



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 December 8, 2021 | 7:00 p.m. Council Chambers 5700 Berwyn Road

Call to order

Mayor Dewey called the Town Meeting to order at 7PM. This is the first in-person meeting since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Present were Mayor Amanda Dewey, Mayor Pro Tempore Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Councilmember Jason Papanikolas, Councilmember Chris Brittan-Powell, and Councilmember Ethan Sweep. Also present were Town Manager Laura Allen, Town Clerk Melanie Friesen, and Committee Representatives Allison Holmes for the Berwyn Heights Education Advisory Committee (BHEAC), Debby Steele-Snyder for the Historical Committee (BHHC), and Susan Jones for the Rec Council.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Announcements

Mayor Dewey reviewed that masks are required over the nose and mouth the entire time of the meeting, including while speaking, and that should the room reach capacity, overflow will be available in the Senior Center.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mayor Dewey requested an amendment to the agenda, moving 6c to 6a. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the agenda as amended. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Consent

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

4. Mayor & Councilmember Reports

Mayor Dewey reminded everyone that the mask mandate was extended by the County until at least late January. She encouraged everyone who is eligible to get boosters for their vaccine. She attended a meeting with Senator Cardin's Office regarding Congressional Earmarks and the new process in making requests and what is eligible. She also reviewed that Friday will be the annual employee appreciation lunch and Town Offices will be closed in the afternoon. She reviewed the upcoming Legislative Meet and Greet, Cocoa with the Popo, Letters for Santa and that Town Offices will be closed Dec 24, 27, and 28.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy recognized residents may want to show extra appreciation for people who serve the Town of Berwyn Heights, and reviewed guidance for ethical governmental gift giving. CM Papanikolas reported that page 26 of the Bulletin has the Code Compliance article. He also highlighted two areas in the monthly department report: business license returns have decreased from 105 licenses to 49, and that while last year the Town had 207 active rental units, this year it has 187.

TM Allen responded that staff are looking at ways to encourage compliance with business licensing.

CM Brittan-Powell reported that the budget season is pending and will be taking up a great deal of time; ARPA funding discussions will be taking up time as well. He also reported hearing from residents the need to focus on people, and acknowledge and encourage the importance of social activities.

CM Sweep reported that leaf collection is going well, despite the leaf vacuum vehicle breaking down earlier in the week, and the crews are back on schedule. He reviewed that loose leaf collection will continue through the end of the month. He also expressed excitement to see Director Pudner work with students at UMD to catalogue the trees in Town. He reviewed the trash schedule changes for the week following Christmas, with recycling pick-up on December 29 and Town-wide trash day being on December 30.

5. Committee Reports

- a. Education Advisory Committee: Allison Holmes reported the BHEAC has been busy this past year. They had a successful summer camp scholarship program. She reported that despite the lag in gathering feedback from the students, they expressed excitement about the STEAM camp projects, and families noted that this program was not available in past years. The BHEAC supported 3 students to the STEAM camp. The committee may ask the Town to sponsor more students in future years. MPT Kulpa-Eddy read a few comments from the students. CM Brittan-Powell asked about the learning loss that is occurring during COVID. Ms. Holmes replied that estimates of the impact of the pandemic indicate learning loss will last the next 5 years, and that the biggest loss is in social interactions and mental health. This will be considered during the grant period and addressing learning loss will require a holistic approach. Ms. Holmes stated the BHEAC meets the 4th Monday of the month, with no meeting in December but returning in January. She also reviewed the next round of education grant funding will be coming up in February.
- b. Green Team: Mayor Dewey reported that there is a holiday light recycling bin in front of Town Hall. She also attended two different Route 1 Green Team summits with Director Pudner. She reported that the Thriving Earth Exchange Invasive Species Survey has about 10 volunteers conducting the survey now. She also reported the Green Team submitted a letter of support for the County Climate Action Plan. The next meeting for the Green Team will be January 13, 2022 via Zoom.
- c. Historical Committee: Debby Steele-Snyder reported the BHHC is having a virtual meeting on December 15. They may have a volunteer to edit their existing raw footage to produce new videos. The BHHC is making plans for a Spring Wine and Cheese event that may be either indoors or outdoors depending on the state of the pandemic. The committee is interested in getting a dedicated email address for the team. She reported that they still have wine glasses available for \$7 each and to contact Ms. Steele-Snyder if interested. The committee is also putting together an information package for people seeking grants for their historic homes, as a way to offer some guidance on the process. Lastly, she reminded

everyone that Berwyn Heights was incorporated 125 years ago.

