



Town of Berwyn Heights

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Minutes Worksession February 19, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:13 p.m. Present were Mayor Calvo, Mayor Pro Tem (MPT) Wilkinson, Councilmembers (CMs) Almoguera, Dennison and Kulpa-Eddy. Also present was Acting Director of Public Works Adrian Lockley and Clerk Harper, as well as Neighborhood Watch/Emergency Preparedness Chair Ron Shane and citizens. Town Administrator (TA) Murphy participated via Skype.

1. Mayor

Agenda: An executive session was added.

Announcements: Mayor Calvo will attend the Greenbelt Middle School talent show tomorrow night.

Calendar: No changes were made to the council calendar. CM Almoguera will be absent at the March Town meeting.

Minutes: On a motion by CM Kulpa-Eddy and second by MPT Wilkinson, the February 4 worksession minutes were approved 5 to 0.

Department reports: MPT Wilkinson said that he met with SHA officials for a site visit. They evaluated the places where sidewalks are proposed to be built in connection with the safe routes to school grant (SRTS). Representatives from the Berwyn Presbyterian Church participated. They agreed that a sidewalk on the east side of 63rd Avenue approaching Greenbelt Road is needed, and promised to work with the Town on an easement. The 8700 block of 62nd Avenue approaching the back of Berwyn Heights Elementary School may not qualify for SRTS funding because a sidewalk must be ADA compliant. Handicapped students, however, cannot enter the school grounds from this end because it is only accessible by a staircase.

CM Dennison noted that the Historical Committee's Presidents' Day event went well. Mayor Calvo said that Kyle Snyder has started working as a budget assistant to the Town Administrator.

Citizen comments: Mayor Calvo received a comment from a resident whose vehicle had been flagged because of an unpaid parking ticket. He also received comments on the budget and sidewalks.

Jeff Gourley, Berwyn Road, thanked a young woman named Nancy, who helped his frail mother get Kharper

back into her house after she had fallen on her porch. As he does not know her, he wished to thank her publicly on camera in the hope that she is watching.

Mike Attick, 62nd Avenue, asked how much money has so far been spent on sidewalks from the public safety reserve. Mayor Calvo said that, apart from the salary for a part-time officer to administer the speed camera program, approximately \$50,000 has been spent for surveying. Mr. Attick asked if the Town has sent a letter regarding the Branchville Fire Department staffing cuts. Mayor Calvo replied that the Council will sign a Four Cities Coalition letter opposing the cuts after the County's fire chief has met with College Park and Greenbelt. Mike Attick said he wants to make it known that he is not against building sidewalks, only against using the public safety reserve to build them. He thinks that money should be spent on other public safety projects, such as emergency generators, or the police and fire departments. Priority 1 sidewalks could have been funded with the safe routes to school grant instead.

Mr. Attick further suggested that the Council consider raising the fines for building permit violations. The contractors renovating a house on Ruatan Street should have received higher than \$25 fines for continuing to ignore the Town's permit requirements. Other revenue could be generated by raising the speed camera fines to \$75 and the personal property tax rate. Some budget cuts might be avoided if the public safety reserve were used for public safety agencies. Mayor Calvo noted that the speed camera fines are set by statute at \$40 per violation.

Public Works budget request: Acting Director of Public Works, Adrian Lockley presented his budget request. He first gave an overview of the department's mission and goals. He has instituted a facilities rating system to enhance the Town's physical appeal. The condition of buildings and facilities will be continuously evaluated so that they can be maintained at a minimum "C" service level. Graffiti will be removed within 48 hours, and a monthly service schedule will be followed to keep up public parks and rights-of-way. Other goals include implementing more energy efficient and environmentally friendly technologies where possible, maintaining a safe and reliable fleet of vehicles at reduced cost with in-house maintenance, and starting a proactive road preservation program through crack-sealing. This spring, the department plans to spend \$1,500 to rent a crack sealing machine for a month and rehabilitate the Town's road surfaces.

Mr. Lockley continued with a summary of last year's accomplishments. They include transitioning the Town to energy efficient lighting using grants and Pepco incentive rebates; completing leaf collection without temporary staff; implementing an employee of the month appreciation program; concluding an agreement to obtain road salt from SHA; and completing the paving of the Public Works yard.

