



Town of Berwyn Heights

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MAYOR

Stephen D. Isler

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jason W. Papanikolas (Mayor Pro Tem)

Amanda M. Dewey

Ethan D. Sweep

Jeffrey Osmond

Worksession Minutes February 4, 2019 7:00 pm

Present were Mayor Stephen Isler, Mayor Pro Tem (MPT) Jason Papanikolas, Councilmembers (CMs) Amanda Dewey, Ethan Sweep and appointed Councilmember Jeffrey Osmond. Also present were Town Manager (TM) Maria Broadbent, Detective Daniel Unger, Code Supervisor Freddie Glass, Clerk Kerstin Harper and citizens.

1. Announcements

Mayor Isler welcomed Jeffrey Osmond at the table, whom the Council has selected as the 5th Councilmember. He will be sworn in at the February 13 Town meeting. CM Dewey announced that she attended a meeting of the Prince George's County Elected Municipal Women, at which Town Attorney Ferguson discussed issues related to small cell networks coming to the County.

2. Budget Presentations

TM Broadbent explained she invited department directors to give a presentation on the proposed budget enhancements they are requesting for the next fiscal year as part of an introduction to the FY 2020 budget process. A comprehensive budget presentation will be given at a later date. Pertaining to the Code Department enhancements, she will propose to fund the most significant changes out of this year's budget.

Police FY 2020 budget enhancements: Detective Unger presented the Public Health & Safety request. He said there are 8 proposed enhancements ranked by priority:

1. + \$11,350 for 3 promotions (2 Corporals, 1 Sergeant).
2. + \$88,250 for 2 new Dodge Durango police vehicles. These AWD, V8 SUVs are more spacious and help transport officers' equipment and get approximately 15 mpg. Two old police vehicles would be retired.
3. + \$61,600 for one additional police officer with police academy training. It would help prepare BHPD for the impending retirement of officers, help meet new state mandates for community policing, and enable BHPD to have two officers on duty 24/7. TM Broadbent can provide information on recommended police per capita ratios as a benchmark for the number of police officers a Town of Berwyn Heights' size may need. Appointed CM Osmond requested a vision/mission statement explaining what BHPD wants to accomplish with a larger force.
4. + \$3,000 for gas & oil for the additional officer's vehicle, plus allowance for price increases. The estimate is based on a presumed requirement of 8,040 gallons at \$3.00 per gallon.
5. + \$5,000 for overtime based on presumed hiring of an additional officer and presence at more community events.
6. + \$4,000 for shift differential based on presumed hiring of additional officer.

7. + \$1,236 for 2 handheld radar guns for speed monitoring. Currently, BHPD shares 1 radar gun among its 9 officers. CM Dewey noted that normally not more than 2 officers work at the same time.
8. + \$6,642 in capital outlay > \$500 for the purchase of 2 electronic speed monitoring signs to show motorists the speed they are traveling. One sign would be battery-powered and another solar-powered. The signs have between 11"-13" displays and can be strapped to poles. They likely would be set up along Edmonston Road, Berwyn Road and 58th Avenue. Appointed CM Osmond said he would like to receive information about other traffic calming options. TM Broadbent said the speed monitoring signs are a recommendation of the Quality of Life Commission. CM Sweep suggested including a title page with summary information about each request, plus prior year comparisons.

Code Compliance FY 2020 budget enhancements: Code Supervisor Glass explained his department's request for budget enhancements ties into the reorganization of the Code Compliance Department. It is proposed to purchase one additional module of the *Comcate* code software package to manage business licensing and personal property tax collection. The added cost to the budget would be \$4,200, with a one-time implementation fee of \$1,971 and an annual license fee of \$2,229.

TM Broadbent said adding this module would streamline the process of business licensing and tax collection, which is currently carried out by 2 employees maintaining different Excel spreadsheets. With this data uploaded into the *Comcate* business module, one employee could perform these functions. The annual *Comcate* fee is based on the number of devices using it and includes data storage and staff training.

Further, an increase of \$2,200 in the *Communications* line item is requested to finance the purchase of new iPads so each Code employee can have their own. The new tablets cost \$1,150 and have longer battery life. They are used primarily to enter data in the field. The price includes a Verizon bi-annual service fee of \$1,050. The Council raised the possibility of creating an asset inventory.

