

# 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

**Worksession Minutes**

**July 19, 2021 | 7:00 p.m.**

This meeting was be 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 301-474-9570 or e-mailing Mayor Dewey at [adewey@berwynheightsmd.gov](about:blank)

**Call to Order**

Mayor Dewey Called the meeting to Order at 7:00 PM. Present were Mayor Amanda Dewey, Mayor Pro Tempore Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Town Manager Laura Allen, Town Clerk Melanie Friesen. Jennifer Hawkins of the Prince George’s County 311 System was also present for a portion of the meeting. CM Chris Brittan-Powell joined the meeting shortly after the Call to Order. CM Jason Papanikolas and CM Ethan Sweep had excused absences.

1. **Announcements**

Mayor Dewey encouraged residents to be vaccinated in light of the increasing prevalence of the Delta variant.

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Dewey called for a motion to approve the agenda. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the agenda. CM Brittan-Powell seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously (3-0).

1. **Discussion Items**
2. **311 Presentation**

Jennifer Hawkins of Prince George’s County 311 gave a presentation on the County’s new “311 on the Go!” program (replacing CountyClick 311) and the coming upgrades. Ms. Hawkins reported considerable improvement in the wait times for calls to be answered by 311 over the last year. She also reported that there will be a new app and service that will be launching in September. She highlighted Community Walks and encouraged Berwyn Heights to consider scheduling a walk with the County Executive. Ms. Hawkins showed several examples of how using “311 on the Go!” had directly impacted several communities. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked where the closest hub site to Berwyn Heights will be located and how the County relays information to Berwyn Heights if a 311 call should be addressed by the Town instead of the County. Ms. Hawkins explained that hubs will be at Social Services Centers. She also explained that the new system will alert users that they are in a municipality and provide the appropriate contact information. Mayor Dewey asked about tracking service requests. Ms. Hawkins said that in the new system there will be a way to create an account and track a request. Mayor Dewey also asked about how social service need calls are handled by 311. Ms. Hawkins explained that they are routed to the County Social Services line 211.

1. **ARPA Survey Questions**

Mayor Dewey reminded everyone that the American Rescue Plan Act is Federal Covid Relief money that will be received by the Town. This is a significant opportunity for the Town. Attached to the agenda is an outline developed over the last several worksessions involving ARPA discussions on how the Council plans to engage the community, giving them opportunity to voice their thoughts on how the funding should be used. TM Allen presented her report and requested feedback on the questions she had provided, adding that she recommends including some educational information about what ineligible expenses are. She also asked if the Council had interest in collecting any demographic information. Mayor Dewey started the discussion stating that she liked the ranked choice questions, adding that she was in favor of collecting demographic data that could be compared to Census data. MPT Kulpa-Eddy expressed concern with collecting demographic data. She also stated that she was more in favor of open-ended questions. CM Brittan-Powell stated he thought demographics should be placed at the end of the survey and made optional. CM Brittan-Powell also indicated that the questions should be broad to allow for the most open responses. Mayor Dewey stated that she believes this to be an opportunity for education and that there will be a second round of questions that can get more detailed and granular. MPT Kulpa-Eddy reiterated her desire to keep things as open as possible. CM Brittan-Powell expressed the desire to have the questions be personal. Mayor Dewey stated that from a social science standpoint that less personal questions will help get answers to questions with social stigma attached. The Council spent several more minutes discussing the value in the various points. Mayor Dewey asked TM Allen if she felt she had a clear directive from Council. TM Allen expressed that she did. She also reminded Council and residents that the Town is in a position to work in conjunction with other entities to reach the goals that are determined by the process of community engagement. Mayor Dewey summarized the discussion by suggesting that not narrowing where the money should be spent would get closer to CM Brittan-Powell’s goals of determining personal impact of the pandemic and incorporating language specific to Berwyn Heights gets closer to determining where in the community the money should be spent.

Council discussed the schedule of community engagement. They determined that a comment box or white board could be placed at Town Hall during a specific period since National Night Out will not be an in-person event.

1. **MML Conference Report-Verbal**

*MPT Kulpa-Eddy* reported that she attended the Academy for Excellence in Local Governance Graduate Course in “Leadership Development and Human Cognition”. She felt it was less practical and more cerebral. She also attended workshops on infrastructure grants, minimizing financial risks, and volunteer engagement. She volunteered at the registration desk and visited with exhibitors to gather information on more grants, training classes and parks & rec activity opportunities. . She received a link to attend the virtual sessions and today attended a seminar on broadband infrastructure. She also watched the recorded session from the June meeting on ARPA funds that included an updated FAQ page. She inquired about a conflict-of-interest policy that she learned about during the ARPA session. TM Allen confirmed after discussion that the Town Attorney has stated the Town’s policies meet the requirements to receive the APRA funds. She also attended a Town Hall with Senator Ben Cardin, during which she learned that the Maryland Team of Senators and Congressional Representatives is working to get the FBI Headquarters relocation project back on track.

