



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

Town Meeting Minutes November 10, 2021 | 7:00 p.m.

This meeting was 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.

Call to order

Present were Mayor Amanda Dewey, Mayor Pro Tempore Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Councilmember Chris Brittan-Powell (attending via telephone), Councilmember Jason Papanikolas, and Councilmember Ethan Sweep. Also present were Town Manager Laura Allen, Town Clerk Melanie Friesen, and Lieutenant Daniel Unger. Susan Jones was present for the Rec Council and Debby Steele-Snyder was present to represent the Berwyn Heights Historical Committee.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Announcements

Mayor Dewey reported that Council had met in Executive Session prior to the meeting in order to discuss a personnel matter. She also expressed thanks and gratitude to the Berwyn Heights Police Department, and especially Officer Krouse in the rescue and recovery of two missing children. She followed by reporting on a walk-up vaccine clinic on November 13 aimed at children 5 and above at the Wayne Curry Sports and Learning Complex. She finished off the announcements by reading the *Municipal Government Works* Proclamation.

2. Approval of Agenda

CM Sweep moved to approve the agenda. It was seconded by CM Brittan-Powell. After no further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Hearing: Red Light Camera Ordinance 149 Amendment

Mayor Dewey opened the public hearing on the Amendment to Ordinance 149 allowing for red-light cameras to be placed within the Town. TM Allen reviewed the Staff report for the red-light camera Amendment to Ordinance 149. Lt. Unger was available to help respond to any questions regarding technical aspects of the program. Resident Angie Wolfinger asked what intersections and which directions would be covered by the cameras. Mayor Dewey replied that two intersections were being primarily considered, but that the ordinance does not specify which intersections would receive the cameras. She continued that the currently considered intersections are Greenbelt Rd and 58th and Greenbelt Rd and 63rd. Ms. Wolfinger requested clarification as to whether traffic on Greenbelt Road would be monitored or just traffic from the “town side”. Lt. Unger clarified that if the ordinance change passed, there would be a study to help determine the best intersections for placement. Resident Susan Jones echoed Ms. Wolfinger’s question and asked if it was possible to add more speed cameras in Town. Lt. Unger expressed that new legislation at the State level may make that possible. Resident James Wilkinson expressed that it was good to hear that 63rd was being considered as a spot for a red light camera for the safety of

the Town children that cross the street there to get to Greenbelt Middle School. There were no further comments. CM Sweep moved to close the hearing. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded the motion. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Hearing: Fine and Fee Amendment Resolution 09-2021

Mayor Dewey opened the hearing on the Fine and Fee Amendment Resolution. TM Allen reviewed the staff report and established that this resolution would set the fine associated with running a red-light at \$75. CM Papanikolas asked what is the maximum allowable fine by State law. There were no public comments. CM Brittan-Powell moved to close the hearing. CM Sweep seconded. During discussion, Lt. Unger reported that the maximum allowable fine by State law is \$75. After no further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

5. Consent Agenda

MPT Kulpa-Eddy requested that the Public Works report and the minutes from Oct. 13th be removed from the consent agenda. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the consent agenda as amended, with the minutes from Oct 13th and the Public Works report to be considered separately. CM Brittan-Powell seconded. After no further discussion the amended consent agenda passed unanimously.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy inquired why one of the suggested edits in the October 13th minutes was removed. The suggested edit identified that the Council planning session that CM Brittan-Powell had inquired about during his report happened in 2016 by a previous council. TC Friesen clarified that minutes reflect the meeting as it happened and that in the meeting there was not a mention of the planning session happening in 2016. With the understanding that the minutes from this meeting will reflect that the planning session was conducted by a previous council, MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the minutes from Oct 13. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously. Regarding the Public Works report, MPT Kulpa-Eddy questioned the statement that the issue on Seminole Street has been resolved. TM Allen reported “resolved” means the County has accepted responsibility for the repair. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to accept the report with clarifying information. CM Sweep seconded. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Mayor & Councilmember Reports

Mayor Dewey reported that she had attended the two Community meetings and was grateful to all who attended for their input. She reminded everyone that the final opportunity to attend will be virtually on Monday the 15th at 7PM. She also reported meeting with students from the University of Maryland who are working on a platform for municipalities. The goal of the meeting was to give information on the Town to the students. She attended the Town Clean-up, Pumpkin Smash and Food Drive over the weekend. She will be attending National League of Cities conference as a part of her day job. There will a reception for elected officials hosted by Dannielle Glaros on the 22nd. She shared reminders that the Town offices will be closed for Veterans Day as well as Thanksgiving. She also shared the Climate Action plan for the County has been released for public comment. She discussed booster eligibility and the vaccine clinic at the Sports and Learning Complex. Finally, all students in grades K-5 are eligible for reading tutoring through BookNook at Prince George’s County Public Schools. Contact details for the tutoring and Climate Action Plan are available on the Town’s website. She closed her report by congratulating those elected in the recent Greenbelt and College Park elections.