- d. Neighborhood Watch/ Emergency Preparedness: Mayor Dewey reported that they met last week and continued the trailer inventory and the goals for the trailer. There were no new financial transactions but they are still looking to purchase a generator for the trailer. She reported that the next meeting is January 5, 2022. She also reviewed holiday best practices including the house watch program.
- e. Recreation Council: Susan Jones reported for the Rec Council and thanked everyone who came and helped make the tree lighting a success. Public Works did a fantastic job and it was so charming. She also reviewed that the Craft Fair was great and lots of people showed up to shop. The Rec Council is looking toward January and will have a regifting party. It will be Saturday January 15th from 2pm-4pm, for adults only, as wine is served. In February, they would like to have the annual Valentine card-making and cookie-decorating on Saturday, February 12th from 2pm-4pm. She reported there will hopefully be a joint summer concert series with College Park this coming summer. The next meeting will be Tuesday the 11th and the Rec Council will be beginning the Berwyn Heights Day discussion. Please email Ms. Jones if you have ideas for BH Day.

6. New Business

- a. BHEAC Education Grant Funding Recommendation(Moved to agenda item a): MPT Kulpa-Eddy gave an update on the grant funding history. Ms. Holmes gave thanks to the other members of the Committee for their support in processing the grant applications. The Committee received good applications. The BHEAC is recommending the application from BHES to improve the school garden. It would benefit a number of people within the community, as well as students and staff. The garden is intended to improve BHES' connection to the Town and residents, as well as provide sustainable food. Mayor Dewey expressed excitement about the partnership that could keep the garden going over the summer to be a provider of food. CM Brittan-Powell expressed gratitude for the garden. CM Papanikolas expressed concern that background checks are required to enter the building, even in the summer when no students are present and that the proposed garden is in an interior courtyard. CM Brittan-Powell asked if other areas of the school were considered. Ms. Holmes reported that she did not know as the grant application that was presented identified the interior courtyard. CM Sweep asked if they know how many garden beds will be installed and if students will be involved in the construction of the raised beds? Ms. Holmes replied that they don't know how many beds are planned. CM Sweep stated that he thinks this is a wonderful way to introduce new foods to students. CM Brittan-Powell moved to award the grant for \$2000 to the Berwyn Heights Elementary School for the construction of the garden. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion the motion passed unanimously.
- b. Pepco Charging Stations Agreement: Mayor Dewey reviewed the meeting on Monday, December 6th with Pepco during the worksession. TM Allen reviewed that MPT Kulpa-Eddy had concerns about the limitation on getting out of the agreement if the Town were to have issues. She reviewed the conversation with Pepco that amended the agreement to a one year commitment with the ability to withdraw anytime after that with a 90 day written notice. CM Sweep moved to approve the Pepco charging stations agreement, CM Brittan-Powell seconded. During discussion, MPT Kulpa-Eddy thanked Pepco for their prompt responsiveness after the previous worksession. The motion passed unanimously.

- c. County Climate Action Plan Comment Letter: Mayor Dewey reviewed the Climate Action Plan process. She also briefly reviewed what the CAP plan entails. CM Sweep requested a change that changes one reference to “Climate Action Plan” to “CAP” as was previously identified in the letter. CM Brittan-Powell moved to approve the climate action plan letter as amended. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- d. M-NCPPC Community Center Use Agreement Extension for Men’s League Basketball: Mayor Dewey reviewed the need for the extension, given that the current Memorandum of Understanding is expiring at the end of the month. This resolution grants the Mayor the authority to execute a one year extension of the current terms of the agreement. CM Sweep moved to approve Resolution 12-2021. CM Papanikolas seconded. During discussion MPT Kulpa-Eddy expressed gratitude for the language change recognizing the Men’s League as a Town organization. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Resident & Community Comments

Residents could also comment by calling (301) 474-9570 or emailing Mayor Dewey at adewey@berwynheightsmd.gov

A resident emailed the mayor expressing a continuing issue with the sound. TM Allen reported that Wordly translated transcriptions are available. CM Papanikolas expressed concerns about issues with the microphone. TM Allen reported that staff are seeking quotes on replacing the entire AV system.

Adjournment

CM Sweep moved to adjourn the meeting. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned 8:12 pm.