*Mayor Dewey* reported that one of the values that she sees from MML is that she has never encountered a problem that the Town has that another municipality hasn’t encountered. The challenge for this conference was the ability to dive deep, due to sessions being cut in half for covid safety. She attended the Waste Management session and had the opportunity to talk with the speaker afterwards and was able to learn more. She attended an Elections Consideration workshop and how different municipalities managed their elections during covid. She attended a session on building an inclusive community; CM Sweep was a speaker at this session which focused on racial and other equity in the community and among staff. She attended the Mayor’s Association session, which focused on the American Rescue Plan Act. As part of the virtual conference, she is leading a Young Municipal Leaders session on covid lessons learned.

*TM Allen* shared that she attended a small communities session on ARPA, the building inclusive community session with Mayor Dewey and CM Sweep, and the volunteer engagement session with MPT Kulpa-Eddy. She also attended the waste management session. One of the key takeaways from that was that the City of Hyattsville has a very successful relationship with Prince George’s County in integrating people with a criminal record into the workforce, and she looks forward to working with the County to build a similar relationship. As she attended in the place of CM Papanikolas, she also took on his volunteer assignments.

*CM Brittan-Powell* was in the midst of the virtual conference. One advantage of the virtual session is being able to view all the recorded sessions from the live conference. He appreciated the Ask Me Anything session with City and Town Managers with years of experience. He does not believe that it was as rich a conference as it has been in the past and that there was a considerable focus on ARPA.

1. **Department Reports**

*Mayor Dewey* began by highlighting the Town Social. She reminded people on behalf of CM Sweep that the street sweeper will be in Town next week and to not leave vehicles on the street if at all possible. National Night Out has been determined to be National Night In and will be a parade on August 3rd; she thanked the Police for organizing that. She highlighted the Federal Child Tax Credit and that you can learn more by going to childtaxcredit.gov.

*MPT Kulpa-Eddy* received an email announcing an opportunity that opened on April 16th from PGCPS for late lottery applications for immersion programs for the 2021/22 school year. You can learn more by visiting pgcps.org/lottery. The detailed site plan for Beltway Plaza will be available on July 20th, from noon to 1PM at the Shamanic Center in the AMC Corridor. She also highlighted the Town Social, mentioning there will be prepackaged snacks and drinks, and to bring your own chair. The Berwyn Heights Education Advisory Committee will meet on Monday, July 26, to discuss their mission statement. The Historical Committee meets on July 28, with officer nominations due at that meeting. The Four Cities meeting is also July 28, hosted by Berwyn Heights, even though it is virtual. She listened in to the Redistricting Committee for Prince George’s County meeting and there was discussion about the possibility of getting a speaker to discuss redistricting at the Four Cities meeting, or using a video presentation instead.

*CM Brittan-Powell* asked questions on outstanding items. First, he asked about purchasing property on Ballew Avenue. TM Allen stated that she checked with the Police Chief, and he was not aware of any property on Ballew that is for sale. She suggested that this was probably best discussed in executive session which the Council is allowed to do. His next question was about if more benches and trash cans can be added along the Indian Creek Trail section that falls within Berwyn Heights. TM Allen said that she will be working with Parks and Planning (M-NCPPC) on that. CM Brittan-Powell asked about the possibility of a Town Code or Ordinance regarding what cameras on private property are allowed to capture. Mayor Dewey asked for clarification on the subject and then suggested that this be added to a future agenda to gauge interest from the Council. He asked about the plans for Park and Planning to accomplish more stormwater run-off projects like the completed project at the end of Nevada St. He understood that there were further sites to be completed. Mayor Dewey said she was unaware of any plans to do more projects like this in Town as the Nevada Street site was chosen as part of a small pilot program. He asked if there was boundary mapping being done in Town in regards to Sports Park. TM Allen said that this was being done by Park and Planning to determine ownership of the trees CM Brittan-Powell brought to her attention. The trees were determined to belong to the Town and were evaluated for safety. Finally, he followed up on the language of the signs at Town Hall, indicating that he feels the language to be too broad in forbidding access. TM Allen stated that the language was determined in part with the Police Chief to meet standards for enforcement and to limit Town liability in case of an accident. CM Brittan-Powell reiterated his concerns about the language and TM Allen stated that the signs were put in place to help protect the small children who had been playing in the parking lot after a couple of near accidents.

1. **Resident & Community Comments**

There were no resident comments.

**Adjournment**

MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to adjourn the meeting. CM Brittan-Powell seconded. After no discussion the motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:55PM.