



Town of Berwyn Heights

5700 Berwyn Road
Berwyn Heights, MD 20740
Tel. (301) 474-5000
Fax (301) 474-5002

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 March 7, 2022| 7:00 p.m. Council Chambers

Call to Order

Mayor Dewey called the meeting to order at 7PM. Present were Mayor Amanda Dewey, Mayor Pro Tempore Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Councilmember Jason Papanikolas, Councilmember Chris Brittan-Powell, Councilmember Ethan Sweep, Town Manager Laura Allen and Town Clerk Melanie Friesen. Also present were Danielle Barnard and Jatnna Gomez from the University of Maryland SAFE Center. The meeting was also attended by several residents of the community.

1. Announcements

Mayor Dewey opened the meeting with the announcement that the County has lifted the mask mandate indoors. She reminded everyone that businesses are able to set their own rules and asked that people be respectful of the decisions of others in regard to mask wearing. She also updated on the status of the County Redistricting map appeal. The Maryland State Court of Appeals upheld the ruling of the lower court which overturned the County Council's Redistricting Map and reinstated the map that was proposed by the Redistricting Commission.

2. Approval of Agenda

CM Brittan-Powell moved to approve the agenda, CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion Items

a. UMD Safe Center

Danielle Barnard and Jatnna Gomez from the UMD SAFE center presented on the mission and services of the organization. The Center provides specialized services around human trafficking including trauma-informed services for all survivors. The bilingual services are free to all survivors. Through a multidisciplinary approach, they provide trauma therapy, human trafficking prevention services, survivor support groups, comprehensive legal services, advocacy, economic empowerment, workforce development, assistance in applying for school, scholarships, industry training, transitional housing, and partner with AmeriCorps Vista. After the presentation, Mayor Dewey asked if Ms. Barnard and Ms. Gomez could provide background context on human trafficking in our area. They replied that human trafficking intersects with other power-based violence, and by definition includes force, fraud, and coercion. CM Sweep asked if human trafficking is something that could be identified in the community. Ms. Gomez explained that his question is really answered best by another presentation that they bring to communities called Human Trafficking 101 and that providing a short answer would give incomplete information that could do more harm than good. CM Sweep asked how clients are referred to the center. Ms. Gomez shared that they get

referrals from a number of sources including attorneys, law enforcement, non-profits, and others. The SAFE center aims to be low-barrier program to reach as many people as possible. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked about how the SAFE center aims to partner with Berwyn Heights. Ms. Gomez explained that it really depends on the Town's infrastructure. They could be involved with National Night Out, PTA groups, etc., as they aim to tailor outreach to the community. Resident Meg Miller asked how long the Center has been in existence. Ms. Gomez stated it had been 6 years, but the founder has 20 years of experience working with trafficking victims. Ms. Miller asked if there has been an uptick in trafficking during the pandemic. Ms. Gomez replied that there has been an increase in internet-based trafficking. Resident Mike Attick asked how many people percentagewise in the county are involved in trafficking. Ms. Gomez explained that this is what the taskforces are trying to find out, that trafficking is a covert crime and can only be based on people who come forward. CM Brittan-Powell asked if there are prevention programs for people during transitional times in their lives. Ms. Gomez stated that yes, there are programs, for example, keeping youth busy during the summers to reduce vulnerabilities.

b. HB 1083 Letter of Support-

Mayor Dewey explained this letter of support is identical to the letter of support for SB376 that the Council supported in February. This is the same bill, but for the House version of the bill at the request of the bill's sponsor. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked about the previous letter, which was approved at the February 9, 2022 Town Meeting but could not be located on the agenda from that meeting. Clerk Friesen replied that was due to the agenda being amended and the letter added that evening. It was stated the SB376 letter of support will be added to the amended February Town Meeting agenda. Consensus was to send the letter of support for HB1083 as well.

c. Project Rubric- CM Papanikolas

Mayor Dewey invited CM Papanikolas to discuss the rubric he created. CM Papanikolas explained that this would be used for the APRA projects, if approved, as a way to score grant applications. It would provide structure for people who would be submitting the proposals to us, as well as providing a structure to evaluate the applications and increase transparency in decision making. He pointed out that there are no values currently assigned to the subject areas. Mayor Dewey asked how he views the process working. CM Papanikolas replied that he would presume that we had solicited for proposals in the past. TM Allen clarified that in some instances you'd like to solicit for RFQ (requests for qualifications) such as mental health providers where there are numerous providers. Mayor Dewey asked who would be evaluating the proposals. CM Papanikolas stated that some of the Council members would likely be assigned to evaluate proposals. CM Brittan-Powell asked about how Community Support, one of the subject areas, would be evaluated. CM Papanikolas stated that in other rubrics he has seen, "community support" isn't a subjective evaluation, rather a checkbox to show the application contains letters of support. Mayor Dewey expressed concern that having just one or two people review proposals could result in skewed scoring. Options to alleviate the potential issues were discussed. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked if this rubric was aimed only at ARPA projects. CM Papanikolas said yes, that this would not apply to other grants that the Town is asked for. Mayor Dewey stated that she's trying to understand the action plan. CM Papanikolas suggested that the rubric could be turned into an application form. CM Brittan-Powell asked if approved projects would be provided a feedback site where residents of the community will be able to give feedback before moving forward. CM Papanikolas stated that he did not envision a site like that as part

of this process. CM Sweep stated that he would not like to have CM Papanikolas attempt to create a grading scale. Mayor Dewey stated that she also would not like to have it weighted. CM Papanikolas had no position on a grading scale; that was a Council decision. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked CM Papanikolas for a deadline by when he'd like to receive comments and specific questions about language in the rubric. Resident Mike Attick asked about why these haven't been publicized. Mayor Dewey shared that the project and process have been made public and are part of the public agenda packet every time ARPA funding is discussed in meetings.

