



Town of Berwyn Heights

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Minutes Worksession October 5, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Mayor Pro Tem (MPT) Chris Rasmussen, Councilmembers (CMs) Patricia Dennison, Maria Robles and Lynn White. Also present was Town Administrator (TA) Jessica Cowles, Clerk Kerstin Harper and Public Works Director Adrian Lockley.

1. Mayor

Announcements: Mayor Kulpa-Eddy enjoyed a brief vacation in Rock Hall on the Eastern Shore. The Harvest Fest fundraiser was postponed to October 10.

Calendar: The Council reviewed the calendar. No changes were made.

Minutes: On a motion by CM Robles and second by CM Dennison, the September 8 worksession minutes were approved 5 to 0.

Department reports: Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reported that Town staff was busy preparing for Hurricane Joaquin which passed through on the weekend without causing damage. There will be an open house on the Purple Line this Thursday at the M-NCPPC building in Riverdale. Parkdale High School will hold a career fair on October 13. MPT Rasmussen reported that the Town has received applications for the Town Treasurer position and three finalists will be interviewed next week. CM Robles reported that residents should have received a Town postcard with fall events and the Clean Lot regulations. Residents may call the Code Department or Town office with any questions. CM Dennison reported that all Town organizations have reconvened. Trunk or Treat will be held on October 17 at BHES' lower parking lot.

TA Cowles reported that she attended a productive International City and County Managers Association (ICMA) conference in Seattle last week. ICMA added a section for small municipalities, in which she attended workshops on budgeting, economic development, and human resources management, among others. She had the opportunity to talk with several human resources vendors and took part in a meeting with Maryland city managers.

Citizen comments: Mayor Kulpa-Eddy received comments about water leaking from one of WSSC's

temporary pipes on Ruatan Street. CM White received a comment about poor drainage along the access road to Lake Artemesia and at the railroad underpass of the Paintbranch trail, which causes problems for people commuting on bikes. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy said that the Town may not have jurisdiction in these areas. She also received a couple of comments on brown water coming out of faucets, which may be related to the WSSC water main replacement project.

Senior Center naming request (discussed out of order): CM Dennison said that several representatives from the Seniors' Club are present to request that the Senior Center be named for Jean McConnell, who recently passed. Ray Smith, President of the Seniors' Club, said that Jean McConnell helped establish the Club and served as its President for nearly 30 years. She lived most of her life in Berwyn Heights and served the Town in numerous ways. The Club discussed how to best memorialize her contributions and agreed that they would like the Senior Center to be named for her. The Council is hereby requested to approve the request.

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy said it would seem appropriate to honor Ms. McConnell's service to the Town in this way, and asked if there are any comments. MPT Rasmussen raised the issue of whether the Town should have a policy on naming Town facilities. The length of service and number of accomplishments might be criteria in making that determination. By all accounts, Ms. McConnell would fit in the category of residents deserving the honor.

CM Dennison moved and CM Robles seconded to approve the request. It was clarified that the new sign reading "Jean McConnell Senior Center" would name only the first floor of the Town Center building, with lettering similar to that of the William Armistead Town Administration Building. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Ray Smith also stated that the address number on the Town Center is small and difficult to see. Visitors to the Senior Center sometimes have trouble finding the building. He suggested the Town consider affixing larger or darker colored numbers.

November Town meeting: Mayor Kulpa-Eddy said that the Council is requested to decide whether to move the November Town meeting, as the second Wednesday will fall on Veterans Day, a federal holiday observed by the Town. TA Cowles explained that Council Rule 1 requires that Town meetings be held on the second Wednesday of the month. Therefore, the Council would have to waive the Council Rule to move the Town meeting. If the meeting is not moved, employees coming in to work would receive holiday pay. She proposed to move the meeting to Wednesday, November 18 as there are no conflicts with other meetings. The Council had no objections. CM White moved to waive Council Rule 1 for this occurrence only, and hold the Town meeting on November 18. MPT Rasmussen seconded. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Holiday lunch: The Council agreed to set the date for the employee holiday lunch for Friday, December 11.

2. Public Works

Purchase of pickup truck: CM White explained that Public Works Director Lockley recommends purchasing a new Ford F-350 1-ton 4x4 pickup truck to replace a 2008 model as scheduled. The 2008 pickup truck has 103,000 miles, a rusting under body and a transmission problem. By selling the 2008 truck the Town will avoid higher maintenance and repair costs and optimize resale value.

TA Cowles and Director Lockley added that the truck was scheduled for replacement in FY 2016. The vehicle replacement reserve had \$35,000 set aside for the purchase. However, DPW held off on the pickup purchase because the purchase of a new trash truck was moved up from FY 2017 to FY 2016, and was also paid from the vehicle replacement reserve. If the Council approves the purchase of the new pickup truck, an additional \$4,600 is needed to cover outfitting. The new truck would have snow plowing capability.

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy said that she would like to have a copy of the vehicle replacement schedule with replacement cost for all DPW vehicles before making a decision. TA Cowles said she will provide a more comprehensive vehicle replacement schedule at the next worksession. It would list all DPW vehicles, replacement dates and costs, as well as the uses of each vehicle with a picture.

