



Town of Berwyn Heights

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MAYOR
Amanda M. Dewey

COUNCIL MEMBERS
Jodie A. Kulpa-Eddy (Mayor Pro Tem)
Christopher S. Brittan Powell
Jason W. Papanikolas
Ethan D. Sweep

Town Meeting Minutes October 13, 2021 | 7:00 p.m.

This meeting was held by videoconference due to the ongoing COVID-19 health emergency and was broadcast on Berwyn Heights cable TV channels and streamed on the Town website. Residents could comment by calling (301) 474-9570 or e-mailing Mayor Dewey at adewey@berwynheightsmd.gov.

Call to order

Mayor Amanda Dewey called the meeting to order at 7PM. Present were Mayor Dewey, Mayor Pro Tempore Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Councilmember Chris Brittan-Powell, Councilmember Jason Papanikolas, Councilmember Ethan Sweep, Town Manager Laura Allen, and Town Clerk Melanie Friesen. Additionally, Brad Pudner Director of Public Works and Debby Steele-Snyder Chair of the BHHC were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

1. Announcements

Mayor Dewey let residents know there is closed captioning available in Spanish on the Zoom meetings. She also gave a COVID update, including the expansion of the County mask mandate to include children, two years old and up. She reported on the vaccine clinic hosted by the Police Department, highlighting that booster shots will also be available.

Introduction of Brad Pudner, Director of Public Works

Mayor Dewey introduced Brad Pudner, the new Director of Public Works. TM Allen stated that Mr. Pudner has been learning the Berwyn Heights way of doing things and highlighted his experience with both plants and people. Mr. Pudner stated it's been a fun 3.5 weeks and expressed that he's learning the ropes and is gearing up for the leaf season and was grateful for the warm welcome. CM Sweep expressed that he was glad to have Mr. Pudner on board.

2. Approval of Agenda

MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the agenda. CM Sweep seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Consent

Mayor Dewey highlighted that there was an additional attachment, a conference report from TM Allen. MPT Kulpa-Eddy moved to approve the consent agenda. CM Brittan-Powell seconded. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously. MPT Kulpa-Eddy thanked TM Allen for answering her questions about the August Treasurer's report.

4. Mayor & Councilmember Reports

Mayor Dewey gave a COVID update, including the expansion of the mask mandate to include

children aged two and up, and that the numbers for COVID have continued to improve in the area. She reported on the vaccine clinic hosted by the Police Department. She stated that the Thriving Earth Exchange project is ready for volunteers and to email her if anyone is interested in volunteering. She encouraged people to sign up for the Oct 19th Budget forum for the County's Planning Board. She thanked everyone who completed an American Rescue Plan Act survey. MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported attending the Maryland Municipal League Fall Conference, including the Academy Graduate Workshop on the "Role of Local Government in Driving Economic Prosperity", as well as other several other sessions. She also attended the Berwyn Heights Elementary School PTA get-together. Lastly, she highlighted the Prince George's County Public Schools Budget Forum on October 18 at 6PM. This will be a listening session on budget priorities for the 2023 fiscal year.

CM Papanikolas also attended MML. He reviewed the Code Compliance monthly report, emphasizing vehicle condition and storage, including non-roadworthy vehicles. He highlighted one permit that was issued which is the WSSC watermain replacement, replacing pipes in several areas of Town. He also shared a Boys and Girls Club fundraiser on Thursday October 21st with 2fifty BBQ. MPT Kulpa-Eddy recommended ordering early.

CM Brittan-Powell asked about Halloween in the Town. Mayor Dewey stated that Halloween is not a Town organized event and recommended that people follow CDC guidelines on trick-or-treating. He stated that the streets seem to be full of parked cars and he's hearing a lot of concern about it. He also was reviewing minutes and had questions regarding strategic planning. Mayor Dewey stated that she was aware of Council Priority setting and project tracking. MPT Kulpa-Eddy reported that the outcome of the planning session were vision and mission statements as well as some goals and action items. He asked TM Allen to provide an update on any Administration issues. TM Allen stated that there will be changes to the ways Town Staff use credit cards and that Town Staff are working on accepting credit card payments.

CM Sweep stated that leaf collection will be starting soon and encouraged residents to keep an eye on the website and Bulletin. He encouraged people to sign up for the E-newsletter which will include leaf collection updates.

5. Committee Reports

Education Advisory Committee: MPT Kulpa-Eddy gave the update and stated that they are looking for volunteers. The goal of the BHEAC is not to replicate PTAs but rather advocate for multiple schools.

Green Team: Mayor Dewey updated that there will be a Pumpkin Smash on Saturday November 6 with the help of the BHVFD. The Town clean-up will precede the pumpkin smash, starting at 10 am, with the smash at Noon. The Thriving Earth Exchange project will be coordinating with the Green Team for efficiency. Bee City USA subcommittee is still looking for volunteers. The Green Team received a weather station that will likely be placed in the Community Garden.

Historical Committee: Debby Steele-Snyder reported that in September the committee had elections and that there is a new secretary, Sierra Langford. She reported a revised meeting schedule for the rest of the year, with the November meeting being on the 17th. The walking tour, "Legends and Lore of Berwyn Heights" will be held Oct 24 at 4:30 in the afternoon. Please email Ms. Steele-Snyder if you are interested in attending. The Historical Committee is looking for a volunteer to edit an oral history tape.

Neighborhood Watch/ Emergency Preparedness: Mayor Dewey reviewed that they went through the Police report and trailer inventory. They met the new police officer who will be sworn in later in the week.

