



Town of Berwyn Heights

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MAYOR
Stephen D. Isler
COUNCIL MEMBERS
Jason W. Papanikolas (Mayor Pro Tem)
Amanda M. Dewey
Jeffrey Jay Osmond
Ethan D. Sweep

Worksession Minutes August 19, 2019 7:00 pm

Present were Mayor Stephen Isler, Mayor Pro Tempore (MPT) Jason Papanikolas, Councilmembers (CMs) Amanda Dewey, Ethan Sweep, and Jeffrey Jay Osmond. Also present were Clerk Kerstin Harper, Assistant to the Town Manager Yvonne Odoi, UMD Community & Outreach Program Manager Andrew Fellows, and citizens. Town Manager (TM) Maria Broadbent had an excused absence.

1. Announcements

Assistant to the Town Manager Yvonne Odoi was present to represent TM Broadbent, who was on vacation. MPT Papanikolas will do a ride-along on a refuse truck tomorrow and help pick up trash. The general manager of Lidl, a new grocery store on Route 1, stopped by the Town office with a complimentary box of donuts to introduce themselves. Mayor Isler had his picture taken with Lidl employees. The backpack project will run for another week before the donated backpacks and school supplies will be handed over to Berwyn Heights Elementary School for distribution. The Education Advisory Committee is meeting with the Town's School Board Representative Joshua Thomas concurrent with this meeting tonight.

2. Discussion Items

UMD – Berwyn Heights Collaboration Projects: Mayor Isler welcomed Andrew Fellows, Community & Outreach Program Coordinator at the University Maryland's i-School for an update on projects for which Berwyn Heights is seeking assistance from UMD students and faculty. Mr. Fellows said the Town in 2017 submitted a list of 10 projects on which to collaborate with the University. Most progress has been made on Project 10 - Increasing the Town's Tree Canopy. Last semester, three UMD students worked with TM Broadbent to survey the Town's canopy and deliver a report of their findings. The students also created a proposed database to monitor the Town's canopy. Another student worked with CM Dewey to organize a 'Trees of Distinction' program to foster the appreciation of trees.

For the coming semester, students in UMD's Communications Department have expressed interest in working with the Town on improving resident and business engagement in the community. The Town may also be interested in participating in a collaborative project to reduce electricity usage and costs during peak hours through demand response modeling. The model was developed by a Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and will be submitted for a National Science Foundation grant in the next cycle. Letters of support from the surrounding municipalities have been received and are

appreciated.

Mr. Fellows cited several other areas for collaboration, including storm water monitoring and mitigation; protecting and restoring Indian Creek; historic preservation; and improving the Greenbelt Road corridor as a multi-modal eastern gateway of the University. Mr. Fellows encouraged Councilmembers with a connection to the University to reach out to the academy and talk to them about their ideas. The goal of the campus-community connection (c3) is to generate a steady stream of students, faculty and staff into the surrounding communities to help in different capacities. CM Dewey and Mayor Isler said that a new Walkable, Bikeable Berwyn Heights Task Force is forming, and it may reach out to the University for advice.

3. Discussion Items

Citizen Survey: CM Dewey explained, after an initial discussion of the survey at a previous worksession, she drafted a memo to provide more details on the proposed methodology: i.e. selection of households to receive the survey, provisions for non-English speaking recipients, mailing and returning the survey; and two timelines. The first timeline would complete the survey before the Christmas holidays, while the second timeline allows more time for the Walkable, Bikeable Berwyn Heights Task Force to give input and would be completed in January.

The Council discussed and tentatively decided to blend the timelines so that reminders to complete the survey are spaced 3 to 4 weeks apart and the final due date is in mid to late January. A draft list of questions would be developed by the Council in September and complemented by questions from Town organizations, as well as residents at a meeting in early October. CM Osmond proposed and the Council agreed that the survey should be tested with a group of people who preferably are not Town residents. CM Dewey will assemble the group from her colleagues.

Phil Ventura, 57th Avenue, suggested the Council consider partnering with a business such as Checkers which does surveys frequently and rewards survey takers with a free meal as an incentive. CM Dewey said she appreciates the idea, but this would probably introduce bias into the survey. The Council then discussed incentives and decided to enter all returned surveys into a raffle for a chance to win four \$50 prizes.

Walkable, Bikeable Berwyn Heights Task Force: CM Dewey said she has no updates since the task force was last discussed. The Task Force members are to be appointed at the September Town meeting. Meanwhile a few more members are needed. Any interested residents can contact her. She will help set up the first meeting, at which the members will choose their leaders and structure the rest of their meetings.

MML fall conference attendance: The MML fall conference will take place October 13-15 in Cambridge, MD. CM Dewey, CM Osmond and MPT Papanikolas plan to attend.

4. Minutes

The Council reviewed the July 15 worksession minutes. On a motion by CM Dewey, seconded by CM Sweep, the July 15 minutes were approved 5 to 0. On a motion by CM Dewey, seconded by MPT Papanikolas, the August 5 worksession minutes were tabled 5 to 0.

5. Department Reports

Mayor Isler and MPT Papanikolas had no report. CM Sweep wished MPT Papanikolas good luck with

the trash truck ride-along.

CM Dewey reported that the Town cleanup drew a large crowd despite the heat. The next cleanup is September 21. CM Dewey also announced the upcoming Berwyn Heights All Stars concert on August 29, the September 14 Community Garden Party, the September 19 Ice Cream Social, and the September 20 Hello Huskies Night.

6. Town Council Schedule

The Council reviewed the schedule. The first September worksession was moved to September 9 because of Labor Day. The Town meeting and second worksession will be held on their normal dates. A pet event will take place on October 5 and Trunk or Treat on October 19, with a rain date of October 26. The next Four Cities Coalition meeting will on October 23 in New Carrollton.

7. Citizens Discussion

Phil Ventura, 57th Avenue, commented that the monetary incentive for residents to take the survey discussed tonight, creates the perception that nothing can be done without spending more money, even in a year when taxes were raised to cover increased spending. He believes residents might answer a survey because they love Berwyn Heights and want it to do better.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Signed: *Kerstin Harper*, Town Clerk