

HRBC Past Events:

CAUCUS CONNECTION (Newport News)

The Hampton Road Black Caucus (HRBC) hosted its first **Caucus Connection** in Newport News, VA at JT's Bar and Grill on July 22, 2021. Those attending were pleased to hear from Elected members of the City Council, School Boards, and a candidate for the House of Delegates. As questions from the floor were introduced, the meeting became a lively conversation in which all candidates and many members of the audience participated.



HRBC President Ron Taylor opens the Connection with Prayer



Newport News Councilwoman and Vice Mayor, Tina Vicks



Charles West, Hampton, candidate for House of Delegates



School Board (L-R) Gary Hunter (NNews), Douglas Brown (NNews), Jason Samuels (Hampton)

HRBC Past Events (continued):

Results of the Police Symposium:

Earlier this Spring the HRBC sponsored a virtual symposium of Chiefs of Police. There were some eighty community participants. Chief Paul Neudigate of Virginia Beach and Chief of Larry D. Boone of Norfolk were the principal speakers at the symposium. The event began with a presentation by both chiefs on how they saw the role of police in our communities. They also discussed how the role of community policing has evolved in Hampton Roads and how police training and doctrine has grown, compared to other communities in Virginia.

The symposium was described by attendees as helpful and clarifying, both on the part of the citizens and the police forces represented. The symposium ended with an entreaty by the Chiefs for better and more communication between our respective citizenry and police officers

Update: On the 10th of August, the President of HRBC met with Virginia Beach Chief of Police, Paul Neudigate and his Deputy. Chief Neudigate had spoken of his wish to further community policing in Virginia Beach. The following is a summary of their discussion:

The Chief's goals included:

- a. Focus on Community Engagement. Building a positive relationship between the PD and the community. To facilitate this, the VBPD has established a Community Engagement Officer in each precinct to be a liaison with community members and to aid police/community engagement.
- b. Recruitment. To encourage minority and persons-of-color participation in policing (the VBPD has 100+ vacancies which need to be filled), the Department is going to establish an "apprenticeship" program for youth 18-21 years of age to work with the police force, and, if they find a calling to a police career, they can then attend the VB Police Academy Note: the VB Academy is twice as long as the State-mandated training and the OJT in the field upon graduation is equally extended. The Chief regularly meets with officers of color to invite their input to Command.
- c. Policy Change. The Chief has rewritten the Department policy on the use of CS gas. Less extreme irritants can be used at the discretion of the officers on the scene; however, use of CS gas requires the Chief's explicit order.
- d. Gun Shot Detectors. The city will invest in special sensors that detect gun shots, identify locations, and can have police movement towards "shots fired" within seconds, often minutes before citizens can call for help via 911.
- e. Ride-Alongs. The Chief renewed his invitation for members of the HRBC Board to participate in the "Ride-Along" program to accompany police officers in order to gain an appreciation of Virginia Beach's enforcement challenges.

Further meetings are envisioned to continue to build a spirit of community participation in which the police and the community work together to reduce the impact of crime within the community.

HRBC Upcoming Events:

RSVP for these events through Eventbrite

New Web address: www.hamptonroadsblackcaucus.com

CAUCUS CONNECTION (August 26th)

Ryan's Steaks and Cakes, 202 E. Washington Street, Suffolk, VA 23434

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Free reception with light Hors d'Oeuvres

RSVP through Eventbrite, www.hamptonroadsblackcaucus.com

CAUCUS CONNECTION (September 23rd)

Roger Brown Restaurant, 316 High Street, Portsmouth, VA 23704

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Free reception with light Hors d'Oeuvres

RSVP through Eventbrite, www.hamptonroadsblackcaucus.com

BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

The Breakfast of Champions will be held at "The Landing at Hampton Marina", 700 Settlers Landing Road, Hampton, VA 23669 from 8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. on October 2, 2021.

Reserve your seat at the table by visiting the HRBC website,
www.hamptonroadsblackcaucus.com

The **honorees** are:

Tina Vick, Councilwoman Newport News, VA;

Dr. William R. Harvey, President of Hampton University and

Tommy Cerja IV, graduate of Norfolk State University, current UVA School of Law student.

HRBC Upcoming Events (continued) :

The Community Action Team of the HRBC (continued from above)

The four areas are: **Transparency** (can the community view the progress of issues and decisions by elected officials), **Timeliness** (response to citizen correspondence), **Advocacy** (speaking to and advocating for community concerns), and **Flexibility** (welcoming of newly activated levels of citizen-led political activity).

The above will be accomplished through the use of CAT-Watchdogs (at least two per city) who will attend, monitor, and report on City Council and School Board Meetings. The CAT provides training and guidance. At present, several CAT Watchdogs are at work; however, HRBC still needs Watchdogs in Newport News, Norfolk, Hampton, Chesapeake, and Suffolk.

If you are interested in joining this committee, please contact Mr. Seko Varner, CAT Team Chair, by emailing: CATChairHRBC@gmail.com.

Community Events of Interest:

As you become aware of events (speakers, meetings, political events, debates, church gatherings of specific interest, etc. - anything that might be of interest to the black community in Hampton Roads), please provide a short description of the event including time, location, subject, etc. so that we can publish it for HRBC members and those who participate in our communities.

If you would like to receive our Newsletter through your personal email, please provide it via our website: <http://hamptonroadsblackcaucus.org/> or to any member of the HRBC board.

A Commentary:

The HRBC is a political action committee (PAC). Established in 2012 with the purpose of increasing the representation of elected officials who advocate and support legislation directed towards enhancing the Black community. To effectively impact the Black community the HRBC supports the following initiatives:

Our Four Pillars:

1. Black –Owned Business Growth – HRBC members support elected officials that support Black owned business growth.
2. Educational Advancement– HRBC members support elected officials that support every student of color receiving a quality education that prepares him or her to be a contributing member of a democracy.
3. Economic Development– HRBC members support elected officials that can assist in driving capital to Black entrepreneurs to start, maintain and grow their businesses.
4. Community Development- HRBC members support elected officials that support building and expanding community development ecosystems that increase structural capacity and leadership skills of Black community development professionals on regenerating underserved Black communities.

The Community Action Team of the HRBC, Mr. Seko Varner, Chairman

The CAT has begun developing a quarterly report card to “grade” seated politician’s actions. Beginning in June, the HRBC Report Card will be available in March, June, September, and December. These reports will be available to the community via the HRBC website. The Report will grade politicians in four basic areas and 12 Key targets.

Several current members of the CAT attended the Caucus Connection in Newport News last month.

Some Thoughts

Join HRBC !

You can support HRBC through membership suitable for your business and personal preference. You can join online, or select your membership level and mail a check made out to “Hampton Roads Black Caucus” to:

Hampton Roads Black Caucus

P.O. Box 2692

Virginia Beach, VA 23450

General Membership – \$50.00 Per Year

Benefits of Membership

Listing in our community directory

Subscription to E-Newsletter

Entry to candidate meet and greet private receptions

HRBC Lapel Pin

BECOME A PART OF THE SOLUTION