



# Town of Berwyn Heights

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**MAYOR**  
Jodie A. Kulpa-Eddy

## **COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Christopher S. Brittan Powell (Mayor Pro Tem)  
Shinita Hemby  
Faustino Menjivar  
Jason W. Papanikolas

## **Council Meeting Minutes August 10, 2022**

**Town Meeting - 7:00 p.m.**  
Council Chamber, 5700 Berwyn Road

This meeting was held in the Council Chamber. Residents could comment by attending the meeting, calling 301-474-9570, or e-mailing Town Manager Laura Allen at [lallen@berwynheightsmd.gov](mailto:lallen@berwynheightsmd.gov)

### **Call to Order**

Mayor Jodie Kulpa-Eddy called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. Present were Mayor Pro Tem Chris Brittan-Powell and Councilmember Shinita Hemby. Councilmembers Faustino Menjivar and Jason Papanikolas had excused absences. Staff present were Town Manager Laura Allen and Assistant to the Town Manager, Yvonne Odoi. Also present were residents of Berwyn Heights.

### **1. Announcements**

- a. **Resolution 09-2022 - Thanking Mutual Aid Partners in Storm Cleanup.** Mayor Kulpa-Eddy read this “Resolution of Gratitude” to thank those partners who provided equipment and staff in helping the Town clean-up after the July 12 windstorm: Upper Marlboro, University Park, Gaithersburg, Hyattsville, New Carrollton, Prince George’s County and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.
- b. CM Hemby announced that the Boys and Girls Club is looking for mentors, coaches and volunteers. High school students can get credit for volunteering.

### **2. Approval of Agenda**

Motion to accept the agenda was moved by CM Hemby. MPT Brittan-Powell seconded.

### **3. Consent Agenda**

- MPT Brittan-Powell moved to make changes to the July 18<sup>th</sup> minutes. He provided printed copies of the changes. After Council discussion on the wording in the proposed changes, the decision was made to table accepting the 7/18 minutes until the September Town Meeting. MPT Brittan-Powell motioned to accept the Consent agenda with the exception of the July 18<sup>th</sup> minutes. CM Hemby seconded that motion. Agenda was unanimously approved as amended.

### **4. Mayor and Councilmember reports**

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reported that National Night Out was a great success, and thanked the residents, Town Organizations and staff for their help and participation. She reviewed the August 4 Four Cities meeting which included a presentation from Prince George’s County Office of Emergency Management on preparing for a natural disaster.

She further stated that the County is still collecting data on uninsured loss claims, hoping to hit \$3 million threshold to activate FEMA relief aid. She also provided resources for residents to receive emergency alerts: [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov), “Prepare Prince George’s” mobile app, and “Alert Prince George’s” at [alert.mypgc.us](http://alert.mypgc.us). Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reminded residents of the August 11<sup>th</sup> opening of the Maryland Insurance Administration’s virtual disaster center for information and questions on severe weather events. She concluded by reminding residents of the upcoming Maryland Tax-Free week August 14-20 for school resources as well as purchasing equipment that can be used to prepare for weather events.

MPT Brittan-Powell wished all going back to school well on this new school year. He added that Council will be using ARPA funds to assist residents with basic needs, including addressing food insecurity. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy added that there are also additional resources for assistance with the State of Maryland.

CM Hemby noted that National Night Out was exciting, especially seeing Town Organizations, teens and young people in attendance. She noted that the Four Cities’ meeting was very informative. The Office of Emergency Management’s presentation on preparing a go-bag for each home and to not just have an emergency plan, but to practice it as well, was very useful. She reported on her department meeting with Director Goodwin. The department partnered with Prince George’s County to provide resources and assist Town residents in navigating permit requirements to recover from this past weather event. She further thanked residents for attending and presenting issues at meetings for Council to address. The issue of speeding and stop-sign running were presented by residents during a previous meeting. Council is working on options to curb this behavior and will be presenting those options to the Police department. She pleaded to residents to continue to call, email, and write to share opinions and concerns with Council on matters in town.

## **5. Committee Reports**

BH Education Advisory Committee had no representation at this meeting.

The Green Team had no representation at this meeting, but Mayor Kulpa-Eddy stated their next meeting is tomorrow (August 11) at 7pm.

Historical Committee: Chair Debby Steele-Snyder reported that National Night Out was a success as they celebrated Berwyn Heights’ 126<sup>th</sup> anniversary of incorporation with cupcakes. She stated there is no meeting in August but that the next meeting is September 28 at 7:30pm; officer elections will be held. She continued by stating there are plans for a fall “Wine & Cheese” event in October or November. Lastly, she mentioned that there needed to be additional security for the museum.

Neighborhood Watch/Emergency Preparedness Committee: Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reported that the trailer was displayed at National Night Out while the members were busy manning the grills. She noted that the next meeting is scheduled for September 7 at 7pm and all are welcome.

Recreation Council: Angie Wolfinger reported that they had great attendance at National Night Out especially with their prize wheel. She listed the upcoming events:

- a. August 18 – summer concert at Lake Artemesia (rain location: Town Center)
- b. September 15 – Ice cream social
- c. End of October – Trunk or Treat at BH Community Center

- d. September 6 at 7pm – next meeting in the G. Love room
- e. August 27 at 11am – Craft Day in the Senior Center
- f. Every Friday night – Game night in the Senior Center
- g. August 28 – book & movie discussion on Steven King’s “The Shining” in the Senior Center
- h. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday Walking club – 8am meeting at Sports park
- i. August 20 @10 am – Brookside Gardens trip, meet at the Senior Center

She concluded with an invitation to all residents to participate in all the activities that are available and to come meet their BH neighbors. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy added that on November 18, Team Trivia night is returning to the Town Center.