Director Lockley related that a citizen complained about the poor drainage of 55th Avenue at the entrance to Lake Artemesia after rain storms. People that commute by bike to the University of Maryland often use this street as an alternative to the pedestrian bridge, which is currently closed. Director Lockley had addressed the issue in his report on street repair planning during the budget season but it was not deemed to be a priority. He spoke to one of the engineers performing the hydraulic study of the Town's storm water drainage system and was advised that the Town can request to have storm drains added where drainage problems exist. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy said that she would want to wait until the findings of the study are available before making any requests. She agreed it would be useful to have Prince George's County brief the Council on the findings of the study at a future worksession.

CM Robles asked if there are plans to purchase equipment for clearing snow off the new sidewalks. Director Lockley said that he has a couple of ideas. He may include a proposal for the FY 2017 budget discussions.

3. Administration

Bulletin cover: The following items were approved for the November Bulletin cover: Thanksgiving theme; announcements for BHHC fall reception and Fall Town cleanup.

Ordinance 109 revision: Clerk Harper explained that this draft of the amended Election Ordinance has new provisions to address mid-term Town Council vacancies and other changes discussed by the Council at the last worksession, as well as several new definitions. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy proposed a number of changes to the new draft, which were discussed by the Council.

Ordinance Title: Broaden title to *Town Council Election and Selection Processes* to include appointment of Town Councilmembers in the event of mid-term vacancies.

Section 1 - Purpose and Authority: Broaden to include Councilmember appointment processes.

Section 2 - Applicability: Broaden to include Councilmember appointment processes.

Section 3 - Definitions: Drop "statewide" from definition of *Registration* to avoid confusion with supplemental registration. Include reference to *Election Manual* in definition for *Spoiled Ballots* for criteria on spoiled ballots. Clarify definition of *Voting Age* so as not to conflict with State law. Redefine *Write-in Vote* as the act of a voter writing-in the name of a person who is not a declared candidate on the ballot.

Section 6 B - Preparing for Town Council Elections: Clarify process of coordination with PGC Board of Elections regarding voter registration. Add the term *Universal Registration* to the definitions.

Section 6 F - Write-in Candidates: Set write-in candidate application due date as one week prior to the

election and April 15 for having one's name published in the May Town Bulletin.

Section 7 B - Polling Station Open: Add provision stating that observers of the tallying of votes may exit during tallying but may not return.

Section 7 C (2) - Machine Vote: Revise to use the same language for tallying of absentee and provisional ballots under the "Paper Ballot Voting" process.

Section 7 C (3) - Paper Ballot Voting: Revise to include reading of write-in votes by Chief Judge.

Section 7 C (4) - Paper Ballot Voting: Revise to include tallying of ballot questions/ referenda.

Section 7 D - Announcements of Election Results: Revise to include results of any ballot questions/ referenda.

Section 8 B - Filling Mid-term Vacancies: Revise to clarify that the Council may offer a vacant Council seat to a candidate who ran in the election "immediately preceding" the vacancy.

Section 8 D - Multiple Town Council Vacancies: A three month limit was set during which the Council may appoint a councilmember from the same pool of applicants in the event two Town Council vacancies occur shortly after one another.

Clerk Harper was asked to make the changes approved tonight and provide copies for a hearing at the October 14 Town meeting.

Merit and Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA): TA Cowles explained that the Council appropriated \$32,000 for a salary pool \$27,000 remains in the salary pool for merit increases and Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs). She has put together four different merit pay options based on FY 2015 employee performance evaluations. This excludes indirect salary costs from employee benefits which will be financed from the budget surplus. All options provide for a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA).

Option 1 establishes 2 performance classes. Class I comprises 17 employees with performance ratings between 3.00 - **3.99** receiving a 1% merit increase. Class II comprises 5 employees with performance ratings between 4.00 - 5.00 receiving a 2% merit increase.

Option 2 is the same as Option 1, but employees falling into Class I receive a higher 1.5% merit increase, and employees in Class II receive a 2.5% increase.

Option 3 establishes 2 performance classes. Class I comprises 15 employees with a performance rating between 3.00 and **3.79** receiving a merit increase of 1%. Class II comprises 7 employees receiving a merit increase of 2%.

Option 4 is the same as Option 3 but employees falling into Class I receive a higher 1.5% merit increase and employees in Class II a 2.5 % increase.

On a motion by CM Robles, seconded by CM Dennison, the Council voted 5 to 0 to approve Option 2 at a total cost of \$21,038 in FY 2016 and an annualized cost of \$30,332.

TA Cowles further explained that she has not included herself in the merit increase options packet because her employment contract does not entitle her to it. The contract does provide for consideration of a salary increase as part of the performance review process. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy scheduled an executive session for the next worksession to discuss the matter.

4. Code Compliance

5. Parks and Recreation

Senior Center naming request: Discussed under Mayor.

6. Public Safety

7. Executive Session (9:35 p.m. - 9:54 p.m.)

On a motion by CM Robles seconded by CM Dennison, the Council went into executive session to discuss a legal matter. With matter discussed CM Robles moved and CM Dennison seconded to end the executive session.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 p.m.
