



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

Work Session Minutes May 2, 2022| 7:00 p.m. Council Chamber

Call to Order

Mayor Dewey called the meeting to order at 7PM. Present were Mayor Pro Tempore Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Councilmember Jason Papanikolas and Councilmember Ethan Sweep. Councilmember Chris Brittan-Powell joined by phone. Town Manager Laura Allen and Town Clerk Melanie Friesen were present as were students from the University of Maryland for their presentation, Chief Kenneth Antolik, and Residents.

1. Announcements

Mayor Dewey reminded all of the upcoming Town election. MPT Kulpa-Eddy shared an early Happy 101st Birthday to Howard Johnson. She also gave thanks to all teachers to celebrate Teacher Appreciation week.

2. Approval of Agenda

MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by CM Sweep. CM Brittan-Powell stated he would like to add discussion on the AV proposal, a brief discussion for a possible town committee on community engagement, a discussion on a Town wide voter registration drive and encouragement, and the possibility of adding a committee to review the Town's response to COVID.

CM Brittan-Powell moved to approve the agenda as amended. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded. After no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion Items

A. CCC Student Presentation

Students from the University of Maryland, all Information Science majors, shared they were continuing the tree inventory project from Fall 2021. They had three objectives: to finish/progress a public tree inventory map for Berwyn Heights, find a software alternative to ArcGIS which would be free/low cost, and create a dynamically editable map which could be used for field work. They reviewed the project status, stating that they have added the majority of the Spring 2022 tree data, including a feature that can sort trees by species, and have classified them based on the State's designation of the species as invasive, non-invasive, or Maryland native. They shared some of the challenges of the project, including being Information Science majors, and not having the tree knowledge to work independently of Public Works. However, the map created can be edited from a mobile device bridging the disconnect between field and technical work. During the question period, Mayor Dewey asked if the map can be viewed but protected from editing, which the students replied it can be. CM Sweep asked what they were classifying as invasive species. Students replied that they relied on guidance from the Maryland Department of Natural

Resources. TM Allen thanked them for all their work and shared gratitude from Director Pudner. She also asked if the students would share how to edit the map, which they will in their final deliverable. Mayor Dewey confirmed that new data fields could be added to the map.

B. BHEAC Grant Proposal

Mayor Dewey invited MPT Kulpa-Eddy to discuss the Berwyn Heights Education Advisory Committee grant. MPT Kulpa-Eddy explained that there was initially \$4,000 for education funding, divided into two rounds. She reminded everyone that the first round of \$2000 went to Berwyn Heights Elementary School for the school garden. This round of \$2000 in funding is proposed to go to Parkdale High School for the Senior banquet, as the current year Seniors have not had the same opportunity for fundraising over the last 2 years due to Covid restrictions. She clarified that this is a one-time grant. Mayor Dewey asked if this was time sensitive and needed support prior to the Town Meeting. MPT Kulpa-Eddy stated that she did not believe so. CMs Brittan-Powell and Sweep shared general support for the grant. CM Papanikolas stated that his son would directly benefit from the grant and therefore he will recuse himself from participating in the discussion or voting.

C. Truck Traffic in Town

Mayor Dewey stated that there have been resident questions about the truck traffic in town. Chief Antolik spoke stating that trucks greater than 20,000 lbs or more are prohibited from cutting through Town, but that most large trucks in Town are here for legitimate business purposes, such as deliveries. He further stated that the heavy trucks on Ballew Avenue are only using the street for transit. CM Brittan-Powell asked if cameras could be utilized to produce tickets for trucks that are cutting through Town. Chief Antolik explained while such technology exists, it is not legal to use at the time in Maryland. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked what Chief Antolik recommended for mitigation on the issue. He stated that the best thing to do is call the non-emergency number and report these sightings to the police department and they will investigate. CM Brittan-Powell asked if there were ways to make the roads undesirable for trucks to cut through town. Chief Antolik explained that would be a Council decision to make infrastructure changes that would make it more difficult for cut through traffic. Chief Antolik reiterated that most truck traffic in Town has legitimate business in the community, but that repeat offenders cutting through Town are being ticketed.

D. Council Rule 2 Discussion

Council engaged a third round of discussion on the rewrite of Council Rule 2. CM Papanikolas reviewed that this is an attempt to provide new councilmembers a high-level overview of the job descriptions. He stated that he removed a section on chastisement and instead referred to the Code of Conduct, Ordinance 124. MPT Kulpa-Eddy requested a correction in the PRECA footnote as well as in section 3, that makes reference to the Town Manager as a political appointee when the position “serves at the pleasure of the Council”. TM Allen stated that during the codification review process that will occur during FY 23, Council Rules that really should be ordinances will be noted.