## 6. Old Business

### a. Berwyn Heights/ UMD SPH Agreement

MPT Brittan-Powell reviewed the University of Maryland School of Public Health’s past presentations and a draft baseline agreement with the Town to address public health needs. Dr. Dushanka Kleinman from UMD SPH called in; he stated he appreciated the invitation and opportunity to partner with the Town. The purpose of this agreement is to listen and learn from the community to develop guiding practices for the Town. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy asked what the start date would be, as it is not stated in the agreement. Dr. Kleinman replied the start date is the date of execution of the agreement, which is to be renewed annually. MPT Brittan-Powell stated that this is a winning program for the Town. MPT Brittan-Powell motioned to approve the partnership agreement. CM Hemby seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### b. Senior Club Use Agreement

TM Allen reported that the changes requested by the Seniors on clarification of the use of the G. Love Conference room next door have been addressed. Currently, the Town Attorney is preparing a “Hold Harmless” agreement for use of the Senior Center. She further explained that included in the agreement is the Town’s option to require adequate insurance for third party usage of the space; that is, groups or organizations not affiliated with the Town or the Seniors Club. This proposed agreement is for 5 years. Seniors Club Vice President Ron Luftman accepted the agreement as presented on behalf of the Seniors Club. MPT Brittan-Powell motioned to adopt Resolution 11-2022. CM Hemby seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### c. Council Rule I and II

CM Papanikolas, who was absent, emailed information to be read at the meeting. He gave background on the development of the Council Rules and explained his key points as to the changes needed in these rules. MPT Brittan-Powell motioned to adopt. CM Hemby seconded. In Council discussion, CM Hemby asked that she and CM Menjivar be given more time, after a presentation from the representatives of the Maryland Municipal League, to further their understanding of these Council Rules before making changes. She stated that she’d prefer that all Council be present for the vote on these Council Rules. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy confirmed that the requested MML meeting will not take place as that service is no longer offered. She asked if there were any other way that the 2 new Councilmembers could further their understanding. Training and/or classes given by a seasoned Councilmember were discussed. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy concluded by explaining the Council Rules are the rules and formats the council uses to govern themselves and that this Council can still operate with the current rules until such a time when changes are made. CM Hemby motioned to table the resolution until a time

when Council has all the background information, seconded by MPT Brittan-Powell. Motion passed unanimously.

**d. Sustainable Communities Workgroup Composition**

TM Allen reviewed that the Town has a designation with Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development since 2017, and renewal as a “Sustainable Community” requires that a workgroup that was established. TM Allen is asking that the previous group be re-established, adding members from the Seniors, Immigrant Neighbors and a Teen member. Staff is seeking approval of the composition of the workgroup to start facilitating meetings to be in compliance by the upcoming renewal date in March 2023. MPT Brittan-Powell motioned to appoint the workgroup composition as recommended; CM Hemby seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**7. New Business**

- a. No new business

**8. Resident & Community Comments**

- a. Resident Mike Attick called with his concerns of the workings of this current Council. He expressed concerns of aggressive behavior of residents toward Council and other residents. He further explained his past knowledge of how to handle severe weather events and presentations that have been made to previous Councils on how to better prepare. Mr. Attick continued to express his concerns on how Council should work with outside agencies and elected officials for the betterment of the Town. MPT Brittan-Powell asked what the Council should be accomplishing to meet his expectations? Mr. Attick responded that Council should know where staff is in severe weather events.
- b. Debby Steele-Snyder commented that a previous committee, the Walkable-Bikeable task force, came up with a complete report identifying unsafe areas in the neighborhood and included possible solutions for these areas. She stated that the crosswalk on Pontiac Street was not marked after the street was repaved. She has witnessed many near misses and near-collisions on this street. She offered suggestions of flashing signs, markings on the street with speed limits, additional crosswalks, and ensuring that the streetlights are in operation. CM Hemby added that the other side of the school has the same safety issues on 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and on Quebec Street. Ms. Steele-Snyder continued with background information on the configuration of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Avenue stairs from BHES. MPT Brittan-Powell asked if the Task Force considered a speed hump before the stop sign. Ms. Steele-Snyder noted there had been a discussion but the needs of the firetruck being able to access the street resulted in the review of other, more visual, options. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy asked TM Allen about the traffic study requested through the task force. TM Allen confirmed there is a \$68,00 grant from Park and Planning for traffic engineering services that has been approved by Council and Park and Planning. However, due to the current staffing issue in Park and Planning, a project manager has yet to be assigned. Everything is waiting on the project manager position to be filled. She continued by saying the previous Council directed that all of the task force recommendations be reviewed. Mayor Kulpa-Eddy commented that it does not preclude the Town from trying temporary solutions.
- c. Mike Attick called to clarify that the sidewalks that are on Cunningham were completed in the first phase of the sidewalk project.
- d. Resident Dave Wolfinger commented on the AudioVisual system used for the Town meetings. He continued to comment on speed bumps. He stated that the root cause to

be addressed is lack of enforcement for offenders; that they need to be fined for the message to be sent. His third comment is the lack of emergency preparedness in the Town. He is volunteering to be able to assist in events.

- e. CM Hemby motioned to adjourned, MPT Brittan-Powell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.  
Meeting was adjourned at 8:52pm.