Proceeding to the FY 2014 budget request, Mr. Lockley said that he composed a regular budget as well as alternatives with a 5% cut and a 10% cut. In the regular budget, the following changes are proposed:

- +\$1,000 in dues & conferences. Mr. Lockley plans to attend the National Public Works Association conference for leadership training. Mayor Calvo said that the travel appropriation would need to go up as well to reflect travel expenditures associated with the conference.
- +\$7,000 in equipment rental. DPW plans to rent state of the art crack sealing equipment to perform preventative maintenance on roads.
- +\$2,500 in street repair materials. Purchase of "super-stretch" crack sealant.
- +\$1,000 in street signs. Purchase of preformed thermoplastic to mark crosswalks.
- +\$15,400 in temporary help. This money has been shifted from the salary appropriation where one position will be cut, saving \$40,000.

The changes made to the budget to obtain a 5% reduction are as follows:

- -\$1,000 in network & software support. Purchased needed IT equipment last year; this year mostly maintenance costs. Plan to reduce use of IT support.
- -\$700 in electricity for DPW building. Reflects trend of recent years. Use of more energy-efficient lighting.
- -\$700 in gas for DPW building. Use of new high efficiency heating system.
- -\$40,000 in salary. Eliminating one vacant position
- -\$3,000 in FICA associated with one full time position
- -\$6,000 in vehicle maintenance & repair. Preventative maintenance done in-house.
- -\$500 in training. Forgoing DPW director training.
- -\$1,400 in capital outlay <500. Zeroing out miscellaneous equipment purchases.
- -\$5,400 in capital outlay >500. Zeroing out Town beautification projects.
(This line item contains fund balance from the FY 2013 budget)
- -\$1,000 in leaf collection. Reflecting in-house savings.
- -\$250 in recycling postage. Zeroed out postage as fliers can be posted on website or e-mailed.
- -\$2,000 in recycling miscellaneous. Zeroed out printing cost for flyers.

To achieve a 10% reduction in expenditures, the following additional changes are proposed:

- -\$500 in building supplies.
- -\$1,000 in building maintenance & repairs.
- -\$500 in capital outlay >500 pertaining to building maintenance.
- -\$1,000 in building equipment. Most office equipment is relatively new.
- -\$1,000 in streets & sanitation supplies. Includes miscellaneous non-vehicle supplies.
- -\$10,000 in vehicle maintenance & repairs. Implementing in-house preventative maintenance program for commercial vehicles.
- -\$13,000 in solid waste disposal fees. Reducing trash collection and/or increasing recycling.
- -\$3,000 in street projects & repairs. Leaving sufficient funds to fix road surface at Berwyn Road and Osage Street, estimated at \$4,000.
- -\$500 for pedestrian bridge. Have new energy-efficient LED lighting with 5-year warranty.
- -\$3,000 in tree service. Performing tree pruning in-house and reducing poison ivy eradication.

Mayor Calvo commended Mr. Lockley on the format of his budget request, which clearly lays out the different options. However, he does not think that the 10% reduction is realistic because it relies on a \$13,000 cut to *solid waste disposal fees* to be achieved by reducing trash collection. Although a worthy goal, it should not be used for budget purposes. As an alternative, Mr. Lockley proposed to zero out the \$15,000 in the *temporary help* line item. In addition, \$2,500 can be cut from *recycling supplies*, which covers recycling containers.

At 8:20 p.m., the Council took a 10-minute break.

Mayor Calvo asked how Mr. Lockley weighs making cuts in man-hours as opposed to making cuts in supplies, equipment or activities. Mr. Lockley said he prefers keeping funding for equipment and supplies because there is more flexibility in allocating man hours. He can usually postpone jobs to a time when the department is less busy. Apart from that, there is enough money in the part-time staff appropriation to keep part-time staff on for additional hours when needed. The budgeted margin is for an additional 2 hours per week per part-time employee. The budgeted \$15,000 for temporary staff, in turn, would pay for one person to work 40 hours per week for 2 months.

Mayor Calvo asked how Mr. Lockley would balance using part-timers versus temporary staff. Mr. Lockley replied that the department has become accustomed to not using temporary staff. It has been his policy to give additional hours to the permanent part-timers when needed. However, he anticipates using temporary labor to perform trash collection when skilled labor is busy working on jobs such as crack-sealing.