E. A/V proposal review

CM Brittan-Powell shared that he did not feel the Council had adequately addressed the needs of space, further stating that he believes the Council Chambers could be reconfigured into offices and that the Council could have their meetings in the Senior Center, which would require a different configuration for the AV system. There was Council discussion on the portability of the AV equipment that is being purchased. Mayor Dewey reviewed that

Council has already voted to authorize TM Allen to enter into a contract for the AV upgrade. MPT Kulpa-Eddy shared that Council Chambers are not just used by the Council, but as a meeting space throughout the week for different staff departments. There was discussion about the practicality and need of the converting the Chambers into offices. Mayor Dewey took a poll and the Council was in favor of proceeding with the AV project as planned.

F. Committee for Community Engagement

CM Brittan-Powell shared that he felt discussions during Candidate's Night brought up a desire to revive community spirit and would like to engage a committee to bring that to fruition. CM Sweep stated that the 2018 Quality of Life Commission made many recommendations that are still being integrated and could be used without the need for a new committee. Mayor Dewey expressed that she'd like any new group be inclusive of both newer and older residents. CM Papanikolas suggested that this item should be picked up by the new Council on June 6th.

G. Town-wide voter registration drive

CM Brittan-Powell expressed that he would like to see the Council promote voter engagement. Mayor Dewey stated that it can be tricky for elected officials to be involved in voter registration drives, but community groups can engage in that activity. She continued that the BHEAC may like to be involved as they have already expressed interest in civic education. CM Papanikolas suggested that the new immigrant community group may be interested. CM Sweep suggested supporting one of the existing non-profits that exist for this purpose.

H. Committee to review Covid-response

CM Brittan-Powell expressed a desire to have a committee put together in order to review how the Town did in its response to Covid. MPT Kulpa-Eddy stated that MML will be having a workshop on this topic. CM Papanikolas stated that he'd like a series of public meetings to discuss the subject and Mayor Dewey suggested the inclusion of the NW/EP Committee. CM Sweep wanted to know what the metrics are, what data will be provided, and if the responses would be objective or subjective. CM Papanikolas stated that phrasing is important on how survey questions are asked.

4. Department Reports

Mayor Dewey reviewed that the Berwyn Heights Town Council election is tomorrow from 7 am to 7 pm in the Senior Center, and everyone can vote for up to 5 candidates. The Maryland Municipal League Legislative Committee met for the last time this session, and will be publishing a debrief. She shared the CDMA met on April 27th, and the businesses present approved the PSTD budget. She and TM Allen had met with Denise Ross from the County for a monthly check-in. She also shared about the virtual NW/EP meeting coming up and that the Greenbelt Rd draft report should be available next week, which will open another comment period. Details will be posted to the Town's website.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy: MPT Kulpa-Eddy shared that she attended the Maryland Municipal League Parks and Recreation Association and a "Municipalities in the Know" webinar presented by the County's Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement. They will be holding a webinar for the public titled "Verify Before You Buy" on May 19, focusing on the purchase of residential properties. She also mentioned an "Older Americans Month" resource fair, free CPR and AED classes, a strategic planning survey from the Maryland State Board of Education and grant opportunities for the arts. She shared about the upcoming Berwyn Heights Day activities and vendors.

CM Papanikolas: CM Papanikolas shared about the Berwyn Heights Property Tax credit

program on page 8 of the May Bulletin, and encouraged reading page 30 to learn about the proper storing of building materials.

CM Brittan-Powell: CM Brittan-Powell mentioned Berwyn Heights Day and the pancake breakfast, and the new elevator. He also shared that staff have been working hard on the budget and that the budget will be approved at the Town Meeting.

CM Sweep: CM Sweep stated the street sweeper was coming into Town in preparation for Berwyn Heights Day. He also shared that there are very limited changes to the trash schedule in May with the only changes around Memorial Day. He reminded people who participated in no-mow April that they might need to raise their mower deck to handle longer grass and to direct yard clippings back into the yard, not the street.

5. Resident & Community Comments

There were no resident or community comments.

6. Adjournment

CM Papanikolas moved to adjourn the meeting. CM Sweep seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM.