



Town of Berwyn Heights

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Minutes Budget Worksession April 14, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Present were Mayor Cheye Calvo, MPT James Wilkinson, CMs Rose Almoguera, Patricia Dennison and Jodie Kulpa-Eddy. Also present were Town Administrator (TA) Edward Murphy, and Clerk Kerstin Harper.

1. Mayor

Announcements: Last weekend community garden volunteers built raised beds and prepared the garden for spring planting.

2. Budget

Mayor Calvo proposed the Town contribute \$300 from the Council public relations line item budget to fund the Parkdale High School robotics team, which won the Virginia regional competition, and will go to the international championship in St. Louis. The Council had no objections. The decision to appropriate the money will be taken up later.

Mayor Calvo said he would like the Council to discuss the funding of priority 1 sidewalks tonight, and any other items councilmembers would like to propose.

Police car: TA Murphy said that the Council appropriated money to purchase a new police vehicle in January 2015, and sent a letter of intent to reserve a Ford SUV. Chief Antolik was to provide additional information on the vehicle and a possible alternate vehicle, a Dodge charger.

Potholes: TA Murphy said that Public Works completed a pothole survey on priority streets. Some sections of road have a lot of alligator cracks in addition to potholes. In those locations the road may have to be milled and resurfaced to for the repaired pothole hold up for a longer period. He suggested appropriating \$20,000 from the additional Highway User Revenue the Town received this year to fix the areas most in need of repair.

Mayor Calvo said a pothole at the intersection of Edmonston Road and Tecumseh Place, which had been filled with cold patch, is not holding up. A permanent patch is needed. MPT Wilkinson asked if the ripples in the 8600 block of 63rd Avenue, which resulted from a WSSC water main break, is part of the pothole inventory. Mayor Calvo said that the ripples are WSSC's responsibility. TA Murphy and the

Public Works Director should follow up with them. However, it will be difficult to get WSSC to act if road damage related to a water and sewer pipe problem has not been documented in writing. Further, he does not want to spend money on piecemeal pothole fixes. These areas may need to be redone with the next large road project, in which case the money would have been spent twice. He would prefer to consider pothole repairs as part of an overall street repair plan.

Benches: CM Almoguera asked if the picnic table and benches removed for the Pop's Park renovation project could be put back in. TA Murphy said that they are no longer available. Mayor Calvo said an appropriation for benches should also include benches for bus stops. He likes those College Park installed along Edmonston Road. They are made from a powder-coated mesh, are durable and dry quickly.

Bike racks: MPT Wilkinson asked if money has been set aside for bike racks. TA Murphy said that funding for bike racks, bike repair stations, and signage is part of a \$20,000 ATHA/MHA grant application. However, the Town has to come up with a \$5,000 match. Notification of grant receipt is due in July.

Emergency generators: CM Kulpa-Eddy asked where the generator projects stands. TA Murphy said that the permits have not yet been issued. Upon reviewing the plans, the County required that the electric panels for the generators be installed on the outside walls of the Town Center. The engineers will need to revise the plan and resubmit them for approval. The Town's share of the project cost in the amount of \$88,000 is in this year's budget.

Capital projects

Mayor Calvo said that the Council previously agreed to fund the purchase of new events furniture for the Town Center and chairs for the Senior Center. The Green Team has recently requested \$1,000 for a composting program. It would purchase 30 composting bins and recover half the cost when interested residents purchase the subsidized bins.

63rd Avenue sidewalks: MPT Wilkinson asked if the easement agreement with the Berwyn Presbyterian Church for the grant-funded sidewalks on 63rd Avenue has been finalized. TA Murphy said that the Town Attorney has written it, but there are additional corrections that need to be made. The easement agreement provides for replacing the steps that go from 63rd Avenue and lead to the church front door with a handicap ramp. Permanent easement agreements will also be needed for the Town-funded priority 1 sidewalks project, 2 properties on Berwyn Road and 1 on Cunningham Drive.

