



# 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

## Public Meeting Minutes Town Council Chamber April 26, 2023 | 7:00 p.m.

### Call to Order

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy called the meeting to order at 7PM. Also present were Mayor Pro Tem Chris Brittan-Powell, Councilmember Shinita Hemby, Councilmember Faustino Menjivar, and Councilmember Jason Papanikolas. Staff present were Interim Town Manager Peter Jones, Town Treasurer Mike Lightfield, and Town Clerk Melanie Friesen.

### Pledge of Allegiance

#### 1. Announcements

There were no announcements.

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

CM Hemby moved to approve the agenda. CM Papanikolas seconded. In discussion, MPT Brittan-Powell asked for clarification on the title of the meeting, which is a Public Meeting. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

#### 3. Public Hearings

##### **Ordinance 185-E- FY23 Budget Amendments**

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy introduced the budget amendment to cover the severance pay for the former Town Manager and to pay for the search for a permanent Town Manager.

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy opened the hearing at 7:03. With no comments, she closed the hearing at 7:05PM.

##### **Resolution 3-2023 FY24 Fees and Fines Schedule**

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy opened the hearing to update the Fees and Fines Schedule. In 2019 the Council adopted Ordinance 179 which requires the Council to review and adopt a fees and fines schedule by resolution on an annual basis. This year, there are proposed changes to certain traffic and parking violations under Ordinance 119 and for "Peace, Order, and Nuisances" violations under Ordinance 114. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy opened the public hearing at 7:05. With no comment, she closed the hearing at 7:07PM.

#### 4. Mayor & Councilmember Reports

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy shared that the College Park Farmers Market opens this weekend from 8AM-1PM every Saturday for the season. Additionally, two Berwyn Heights police officers received "Top Cop" awards from the Maryland Municipal League Police Executives Association. This

statewide award was presented to Corporal Ben Hollowell and Private First Class Jeffrey Harriot for their actions in the bank robbery in progress in October of 2022, where they safely removed bystanders from the scene and apprehended the suspect.

MPT Brittan-Powell encouraged everyone to make their preparations for Berwyn Heights Day. He thanked ITM Jones on a couple of efforts, including a meeting with WSSC which appears to have been productive for residents with backflow issues on Cunningham Ave. He has had good conversations on stormwater management issues with officials from the County. Additionally, students from the University of Maryland who have been working on a project involving stormwater data will hopefully present at a meeting soon. He also suggested reaching out to Andrew Fellows as another contact with stormwater experience.

CM Hemby thanked all the residents who have sent emails and calls about the young adult and teen program. She asked for more volunteers to teach classes on a variety of topics to advance the program and guide the participants. She added that due to the nature of working with children, background checks will be required.

CM Menjivar shared that WSSC has been in contact with Director Pudner regarding the street restoration on Edmonston Road. There has been a change of contractors and hopefully work will begin soon. Director Pudner also received informal word that there will not be an increase in landfill fees in the next fiscal year and is working to get that in writing.

CM Papanikolas shared about a wellness fair that will be held at Berwyn Heights Elementary School on Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. He stated that he would like to offer clarification as he has received comment that he was critical of Director Pudner's leadership in the last worksession. He stated issues with Human Resources practices of the past fall on former Town Managers as the head of HR. He will be speaking with Public Works staff soon and believes the proposed reorganization to be an important step for Public Works.

## **5. Old Business**

There was no old business.

## **6. New Business**

### **a. Ordinance 185-E FY23 Budget Amendments Introduction**

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy introduced Ordinance 185-E as a budget amendment to pay for the unexpected expenses of severance pay of the former Town Manager and search for the new permanent Town Manager. MPT Brittan-Powell moved to introduce the ordinance, CM Hemby seconded. CM Papanikolas asked to waive the first reading. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy agreed. With no further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

### **b. Ordinance 187: FY24 General Fund Budget Ordinance Introduction**

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy explained the Department Directors, Town Management and Town Council have been working to draft a budget for FY 2024. This is the budget that funds the day-to-day functions of the Town. The proposed budget maintains the constant yield tax rate (CYTR) of \$.5187 per \$100 of assessed real property value rather than keeping the current tax rate of \$.545 per \$100 of assessed value. This means that the revenue from this source will remain flat. A proposed increase in expenditures means a deficit of close to \$700,000 for the next fiscal year. The Council will continue to work on the budget. CM Hemby moved to introduce Ordinance 187. CM Menjivar seconded. CM Papanikolas offered a friendly

amendment to correct the tax rate typographical error. MPT Brittan-Powell asked for clarification on what had changed between this Ordinance and the budget worksheet. TT Lightfield reviewed the changes between the budgets from the last worksession and the worksheet that was presented with the Ordinance introduction. There was discussion regarding the CDL incentive line item for Public Works. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy invited each Councilmember to review each of their departments and the changes that have been proposed. She reviewed the changes to the police department, including the COLA salary increase across all departments, a promotion for one officer, two police vehicles and a software purchase. CM Papanikolas shared the changes to the PRECA budget. The biggest change is the addition to pay M-NCPPC for the Men's Basketball League which will be reimbursed but is required by M-NCPPC. He also highlighted several small changes within some line items. CM Hemby shared that TT Lightfield reviewed most of the changes to Code Compliance in his review but highlighted that training is of utmost importance. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy asked about the stipend for the teen volunteer program to ensure that it is in the FY24 budget. CM Menjivar reiterated his opinion that the CDL incentive is critical to the Public Works Department. He also reviewed capital requests for vehicles and equipment. MPT Brittan-Powell had no further updates. But he expressed his concern that by not allowing the reorganization of Public Works, it will hinder progress with stormwater management. He also expressed that he did not understand the issue that halted the proposal and would like to understand the issue before the next Worksession. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reiterated that the Council is not voting on the budget at this time, but rather the Ordinance. CM Hemby noted that there have been several mistakes in the letterhead that was inadvertently used.

With no further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

- c. Ordinance 188: FY24 PSTD Budget Introduction  
Mayor Kulpa-Eddy introduced the Public Safety Taxing District budget which finances the capital and operating costs of one police officer. She reviewed the areas which comprise the district as well as the one cent tax increase which will balance the budget. MPT Brittan-Powell moved to introduce the Ordinance. CM Papanikolas seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.
- d. Resolution 2-2023: Traditional Funding for the Berwyn Height Police Department Facility  
MPT Brittan-Powell moved to introduce the resolution. CM Menjivar seconded. In discussion, MPT Brittan-Powell shared that this document seeks to recognize the value of the police department and their service to the community, but that in looking to fund a new police department building it should be done through traditional funding methods rather than using ARPA funds. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy stated that she disagrees with the resolution as it is not logical. The Town should maintain the flexibility to use the limited-time-available ARPA funds for this purpose, even if it decides not to. CM Hemby voiced that she, MPT Brittan-Powell and CM Papanikolas have heard from Town residents who have voiced their opposition to ARPA funds being used for this purpose. With no further discussion the motion passed 4:1 with Mayor Kulpa-Eddy opposed.
- e. Letter to Aldi/Quantum in Support of Green Initiatives  
CM Papanikolas moved to submit the letter to Quantum. CM Hemby seconded. In discussion, CM Papanikolas reviewed the letter that the Green Team proposed to encourage the developer and Aldi to consider adding some green initiatives and infrastructure. Discussion included adding a request for EV chargers in the parking lot and the benefits and challenges of permeable pavers. The motion passed unanimously.

**7. Resident & Community Comments**

There were no resident comments.

**8. Adjournment**

CM Menjivar moved to adjourn. CM Hemby seconded. With no discussion, to motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.