

Town of Edmonston
Town Council Work Session Meeting Agenda
Wednesday August 10, 2021, 6:30 P.M. (Via Zoom Teleconference)

1. Mayor Gant called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m. and teleconference attendees were Council Members, Hilary Chester, Betsy McCauley, John Johnson, Sarah Turberville, Town Administrator Rod Barnes, Town Clerk Averl Gray, Police Chief Elliott Gibson Sr., Town Attorney Suellen Ferguson

2. Emergency ordinance 2021-OR-04 was presented for consideration. The emergency ordinance of the Mayor and Town Council of Edmonston would amend the Town's Personnel Manual by adding Chapter 2, "Work Rules", Section 2-1, "General Employee Conduct", Subsection P, "Vaccines and Inoculations – Fitness for Duty" to authorize the Mayor to determine that certain vaccinations and inoculations are required in order for employees to be fit to perform the essential duties of their positions and to avoid endangering the health or safety of themselves or others. The ordinance would add vaccines and inoculations – fitness for duty to the Town's employee manual. The Mayor would have the authority to require all Town staff to become vaccinated or inoculated against illness. Council Member McCauley stated she was against a mandate for a vaccine not FDA approved beyond emergency use. Chief Gibson suggested the inclusion of EEOC guidelines if applicable. Council Member Turberville believes the mandate is a sensible approach given rising COVID cases of the new variant but is willing to except justifiable religious and medical exemptions and with caveats on regular testing. Council Member Chester thinks the mandate will best protect the working environment. Mayor Gant understood this issue is difficult but considers the vaccine mandate to be in the best interest of public safety of the staff and community. As such an Executive Emergency Order is proposed in this circumstance. Town Attorney Ferguson will need policy order parameters, date policy goes into effect, exemption options including testing requirements. This Executive Order Ordinance will be signed by the mayor and will appear with the personnel manual. Not adhering to the policy will result in loss of employment. In addition, Town Hall will resume the requirement of staff to always wear masks in public buildings. Council Member Turberville moved, seconded by Council Member Chester to approve emergency ordinance 2021-OR-04 as presented.
Vote: Ayes: Chester, Turberville
Nays: McCauley, Johnson
Mayor Gant - Aye
Motion Carried.

3. The consideration and review of the draft Records Management Policy was presented for discussion. Town Clerk Averl Gray shared the proposed policy covering the General Government and Police records with Council. It is based on several policies from neighboring municipalities of different sizes. Council and Chief Gibson shared no objections to the plan which will next be submitted to the State Archivist for approval before Council votes on the policy.

4. The consideration of approval of an engineering agreement with Ecosite for the design of sidewalks in ward 2 in the amount of \$25,789.00. This is a CDBG grant. Town Administrator Barnes updated Council on the status of this project.

Council Member McCauley moved, seconded by Council Member Chester to approve the agreement with Ecosite for sidewalk design.

Vote: Ayes: Chester, McCauley, Johnson, Turberville

Nays: none

Motion Carried

5. Review of the social media proposal for the town's communication strategy & implementation campaign. Kita Williams with Brandu presented a proposal to provide the Town with social media services for the next six months. Mayor Gant indicated that this effort would provide the Town with a cohesive plan for distributing information to residents. There was no objection to the proposed plan.
6. Discussion of upcoming Fall events:
 - a. Backpack/School Supply Giveaway – residents who watch a series of health-related videos created by Medstar Health-Georgetown Family Medicine Residency program and answer survey questions will receive a back with school supplies.
 - b. First Annual Edmonston Fitness Expo and Gun Violence Awareness Rally Powered by DJ Harlem Productions – Edmonston Recreation Center Park, September 11, Noon to 5:00 p.m. The Town is partnering with D J Harlem Productions to hold this event. There will be speakers, booths, music, and fun.
 - c. Hispanic Festival, Edmonston Recreation Center Park, September 25, 2 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 - d. Back to School Unity Rally, Decatur Street Bridge, October 9, 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
 - e. Edmonston E-Talk Programs
 - i. September – Pandemic – What Now?
 - ii. October – Celebrating the Latino/Hispanic Community
 - iii. November – Celebrating Veteran's Day
 - iv. December – Make A Difference/Volunteer Appreciation
7. Work on Strategic Plan – Deferred to a later date.
8. Closed Session - 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.
9. Adjournment – Mayor Gant adjourned the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

The work session meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m. and a closed session began.

Mayor, Tracy R. Gant

Averi Gray, Town Clerk