



Town of Berwyn Heights

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MAYOR
Jodie Kulpa-Eddy

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

Work Session Minutes November 20, 2023 | 7:00 p.m. Council Chambers

Call to Order

Mayor Jodie Kulpa-Eddy called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Also present were Mayor Pro Tem Chris Brittan-Powell, Councilmember Shinita Hemby, Councilmember Faustino Menjivar, and Councilmember Jason Papanikolas. In addition, Staff (Town Manager Kyle Snyder) and residents of the Town of Berwyn Heights were present.

Approval of the Agenda

MPT Brittan-Powell moved to approve the agenda. CM Hemby seconded. With no discussion the motion passed unanimously.

1. Mayor

a. Announcements

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy shared condolences with Riverdale Park, where two elementary school students were tragically killed today. MPT Brittan-Powell provided a holiday message for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday.

b. Calendar

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy announced that the Town Offices are closed this Thursday and Friday for the Thanksgiving holiday, so there is no Town-wide trash collection Thursday. She reminded Council of the upcoming District 22 State Delegation joint dinner with the other District 22 municipalities at which the Town will be able to present the funding and law-making requests for the 2024 State Legislative Session. The PGCMA Legislative Dinner is being held on Thursday December 7th in Upper Marlboro, and Councilmembers should let TM Snyder know if they would like to attend so he can purchase tickets. CM Papanikolas brought up the Holiday events happening in Town on Saturday December 2nd: the craft fair will be on the 2nd floor from 11am until 4pm, with the BHPD's "Coco with the Popo" from 1pm-4pm in the Senior Center, and finishing with the Tree lighting out front of the Town Center from 6pm-7pm.

c. EV Charging Station Fees

TM Snyder provided the Council an overview of how the two new charging stations at Town Hall, which replaced the two damaged by the lighting strike, take credit cards. The EV company has asked if the Town would like to set a small fee to offset the cost of electricity; they recommend a \$1.00 per use charge and \$.50 per kwh drawn, which is split with the Town. The previous charging stations were 1st generation and did not have the ability to take payments. The charging stations installed recently near the police station do accept payments. As the Town Hall charging stations are attached to the Town Center electric meter, it is not easy to see the exact use and cost of the EV stations to the Town, though the new meters can track usage. After discussion, Council asked TM to

track usage for 4-6 months to determine the costs to the Town so that they can make a better informed decision.

d. Review Draft Flag Policy

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy provided an overview of the draft Flag Policy that was introduced at the August 21st work session for Council review. She did receive comments on the Flag Policy from some residents and she was able to explain the reasoning behind it. After some discussion, it was determined that the Council will place it on the December Town Meeting agenda for approval.

e. Stormwater Engineer Proposals

TM Snyder provided the Council with an overview of the three replies the Town has received from the Stormwater Engineer/Firm position announcement. The job description was released in July 2023, and he had reached out to several area engineering firms over the past month, and was able to obtain these three proposals from interested parties. The firms that submitted a response include the Low Impact Development Center (LIDC), Inc. of Beltsville; Charles P. Johnson & Associates (CPJ), Inc. of Greenbelt; and RK&K Civil Engineering out of DC and Baltimore. TM Snyder advised each firm seems to be qualified to perform the work. The Council shared their thoughts on the details provided by each firm. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy stated she would like to see LIDC's proposal include a Town-wide evaluation of water problems so Council has a full view of the issues around Town. CM Papanikolas asked the Council if the goal was to have a firm focus on specific stormwater projects as LIDC's proposal did, or a more general Town on-call Engineer as CPJ and RK&K's proposals did. Council further discussed the three proposals in depth, and provided TM Snyder with follow-up clarification questions for the firms so that he can report back at the December 4th work session, with the Council tentatively selecting a firm via Resolution at the December 13th Town Meeting.

f. Resident Comments

Paul Kavanaugh of Berwyn Road thanked Council for their focus on selecting a stormwater engineering firm, and suggested that the Council coordinate with the Environmental Finance Center on the Town's stormwater initiatives. He also provided an overview of the services provided by the Center for Assistance to Families.

