

Town of Edmonston
Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday October 9, 2019 7:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Gant at 7:12 pm. Mayor Tracy Gant. In attendance: Council Member Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne and Turberville, Town Attorney, Suellen Ferguson, Town Administrator Rod Barnes, Town Clerk Averil Gray and Captain Billy Sullivan

2. Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence to reflect and prepare for the meeting

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

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

Nays: None

Motion carried

4. Public Comment-

Mr. Carl Butler at 5117 Crittenden St expressed concerns about the parking on Crittenden. He submitted petitions to request restrictive permit parking for the 2 blocks from 51st to 52nd.

Donata Bryant 4811 Hamilton asked about the status of Robey's U&O permit. Mayor Gant suggested calling Town Hall during business hours for that update. Mr. Barnes mentioned the permit was in process but not obtained yet. Ms. Bryant also raised concerns about an applicant for the Chief of Police position and asked if he had been interviewed. Mayor Gant indicated an interview had occurred but cautioned about sharing unverified information about any applicant.

Mr. Alex Maltez Gallatin Street – is empathetic and appreciative for the creation of the Trust Act.

Mr. Bobby Kerns 4801 Gallatin St reported that a man has been seen coming on property and stealing items from residence yards in Edmonston and other surrounding towns and cautions residents to be aware. Mr. Johnson indicated a picture in the lobby of a suspect he believes might be the culprit and Captain Sullivan has some still shots of the suspect that have been shared with neighboring Police Departments. Mayor Gant cautioned to also stay alert to others, beyond this suspect who may be involved in this kind of activity.

5. Special Presentations

Recognition of Prince George's County Board of Education Member, District 3 Pamela Boozer-Strother. District 3 School Board member since December. Mayor Gant asked how you can assist us. Ms. Boozer-Strother indicated her role is a liaison as the representative of six towns working on advocacy efforts around building infrastructure and any family issues. Council Member Bennett-White asked who's our contact on the board – Ms. Boozer-Strother represents Edmonston but information can be found on the school board website. Council Member Layne asked if Boozer Strother represents Mount Rainier schools she does and lives there as well. Council Member Turberville asked how County school ratings are being addressed with most of the schools in the area rating low. Ms. Boozer-Strother indicted standardized testing is important but only one way to rate the school system. Highly respected and long-time educator Alvin Thorton has been hired back as chair to focus on how we tell the stories about Prince Georges County schools. In addition, she indicates test scores have shown improvement. There is also a lot of confidence in Dr. Monica Goldson who's been with the County school system for 28 years.

Mayor Gant announced the Town's annual contribution to the Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Department. Council Member Turberville presented to the Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Department a check for \$7,500.00. Fire Chief Sumner shared background about the history of the Fire Department and himself. He also invited Council, staff and residents to attend activities at the Fire Department such as Bingo and offered "ride alongs" as well.

A vote was taken on the request from residents in the 5100-5200 Blocks of Crittenden Street for the Town to implement permit parking. Mr. Barnes indicated 17 signatures on the petition were from residents living on these blocks which gave the percentage needed to move forward. Council Member Johnson moved, and Council Member Bennett-White seconded for the approval of permit parking in the 5100 to 5200 blocks on Crittenden subject to draft of the necessary approval document by the Town Attorney.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried

6. Public Hearing

7. Old Business

- a. The introduction of a proposed "Welcoming Town" ordinance (OR-2019-06). Mayor Gant indicated it's now called the "Welcoming Town Act" as it reflects the Town's needs and intent to make all feel

welcomed and safe. It clarifies practices for instance, if stopped and background is checked your citizenship status will not be questioned nor will information be shared for any civil immigration matter. Councilmember Turberville shared the importance of the ordinance in clarifying practices in writing. Hopefully it will encourage more engagement by minorities in Town activities. The ordinance requires an annual report to the Council. Council Member Bennett-White asked if reporting would be a function of the Administrator or Police. Mayor Gant suggested it be a function of the Administrator as done in other municipalities but to confer with the police.

Councilmember Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded to introduce ordinance OR-2019-06 "Welcoming Town Act".

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

- b. Councilmember Turberville moved and Council Member Layne seconded the approval of Policy Resolution 2019-R-02 establishing a green street policy for the Town.

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

8. New Business

- i. The consideration of approval of the following minutes was presented: Councilmember Bennett-White moved and Council Member Johnson seconded to approve the following minutes.

