

**Town of Edmonston**  
**Town Council Regular Session Minutes**  
Wednesday June 12, 2019 7:00 P.M.

**1. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Gant @ 7:20 pm. In attendance: Council Members: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne Bee, Turberville, Captain Billy Sullivan, Town Attorney Suellen Ferguson, Town Administrator Rod Barnes and Town Clerk Averil Gray

**2. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Gant followed by a moment of silence.**

Remembrance to the fallen 24-year old police officer was reflected upon.

**3. The approval of the agenda was presented for approval.**

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne Bee and Bennett-White  
Nays: None  
Motion carried.

**4. Special Presentations –**

Students from William Wirt Middle School’s Environmental Club were introduced. The club was established by Edmonston CCC Intern Andrew Jones and he was assisted by Giovanni Munoz Hernandez. The program is where students learn about and participate in activities centering on the environment. In May, students from the environmental club participated in a Mayor of Edmonston Essay Contest in which contestants were to tell what they would do as Mayor to inform and improve the community about environmental issues. The contest winner, Angel Gustavo Murillo Lorenzo and another contestant, Hember Perdomo served as Junior Mayor and Council. Both students read their essays aloud to Council, staff and guests and were sworn in by Mayor Gant for their one-day assignment.

Captain Billy Sullivan promoted Officer Cindia Torres to Private First Class.

**5. Public Comment:**

Betsy McCauley of 5415 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue expressed concerns about the replacement of our police chief, advocating for stronger leadership in efforts to increase staff retention. She mentioned the Town has increased truck traffic and voiced the need for more patrol. Mrs. McCauley made a request for OT hours for current police officers provided over the past three months.

Eric Dyson of 4808 51<sup>st</sup> Ave expressed concerns about interaction with police especially with the onset of summer and the possibility of part time officers coming onboard. He suggested starting a community watch-type program and mentioned the potential of recruiting Police candidates from within the Town.

**6. Old Business:**

- i. The consideration of ordinance 2019-OR-03 amending the FY 18-19 annual budget was presented for consideration. Council Member Layne Bee moved, seconded by Council Member Johnson for the approval of ordinance 2019-OR-03.

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne Bee and Turberville.  
Nays: None.  
Motion carried

ii. The consideration of ordinance 2019-OR-04 establishing a commercial parking permit system was presented. Council Member Bennet-White moved, seconded by Council Member Johnson to approve ordinance 2019-OR-04.

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne Bee and Turberville.

Nays: None

Motion carried

## 7. New Business

ii. Consideration of Minutes for Work Session and Regular Sessions on May 8, 2019 were presented for consideration.

1. The approval of the minutes for the work session of May 8, 2019 was presented. Council Member Layne Bee moved, seconded by Council Member Johnson to approve the work session minutes with an amendment by Council Member Turberville that discussion dealing with Ward representation be transcribed and added as an attachment.

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Layne Bee and Turberville.

Nays: Bennet-White.

Motion carried.

2. The approval of the minutes for the regular council session of May 8, 2019 was presented. Council Member Layne Bee moved, seconded by Council Member Bennet-White to approve the regular council meeting minutes.

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne Bee and Turberville.

Nays: None.

Motion carried

iii. There was discussion about the process for considering a Charter Resolution amending the Elections section of the Charter. The first step is setting a public hearing for the July 10<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting. Council Member Layne Bee moved, seconded by Council Member Turberville to set a public hearing for July 10 at 7:00 p.m. to consider a Charter Resolution amending the Town's election section of the charter.

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne Bee and Turberville.

Nays: None.

Motion carried

iv. The consideration of Resolution #R2019-03 supporting the Town's Community Legacy grant applications to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. (Edmonston Beautiful and Commercial Façade Improvement Grants). Council Member Layne Bee moved, seconded by Council Member Turberville to approve Resolution #R2019-03.

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne Bee and Turberville.

Nays: None.

Motion carried

iv. The award of bid to for engineering and design service for the SHA Safe Routes to School sidewalk project in the amount of \$30,034.07 to Brightwater, Inc. Environmental Consulting (Safe Routes to Schools Grant) was presented for consideration. Council Member Turberville moved, seconded by Council Member Johnson to award Brightwater, Inc. Environmental Consulting for engineering and design work in the amount of \$30,034.07.

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne Bee and Turberville.

Nays: None

Motion carried

- v. The introduction of Ordinance 2019-OR-05 modifying the Town's fence requirements, disallowing electric fences in certain areas was considered. Per Town Attorney Ferguson, the draft is was not ready for introduction and will be presented at the July meeting.
- vi. The approval of the proposal from Ecosite, Inc. in the amount of \$30,000 to develop construction plans, details and bid documents for the proposed Ingraham Street Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant. (Paid with CBT Grant funds) Council Member Turberville moved, seconded by Council Member Johnson to approve awarding Ecosite, Inc. for plans, details and documents for the Ingraham Street Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant project.  
**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne Bee and Turberville.  
Nays: None  
Motion carried

## 8. Police Report

Captain Sullivan provided a copy of the May police report and it was noted the month was slow in terms of police activity. He's worked with the county on a contract agreement and is awaiting word from the assistant chief on legal sections that will then be sent back to Attorney Ferguson to review before it's finalized. Captain Sullivan has contacted Prince George's County Police Retirement Association as well as Maryland Parks Association to see if any of the certified officers would want to apply and has gotten no response. An extensive background search was done on six applicants and out of these, two have dropped out: one for another job; one for medical reason and then three others just dropped out during the background review. Mr. Dent introduced earlier has one thing we're waiting to hear back on if the Mayor and council agrees; he'll start on July 8<sup>th</sup>. This ended the Police report and it was opened for questions.