3. Discussion Items

Code Department staffing changes: TM Broadbent explained, with recent attrition in the Code Department, she plans to combine two part-time positions into one full-time position. The new full-time employee would take on business licensing and tax collection, formerly housed in the Administration Department, using the *Comcate* software. The total cost of the changes in FY 2020 would be \$9,065.

It is proposed to finance the *Comcate* upgrade from the FY 2019 budget and to retain the Code Clerk for the remainder of FY 2019 as a contractor to help transition the Department back to using *Comcate*. The goal of these changes is to 1) improve coverage of the Code Compliance office; 2) create three inspector positions, who will share inspections of all rental properties and exterior lots; and 3) eliminate most rental inspections after dark.

Quality of Life recommendation – commercial vehicles: TM Broadbent said the Quality of Life Commission's recommended that Ordinance 119 – Traffic & Parking be amended to include vehicles with ladder racks, modified bodies/ beds, side toolboxes and cargo vans in the definition of a commercial vehicle. Chief Antolik has reviewed the Ordinance and recommends leaving it as is because these types of vehicles are already covered by the current definition: "any vehicle designed, used or maintained to carry freight, property, merchandise, or passengers for a fee, in furtherance of a commercial enterprise."

CM Sweep asked if vehicles displaying *Lyft* and *Uber* stickers are being cited for being parked in street overnight. TM Broadbent said the Ordinance would allow it but Chief Antolik believes it is not a good use of officers' time to ticket every such commercial vehicle parked in the street.

Quality of Life recommendation - 58th and 60th Avenue traffic survey: TM Broadbent said BHPD has conducted a traffic survey of the 8900 blocks of 58th and 60th Avenues. They have made recommendations to the Council on restricting parking to alleviate the traffic backups that occur on these streets during rush hour. They are requesting direction from the Council on how best to solicit feedback from residents, e.g. holding a public hearing, requesting written comments and/ or leaving notices at homes and vehicles.

The Council discussed the merits of the two recommendations: 1) to institute 'no parking' on the last half of the 8900 block before the intersection with Greenbelt Road during rush hours; or 2) to prohibit parking on one side of these blocks of street. Mayor Isler preferred recommendation 1 while MPT Papanikolas, CMs Dewey and Sweep preferred recommendation 2. It was agreed to ask residents for feedback on both recommendations at the next Town meeting and by email.

Spay/ neuter grant: Mayor Isler said application for a spay/ neuter grant from the Maryland Agriculture Department was discussed at the last Four Cities meeting. The Four Cities had received spay/ neuter grants in previous years, but the sterilization of feral cats was not covered by these grants until now. Greenbelt offered to take a lead on the grant application and to include feral cats. Berwyn Heights would be a participant.

CM Dewey asked if there are plans to have a staff member take animal training since the Town does not have an animal control officer. TM Broadbent said that Officer Rufino has been designated as the liaison for the grant and will receive some animal training.

ULI TAP recommendations: CM Sweep said he and CM Dewey attended a January 23 worksession in Greenbelt at which the Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel (ULI TAP) presented its recommendations for the improvement of the Greenbelt Road Corridor. The recommendations were developed from site visits and discussions with stakeholders from Berwyn Heights, College Park and Greenbelt in June 2018 and form the basis for re-envisioning Greenbelt Road and the adjacent commercial corridor.

CM Sweep said he participated in a tour of the shopping centers Kentlands and Pike & Rose in Montgomery County, which could serve as models for redeveloping Beltway Plaza. He learned from another tour participant that Greenbelt's City Council is tonight discussing staff recommendations for the Beltway Plaza conceptual site plan that has been submitted to the Prince George's County Planning Board for review. He suggested Berwyn Heights look over Greenbelt's recommendations to identify those it wants to support. TM Broadbent offered to review the document with Councilmembers at their convenience.

CM Dewey said she would like Quantum Corporation, which manages Beltway Plaza, to keep coming to Berwyn Heights to give progress reports to the Council. TM Broadbent suggested to meet with a plan reviewer from Prince George's County to discuss Berwyn Heights preferences for the development. The Council agreed it is important to remain involved on all fronts as this project moves forward.

