



Town of Berwyn Heights

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MAYOR
Amanda M. Dewey

COUNCIL MEMBERS
Jodie A. Kulpa-Eddy (Mayor Pro Tem)
Christopher S. Brittan Powell
Jason W. Papanikolas
Ethan D. Sweep

Town Meeting Minutes August 11 2021 | 7:00 p.m.

This meeting was held by videoconference due to the ongoing COVID-19 health emergency and was broadcast on Berwyn Heights cable TV channels and streamed on the Town website. Residents could comment by calling (443) 646-3529 or e-mailing Mayor Dewey at adewey@berwynheightsmd.gov.

Call to order

Present were Mayor Amanda Dewey, Mayor Pro Tempore (MPT) Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Councilmember Chris Britton-Powell, Councilmember Jason Papanikolas, Councilmember Ethan Sweep, Town Manager Laura Allen and Town Clerk Melanie Friesen. Also present were Berwyn Heights Chief of Police, Kenneth Antolik and Officer Jeffrey Herriott as well as Debby Steele-Snyder for the Berwyn Heights Historical Committee. The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Announcements

Mayor Dewey reported that immediately prior to the Town Meeting there was an Executive Session. She stated that the Council is looking forward to being able to soon announce the hiring of a new Public Works director. She thanked the staff who have been working diligently on that process. She also made a COVID update, highlighting that the County has been seeing an increase of cases over the last month as well as a slight increase in deaths. She also reported that as of last Sunday there is a County-wide indoor mask mandate that includes everyone, regardless of vaccination status and that includes all Town buildings, including the Senior Center and the G. Love room. She encouraged everyone to get vaccinated. There were no other announcements from the Council.

2. Approval of Agenda

Councilmember Sweep moved to approve the agenda. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded the motion. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Consent

MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to remove the July 12, 2021 minutes from the consent agenda. CM Sweep seconded the motion. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. CM Sweep seconded the motion. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy requested that the July 12, 2021 minutes be discussed at this time. She asked for clarification on which legislation was being referred to near the end of Discussion Item 3.B.

(Don't Block the Box). The term "legislation" was clarified to reflect Ordinance 119. MPT Kulpa-Eddy also asked for clarification on a point in Discussion Item 3.C. The sentence in question was edited to reflect that the term accessibility was in reference to the ability for people to attend the meeting as well as in reference to the Americans with Disabilities act. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the July 12, 2021, minutes as amended. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion the motion passed 4-0 with CM Sweep abstaining as he was absent from the July 12, 2021 meeting.

4. Mayor & Councilmember Reports

Mayor Dewey reported that it has been a very event heavy time. She attended a webinar from the White House Intergovernmental Affairs on the new infrastructure bill. She had the first meeting of the County Climate Plan Resident Advisory Council last week with the second meeting happening this week. She's also been attending webinars put on by the County introducing elected officials to a 101 level on County departments. Along with TM Allen, she has had a couple good meetings with the Thriving Earth Exchange Project and had a good conversation and interview with a potential scientist. She planned to talk with the Green Team about that at their next meeting. The Maryland Municipal League continues to have webinars on American Rescue Plan Act implementation. She was also excited to report that the Town's ARPA check was on the way and that the Council will continue their public engagement process to determine the best way to use these COVID relief funds. Mayor Dewey, along with MPT Kulpa-Eddy, CM Brittan-Powell, CM Papanikolas, and TM Allen met with the Boys and Girls Club to get to know the club and discuss their needs and capacity, especially in regards to Sports Park. She reported that she signed on to a Mayor's Pledge with the My Brother's Keeper Foundation to engage in public conversation on Policing and she will be attending a session on funding for Public Safety Initiatives. She congratulated the Rec Council on a successful Summer Concert.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported that August 8-14 is tax free shopping week, that clothing under \$100 per item and the first \$40 of a backpack are sales tax free. Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) have a new communication platform; School Messenger is replacing GovDelivery. The registration link to this new service will be posted on the Town Website. PGCPS has a temporary Virtual Learning Program for K-6th graders and a new Online Campus for students in 7-12th grade. While the deadline for these programs has passed, the schools have opened a waitlist given the rise of the Delta variant. Applications must be received for the Online Campus by Tuesday, August 17th, and for the Virtual Learning Program by Friday, August 20th. The new school year will kick off with a virtual school orientation for all students on Friday, September 3rd. School starts Wednesday, September 8. Students will be in-person at Berwyn Heights Elementary School, so use caution when driving. Dr. Goldson will be providing an update at this week's Board of Education meeting. A link to the Zoom meeting will be posted on the Town website. The "Stuff the Bus" school supply drive is ongoing at the Berwyn Heights Police Department until Monday, August 16. There is a survey on how PGCPS should allocate the American Rescue Plan Act funds that they are receiving. There is a survey on the three scenarios that have been developed for new school boundaries Both the ARPA and Boundary survey links will be on the Town website. CM Brittan-Powell asked if it would be appropriate to ask a PRECA related question at this juncture. He stated that in reference to meeting with the (Boys and Girls) Club, that many of the issues that arose from that meeting could be addressed if the Town had a cogent Recreation Plan for the Community. Mayor Dewey stated that there are a few strategic planning processes in place and meetings coming up. While she doesn't believe there is staff capacity to add to that, that perhaps Council could consider adding recreation in general to the broader planning coming up. CM Brittan-Powell stated that there are experts in the community that could perhaps be tapped as

