

DRAFT
Town of Edmonston
Town Council Regular Session Minutes
Wednesday March 11, 2019 7:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Gant @ 7:05pm. In attendance: Council Members: Johnson, Bennett-White, Layne, Turberville, Town Administrator Rod Barnes, Town Clerk Averil Gray Police Chief Demetrius Harris and Town Attorney Suellen Ferguson.

2. Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence – Reflect on those dealing with any illness especially the coronavirus.

- i. **Closed Session** – to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, 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 Layne and Council Member Bennett-White seconded to adjourn into the closed session at 7:22 p.m..

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

Council Member Johnson moved to resume the regular Town Council meeting at 7:40 p.m. and Council Member Turberville seconded.

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

3. The approval of the agenda was approved as presented.

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

4. Public Comment:

Donata Bryan 4811 Hamilton expressed concern about Robey's Towing business lack of a U&O permit to operate in Town and is following up on a previous inquiry on the status. Chief Harris noted increased efforts by the Code Officer to track U&O licensing of businesses to include Robey's Towing has been

undertaken Chief Harris encouraged open communication with residents to share their concerns.

5. **Old Business:** Mayor Gant asked Council to delay moving forward with the consideration of approving a lease with Capitol Land Development, LLC for public parking spaces located at 5300-C 46th Avenue until additional information is requested from the owner along with further review and discussion with the Town Attorney. Action to be taken at the March 24th meeting.

Council Member Turberville moved to delay consideration of lease with Capitol Land Development until March 24th and Council Member Johnson seconded.

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

6. **New Business:**

- i. The consideration of approval of the following minutes:
1. Work Session minutes from the February 12 council meeting.
 2. Closed Session minutes from the February 12 council meeting.
 3. Regular Council Meeting minutes from February 12, 2019 council meeting.

Council Member Bennett-White moved to approve the minutes – adding a correction of *the Town of Brentwood*, not North Brentwood, as the locale we're entering into agreement with for the use of Edmonston's electrical charging station. Council Member Johnson seconded.

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

- ii. Police Officer candidate Cedric Heyward was introduced. Chief Harris shared that Mr. Heyward has ten years of experience in police work and is a native Prince Georgian. He also noted Mr. Heyward's excitement to join the EPD and help lead youth initiative programs in the community. He will start the second week of April.

Mayor Gant commended EDP progression with the addition of Candidate Heyward. Council Member Johnson moved and Council Member Bennett-White seconded to hire Candidate Heyward

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

- iii. Mayor Gant asked for a motion on the consideration of the following residents to the Election Board:
 1. Ward 1 Clerk – Freida Parks
 2. Ward 2 Clerk– Monique Burton
 3. Judge Audrey Pabs-Garnon

Council Member Layne requested a discussion about the election board candidates and their experience which occurred after the first vote on election board Candidates. Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded the consideration of residents recommended to serve on the Election Board.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville
Nays: None
Abstain: Layne, Bennett-White
Motion Failed

A discussion ensued on the selection and experience of candidates to the Election Board.
Ward 1 resident Freida Parks is new to this process
Ward 2 resident Monique Burton has experience serving on general County election boards
Ward 2 resident Audrey Pabs-Garnon has served on Town election before and is recommended to serve as Judge

Council Member Bennett-White asked if other candidates had been considered for the Election Board. Mayor indicated Byron Hope, who served before was approached but not available. It was thought that a change was needed to the Election Board and after well-serving Town elections since the 1970's, Marie Jackson was not selected to take part. It was also noted that no recommendations for the Election Board had been brought the attention of the Council.

Town Attorney Ferguson was asked to interpret the Town's Charter regarding the selection process of the Election Board and how it is tied to information to be published about the election. After the clause was read, Attorney Ferguson and Council thought the language was vague and open to different interpretations. Attorney Ferguson suggested best practices used before for similar situations. In previous elections, information on the election board was not published however, Council Member Layne's interpretation is that it should be and therefore requested that her previous vote on the election board be changed from "nay" to "abstain".

A second vote was taken on Council Member Turberville moved and Council Member Johnson seconded the consideration of resident recommended to serve on the Election Board.

Vote: Ayes: Johnson, Turberville, Mayor Gant
Nays: Layne
Abstain: Bennett-White
Motion carried

An interpretation of the vote Attorney Ferguson was asked for an interpretation of the vote and suggested Robert's Rule of Order as a guide to resolve the standing about the vote. According to Robert's Rule of Order, when individuals present as to what counts towards a quorum, that majority of votes is enough for the passing of a motion. Council Member Turberville elaborated that in this case, we have a quorum as all are present and two have voted to "abstain" and two voted "yes" so the majority of votes cast move the motion forward. The "abstain" votes is considered as not casting a vote and Town Charter allows the Mayor with the ability to break a tie vote. Attorney Ferguson thought this was correct resolution but suggested addressing that language in the Charter. Mayor Gant noted Council following rules and recommendations as presented.

- iv. Ordinance 2020-OR-02 was introduced amending the rental license requirements. The Town is increasing enforcement on compliance to meet health and safety standards and conducting inspections. If owner doesn't live in house they must obtain a license however, if they do live in the house and rent a portion they don't need a license.

Council Member Layne and Council Member Johnson seconded to amend the rental license requirement.

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

- v. Ordinance 2020-OR-03 was introduced creating a vacant property registration process. Mr. Barnes noted guidelines previously done had not been codified and approved. This ordinance ensured vagrancy doesn't become an issue. A \$300 fee for registration applies to residential and vacant lots so we can keep an inventory of these properties.

Council Member Layne and Council Member Bennett-White seconded to the vacant property registration process.

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

- vi. The consideration of an annual community application for adult Mosquito Control for 2020 with Prince George's County.

Council Member Johnson and Council Member Turberville seconded to approve the adult mosquito control for 2020.

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

7. Police Chief Report (Police and Code Enforcement)

Stats are up not because there is more patrolling and community engagement. However, isolated issues such as the Air B&B party incident and another involving a weapon at the Rec Center were noted. Chief Harris has restructured how statistics are mapped and gets daily reports, a practice that follows Montgomery County reporting with raw data that identifies details on incidents in a specified manner. The change to ten hour shifts is better for managing productivity. EPD is working with MD Chief Association on plan of action to deal with the coronavirus outbreak. A MOU is already in place.

8. Council Dialogue

Mr. Barnes noted the cancelling of Casino Night per recommendations due the coronavirus outbreak.

Council Member Bennett-White shared the Bladensburg High School received a Rachael Ray Foundation grant for their culinary arts program. She attended the Blue Print for Education forum with Alonso Washington where the Kerwin Commission recommendations were discussed.

Council Member Johnson noted Kenilworth and Decatur light needs further evaluation by the State as pedestrians still aren't given the right of way when crossing. Also mentioned was the need to address excessive speeding at night on Kenilworth Avenue.

Mayor Gant noted PGCMA is cancelled for this month but may have a conference call in April. Current plan is to have a wine and cheese with County Council and local businesses. WSSC CEO Carla Reid is the special guest attending. Mayor Gant thanked all involved with Black History Month program as it was a huge success and a Great community event. She noted the attendance by our local officials such as: County Council Ivey, Sen Augustine, Delegate Williams, Mayors Barrow and Robinson.

9. Adjournment Council Member Johnson and Council Member Layne seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:15pm.

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

Mayor, Tracy R. Gant

Averi Gray, Town Clerk