

Town of Edmonston
Town Council Regular Meeting
Wednesday September 11, 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, and Turberville, Sgt. David Young, Town Attorney, Suellen Ferguson, Town Administrator Rod Barnes and Town Clerk Averil Gray

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

Special thoughts were given to Maryland Municipal League president elect Mayor Perry Jones of Union Bridge in the loss of his son and to the victims of the September 2001 attack.

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

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

4. Special Presentation:

The Mayor presented a Proclamation recognizing Elizabeth Seton High School on their 60th Anniversary. Margaret Moseley an administrator at the school and her niece, Molly who is a freshman at Seton received the certificate.

5. Public Comment

Donata Bryant – 4811 Hamilton Street gave her perspective on a situation involving an Edmonston staff member. She also questioned several other issues as follows:

- DPW's lack of involvement with curb painting around the community
- The Town's operating hours and phone system
- Payment to employees for lunchtime
- The use of Town vehicles by Council Member Johnson
- Loud music in her neighborhood
- She felt the Code Officer should increase her presence in the community to spot issues.

Crystal Dickson - 4906 Gallatin St. – complemented Administrator's response for yard and pick-up. She expressed concerns with loud music in the community and queried how to handle.

Mayor Gant thanked residents for voicing their questions and concerns. She encouraged alerting the police department of noise concerns and provided contact numbers to use during and after operating hours.

Sgt Young offered that for first calls he doesn't write a citation but if compliance isn't met then one is written which increases each incident thereafter.

6. Special Presentations continued:

Mayor Gant proclaimed November 1st as "Make a Difference Day" which is in its 4th year. She indicated the event recognizes residents or businesses who have made a difference in the community.

7. Public Hearing

Mayor Gant opened a public hearing to receive comment for the proposed refinancing of the Town's outstanding G.O. Bonds. In 2008 when Decatur Street was constructed a private placement general obligation bond was issued with TD Bank with an annual repayment of \$48,756. It was negotiated with an interest rate "reset" every three years starting in 2011, again in 2014 and in 2017/18. The Town can obtain a lower interest rate by refinancing the bonds through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) which conducts annual bond issues on behalf of a group of small municipalities. By using the state's solid bond rating, it ensures a lower interest rate loan going from 4.55% to 2.85% or lower. A financial packet application was compiled with a request for a \$400,000 loan which covers the approximate amount of \$360,000 outstanding along with the loan issuance costs. Edmonston's Town Attorney will work with the bond counsel from DHCD. The Mayor closed the public hearing.

8. Old Business

i. Council Member Layne moved, and Council Member Johnson seconded for the approval of Ordinance 2019-OR-05 modifying the Town's fence requirements, disallowing electric fences in certain areas.

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

ii. The consideration of amending the transcript portion of the May 8th (not June 12th) work session minutes was presented. Council Member Layne Bee moved, and Council Member Johnson seconded to approve the May 8th amended portion of the work session minutes.

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

Nays: None
Motion carried

iii. The consideration of approval of committee assignments as recommended by the Mayor was presented. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded to approve the Mayor's appointed committee assignments.

Finance Committee: Johnson, Turberville, Bennett-White, Layne, Gant
General Government – Johnson, Turberville, Bennett-White, Layne, Gant
Public Works – Johnson
Public Safety - Turberville

Vote: Ayes: Johnson and Turberville
Nays: Bennett-White and Layne
Split vote: Mayor Gant voted Aye
Motion carried

9. New Business

i. The consideration of Resolution 2019-R-02 approving the refinancing of the Town's Outstanding General Obligation Debt with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development was presented. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded to approve Resolution 2019-OR.

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

Town Attorney Ferguson suggested with the insertion suggested that the interest rate not to exceed 3.55% be included in the vote. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Bennett-White moved seconded to include the interest rate in Resolution 2019-R-02.

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

The consideration of approval of the following minutes was presented. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded to approve the following minutes.

1. Work Session, July 10, 2019
2. Work Session, July 19, 2019

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

ii. The consideration of approval of the following minutes was presented. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded to approve the following minutes with the insertion made by Council Member Bennett White to include the vote taken in the closed session in the July 10, 2019 closed session meeting. The vote was to not hire police candidate Andre Dent with Bennett-White and Layne voting nay and Johnson, Turberville and Gant voting aye. The motion carried.

