

Town of Edmonston  
Town Council Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday December 8, 2021 (Via Zoom Teleconference)

1. Mayor Gant called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. and teleconference attendees were Council Members, Hilary Chester, Betsy McCauley, John Johnson and Sarah Turberville, Town Administrator Rod Barnes, Town Clerk Averil Gray, and Chief of Police Elliott Gibson Sr.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Mayor and was followed by a moment of silence.
3. Public Comment was opened by the Mayor. There were no comments from the public.
4. Old Business – There was none.

5. New Business

- a. The consideration of approval of the following minutes:
  - i. Virtual Work Session Meeting minutes from November 2, 2021.
  - ii. Virtual Regular Council Meeting minutes from November 10, 2021.
  - iii. Virtual Closed Session Meeting minutes from November 10, 2021.

Council Member Johnson moved seconded by Council Member Turberville to approve the minutes from the above-referenced virtual meetings.

Vote: Ayes: Chester, McCauley, Johnson, Turberville

Nays: None

Motion Carried

- b. Presentation of the Town's Annual Audit FY20-21 by Robert Diss, Lindsey & Associates. In the brief overview provided, it was noted that the Town continues to work at reducing expenditures while successfully seeking new sources of revenue in applying for grant funding that were awarded. The State of Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation certified the assessable base for the town increased allowing the Town to reduce property taxes from FY21-22 from .5489 to .5264. During the COVID pandemic, the Town received \$91,000 from the CARES Act fund to purchase equipment to allow for remote access for Town staff, hazard duty pay to public safety employees and provide protective gear. The Town continues to move surplus funds at the end of the fiscal year to an investment fund and \$100,000 was moved to the reserves for FY20-21. The balance on June 30, 2021, as \$735,261.87 representing 36% of the annual budget for FY20-21. The full auditor report is on the Town's website.
6. Police Department Report (Police and Code Enforcement) - Police Chief Gibson reported 6 crimes total in November: 2 burglaries; 2 stolen cars from auto body shops and 63 cars were impounded. Within Code compliance, 25 tickets given, and 6 inspections were completed. Two auto body shops received notice for working on cars outside of their buildings. Chief Gibson also shared residents

have noted an increased visibility of the Police in town. Edmonston's Police Department is participating with the upcoming "Shop with a Cop" on December 18<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Gant inquired if body camera gear was regularly used by the Police Department. Chief Gibson confirmed its use as a valuable tool in evidence collection and to refute complaints. Mayor Gant asked that Town parking signs be clearly visible and Chief Gibson will survey the community to locate problem areas.

7. Town Administrator Report (General Government and Public Works) – Rod Barnes noted that the success of the Thanksgiving basket food distribution and the Holiday caravan. The Town's food pantry located in Veteran's Park is up and running. Adopt a child gift giveaway is upcoming on December 16<sup>th</sup> and donations received have surpassed \$6,100 towards presents for 69 community children. Edmonston's December 3<sup>rd</sup> breakfast with local businesses on the north end involved good conversation and information sharing. Our social media strategists have gotten 30 volunteers to sign-up for "listening sessions". We distributed 36 food baskets provided by the County's Sheriff's Office to the community. Restricted parking signs are up on 51<sup>st</sup> Avenue.. The leaf machine is now repaired, and pick-up will continue through January 10.

8. Council Dialogue

Council Member Johnson is still concerned about the pedestrians walking at the Decatur and Kenilworth Avenue light. For future caravans, he suggests wearing reflective or glow in the dark clothing for better visibility.

Council Member Turberville and Council Member Chester suggested the Police Department continue efforts for positive connections with residents at events such as caravans and like they did at the Halloween Trunk or Treat.

Council Member McCauley shared that a resident on 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue would like it to become a one way due to what is believed to be an increase in speed and traffic. Some alternate suggestions are to include speed bump(s). Also, better visibility can be sought by trimming trees on streets that turn onto Decatur such as 51<sup>st</sup> Place. The train horns have been bothersome to some residents and Town Administrator Barnes indicated "quiet zones" in certain areas can be pursued with the town of Hyattsville.

9. Mayor's Comments – Mayor Gant thanked Council Member Turberville for her letter and speaking out against boundary changes at the County Council meeting noting it ensured the Town's position was recognized. PGCMA is holding a special election for a officer vacancy and a board seat. Mayor Gant gave kudos to Staff and Council for their involvement in the Holiday caravan and tree lighting. She commented that the Business Breakfast was successful and looks forward to a similar event with the south end businesses in the new year. Mayor Gant then requested to hold a closed meeting session.
10. Mayor Gant indicated the closed session was to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel

matter that affects one or more specific individuals and/or to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter. Council Member McCauley moved seconded by Council Member Johnson to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:25 p.m. and to go into a closed session not returning to regular session.

Vote: Ayes: Chester, McCauley, Johnson, Turberville

Nays: None

Motion Carried

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Tracy R. Gant, Mayor

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Averi Gray, Town Clerk