Council Member Turberville asked what is in the MOU and what is the mechanism for finding people to temporarily serve as officers here in Edmonton. Attorney Ferguson indicated there are two parts to this program. One is an agreement with the county police department that allows the officers when they're off duty to work for the town as secondary employment which has to be approved. Then the second agreement is with the police officer which states their duties on behalf of the town. Captain Sullivan is using the College Park agreement.

Attorney Ferguson noted that officers wear county uniforms. Edmonston takes them on as employees and insures them. Prince George's County's police department handles disciplinary matters and relieves the town of that function. The arrangement is not covered by the law enforcement officer's bill of rights so if somebody isn't working out, just say so and no reason is needed to change officers. Payment is by the hour and there's a separate payment for mileage for the use of the car which is included as a reimbursement to the County.

Mayor Gant shared experience with this kind of hiring and thinks the arrangement could work well for the Town especially in ensuring coverage at all times by Prince Georges County officers on a temporary basis.

Attorney Ferguson stated the only limitation that the officers have in terms of enforcement is with code enforcement requirements like housing requirements. They will enforce the criminal code and can assist code enforcement for security reasons.

Captain Sullivan had a question about car impoundment and was referred to Capt. Ryan with College Park PD for more information on this.

Council Member Bennett-White queried how were the six candidates recruited. Captain Sullivan responded that he used Facebook, MML, Town website and an oral board. He sent out emails to the retirement groups and used word of mouth.

## 9. Council Dialogue

Council Member Bennett-White congratulated the Junior Mayor and Council Member for their participation and encouraged continued involvement in community service hours needed for High School.

Council Member Johnson commented that Edmonston Day was one of the best in a while. He brought up an issue with the state highway about Kenilworth and Decatur regarding pedestrian right of way while crossing the street. There's a small sign there but it's not enough and thinks a 'don't turn on red' sign might work better. Perhaps the Red Light Camera could be added for the right off of Decatur Street to Kenilworth. Clean-ups done in April including the area by the gas station is still a major littering problem and he suggested to thin out the bushes/trees in that area.

Council Member Layne Bee noted that the area around Community Forklift is an eyesore, especially the fence with black tarp on the fence and thinks it's kind of disrespectful to the town distracting from a major business close by. As some businesses in that area are mainly auto repair shops there are too many cars and is just not a good look for the town. She asked for the third time about the car lot on Kenilworth Avenue and when it opens. Also inquired about the status of the church with boarded windows and wondered if Town can help with some kind of grant.

Administrator Barnes noted the car lot has paid for this year's business license so it will still happen and is planning to open in the near future. The church however, has gone through their use an occupancy permit and is getting their fire suppression system approved. It's also working on implementing county issued compliances as pointed out during inspection. If façade grant is awarded, perhaps something can be provided to help.

Council Member Turberville thanked staff, police department and all those involved for making Edmonston Day a success. She thought it was well attended; that the music was great and it made her proud to be a member of this community. She would like Council to get back on track with strategic planning for the community and set a five to seven year plan. She recalled a rep from Prince George's County, economic development who visited from which a lot of ideas were generated and wants to focus on a broad and long term approach on this issue.

Administrator Barnes thanked the staff and the council for their involvement in Edmonston Day. He thought it was a great day with good weather and one of our largest crowds at the park and he received lots of compliments from participants. The staff made our first float and it has inspired us for two ideas for next year. It was a fun day and thanked all who participated and was there.

Mr. Barnes reported that a new thrift store business in town donated 19 cases of rolled paper towels to us and 5 cases of school supplies.

The environmental club will start at Bladensburg high school in the fall and then again at William Wirt next spring. He thanked Andrew Jones work on this project.

William Wirt Junior Mayor and Council Member thanked the Town for the opportunity to be involved in the environmental club and the Mayoral essay contest. They look forward to joining the environmental club again.

Mayor Gant thanked the staff in particular Administrator Barnes, Town Clerk Averil Gray, Captain Sullivan and the PD and Council for making Edmonston Day an awesome event. She recognized the preparation involved on the clean-up in closing out the event and commented on the efforts to publicize even a door to door campaign with flyers as a reminder the Friday before. She thanked residents for participating in events and for coming out to this meeting.

**10. Adjournment:**

- a.* A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 8:50 p.m. by Council Member Turberville, seconded by Council Member Johnson.

**Vote:** Ayes: Johnson, Layne Bee, Bennett-White, Turberville

Nays: None

Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

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Tracy R. Gant, Mayor

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Averil Gray, Town Clerk