3. Closed Session, July 10, 2019

4. Regular Council Meeting, July 10, 2019

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

Nays: None

Motion carried

iv. The award of bid for the construction of rain gardens on 46th Avenue to Professional Landscape Maintenance was presented. (Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant). Council Member Johnson moved and Council Member Turberville seconded to approve moving forward with Professional Landscape Maintenance company.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried

v. The award of bid for the construction of curb and gutter on 46th Avenue to American Striping. (Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant) was presented. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded to approve using to American Striping for curb and gutter work.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried

vi. The consideration of submitting a Community Development Block Grant to Prince George's County for the Crittenden Streetscape in the amount of \$126,607. Council Member Johnson moved and Council Member Turberville seconded to approve submitting a Community Development Block Grant to Prince George's County for the Crittenden Streetscape.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

vii. The consideration of award of bid for landscape maintenance services to Professional Landscape Maintenance in the amount \$25,000 was presented. Before voting, a discussion ensued about the DPW handling landscaping function. It was noted

landscaping services was used by the Town in 2011 and perhaps before that time and the additional work of landscaping would require the need for summer hires and is a distinct skill the DPW doesn't hold. Traditional advertising in newspapers and website were used to obtain bids. Council Member Johnson moved and Council Member Turberville seconded to approve moving for with Professional Landscape Maintenance company.

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

viii. The introduction of a proposed Complete Street Policy for the Town was shared. This work is the last project researched and developed by the Town's former intern Andrew Jones. The community used this concept for the work done on Decatur Street with bike lanes, permeable paving, rain gardens, benches and cross walks. The policy will help the Town obtain grant dollars. Next project will be taking on sidewalks currently in design and lighting on Crittenden through grant dollars. The complete street policy was opened for questions and it was asked what model(s) was used which several towns were used in developing a plan for Edmonston.

10. Police Report

Police Report (Captain Sullivan) In Captain Sullivan's absence Sergeant Young provided the Police Report. National Night Out was a success due to support from the Mayor and Council, residents and funding donations in the amount \$1,375 by Town businesses. Book bags with school supplies also were given at the event. McDonald Towing displayed a car involved in an accident caused by distracted driving in efforts to deter that behavior while driving. On September 7th PG County provided 4-5 hours of assistance in Edmonston to highlight the need to steer clear of on duty emergency vehicles. 120 citations were given that night along with one DUI. The department is continuing its search for applicants. A grant is being written by Captain Sullivan with Administrator Barnes to aid in the recruitment and retention process. The Town will hold a Purple Light night in support of Prince Georges County fight against Domestic Violence on Oct 1st.

11. Code Report

Town Administrator Barnes indicated that 136 business in the community are up to date with license fees. We now have applications on file of all but 8 of those businesses that are missing their Use and Occupancy (U&O) permits from the County. The Town won't license businesses until U&O is provided. There are 42 rental licenses that have been provided and of that amount only 5 properties need inspection. A stop work order on Decatur Street and Crittenden was given and the fence at Tanglewood and Buchanan is to be removed.

Council Member Bennett-White asked about the rental license fee which is \$200.00 and Robey's Towing U&O status. It was noted the U&O has been in process with the County operation for some time.

Council Member Layne questioned why churches weren't included on the list and Administrator Barnes noted that the Town ordinance doesn't include their monitoring.

He reminded Town and Council about the Port Town's Day which occurs on Saturday, September 21st at the Bladensburg waterfront. It was noted that this is the 23rd year of the Town's involvement.

He also shared information from the work session about a proposed "Edmonston Collective". The Collective would be a weekend market in the warehouse district showcasing the works of crafters of furniture, artwork, jewelry, etc. along with live events and food truck vendors with a goal of bringing people to spend a day in Edmonston. The location is a 10,000 square foot building currently going through the permit process with Maryland National Capital Park and Planning with an attempt of starting in February. Town Support is not yet specified at this point but will be needed to assist in moving through County processes.

12. Council Dialogue

Council Member Bennett-White reminded to create quarter page ads in the newsletter to promote events and ask about bike share program for the Town. The Town's bike stations are included in phase 5a of a 6 phase Prince George's County plan and the proposed locations in Town will be at Veteran park and Kenilworth Avenue.

Council Member Johnson applauded the Police Department's effort on Sept 7th. He also indicated his use of Town vehicles are for the purpose of Town business and that use can also be viewed as a "neighborhood watch deterrent.

Council Member Layne noted a food pantry sponsored by PG Councilmember Ivey to take place on September 19th at 1:00pm in the backside parking lot of Bladensburg Community Center.

Council Member Turberville asked to investigate speed bumps on Emerson and 52nd again. She questioned the unsightly tarp on the Tanglewood and Buchanan fence and suggested to use murals across chain link fences instead to improve the look. Noted the Edmonston Collective can greatly benefit the Town as a gateway access to the arts district in Hyattsville. She also encouraged establishing a "Trust Resolution" following the lead of several towns like Hyattsville which will establish in writing that the Town's police won't cooperate with ICE immigration policing actions.

The Mayor is enthusiastic about the potential of the Edmonston Collective and noted renewed ties with DC Rollergirls and collaborations with the Town. An attended a breakfast meeting with local officials and networked with various business leaders. She reminded Town and Council of the Back to School Unity Rally on Saturday, September 28th from 5:00pm to 8:00pm.

13 .Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 9:25 p.m. by Council Member Johnson and seconded by Council Member Turberville.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried and the meeting adjourned

Averi Gray, Town Clerk

Tracy R. Gant, Mayor