

Town of Edmonston
Town Council Work Session Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2022, Via Teleconference (ZOOM)

1. Mayor Gant called the meeting to order at **5:06** p.m. and teleconference attendees were Council Members Hilary Chester, Betsy McCauley, John Johnson, Town Administrator Rod Barnes, Town Clerk Averil Gray, and Acting Police Chief Eric Beale. Council Member Sarah Turberville was absent. The meeting then went into a closed session to interview candidates for Town Attorney.
 - a. Jason Deloach of Alexander Cleaver
 - b. Kevin Best
 - c. Review Agenda
 - i. No edits were suggested for Minutes from the following meetings:
November 9, 2022, Work Session Meeting Minutes
November 9, 2022, Regular Session Meeting Minutes
 - ii. Administrator Barnes indicated the review and final approval of the Stormwater Management Best Practices Grant Program for flood mitigation assistance to residents is postponed until the January meeting. The Town Attorney needed more time to review and make needed changes to the proposal.
 - iii. The final approval of ordinance 22-OR-07 granting a renewal of the cable franchise to Comcast of Maryland, LLC agreement and authorizing a franchise agreement will be presented. Administrator Barnes acknowledged the efforts of Town Attorney Suellen Ferguson to secure the agreement.
 - iv. The consideration and approval of the franchise agreement with Comcast of Maryland will be discussed by the Town Attorney. Administrator Barnes indicated the collective agreement amongst municipalities was a great cost saving measure.
 - v. The consideration and approval of the Communication Specialist job description and designation of full-time status beginning January

1, 2023, was discussed. Town Administrator Barnes indicated that an adjustment to the Town's budget is being requested to bring Asha Cole onboard full-time as of January at a salary of \$41K with full staff benefits. Her efforts while interning, have greatly increased the Town's social media presence about events and campaigns and was acknowledged by the Council. Town Council Member Chester queried if adjustments to the Police Administrative Assistant job description would be made since some duties may overlap with the Communication Specialist's. Town Administrator Barnes indicated he and Acting Chief Beale will review and adjust the Police Admin. Assistant.

- vi. The introduction and approval of ordinance 22-OR-08 modifying the Personnel Policies and Guidelines under Section 8-4 Holiday Pay the following sentence: Police Department employees are paid 8 hours of additional pay on all specified holidays unless they are on designated leave was reviewed. Administrator Barnes clarified that if Police staff work on the holiday it is compensated with additional pay but there is no additional compensation if not scheduled to work on a holiday. Also, Town Attorney Ferguson hadn't included the ordinance of "Juneteenth" as an official Town holiday and will be doing so with this ordinance.
- vii. The consideration of approval to pay the bi-weekly salary for 6 to 9 months of a potential police officer candidate to attend and become certified through a Municipal Police Academy was reviewed. (\$18,259.88 Estimated Cost). Acting Chief Beale reported that he expects this approach will result in an expanded candidate pool and allows for increased first-hand training while certification continues. Council Member McCauley and Chester asked about plans for retention, penalty for breaking the contract, or if certification is not achieved. Acting Chief Beale proposed better enforcement of the contract and increasing the commitment from three to four years. He also wants to make

departmental changes to enhance morale as incentives for tenure. Town Administrator asked about compensation during certification as full-time payment is indicated. Acting Chief Beal suggested a portion of a salary be provided because candidates receive no compensation during the certification process. He also indicates time investment will keep the Department alerted to candidates increased need of support. Compensation during a candidate's certification is proposed at 50% of the full-time salary while undergoing 400 hours of training by Edmonston Police Department. Mayor Gant 4-year contract is good and suggests as consideration a six-year like the military be considered. In addition, Mayor Gant wants to explore a MOU amongst municipalities to pay back remaining compensation of the terms should a hire break their contract and become employed by another Maryland municipality. Council suggests further discussion with the Town Attorney about a potential MOU.

- d. Administrator Barnes reported on upcoming events and projects. Adopt a Child occurs Thursday, December 15 with Mayor Gant, Santa, and staff to pass out gifts for 67 children. Saturday, December 17th, an additional 8 children will participate in "Shop with a Cop. In total, \$8,200 raised for this effort benefiting 75 children. Mayor Gant encouraged Council participation if available. Holiday lighting contest is on-going, and Council's selection of best displays is needed. Santa cruising through the community is happening next week Sidewalk project on 52nd is starting this winter and flashing red-light signs are being ordered for Decatur Street intersections. The Pennoni study underway is nearing a January completion. The staff is working with Riverdale Park and the Town engineer on a walking pass through the end of Lafayette. The project will be submitted for grant funding during 2023. A sidewalk on Lafayette is also proposed to ease issues of double-parking. The Town will be applying for a rain garden grant submission in January for areas on Tanglewood and around Caliber Collision business. The Town is waiting for final documents from the USDA on the food composting grant. The Town is awaiting word on application for Chesapeake Bay Corp to host an intern and the Town's new snowplow is purchased and ready to install for winter inclement weather.

The mayor adjourned the meeting at **6:49 p.m.**

Mayor, Tracy R. Gant

Averi Gray, Town Clerk