MPT Kulpa-Eddy shared information about the Prince George’s County Cultural Arts Study. A virtual meeting will be held on November 18, 2021 to present the Draft Cultural Arts Study to residents. The County Department of Parks and Recreation virtual Town Hall will be held on November 16 for residents to weigh in on the future of Parks and Recreation in the County. Every 5 years, the County updates its Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan to improve

countywide opportunities. Sessions will be held at 11AM and 6:30PM.

CM Papanikolas started his announcements by wishing the Marine Corps a Happy 246th Birthday. He reviewed the Code Compliance Report encouraging others to read page 4 of the report to view how Code responded to a situation at Checkers. He highlighted that over the last several months, policy implementation has been a focus in Code. He expressed that residents have interest in knowing about the jurisdiction on yard (clean lot) issues. He reported that the county says that Code can do what is needed but he believes they should inform residents that they are on their property. Finally, he reported on the number of rentals in Town and that between 17-18% of housing units were rentals, when the average in PG County is almost 40%.

CM Brittan-Powell attempted to start his report but his call dropped at 7:40PM and he was unable to rejoin the meeting due to a loss of phone service.

CM Sweep began his report by stating he believes the number of rentals has been reduced since 2020. CM Papanikolas confirmed that there has been a slight reduction in rentals. He reported on the leaf collection process and getting the signs indicating collection periods kept current. He reviewed the trash collection schedule for the holidays and that the Street Sweeper will be in Town between November 29-Dec 3. He also reviewed Winter Weather Preparedness.

7. Committee Reports

- a. Education Advisory Committee: MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported that a short meeting would be happening on November 22 at 7PM. She mentioned the organization is still seeking volunteers. She reported on the final opportunity to join the County school boundary changes conversation on November 13. The group is also reviewing the Education Grant Applications and feedback from the STEAM summer camp.
- b. Green Team: Mayor Dewey reported that the group is planning quarterly Town cleanups and will be looking for ways to make those fun events as well. She reported on the Thriving Earth Exchange and that the next Green Team meeting will be focused on the next steps for that. She reviewed the Bee City Resolution and stated the Green Team will be meeting at a summit with Sustainable Maryland and other Route 1 Green Teams later this month.
- c. Historical Committee: Debby Steele-Snyder shared a recap of the “Legends and Lore” walking tour. MPT Kulpa-Eddy said there had been requests for the notes from the tour and hoped to make them into a sharable format. Ms. Steele-Snyder reported they are looking to get a dedicated Historical Committee email. She also spoke on pausing the oral history project, as well as looking for volunteers for a video editing project. The Committee is in the early stages of planning a Spring wine and cheese event.
- d. Neighborhood Watch/ Emergency Preparedness: MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported the most recent meeting included a focus on purchasing a generator for the trailer. She also reported that 26 vaccinations were given at the Police Department’s Trunk-or-Treat event. There was discussion on the mission for the new trailer, including relevant equipment and training needed to use it.
- e. Recreation Council: Susan Jones reported that there was a lot of food collected during the Food Drive that was held in conjunction with the Town Clean-up and Pumpkin Smash. She reported on the tree-lighting and decorating party on December 4th. There was a brief discussion on heating options for the area during the outdoor party and that there will be hot beverages available. Carol singing is still being finalized. On Dec 4th from 11 am -4 pm, there will be a craft sale in the Senior Center. A collection for “Toys for Tots” is being held during the season at the police department. The Rec Council is planning a January gifting party.

8. New Business

a. Bee City USA Resolution 11-2021

TM Allen reviewed the staff report for the Bee City USA resolution. She stated that the

program requires there to be a staff liaison and that would be the Director of Public Works. MPT Kulpa-Eddy expressed concern about language regarding habitat that may violate Clean Lot Ordinances, 107&134. TM Allen agreed to add language that would reflect that habitat would still be subject to the Clean Lot Ordinances. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to adopt the resolution as amended. CM Sweep seconded. After no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously, 4-0 (CM Brittan-Powell was absent).

b. Legislative Dinner- verbal discussion

Council discussed when to hold the Legislative Dinner, that would invite every legislator that represents Berwyn Heights. There was concern about having the meeting before the State Legislators return to Annapolis for a Special Session beginning the week of December 6. Council decided that a virtual event held the week of November 29 would be their first choice, with the week of December 13 being the follow-up if Legislators were not available.