2. Parks, Recreation, Education, and Civic Affairs

CM Papanikolas provided some fun facts regarding the Thanksgiving holiday.

3. Public Safety

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy thanked the Cornerstone Lodge, Karate Club, and other volunteers who helped pack and distribute turkey dinners to residents for the holiday.

a. Review Police Incident Reporting

TM Snyder clarified the Town's routine police incident crime report to Council received emails from residents concerned about how much detail was provided about a particular crime. The Town's practice is to specify the location by numbered block of the street (not the exact address) and a brief description of the crime. Moving forward, the Town will eliminate mention of race and age and take additional consideration on those incidents deemed "sensitive". Though reporting only includes the block of the street, there are some streets in Town such as the 5900Blk of Berwyn Rd with 30 houses, and other blocks such as the 8300Blk of 58th Ave with just one house. There is a delicate balance between sharing public information with residents who may be concerned about crime happen near their home, while also protecting the privacy of our residents who have been victims of a crime.

He advised that the Town Attorney will be researching to determine what the Town's responsibility is: to provide public information, and to protect residents' information, from a legal standpoint. The Council discussed different options to present the crime statistics to the public, including using maps and creating a page on the Town website.

4. Public Works

CM Menjivar reminded residents of the altered refuse collection schedule this week due to the holiday. He also highlighted that 80 food compost containers were delivered to the Town as a part of a pilot program, and residents who have requested these should place them on their curb for pick-up on their regular yard waste collection day. A set of these containers is on display at the Town Office, and if residents would like a container, please reach out to the Town.

a. Public Works Reorganization Verbal Update

TM Snyder provided the Council with an update on the Public Works (PW) Reorganization and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) incentives that the Council had funded in the FY24 Budget. He worked with the Town Attorney and Director Pudner to put a CDL Bonus agreement in place, in which PW employees are paid a bonus (\$2,000 for Class B and \$5,000 for class A) in return for signing an agreement that they will stay with the Town for at least 18 months after obtaining their CDL certification. It was well received with the current employees who had just obtained their CDL certification and provided encouragement to other employees to advance their skills and help the Town with getting their CDLs. He also advised that the Town has made the necessary promotions, and some pay increases based on the Council discussions held during the FY24 budget process. The next step is for the Town to establish a "Crew Leader" position between the "Maintenance Worker III" and "Foreman" positions that has additional leadership responsibilities and job skills that not only help build the employees but also benefit the Town. The council will discuss the new position as a part of the FY25 budget development process. CM Hemby then asked TM Snyder what gifts residents could provide to the staff during the holiday season, and TM Snyder advised that there is a restriction on monetary gifts and gift cards, but food or treats are always welcome. CM Menjivar agreed that a good lunch goes a long way. MPT Brittan-Powell asked how the incentives were received with the public works staff. TM Snyder replied that the PW team seems very encouraged by the investments made by Council, and that the Town is now more competitive in regard to its public works pay scale compared to other municipalities.

5. Administration

MPT Brittan-Powell turned it over to TM Snyder to provide an update on the different positions that the Town is currently hiring including the Assistant to the Town Manager, Grants Writer, and PRECA Aide/Community Engagement & Outreach person.

6. Code Compliance

a. Review Ordinance 101, Animals revised.

TM Snyder provided an overview of draft Ordinance 101, *Animals* which incorporates the ability for the Town to levy a fine for pet waste violations. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reminded the Council that this goes back to the August 2023 Council discussions regarding complaints made about pet owners not picking up pet waste at the Elementary School fields. Once the revised Ordinance is passed, Council will be able to include a fine for pet waste violations in an updated Fees and Fines Schedule under Ordinance 179. She asked Council to review the Ordinance 101 draft, for discussion at the December 4th work session, with the aim to introduce the revised Ordinance at the December Town Meeting. CM Hemby warned

residents that there has been an uptick in deer running throughout Town and to be careful when driving.

7. Adjournment

CM Papanikolas moved to adjourn. CM Hemby seconded. With no discussion the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.