



# Town of Berwyn Heights

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## Minutes Budget Worksession May 11, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Present were Mayor Cheye Calvo, Mayor Pro Tem (MPT) Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, and Councilmembers (CMs) Patricia Dennison, Chris Rasmussen and Anthony Schreiber. Also present were Town Administrator (TA) Jessica Cowles, and Clerk Kerstin Harper.

### 1. Mayor

**Announcements:** There were none.

### 2. Budget

TA Cowles gave an overview of the latest adjustments to the FY 2016 Town budget.

**Insurance:** No changes are needed in the insurance line items with the exception of General Liability & Property Insurance from LGIT. An additional \$2,500 is needed to cover an increase in the caps to claims recently passed by the State legislature. The \$115,000 budgeted for health insurance in FY 2016 is expected to cover the costs of filling currently vacant positions and any vacancies throughout the fiscal year.

Mayor Calvo asked if there is enough cushion in this line item to pay for the increase in general liability. TA Cowles advised against it because the family status of yet to be hired staff is not known. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked if the money left in the 'kitty' could be used to cover this cost. TA Cowles said the money in the kitty was used to help offset a \$4,000 decline in State police aid since the budget was introduced. She would look to pull money from the workers compensation line item, where preliminary quotes suggest a cushion of \$8,000.

After further discussion, CM Rasmussen moved and CM Dennison seconded to offset the police aid deficit by taking \$2,000 from the kitty and \$2,000 from the salary pool, which the Council increased substantially this year. The motion passed 5 to 0. CM Rasmussen also moved, and CM Dennison seconded to reduce the workers compensation line item by \$2,500 to fund the general liability insurance increase. The motion passed 5 to 0.

**HUR, MSEC grants:** TA Cowles said that Highway User Revenues could go up by 1% to 2% depending

on how the Governor's additional one-time grant funds will be allocated. The Town also expects to receive a Maryland Smart Energy grant of \$25,000 for upgrades to the Town Center's HVAC system. Mayor Calvo commented that additional revenues do not have a limit but should be accounted for in the budget amendment. TA Cowles suggested to allocate MSEC grant funds to the building & grounds appropriation in the Town Center budget. CM Schreiber so moved. CM Dennison seconded. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Demolitions: TA Cowles noted that demolition of 2 condemned houses are estimated to cost between \$30,000 and \$35,000 and that the County is ready to go forward when the Town so decides. Noticing the demolition takes between 30 and 45 days. Mayor Calvo said that the demolition should occur as soon as possible and be paid from the FY 2015 budget, with the appropriation listed in the budget amendment.

TA Cowles said that the Safe Routes to School sidewalks project is inching towards SHA approval, as are the emergency generators. She asked if the Council wants to set money aside in the budget amendment. Mayor Calvo said, if the contracts can be signed before this fiscal year ends, the projects should be paid for with FY 2015 funds, if need be by purchase order.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked if an additional \$10,000 for street repairs in the Public Works budget has been appropriated in the FY 2016 budget. TA Cowles confirmed this and said the money is being pulled from the HUR receipts. CM Rasmussen asked what the overall increase is in the FY 2016 operating budget. Mayor Calvo said it is approximately 1%.

FY 2015 budget amendments: Mayor Calvo thanked TA Cowles for providing an early draft of the amendments to be adopted at the June 10 Town meeting. TA Cowles said that the draft represents a high-level summary, which is based on the year-end estimates of actual expenditures detailed in the enclosed budget sheets. The amendments reflect the disbursement to departments of merit increases and cost of living adjustments (COLAs), corrects the public safety reserve, and reduces the amount to be pulled from surplus to \$96,000 from the \$101,000 budgeted. Mayor Calvo offered several corrections to the presentation and content of the budget amendments. Speed camera revenues should show \$79,000 from current year revenues and \$220,000 from the speed camera reserve.

TA Cowles asked how the Council wants to proceed with the demolition of the condemned properties. The Council agreed to fund up to \$35,000 for the demolitions from surplus in the FY 2015 budget with a budget amendment.

TA Cowles asked if the Council still plans to pay \$5,500 for the FBI promotional video from the cable reserve in this year's budget. Mayor Calvo corrected that the Council had agreed to contribute \$5,000 and give the City of Greenbelt discretion to manage the contract. No consent was given to spend an additional \$500 for legal review of the contract. Mayor Calvo further proposed to appropriate a given amount of money from the cable reserve for any cable TV related expenditures that might occur in a given fiscal year. With the recently amended Comcast franchise agreement this can include salaries. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved and CM Schreiber seconded to appropriate \$12,000 in FY 2015 from the cable reserve. The motion passed 5 to 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Kerstin Harper