part of this. He further stated that given the budgetary implications that a plan would be beneficial. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked for clarification on if the CM was asking for a strategic plan. CM Brittan-Powell stated that even with the Community Center there are multiple assets within the community that we aren't resourcing. Mayor Dewey thanked CM Brittan-Powell and stated that at this point in the discussion it needs to be on an agenda so that residents would know that it was being discussed. She asked CM Brittan-Powell to write down his proposal so that it could be added to a future agenda so that staff time can be prioritized.

CM Papanikolas reported for Code Compliance and reminded everyone that building and roll off container permits are required, and that if you need a permit from the county, you need one from the Town as well. Building permits are good for 24 months and roll off container permits are good for 60 days. He also reminded people that they may need a right-of-way permit for things like curb cuts. He stated a few residents have expressed concern about the large number of vehicles that are parked on some Town roads. While parking isn't the purview of Code Compliance, they are passing those concerns along to the Police Department. He stated that if people see Code issues, to reach out to either Code Compliance or himself. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked Mayor Dewey at this point about the webinars she has been attending with the County, specifically the one from the Department of Permitting and Inspections, where a chart presented that had permitting responsibilities. She was hoping the County would share a copy with the webinar attendees. TM Allen said that she has been in touch with the County regarding this and that they are having challenges sending that presentation out but that they are working on it. *CM Brittan-Powell* reported for Administration and stated that TM Allen has been firming up her team and getting things organized, despite Councilmembers asking to reprioritize and reenergize Town Staff to projects.

CM Sweep stated there isn't a lot to report for Public Works. He stated the Street Sweeper is not in Town this month and there are no holidays to interfere with trash schedules. He stated that road work continues in and around Berwyn Heights, so to be aware and cautious around construction sites. CM Papanikolas stated that he has had several residents congratulate Council on the nice road construction in Town.

5. Committee Reports

Education Advisory Committee: MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported that the next meeting is August 23rd at 7PM. They are continuing to promote the Berwyn Heights Educational Grant and that the first round applications are due on August 15th. They provided 3 scholarships to the STEAM Camp at the Berwyn Heights Community Center and the students' reports on their experience should be available by the September Town Meeting. For the next BHEAC meeting they will be working on the mission statement and the next steps for the PGCPs Boundary Initiative.

Green Team: Mayor Dewey reported that the Green Team will be meeting the day after the Town Meeting. They will be working on litter. They are establishing a specific committee to work on the Bee-City Application process and if you are interested in working on that to reach out to Therese Forbes. There will be a tree identification nature walk and post-Halloween clean up. TM Allen will be presenting the tree rebate program to the group as well.

Historical Committee: Debby Steele-Snyder was present and reported that the Committee is taking August off and that they'd normally be participating in National Night Out but that event didn't happen this year. The next meeting is September 22nd at 7:30 and they believe it will be virtual. Residents should look in the Bulletin on how to contact Sharmila Bhatia and she will let people know how to join. The September meeting will be when they are electing officers. She also mentioned that members on the Committee need to be appointed/reappointed before they are able to vote. With MPT Kulpa-Eddy they are working on a walking tour featuring Halloween History

and Spookiness. The date for that is Oct 24th with a rain date of November 7th. The Chlopicki house at 5717 Ruatan St. has been sold as private residence. The large lot next to the property has been sold to the neighbors and will be used to expand their yard. They have not decided on a Fall Wine and Cheese event yet. Mayor Dewey let Ms. Steele-Snyder know that the Committee appointments and reappointments will be happening during the New Business portion of the agenda.

Neighborhood Watch/ Emergency Preparedness: Mayor Dewey reported that the National Night In parade occurred. The Police Department shared updates to the committee about their priorities, safety issues in Town, and some educational priorities and inventorying the trailer. The next meeting is September 1st.

Recreation Council: MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported that the Susan Jones Jazz Quartet performed at the Lake Artemesia Stage last week and the audience consisted of wildlife and over 100 people. The next in the series will be on September 18 from 1-3PM and will feature Seth Kibel and the Bay Jazz Project. It's lawn seating so bring your own chair or blanket. In case of rain or extreme heat, the concert will be moved to the Community Center. From the Karate Club, Abby Reznick and John Epps were promoted to Black Belt. Dick and Joan Ahrens, Helen Weinrich, and Chris Emmell were promoted to Green Belt. Kudos to all them. The Rec Council is also working on an Ice Cream Social on September 23rd from 6-8PM at the Sports Park Snack Bar. The Boys and Girls Club will be practicing that night so please be respectful of their space.

