



# Town of Berwyn Heights

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

**MAYOR**  
Jodie Kulpa-Eddy

**COUNCIL MEMBERS**  
Christopher Brittan-Powell (Mayor Pro Tem)  
Shinita Hemby  
Faustino Menjivar  
Jason W. Papanikolas

## Town Meeting Minutes Town Council Chambers August 9, 2023 | 7:00 p.m.

### Call to Order

Mayor Jodie Kulpa-Eddy called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Present were Mayor Pro Tem Chris Brittan-Powell, Councilmember Shinita Hemby and Councilmember Jason Papanikolas. Staff present were Interim Town Manager Peter Jones, Town Treasurer Mike Lightfield and Town Clerk Melanie Friesen. Councilmember Faustino Menjivar had an excused absence.

### Pledge of Allegiance

#### 1. Announcements

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy read the closed session report from July 22, 2023. After a brief open session, the meeting was closed at 8:32AM, under Maryland Code Annotated, General Provisions Article, § 3-305(b)(1): To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals. The closed session ended at 1:33PM. All Councilmembers were present, alongside recruiter David Deutsch. CM Menjivar joined the meeting late. Three candidates for Town Manager were interviewed and staff and resident interview committee feedback was also taken into consideration when the Council voted 5:0 to make an offer to one candidate. Lastly, the terms of that offer were discussed. She also reported that the Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup> WorkSession was postponed due to forecasted inclement weather and that it will be rescheduled to Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup> at 7PM. MPT Brittan-Powell stated that residents are expressing concerns about the ARPA timeline. He also reported that there was improvement on 59<sup>th</sup> Avenue with the distribution of sandbags during storm preparation. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy added that there are still DIY sandbags available behind Town Center.

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

CM Papanikolas moved to approve the agenda. CM Hemby seconded. In discussion, MPT Brittan-Powell asked that Council be allowed to discuss ARPA issues with TT Lightfield, since he is present. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy asked that TT Lightfield instead address the ARPA timeline during the treasurer's report. CM Papanikolas clarified that this change would remove the administration/treasurer's report from the consent agenda and make it Agenda item 4. He also asked to strike 7a. as no meeting was held on August 7<sup>th</sup>. With no further discussion, CM Papanikolas moved to approve the agenda as amended with CM Hemby seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

### 3. **Consent**

CM Papanikolas moved to approve the modified consent agenda. CM Hemby seconded. With no discussion the motion passed unanimously.

### 4. **Administration/Treasurer's Report**

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy asked TT Lightfield to discuss the status of the FY22 audit and the ARPA timeline. MPT Brittan-Powell asked for a ballpark figure on deficit or surplus for FY2023. TT Lightfield explained that the Town has until August 31<sup>st</sup> to capture any revenue or expenses for FY23, but that he anticipated a deficit of between \$150,000-\$300,000. He also explained that the FY22 audit is still incomplete, and he took responsibility for it being behind. Regarding ARPA, he expressed that his only concern is about the December 31, 2024, deadline to obligate the funds and would encourage Council to be aware of the rate of spending and how long it may take to get certain items under contract. ARPA will be further discussed at the August 14, 2023, worksession. CM Papanikolas asked if there were any expected findings in the FY22 audit. TT Lightfield reported that there are not.

### 5. **Mayor & Councilmember Reports**

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy gave updates on funds that are still available to assist residents who are struggling with property taxes, mortgage, and water bills. She reviewed the Maryland DHCD Homeowner's Assistance Fund and that after August 15<sup>th</sup>, applicants will be placed on a waitlist as funds become available. WSSC resumed residential water turnoffs on July 5<sup>th</sup>. She reviewed the assistance that is still available with their *Get Connected* program. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy spoke about the Four Cities meeting and the presentation by Pepco on the future LED streetlight changeover. She reviewed a discussion on hiring a shared legislative consultant. She also reported co-signing a letter from the Four Cities leadership to County Executive Alsobrooks regarding two transportation projects that will impact all our communities. She highlighted Chief Antolik receiving the "Chief of the Year" award from the Small and Rural Law Enforcement Executives' Association during their recent annual conference.

MPT Brittan-Powell thanked the Hemby family for all they did with the potential flooding and on National Night Out (NNO). He shared that the Four Cities meeting also revealed the need for continuing food and housing security efforts. He reviewed spending much of his time working on ARPA and hopes that there are ways for the Town to extend the clock. He asks that the Council doesn't try to do too much, but rather rely on the experts that they will be bringing in.

CM Hemby reported meeting many residents at NNO with ideas on ways to improve the Town. She encouraged residents to come forward. She also congratulated Chief Antolik on his achievement. She thanked residents on Ruatan Street for putting out the "slow down" yard signs and that it seems to be making a difference in that area.

CM Papanikolas thanked ITM Jones and Mayor Kulpa-Eddy for manning the command post for the storm on the 7<sup>th</sup> and for Public Works assistance during that time. He highlighted that longtime Public Works employee Gary Stanton received his CDL and acknowledged the difficulty in that achievement. He shared about the school registration process, including how high school class schedules are affected by that.

### 6. **Committee Reports**

- a. Education Advisory Committee: No report
- b. Green Team: CM Papanikolas shared that the Green Team held elections for their new moderator, Shira Francis. Michael Bloom was elected as deputy moderator. There will be a

- garden clean-up for the elementary school on Sunday, August 20<sup>th</sup> from 10am-12pm.
- c. Historical Committee: CM Papanikolas shared that they participated in NNO and sent thanks to Sgt Krouse and crew for putting the event together. They will be meeting on August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30pm and will be taking nominations for chair, vice chair and secretary at that meeting. Several members of the Committee will need to be reappointed by Council in September.
  - d. Neighborhood Watch/ Emergency Preparedness: Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reviewed that NNO was held on August 1<sup>st</sup> and she hoped all were able to join and interact with the public safety personnel. She stated it was a perfect night out and thanked everyone who made that possible. NW/EP is working on clearing items out of the shed to make space for the Rec Council. They will be looking to redistribute items that no longer fit their needs.
  - e. Recreation Council: CM Papanikolas reviewed that the last meeting focused on a debrief of NNO. The Rec Council is planning the usual October events with Trunk or Treat and a sensory friendly Halloween party. There will be a blue grass concert on a date yet to be determined. They would also like to revisit the ordinance that establishes the Rec Council as it is 40 years old.

## **7. Old Business**

There was no old business.

## **8. New Business**

- a. Introduction Ordinance 189A (ARPA Budget Amendment)-pending outcomes of 8/7/23 WS  
This item was stricken from the agenda.
- b. Approval of Town Manager Contract  
Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reviewed the process for the Town Manager search and again thanked residents who served on the resident review committee. She restated that during the closed meeting in July the Council voted unanimously to make an offer to a candidate. Mr. Kyle Snyder, a lifelong resident of Berwyn Heights will be the new Town Manager beginning August 28, 2023. MPT Brittan-Powell moved to approve the Town Manager contract. CM Papanikolas seconded. During discussion, MPT Brittan-Powell shared that they are happy with their decision. The motion passed unanimously.

## **9. Resident & Community Comments**

MPT Brittan-Powell shared concerns from residents about the cost of living in Berwyn Heights. Resident Claudia Barragan shared in detail a letter of dissolution for the Immigrant Neighbors Community of Berwyn Heights (INCbh).

Resident Jose Valcarcel expressed concern about a paid advertisement in the Bulletin.

## **10. Adjournment**

CM Papanikolas moved to adjourn the meeting. CM Hemby seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:53PM.