Mayor Calvo said that Mr. Lockley may be better off renting the crack-sealing equipment on a weekly basis rather than monthly. While the rental is cheaper by the month, it is unlikely that the department can work on the streets for one month straight because of changes in weather. Mr. Lockley said that it costs \$5,700 to rent the equipment for a month and it takes a minimum of 3 people to run the machine. He concurred that it would probably more efficient to rent for a shorter term. MPT Wilkinson thought October may be the best month for the job because it has the driest weather.

Mayor Calvo suggested splitting the \$50,000 *vehicle maintenance & repair* line item. It would separate the more predictable maintenance expenses from the highly variable repair expenses. In this budget, the department already saved \$10,000 by doing preventive maintenance in-house, which could then be used to hire temporary labor, for example. He likes the idea of paying staff to do the skilled labor and use temps for unskilled labor. Mr. Lockley said that in this budget, savings from this line item were used to buy other useful supplies, such as flashing emergency lights for trucks.

Mayor Calvo said, last year, the Council asked that the *recycling* budget be integrated with the *streets & sanitation* budget, but this has not been done. TA Murphy explained that the separate recycling budget was eliminated, but that he has kept a few recycling accounts to be able to track various expenses related to recycling. Mayor Calvo noted that Mr. Lockley just proposed zeroing out two of those recycling accounts, *postage* and *miscellaneous*, because they are not needed. Mr. Lockley added he would keep the *recycling supplies* line item, which pays for recycling containers, and *recycling maintenance & repairs*, which shows when the recycling truck starts costing too much money. Mayor Calvo said that vehicle expenditures should be tracked independently on a separate spreadsheet. Police already does it for its fleet. He would like to reduce budget line items to those things on which the Council makes policy decisions.

MPT Wilkinson said that the *recycling supplies* line item should be retained, as should the *recycling postage* line item for sending out reminders to residents on what can be recycled. Further, he has concerns about zeroing out the *temporary labor* appropriation, which may be needed when Public Works performs leaf collection or crack-sealing. He agrees that crack-sealing equipment should not be rented for an entire month because there is no guarantee it can be used an entire month due to weather changes. He also would like to make sure that poison ivy eradication remains funded when the landscaping budget is cut.

CM Almoguera noted that her main concern is that 11 line items in the FY 2013 budget exceeded what was budgeted. However, the requested FY 2014 budget does not raise the funds in those accounts to reflect these expenditures. Mr. Lockley said most of the overages resulted from new ideas he implemented that turned out to be more expensive than anticipated. For the most part, these were one-time expenses and will not recur. CM Kulpa-Eddy said she would like to see the Public Works staffing analysis TA Murphy provided the FY 2012 budget discussions. The document may be useful for this year's discussions.

NW/EP budget request: Mayor Calvo welcomed Ron Shane, Co-chair of the Neighborhood Watch/Emergency Preparedness, for a presentation of the Committee's budget request. Mr. Shane said that this year's request is very simple. NW/EP is requesting a total of \$2,500, which is a little more than a 10% cut of the full \$3,000 NW/EP funding level. Planned expenditures focus on replacing equipment and on repairs. Purchase of bottled water is being phased out. Instead, the Committee plans to buy more collapsible water containers, which can be used to truck water into town from elsewhere in an emergency. Six hundred dollars are budgeted for trailer repairs, \$400 for event expenses, \$360 for fire extinguishers, \$300 for training and education, and \$120 for batteries.

Mayor Calvo said that the Council approved a trailer reserve, which currently contains around 3,000. Any leftover money not used for operations can be set aside there to fund the upkeep and eventual replacement of the emergency trailer. He encouraged NW/EP to continue to do that. Mr. Shane said that NW/EP is looking into getting a small trailer that can be used to transport emergency generators and power tools to help other municipalities when they need help. Hauling the big trailer around for that purpose is cumbersome and expensive.

Mayor Calvo noted that the Council has gained sponsorship from the Town's legislative delegation for a bond bill appropriation of 50% of the estimated cost to install emergency generators at the Town Center. He thinks the prospects for passage are good. Mr. Shane said that NW/EP certainly agrees that this would make the Town Center and municipal more viable as an emergency station. Mr. Attick asked why the Town chose generators powered by natural gas rather than diesel. TA Murphy said because they are cheaper and do not require refueling. Mr. Attick said that this could be a problem when gas lines get severed. Mayor Calvo said that there will be opportunity to discuss the technical details. First, the Town wants to ensure the bond bill goes through.