d. ARPA Project Discussion

Mayor Dewey opened discussion. CM Brittan-Powell asked how dollar amounts were allocated. TM Allen explained that dollar amounts that are written in green are suggested dollar amounts that staff thought Council might want to adjust based on their preference. Dollar amounts that are in black are amounts that have been researched and have hard numbers to back up the amount listed. MPT Kulpa-Eddy expressed a desire to prioritize emergency assistance for residents now and preserve the remainder for a major project that would combine the Police Department and Town Hall into a single building. She also expressed that she believes hiring a public health expert would cost more than the \$15k allocated in this draft. There was Council discussion about the idea of a building project. Mayor Dewey expressed concern over the timeline of such a large project. CM Sweep pointed out that there appear to be four grant-type items on the list. He suggested that the Council focus on those while gathering more information on the potential building project. TM Allen encouraged the Council to include premium pay to staff as part of the more immediate needs. Ultimately, Council made 3 lists for the projects, categorizing them for immediate response, for Fiscal Year 2023, and for further study. Resident Meg Miller asked for clarification on what fiscal year it is and stated her support for grant and direct resident support in this fiscal year, with other items falling in FY23 and for the building project to be in further study. CM Sweep asked about addressing educational issues. MPT Kulpa-Eddy expressed a desire to wait to see how Prince George's County Public Schools spends their ARPA funds. Council had a discussion on executive training. They decided to move that item to the general fund. They further discussed mental health training for police officers. They addressed stormwater management, including that the engineer hired would be required to provide free or discounted support to residents. Ms. Miller asked if the Town would need to work with the County on water projects for the permitting process. The Council discussed grant related items and if there would be a requirement to have non-profits spend the grant money on programs that would only be operated in Berwyn Heights, or if the grant money could be spent on programs that had Berwyn Heights in their support area but included other communities in their service area. There was discussion about reducing the amount of suggested funding for FY22. Council decided to allocate \$25k to project A1, \$60k for B2, \$25k for B3, \$50k for C1 in FY22, with \$175k for D1 in FY23, with F1-3 and 5,6 at the suggested amounts also in FY23. They identified project D4 as needing further study and to review in FY23. Resident Mike Attick stated his concern that starting a stormwater project in FY23 would mean that the project runs out of time before the ARPA deadlines. He asked about other properties for the Town Hall/Police department project, stating that the current location can't survive another remodel.

4. Department Reports

Mayor Dewey reported on several upcoming meetings, including the Town Meeting on March 9, the Rec Council meeting that will be a hybrid meeting on the 8th, the virtual Green Team meeting, and an upcoming Green Team event that will be in person on Saturday. PGCMA will

be meeting on Thursday. She also reported that as part of the MML Legislative Committee, there are no new bills of interest being introduced. She reported that they are still monitoring many bills. She stated that it does not look like the Police Accountability Board bill, which would allow for municipalities to convene their own accountability boards, will likely be going anywhere, but that the Highway User Revenue changes look positive as do the bills for the streetlight changes and constant yield tax rate. She also encouraged youth to look into the Summer Youth Enrichment Program for summer job training and job placement. Application deadline is March 31. She highlighted that the State Youth Advisory Board is accepting applications for a two year term. Finally, she reported that Pepco is offering additional rebates for those who are recycling old refrigerators and freezers, with a \$75 refund.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy shared that there are a number of scholarships, summer camps and other activities being offered in the County and that details will be shared as an announcement on the website. She also mentioned a WSSC “Protect Our Source” art contest for High Schoolers. The deadline is March 18. Lastly, she reported on the Maryland Public Schools Multi-year strategic plan survey and that it is open to all, regardless of their status with schools.

CM Papanikolas stated there have been several calls about roosters in Town. He reviewed those roosters are forbidden in residential areas of Prince George’s County. In Berwyn Heights, the Town has several ordinances that deal with this, including Ordinance 101 pertaining to nuisance animals.

CM Brittan-Powell shared that he will give a full update during the Wednesday Town Meeting.

CM Sweep stated that there are no changes to the trash schedule this month. He responded to a question from CM Brittan-Powell and stated that there are no Spring leaf pickups. He also responded to MPT Kulpa-Eddy about the Greenbelt Road Corridor Plan, stating that the next meeting is March 23.

5. Resident & Community Comments

Resident Mike Attick asked about the staffing levels in Public Works. TM Allen replied that they are looking for two full time employees.

Adjournment

CM Brittan-Powell moved to adjourn the meeting. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:44PM