Small cell facilities: TM Broadbent said the impending deployment of a 5G wireless network in Prince George's County was discussed at the MML fall conference, and the creation of a regulatory framework is an MML legislative priority. To create the 5G network, communications companies are in the process of installing small cell facilities in County and municipal rights-of-ways. Municipalities are adopting legislation to create a permitting process and adopt standards for the installation, but a recent FCC ruling has limited what regulations municipalities may impose.

TM Broadbent said she is working with the Town attorney on drafting an ordinance that is compliant with

the FCC ruling and the Council can adopt at the February Town meeting. Once the ordinance is in place, she plans to hire a third-party engineer to review any plans for the installation of small cell facilities applicants may submit. The reviewer would be paid with fees levied on the applicants.

CM Dewey said she received an in-depth briefing on small cell issues at a recent meeting of the Prince George's Elected Municipal Women. There are a number of concerns about the technology, one being that the transmitters must be between 50-450 feet apart to be able to 'see' each other. Therefore, anything obstructing the sight lines, such as trees, may have to be removed. Health and privacy issues are also of concern. However, in an unusual ruling, the FCC has essentially preempted local governments from denying permits to the companies making application to install the networks. Cities will be limited to setting some aesthetic standards and prescribing where the facilities can be installed.

Smart cities initiative MOU: Clerk Harper said the University of Maryland and surrounding communities have formed a partnership to research, develop and deploy smart technology and data analytics to help solve the problems facing cities. Since April 2018, the partners have met periodically to identify projects and funding sources to advance the initiative. To formalize the partnership a memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been drafted that will be submitted to all participants for adoption in the coming months. The MOU is provided in the background documentation

In discussion, it was noted that Seat Pleasant recently demonstrated smart technology applications, primarily focused on law enforcement, it has implemented with the assistance of IBM. The question was raised how Berwyn Heights would benefit from smart technologies. Clerk Harper said the background documents include leaflets with examples of smart technology applications. She will also send information about upcoming meetings in the event Councilmembers would like to attend.

4. Minutes

On a motion by CM Dewey, seconded by CM Sweep, the January 7 worksession minutes were approved 4 to 0. On motion by CM Sweep, seconded by MPT Papanikolas, the January 14 worksession minutes were tabled to the next worksession.

5. Department Reports

Mayor Isler said with the selection of Jeffrey Osmond as the 5th Councilmember, departmental assignments will change after he is sworn in. CM Osmond will head the Code Department, MPT Papanikolas will move to Administration, CM Dewey to Parks & Recreation and Mayor Isler to Public Safety. CM Sweep will remain with Public Works. Mayor Isler also said that the Administration Department is busy preparing the FY 2020 budget, that he will meet with County Councilmember Glaros, and that he is ready to receive items for the mid-monthly e-newsletter.

CM Dewey requested information about the funds that were approved for each Town organization in the FY 2019 budget, which would help the organizations draft next year's budget requests for presentation at the March 23 budget worksession. As the next Parks & Recreation Department head, she plans to quickly complete a Town organizations policy begun by the previous Council and work on re-establishing a functioning Education Advisory Committee. The Town is applying to host a Chesapeake Conservation Corps member, who would work on storm water management projects and other environmental activities.

CM Sweep reported that representatives of the State Highway Administration (SHA) gave a presentation on the planned widening of I-495 and I-270 at the last Four Cities meeting, which was met with a lot of skepticism. He would like to be informed about any upcoming workshops SHA will hold on the subject so that Councilmembers and residents can continue to give input.

CM Osmond said he is meeting with TM Broadbent to get up to speed with the Code Department and is looking forward to helping govern the Town.

6. Town Council Schedule

The Council reviewed the calendar. The date of the Green Team meeting was moved to Tuesday, February 12. The 2nd worksession was confirmed for Tuesday, February 19. CM Osmond asked whether the calendar could be made accessible online to all Councilmembers, so each can add or correct information. Councilmember absences might be usefully marked on it.

7. Citizens Discussion

Phil Ventura, 57th Avenue, commented on refuse collection during snow days, last Friday's snow clearing operations, and the traditional twice-weekly refuse collections. He also presented photos of damage to the recently repaved 60th Avenue cul-de-sac due to what he believes to be problematic paving around a new storm water inlet.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 p.m.

Signed: *Kerstin Harper*, Town Clerk