Parks & Recreation budget request: CM Dennison presented the budget request for the Parks & Recreation Budget. A 10% cut option would be achieved by reducing the equipment line item from \$7,500 in FY 2013 to \$2,500 in FY 2014. This appropriation pays for new playground equipment. Other changes include an increase in Pop's Park supplies for mulch by \$1,000; an increase of \$50 in Pop's Park maintenance & repairs; and an increase of \$700 in the Sports Park concession stand to pay for a plumber to winterize and de-winterize the building and pay for repairs. Last year, repairs had to be made to the gutters and the electric hand dryers were purchased to replace paper towels.

Mayor Calvo asked if the cut in the equipment appropriation has been proposed because the Town hopes to receive a state grant for a new playground. CMs Dennison and Almoguera confirmed this. MPT Wilkinson asked what the Pontiac Street field appropriation covers. There is a need for an overhaul of the batting cages. TA Murphy said that he will have to check on that. CM Kulpa-Eddy asked if the upgrade of the parking area next to T-Ball field is paid from Parks & Recreation budget. Mayor Calvo said this would be funded from a beautification account that was put into the Public Works Department. Mike Attick asked how much is budgeted for Berwyn Heights Day. Mayor Calvo said \$9,000 has been budgeted. However, some money is recovered from Berwyn Heights ticket sales.

FBI Headquarters relocation: Mayor Calvo said that the Council already voted to support the relocation of the FBI headquarters to Greenbelt Metro Station. The Four Cities Coalition has written a joint letter, while TA Murphy has drafted a separate letter for the Town of Berwyn Heights. He has yet to make some changes to it before it can be sent.

Sidewalks Design & Engineering: TA Murphy explained that he has obtained a second proposal from Kharper

CP Johnson & Associates to design and engineer priority 1 sidewalks. He found this proposal helpful in thinking about all the factors to be considered in going forward, including compliance with storm water management, soil conservation and forest conservation regulations. The costs of these environmental reviews are not included in either CP Johnson's or AB Consultants' plans. CP Johnson is of the opinion that exposure to environmental reviews can be minimized by breaking construction down into sections of 1,000 square feet with less than 5,000 square feet of surface disturbance.

CP Johnson informs that County requirements for a storm water management plan must be completed regardless of the project size. Their plans provide for an under drain to be installed along the full length of the sidewalks that is tied into the storm drains. For pervious pavement they recommend brick pavers, while AB Consultants recommends pervious concrete. Both engineering plans provide the Town with complete sets of bid specifications and construction plans, and delineate Town right-of-way in relation to the curb. TA Murphy thinks that CP Johnson is worthy of an interview with the Town Council.

Mayor Calvo said that 1,000 square feet of sidewalk would reach approximately from Greenbelt Road to Ruatan Street and is too short a distance to consider building sidewalks in increments. He thinks that the Town needs to find a way to get some of the environmental regulations waived. The regulations are designed to guide development of large sub-divisions, but make little sense for small infill projects. From Berwyn Heights' perspective, there is no point in installing pervious sidewalks if storm water runoff is guided into storm drains anyway. It would be more useful to mitigate storm water runoff elsewhere in Town.

Mayor Calvo summed up that he would like CP Johnson & Associates to come in for a presentation and give a second opinion on how to best construct the sidewalks in priority 1 locations.

Pepco Tree Trimming MOU: Mayor Calvo said that the Council already agreed to pursue a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Pepco regarding the trimming and felling of trees. Greenbelt's MOU would serve as a model. TA Murphy was asked to draft an agreement for the Council to review. CM Kulpa-Eddy said that Greenbelt's MOU provides for staff to monitor Pepco's tree trimming activities. She wondered who might be assigned the task for Berwyn Heights. MPT Wilkinson thought that Public Works Department would likely do that.

Nothing was discussed under **2. Public Works, 3. Administration, 4 Code Compliance, 5. Parks & Recreation, and 6. Public Safety.**

7. Executive Session (9:45 p.m. – 10:20 p.m.)

On a motion by MPT Wilkinson and second CM Dennison, the Council went into an executive session regarding a personnel matter. With matter discussed, MPT Wilkinson moved and CM Dennison seconded to end the executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Signed: *Kerstin Harper, Town Clerk*