cost the council had been given on both 1% & 2% COLAs; He also told us the COLA support was higher than in any of his 8 years on council.

He updated us on many city issues:

- Military Circle - A sports arena is off the table, and it will be some form of housing if interest rates drop.
- MacArthur Mall - Has had some interest from developers but again the current interest rates are a factor.
- Cruise Terminal - Upgrades are completed. A wide walkway to assist the four elevators for arriving and departure issues with the larger ships.
- Nauticus has been upgraded.
- Scope/Chrysler Hall - Will both be renovated. Chrysler Hall first. Basically, seating and stage improvements with more loading docks to accommodate larger shows.

- **Speaker Feb 20**

The new Superward 7 representative, Carlos Clanton, is our speaker for Feb 20<sup>th</sup>.

**I understand the issue with people living out of the area, but attendance at the meetings when we have council members is vital to our need for COLA. We need your show of support at this meeting. If we can gain his support, it will give a boost to our COLA request.**

Regards,

Chuck Flowers

President - RCEAN