6. New Business

A. Introduce Officer Herriott

Mayor Dewey invited Chief Antolik to introduce the newest officer in the Berwyn Heights Police Department, Officer Jeffrey Herriott. Officer Herriott resides in Baltimore with his wife and grandson. Officer Herriott is a deacon in his Baltimore church and coaches basketball for youth. He worked for the Baltimore City Schools from 2007-2018 and then with Anne Arundel Police. Officer Herriot joined the BHPD in June of 2021. Officer Herriott expressed his gratitude and he looks forward to meeting and working with everyone. Mayor Dewey stated that she is hearing positive community feedback from those who have already interacted with Officer Herriott.

B. Don't Block the Intersection, Ordinance 119 (1st Reading)

TM Allen summarized the proposed ordinance change. This is a priority identified by the Walkable Bikeable Berwyn Heights (WBBH) task force and was identified by Council as a priority. The process requires a first and second reading, followed by a 20-day waiting period to enable residents to petition the action to referendum. Council may waive the reading into the record, if preferred. The cost of the implementation is minimal, essentially, staff time, paint, and a stencil.

CM Sweep made a motion to introduce and waive the reading of Ordinance 119. CM Brittan-Powell questioned where the changes to the Ordinance are. CM Papanikolas clarified that it was in section 3 paragraph H. CM Papanikolas seconded the motion. In discussion, CM Brittan-Powell questioned if the cost incurred from this will come from the WBBH funding and that this won't deplete that funding too severely. TM Allen confirmed that the cost for this would be minimal, as there is no intent to charge staff time to the WBBH funding. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked if there weren't also changes to section 11 as well. TM Allen confirmed that there were changes but they had already been accepted and discussed, so they are not reflected as changes in this document, however she is able and willing to produce a document that reflects all the changes. MPT Kulpa-Eddy believed that all the changes should be visible to residents so they can easily compare this proposed version to the current ordinance. MPT

Kulpa-Eddy clarified that section 4.F.11)A. has not been accepted by vote of the Town Council. TM Allen explained that what is annotated as a change in the document provided as part of this meeting is the addition of a definition of intersection as requested by Council at the last meeting that the Ordinance was discussed at. MPT Kulpa-Eddy also questioned the definition of intersection provided as it references “highways” and the Town does not have highways. TM Allen stated the definition that is provided is the State of Maryland’s definition of intersection and she understands that it to be an all-encompassing definition of intersection. When no other questions were presented, Mayor Dewey called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

C. Risk Management Policy, Resolution 7-2021

Mayor Dewey introduced and summarized the purpose of the Risk Management Policy, which was developed in response to feedback from the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) at policy renewal. TM Allen stated that staff fills out a Loss Control Survey during renewal and if the Town scores 90% or higher they are eligible to receive a policy credit. The Town Manager is the Risk Manager for the Town. The policy makes reference to an internal Safety Committee; the Chief of Police will function as the Chair of the Safety Committee. The major goals are to eliminate or reduce the risk of loss, to apply responsive claim management techniques to losses that occur, and to protect the Town Budget from losses in excess of \$1Million or an annual accumulation of losses that would cause a financial hardship. Included in the policy is an accident review process which would strengthen the Town’s existing accident policy. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked about the language in paragraph 5.a. under “Policies” to clarify what “establishing reserves” means in the policy. TM Allen explained that this is the “cushion” that is included in our policy premiums and that the policy is a codification of what we are already doing with LGIT and that the reserves are the General Fund reserves that the Town already has in place. CM Papanikolas wanted clarification on the credits. He referenced the budget and asked that if the Town didn’t get the credit, it would pay 3% more in liability insurance. TM Allen affirmed this and expounded that the credit is determined by the LGIT Executive Board based on how the insurance pool is doing and if the members are managing their risks appropriately. The credit this year was 3% but it could be in the range of approximately 3-7%. Mayor Dewey stated that this is a smart fiscal decision. Mayor Dewey asked for a motion. CM Sweep made the motion to approve Resolution 7-2021. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded the motion. After no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

D. BHHC Appointments

Mayor Dewey stated that the resolution that established the Berwyn Heights Historical Committee also requires that committee members be appointed by Council, for terms of two calendar years beginning in September. There are six (6) residents interested in appointments or reappointments: Debby Steele-Snyder, Lee Fuerst, Dick Ahrens, Sharmila Bhatia, Hank Becker, and Sierra Langford. Mayor Dewey invited Ms. Steele-Snyder to make a statement at this time. Ms. Steele-Snyder thanked the council and indicated that they are just trying to make sure that they are up-to-date. Mayor Dewey thanked the BHHC for their volunteerism. MPT Kulpa-Eddy made the motion to appoint these 6 Berwyn Heights Historical Committee members. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

7. Resident & Community Comments

MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked what is wrong with the phone that is currently in Council chambers. TM Allen stated that the device itself has died and that we are waiting on the new one to come in. There were no other Resident or Community Comments.

Adjournment

CM Sweep made a motion to adjourn the meeting. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:06PM.

Respectfully Submitted, *Melanie Friesen* Town Clerk 8/19/2021