9. Old Business

a. Red Light Camera, Ordinance 149 Amendment

Mayor Dewey reviewed the history of the Ordinance amendment and the public hearing. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to adopt Ordinance 149. CM Papanikolas seconded. During discussion, MPT Kulpa-Eddy questioned what the Town had decided regarding education on the red lights, especially when making a right turn on red and the length of the stop required. TM Allen reviewed that there are several options for education: the Bulletin, the e-newsletter, website and signs. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked Lt. Unger about speed cameras, seeking clarification on when the school zone speed cameras were active. Lt. Unger confirmed that school zone speed cameras are only issuing citations during “school hours” Monday-Friday for anyone exceeding 12 mph over the posted speed limit. MPT Kulpa-Eddy expressed a desire to revisit the speed camera issue at a later date. CM Sweep expressed a desire to have a clarification on section 2.A which states a warning will be issued for the first 30 days after a speed or red-light camera is placed in Town. He was seeking clarification on if that would be whenever the camera was initially placed in Town or when it was moved in Town. Lt. Unger stated he thought he expected that it would be whenever the camera was moved. CM Sweep expressed concern that since we already have speed cameras in Town and given the two types of cameras are bound in the wording of the ordinance, it would be useful to clarify that warnings would be issued for 30 days after any camera is moved within the Town. Mayor Dewey suggested amending the wording to state that “after a speed or red-light camera monitoring system is placed or moved within the Town”. CM Sweep agreed. Council voted on the motion on the table and the motion did not pass, unanimously, 0-4. CM Sweep moved to approve Ordinance 149 as Amended to reflect that section 2 subsection A to reflect that the 30 day warning period is whenever a unit is moved. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded. There was no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously, 4-0, with CM Brittan-Powell absent.

b. Fine and Fee Resolution Amendment

MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve Resolution 9-2021 the Fine and Fee resolution Amendment. CM Sweep seconded. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked why there was not a speed camera fine in the schedule. Lt. Unger confirmed that the fine for the speed camera was set by the State. The motion to approve Resolution 9-2021 passed unanimously, 4-0, with CM Brittan-Powell absent.

Mayor Dewey released Lt. Unger from the meeting. Lt. Unger took the time to thank the State Attorney’s Office for all their work during the week and the late nights worked with Detective Krouse.

c. PAMC Grant Application and Resolution 10-2021

TM Allen reviewed the staff report, stating that Parks and Planning had approached her about applying for the grant and that no one from Berwyn Heights had ever applied. The

grant would offer up to \$68,000 in planning and implementation of some of the Walkable Bikeable Berwyn Heights Task Force recommendations. MPT Kulpa-Eddy had concerns about the wording in the application sections 3.C and 3.E regarding the budget and how much the application commits the Town to doing projects in perpetuity. TM Allen suggested adding language that would indicate that projects would be subject to the approval of the Town Council. CM Sweep moved to approve Resolution 10-2021. MPT Kulpa-Eddy clarified that the resolution was not being amended, but the application was. After clarification, MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded. After no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously (4-0, with CM Brittan-Powell absent).

d. Redistricting Letter

Mayor Dewey explained the reason behind the Council writing a letter and the decision to send a Berwyn Heights specific letter to the County Council, even after signing onto the College Park and 4-Cities letters. MPT Kulpa-Eddy suggested a couple of edits to the letter, specifically that the County Council resolution be specified (to reflect it is CR 123-2021) and that the Berwyn Heights Town Council encourages them to revert back to the “least change map”. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the letter. CM Sweep seconded. After no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously (4-0, with CM Brittan-Powell absent)

8. Resident & Community Comments

Resident Leslie Wolfinger expressed a desire to find a way to share the information that is provided in the reports (code and police) more with the public. Mayor Dewey responded that she will ask TM Allen to speak with Director Goodwin and Chief Antolik about Bulletin content. CM Papanikolas also stated that he is invested in increasing communication between Code and the community and will search out creative solutions. Ms. Wolfinger asked about why there was financial data in the Code report for 2022. Mayor Dewey replied that it is about Fiscal Year 2022. Resident Angie Wolfinger asked Mayor Dewey if she was doing any more “pop-up and talk” sessions. Mayor Dewey replied that it was a temporary project and she doesn’t have other events planned. Ms. A. Wolfinger replied that if Mayor Dewey was interested in doing more, she’d be happy to host the Mayor in her driveway. There were no further resident comments.

Adjournment

CM Sweep moved to adjourn the meeting. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously (4-0, with CM Brittan-Powell absent). The meeting adjourned at 8:49PM.