Recreation Council: MPT Kulpa-Eddy stated the next meeting will be November 2nd at 7PM in person. She also highlighted the “Trunk or Treat” event to be held on October 23rd from 6:30-8PM. There will also be a Halloween House-Decorating Contest, which will be judged during the week of October 25 with nighttime displays judged on the evening of the 29th. She suggested that residents may also consider entering the Prince George’s County house decorating contest online. There will be a food drive in conjunction with the Town clean-up and pumpkin smash. She noted the tree lighting event for December is a work in progress but will also include a craft fair.

6. New Business

a. Leaded fuel airplanes initiative sign-up

Mayor Dewey introduced the initiative stating that a resident from College Park had reached out to her regarding this and asked for neighboring communities to consider signing the petition by Earthjustice to demand the EPA regulate leaded fuel in small aircraft. Mayor Dewey reviewed that it is the practice of the Council to not sign petitions like this as a Council unless the decision to do so is unanimous. MPT Kulpa-Eddy stated that she was unsure how this directly effects Berwyn Heights and cannot see the Town signing on. CM Brittan-Powell expressed that leaded fuel is essential for safety in small aircraft and would be cautious. CM Papanikolas stated that he understands that the FAA is already requesting the industry to take action on this by 2023. Mayor Dewey stated that no action would be taken as a Council at this time. CM Sweep stated he would be interested in signing this as an individual, due to lead ending up in the soil and water. Mayor Dewey also stated she plans to sign it as an individual.

7. Old Business

a. Annual Calendar Approval

Mayor Dewey reviewed the purpose of the Calendar is to give residents plenty of advance notice for scheduled meetings. CM Sweep moved to approve the 2022 Town Council calendar. CM Papanikolas seconded. After no discussion the motion passed unanimously.

b. Sustainable Purchasing Policy

Mayor Dewey invited TM Allen to review the Sustainable Purchasing Policy. TM Allen reviewed the language changes that were made at the request of the Council. She recommended that Council approve the Sustainable Purchasing Policy by resolution. MPT Kulpa-Eddy thanked TM Allen for the language changes. Mayor Dewey asked for a motion to adopt Resolution 9-2021. CM Sweep moved to adopt 9-2021. MPT Kulpa-Eddy asked for confirmation that this was a resolution not a policy adoption. TM Allen stated that she neglected to include the resolution, but that policy can be adopted by motion. Mayor Dewey asked for a second so that it would open the floor for discussion about how to proceed. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded. During discussion it was concluded to vote on the policy and not require a resolution. Mayor Dewey asked for a vote for the motion to adopt resolution 9-2021. After no discussion, the motion was rejected unanimously. CM Sweep moved to adopt the Sustainable Purchasing Policy. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded. After no further discussion the motion to adopt the Sustainable Purchasing Policy was approved unanimously.

c. Red Light Camera Ordinance 149

Mayor Dewey reviewed that in two previous worksessions the possibility of red-light cameras at locations along Greenbelt Road had been discussed and that implementing

those would require passing an ordinance. TM Allen reviewed the staff report that amends Ordinance 149 to allow for red light cameras and recommends that Council waive the first reading of the ordinance. She reviewed the fiscal impact of the proposed program and discussed the associated fine, which after further discussion with the Chief of Police would be set at \$75. She reviewed and responded to the previous question regarding data collection and recommended that there not be any changes to the data that is collected under the speed camera ordinance, which then avoids the appearance of targeted enforcement. She also responded to the question of what does a “full stop” include, which is the vehicle coming to a complete stop for 4 seconds. TM Allen also reported that any red-light camera enforcement signage would be at the Town’s expense. She also reported that no points would be added to a driver’s license for a red-light camera ticket. Finally, she reviewed the next steps for adopting the ordinance and the amended “fees and fines” resolution.

In discussion, MPT Kulpa-Eddy stated that education regarding the need for a full 4 second stop is critical. TM Allen clarified that any educational signs would be at the Town’s expense vs the vendors. CM Brittan-Powell asked what problem is this trying to solve; is it cut through traffic, pedestrian safety and how will the Town know if this is impacting it? Mayor Dewey replied that in conversation with the Chief, that the goal is to improve pedestrian safety. CM Brittan-Powell questioned if the cameras would really facilitate safety and felt that there would be a lot of headache and trouble from the cameras. CM Sweep thanked TM Allen on answering the questions and expressed interest in cameras for safety and also was in favor of educational signage. Mayor Dewey reported that this ordinance doesn’t detail where cameras would go. MPT Kulpa-Eddy stated that this ordinance only allows for the installation of cameras but doesn’t require it. TM Allen reviewed again that there would be a Public Hearing at the next town meeting and additional opportunities for community engagement. Mayor Dewey asked for a motion to introduce Ordinance 149 and waive the first reading. CM Sweep moved to introduce Ordinance 149 and to waive the first reading. MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconded. In discussion, MPT Kulpa-Eddy reiterated that she wanted to hear more from the public. The motion passed 4:1 with Mayor Dewey, MPT Kulpa-Eddy, CM Papanikolas and CM Sweep in favor of the motion with CM Brittan-Powell opposed.

8. Resident & Community Comments

Resident Mike Attick called and expressed his belief that the 4 second requirement for a stop isn’t legal and suggested that the vendor should be able to calibrate the device to any amount of time.

Adjournment

CM Sweep moved to adjourn the meeting with MPT Kulpa-Eddy seconding. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 8:22PM.

Respectfully Submitted: Melanie Friesen, Town Clerk