Composting program appropriation: CM Almoguera moved and CM Dennison seconded to appropriate \$1,000 for the Green Team's composting program. The money is to be taken from surplus and placed in the Council public relations budget. CM Kulpa-Eddy said that she would like some background on this program before she votes for it. TA Murphy provided a Green Team memorandum on the subject. Mayor Calvo said the Town is likely to see some long-term savings in tipping fees, when compostable waste no longer goes to the landfill. The motion passed 5 to 0.

At 8:00 p.m., the Council took a 5 minute break.

Sidewalks: TA Murphy said he was given a project update by C.P. Johnson Engineers today but is still waiting to receive the 95% design. The estimated project cost is \$540,000, including a 25% contingency. The plans for the storm water mitigation project at the Public Works yard have been revised to include capturing the runoff from the roof of the neighboring property. This brings the project into compliance with the new storm water offset requirements. The County is reviewing the plans, but has not yet issued a permit.

Mayor Calvo said that he would like to adopt a funding plan for the sidewalk project as part of the FY 2015 budget. He anticipates that by the end of FY 2014 there will be \$220,000 in the public safety reserve, which contains the revenue from speed camera tickets. For FY 2015, another \$80,000 to \$100,000 should be added to the fund, based on prior years' receipts. This would bring the public safety reserve fund up to around \$300,000 to \$320,000. If \$29,000 is taken out to pay for the reinstatement of the 8th police officer and the Berwyn Heights Volunteer Fire Department contribution, approximately \$270,000 to \$290,000 would be left that could be used to finance sidewalks construction.

Mayor Calvo proposed the following sidewalks funding formula:

- \$270,000 from the public safety reserve fund (\$50,000 from FY 2015 receipts);
 - \$120,000 from Greenbelt Station impact fee funds (with 80,000 from FY 2015 receipts);
 - \$150,000 from surplus.
- \$540,000 Total

CM Kulpa-Eddy expressed reservations about the revenue projections for Greenbelt Station. She thought the pace of payouts the Town receives from Greenbelt Station developers may be slower than anticipated if the FBI headquarters does not come here. She also wondered what the impact of the new speed camera legislation would be, and whether this revenue will remain stable. Mayor Calvo said that the legislation passed this session will require municipalities to enter into a new type of contract with speed camera vendors, in which they must pay the vendor a negotiated amount up front. However, there would not be a direct impact on revenues.

MPT Wilkinson said he has long advocated using the Town's healthy surplus to finance the sidewalks rather than waiting for speed camera and Greenbelt Station revenue to come in. Regardless, the first set of homes to be built at Greenbelt Station sold quickly, which should be taken as a sign that this revenue is on track. During the many public hearings, a majority of those present have been favor of sidewalks, indicating widespread support. He hopes the sidewalks will be this Council's legacy.

CM Almoguera said she agrees that the Greenbelt Station payouts may be less than expected without the FBI headquarters. However, this revenue is not needed to go forward with the sidewalk project. There is enough money in the surplus to cover any shortfall. She thinks the project should not be pushed off any longer because the Town is too far into the process not to do anything. Sidewalks is one of the first things she looks for when buying a home.

Mayor Calvo said he is confident that Greenbelt Station funds will come in as projected with the housing market on the rebound. As with the Seminole/ Ruatan Street project, the Town may end up not having to use money from surplus. If the FBI headquarters is awarded to Greenbelt, and the Town receives its impact compensation sooner, he would like the Council to consider doing a big road repair

project next. CM Kulpa-Eddy said she did not think it prudent to rely on revenue that might be generated by the FBI headquarter relocation. In addition, she sees other problems resulting from the sidewalks construction, such as congestion where the roadway will be narrowed and negative impact on street trees.

MPT Wilkinson moved to adopt the sidewalks funding plan as proposed. CM Almoguera seconded. The motion passed 4 to 1, with CM Kulpa-Eddy opposed.

3. Ordinance 121 - Executive Powers and Duties

Postponed to next worksession.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Signed, *Kerstin Harper, Town Clerk*