- 1. Work Session, September 11, 2019
- 2. Regular Council Meeting, September 11, 2019

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

- ii. Mayor Gant indicated a local resident, Robert McKana had requested the speed bumps be installed to slow down traffic on 52nd Avenue. Councilmember Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded the approval of the installation of speed bumps in the 5100 and 5200 blocks of Emerson Street and in the 4900 and 5000 blocks of 52nd Avenue at a cost of \$6,700 from American Striping.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne and Bennett-White

Nays: None

Motion carried

- iii. Mayor Gant indicated that this would be the third year applying for a grant to conduct a 4-week summer camp for children age 7 to 13. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded the approval of application for a Community Development Block Grant for the operation of a 4-week summer camp program.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne and Bennett-White

Nays: None

Motion carried

- iv. Mr. Barnes indicated that the Town was eligible for Community Development Block Grant funds to construct sidewalks on the east side of the river. The project would be designed with resident input. Council Member Layne moved and Council Member Turberville seconded the approval of applying for a Community Development Block Grant for the construction of sidewalks on Emerson Street, 51st Street, 51st Place, 52nd Place and 52nd Avenue.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne and Bennett-White

Nays: None

Motion carried

- v. Mr. Barnes gave brief overview of the Edmonston Beautiful project. Mayor Gant ask to start the program two years ago as Community legacy project helping low-moderate or Senior homeowners with home improvement upkeep of their residences. The first year \$50,000 was awarded and 9 projects were completed. We're awaiting word for sign-off of historical community on 7 projects with start dates this month. In November we'll have word on our 3rd round application to include improvements to the retail façade of businesses.

Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded the approval of the award of contract to J.O.M. Painting for the Edmonston Beautiful grant projects.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne and Bennett-White

Nays: None

Motion carried

- vi. Mayor Gant indicated the proposed amendment to the Personnel Guidelines will correct a misunderstanding that employees are paid for the lunch time and they are not. Council Member Layne had questions on standardizing the amended language and Attorney Ferguson suggested the following. "Employees can take a daily unpaid ½ hour or one hour, with supervisor approval and adjustment accordingly to their work schedule". Council Member Layne moved, and Council Member Johnson seconded the approval of the amended Update to the amended Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual Section 2-1 General Employee Conduct (f) Hours of Work.
Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne and Bennett-White
Nays: None
Motion carried
- vii. Mayor Gant indicated a resident Lisa Williford, 5109 Emerson requests for adding a street light in the middle of the block of the 5100 block of Emerson Street. It is recommended that first the Police Department contact Ms. Williford and provide feedback on how to improve lighting around her home.
- viii. Council Member Bennett-White moved and Council Member Layne seconded to approval of the annual memorandum of understanding with the City of Hyattsville for the purchase of road salt.
Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne and Bennett-White
Nays: None
Motion carried
- ix. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Layne seconded to approve authorizing the Mayor to sign the letter of intent with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development authorizing Local Government Infrastructure Bonds – 2019 Series B. Mr. Barnes reiterated the potential interest savings from 4.55% to below 2.85 % with no change to the terms.
Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne and Bennett-White
Nays: None
Motion carried

9. Police Report (Captain Sullivan)

Monthly reported was provided to attendees. There was an accident on Kenilworth and the driver had a medical condition which was amplified by drinking and became aggressive and damaged the windshield of Officer Torres police car. The driver was arrested and charged and transported with assistance by several Port Town officers and County Police.

Code Report (Town Administrator Barnes). The monthly Code Report was provided to include an update on vacant property with a couple of homes waiting on permits from County inspections. One home 5112 Decatur is applying for an extension; 5009 Decatur owners have applied for permits to expand the size of the home. The owner of 5003 Decatur expects roofing repair complete within 30 days. The fence at Tanglewood and Buchanan must be replaced per the notice from the Code Officer. Pepco has been cutting trees throughout Town and another company has been hired to clean up the debris within 4 weeks afterward. Resident Byran Hope asked if residents could be better notified when Pepco is doing the work. Mayor Gant indicated she received a notice through the mail. Mr. Barnes will check on the notification process.

10. Council Dialogue

Council Member Layne asked for an update about the Chief of Police hiring process and interview process. Council Member Layne Mayor Gant indicated first interviews had been conducted and that a recommendation would be presented in November.

Council Member Bennett-White expressed her hopes that townspeople feel welcomed and encourages residents to get to know neighbors. She seconded Council Member Bennett-White assertion that the best way to get to know your neighbors to reach out to them which we all should be doing.

Council Member Turberville expressed pride in the Town's effort to unanimously adopt the "Welcoming Town" ordinance. It illustrates we want to make residents feel safe and comfortable.

Council Member Johnson expressed the town is need of another clean-up- green up. The area behind the fence at gas station has become a mess again. Feels an effort to put up a fence is needed.

Mayor Gant expressed our community offers many opportunities and has attracted many grants such as for camp and home improvements and has shared this information at meetings with State and County legislators. These meetings have also offered a chance to receive information and get understanding on what is happening within the State, County and Town.

Mayor Gant also thanked those involved in the success of the Anti-Bullying Rally and who attended and hoped collectively that we can continue to combat this issue.

11. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 8:38 pm by Council Member Johnson and Council Member Layne seconded.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Layne and Bennett-White

Nays: None

Motion carried and the meeting adjourned.

Tracy R. Gant, Mayor

Averi Gray, Town Clerk