



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 February 20, 2024 | 7:00 p.m. Council Chambers

Call to Order

Mayor Jodie Kulpa-Eddy called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Present were Mayor Pro Tem Chris Brittan-Powell, Councilmember Shinita Hemby, Councilmember Faustino Menjivar and Councilmember Jason Papanikolas, who attended remotely. Also present was Town Manager Kyle Snyder and Town Clerk Melanie Friesen. Kelly Kennedy of LPi was present in-person and Bob Diss of Lindsey and Associates was available virtually for their presentations.

Approval of the Agenda

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

1. Mayor

a. Announcements

MPT Brittan-Powell shared about the passing of long-term resident Ron Luftman and his memorial service. He noted that Mr. Luftman was a great example of volunteerism in the community.

b. Calendar

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reviewed the calendar for the remainder of February and gave some March highlights, including the opening of registration for the Maryland Municipal League Summer Conference and the Women's History Month Event which will be held on March 9.

c. Bulletin Presentation from LPi

Ms. Kelly Kennedy from LPi Communities gave a presentation on their newsletter service and how it works. She reviewed that LPi does market research before approaching communities and takes on the chore of advertising, billing, and seeking out new advertisers. She highlighted that LPi has been in business for over 50 years and serves over 900 communities with a growing presence in Prince George's County. She noted that while they ask for a five-year agreement, there is room for negotiation. LPi offers the full color newsletter service free of charge to municipalities, as they make their revenue from advertisement sales. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy stated "it seems too good to be true", and Ms. Kennedy responded that they get that a lot, but they do the market research before they move into an area and only approach organizations when they are comfortable that they will be able to make a profit. Council and Ms. Kennedy discussed a number of issues such as how the newsletter would be compiled, who is responsible

for the content, the type of paper options, discounted rates for non-profits' advertising, and other products and projects that LPi might be able to help the Town with.

d. FY22 Audit Presentation

TM Snyder introduced Mr. Bob Diss and thanked him for all his work to get things done. Mr. Diss gave the Council an overview of the audit, reviewing how to read the audit and the two sets of financial statements as well as the differences between the two. He noted that the Town received a clean opinion. He noted the department with the largest change was Public Works and that was due to temporary staffing and salary increases.

There was discussion about how much the Town has spent of ARPA funds and Mr. Diss noted that if the Town spends more than \$750,000 of funds in a single year, that they will need a single audit for which the Town will need to budget approximately \$5,000.

e. EV Charging Station Update

TM Snyder noted that we have received a snapshot from the month of January 2024 of the data for the EV charging stations at Town Hall. He reviewed that data from the chargers will help inform Council on their decision whether the Town should charge for the use of the stations based on KW usage and if so, how much to charge. MPT Brittan-Powell asked for clarification on the reasoning for the monitoring. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy noted that residents have expressed concerns about the Town providing free electricity to people charging their vehicles.

There was discussion regarding whether the Town was supposed to be charged for the electricity under the company's installation agreement. CM Papanikolas noted that the original chargers were installed for free using grant funding, but that the Town has always paid for the electricity.

f. Questions for County Executive Alsobrooks (10 minutes)

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reviewed that Council had received a letter from PGCMA asking for no more than two questions/concerns from each municipality to send to County Executive Alsobrooks in advance of the annual PGCMA meeting with her. The Council discussed several possible items, ultimately deciding to ask questions specific to Berwyn Heights and will inquire about the plans and timeline for Berwyn Heights Elementary School renovations. The Council will also submit a question regarding the ongoing stormwater issues in Town and what County funds will be provided to remedy these.

g. Resident Comments

There were no resident comments.

2. Public Safety

There was no Public Safety report.

a. Road Safety Community Outreach Dates

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reviewed that the Council had received a Roadway Safety Report at the last worksession and wanted to present that information to for residents for comment, as specific locations are now attached to proposed remediations. In discussion, Council decided to host a late morning meeting on Saturday, March 30th

from 11AM to Noon, and then a second outreach opportunity prior to the April Town Meeting.

3. Public Works

There was no Public Works report.

4. Administration

MPT Brittan-Powell shared that the Town has hired Jonathon Loutsch as the PRECA Aide and that he will begin in March. The Town has made an offer to a grant writer and is still working to fill the Community Engagement position.

a. Record Retention Policy Review

TC Friesen reviewed that each municipality is required to have a record retention policy approved by the Maryland State Archives. She inherited a project in process from the previous Town Clerk, but found that the regulations on record retention had changed and that many updates needed to be made to those draft documents. The policy now before Council has been through one review at the State Archives and is responsive to their questions and comments. TC Friesen noted that it is easier to amend a policy than it is to create a new one, so she has focused on Administration files and will add the other departments over time. She requested Council review the policy and note any concerns or questions for her to review.

5. Code Compliance

CM Hemby requested that Council review the policy on landlords and what it would take for a landlord to have their rental license revoked. She noted that most landlords are following the rules, but there are a few that are consistently negligent, and fines and consequences for that negligence need to be a deterrent. She suggested that we ensure that we are in line with County fines. There was discussion on how the Code Compliance officers are being treated in the community. MPT Brittan-Powell noted that the Police Department has commented on how significant Code Compliance is to the public safety of the community.

6. Parks, Recreation, Education, and Civic Affairs

There was no PRECA report.

a. Town Organization Policy Draft 4

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reviewed the new draft codifies town organizations into defined categories: the appointed Boards and Commissions; Committees (such as the Green Team and Historical Committee); Assemblies, which are informal groups (such as the Quilters Club), and the various Non-Profits that work with the Town (such as Boys and Girls Club). The draft also removed a section on finances, as that was incorporated into each organization type subsection. Council reviewed that Sections 8, 9, and 10 still need to be worked on with the help of various staff and groups. Section 11 formalizes how groups are created and dissolved. Council spent several minutes discussing how to foster new group development. MPT Brittan-Powell expressed a desire to make sure that the structure of the ordinance has been vetted by Town Organizations. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy and CM Papanikolas both noted that there has been ongoing discussion for several years with Town Organizations that have informed this document. CM Hemby encouraged residents to come forward to start new Assemblies. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reviewed the draft "Event Policy" and led a discussion on the process of canceling an

event and the possible appeals process. TM Snyder recommended getting an MOU with all non-profits that the Town coordinates with.

7. Adjournment

CM Hemby moved to adjourn the meeting. MPT Brittan-Powell seconded. With no discussion the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:09PM.