

Town of Riverdale Park
Work Session Minutes
December 20, 2022
7:30 p.m.

In Attendance

Mayor Alan K. Thompson
CM Richard Smith, Ward 1
CM David Lingua, Ward 3
CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4
CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5

John N. Lestitian, Town Manager
Jessica Barnes, Town Clerk/Director of Administrative Services
Ryan Chelton, Director of Development Services
Rosa Guixens, Chief of Police
Ivy Lewis, Director of Public Projects and Services
Paul Smith, Director of Finance and Employee Services

Absent

CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2
CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6

Call to Order

Mayor Thompson called the Work Session to order at 8:31 p.m.

Agenda Approval

A presentation was removed from the agenda. There were no stated conflicts of interest.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Alan Thompson reported:

- Discussion regarding immediate action from staff related to gas outage in a multifamily building in Town; staff worked with the building owners and hotel rooms were reserved and arrangements were made for residents; Town Hall was opened as a warming center; staff worked well past midnight; so proud of effective municipal government as all departments pitched in to help the impacted residents.
- COVID-19 Update: infection rates up by 50%; 3,000 deaths per week; recommendation to vaccinate and get boosters; encouraged everyone to stay home if you were feeling ill to prevent transmission to others.
- Discussion regarding Christmas day and spending time with family; wished everyone an enjoyable holiday season.

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager John Lestitian reported:

- Upcoming holiday closures: December 26th and January 2nd
- Trash and yard waste updates
- Hopes to have Comcast cable franchise agreement back on the agenda in January.

- Overview of holiday events and activities
- Wishing all residents, the elected body, and staff a safe and joyous holiday season.

Council Committee & Ward Reports

CM David Richard Smith, Ward 1

CM Richard Smith reported:

- Attended Riverdale Park Business Association (RPBA) annual holiday gathering in Riverdale Park Station.
- Reminder to shop at local small businesses.
- Thank you to all staff for their work in addressing the gas outage in the multifamily building.
- Congratulations to Senator Paul Pinsky on his appointment to Maryland Energy Administration.
- Seeking updates on the road transfer for Riverdale Park Station.

Mayor Thompson reported that CM Faulx was absent as he was being inducted into his high school's basketball hall of fame.

CM David Lingua, Ward 3

CM David Lingua reported:

- Also attended the RPBA event.
- Discussion regarding Mr. Regulinsky's desire to explore an electric vehicle circulator system to include Town Center, Riverdale Park Station, and other places in Town.
- May want to consider assisting with the funding of a feasibility study, perhaps an expansion of the Walk, Bike, Drive safety initiative.
- COVID-19: recent report in NY Times asking people to mask up; reminder to get boosters and flu shots; no side effects of booster.
- Have a happy and safe holiday season.

CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4

CM Thomas Sadiq reported:

- Was in France and Switzerland last week.
- Discussion regarding Tot Lot on Silk Tree: lights and regular patrols are needed.
- Merry Christmas

CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5

CM Karen Mejia did not have a report.

Public Comments

Resident Zachary Schulman discussed the road transfer in Riverdale Park Station and his concerns regarding the intersections of 46th Street and Van Buren Street and 46th Street and Woodberry Street near LaFantome. Mr. Schulman discussed the need to work with FedEx regarding trucks stopping on the street. Mr. Schulman stated that the developer was not responsive.

Resident Jim Schmitz also discussed his concerns regarding the road transfer and a missing stop sign. Mr. Schmitz discussed his safety concerns and asked for a detailed briefing from the Town Attorney regarding the delay in the road transfer process.

Resident Ifiok Inyang discussed the safety concerns in Riverdale Park Station at Rhode Island Avenue and Woodberry Street. Mr. Inyang stated that he wanted more information about the timing of the road transfer. Mr. Inyang asked if a temporary stop sign could be installed in the meantime. Mr. Inyang asked about the overall expense of the road transfer process.

CM Smith asked for a briefing from the Town Attorney at the next meeting. Town Manager Lestitian stated that he expected an update prior to the end of the year.

Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff would reach out to the developer, Cafritz, again regarding the stop sign. Mayor Thompson stated that he would be happy to reach out to Mr. Regulinsky if needed.

Resident Zachary Schulman requested that the Town Attorney discuss the possibility of superseding private property concerns due to the public safety risk and asked if the police department could focus on the intersections that he was concerned about. Town Manager Lestitian stated that the Town continued to enforce moving violations in Riverdale Park Station and an update was provided at the last Mayor and Council meeting regarding the progress of those efforts.

Resident Jim Schmitz acknowledged and thanked the Town's police department for their enforcement efforts in Riverdale Park Station.

Discussion Items

1. FY2023 Revenue Update

Finance and Employee Services Director Paul Smith provided an overview of the revenue sources in comparison to the previous three fiscal years.

Mayor Thompson stated that he was glad to see that the Safe Speed for Students numbers were lower.

CM Lingua thanked Director Smith for presenting the report.

2. Redistricting Committee Recommendations

Mayor Thompson presented the ward boundary maps recommended by the Redistricting Committee.

Mayor Thompson suggested that the maps be introduced at the January Legislative Meeting and that a dedicated Work Session for redistricting be held in mid-January. There were no objections.

CM Lingua asked if the other ward boundary maps were available for the Council's review and Mayor Thompson replied in the affirmative.

Mayor Thompson recommended January 17th as the date for the redistricting Work Session. There were no objections.

Mayor Thompson thanked the Redistricting Committee for their hard work.

Mr. Inyang thanked Mayor Thompson for his work and for handling the nuances of the software used for redistricting. Mr. Inyang stated that it was a very insightful process and a pleasure to work with the Redistricting Committee.

3. 2023 Town Election

Director Barnes provided an overview of Ordinance 2023-OR-01 regarding the 2023 Town Election. Director Barnes discussed the language added to the ordinance to account for the possibility of needing to change the polling location due to the Municipal Center renovations.

Mayor Thompson stated that he did not think that there would be a need to move the polling location, but it was good to have the option just in case.

4. Ordinance 2022-OR-07 regarding Property Maintenance Code Modifications

Director Chelton provided an overview of Ordinance 2022-OR-07 regarding Property Maintenance Code Modifications.

CM Lingua asked about the lot size of the other jurisdictions considered and Director Chelton provided an overview.

CM Lingua stated that a 10-foot setback would be difficult for a lot of properties in Town.

CM Lingua asked about the effective date, perhaps having an effective date of July 1.

5. Ordinance 2022-OR-08 regarding Vacant Property Registration

Director Chelton provided an overview of Ordinance 2022-OR-08 regarding Vacant Property Registration.

CM Lingua stated that the ordinance looked good.

6. Ordinance 2022-OR-09 regarding Micromobility Standards

Director Chelton discussed Ordinance 2022-OR-09 regarding Micromobility Standards.

CM Lingua asked if the Town could still designate micromobility sites to multiple providers and Director Chelton provided a response.

Mayor Thompson thanked staff for incorporating his recommendations.

7. Ordinance 2022-OR-10 regarding Section O-6 of the Personnel Manual regarding Mandatory Vaccinations

Finance and Employee Services Director Paul Smith provided an update on Ordinance 2022-OR-10 regarding Section O-6 of the Personnel Manual regarding Mandatory Vaccinations.

Town Manager Lestitian stated that the legislation would be discussed again at a future meeting.

Mayor Thompson stated that he looked forward to an update on the response from Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) and staff.

8. Minutes

Mayor Thompson asked that the Council make staff aware of any changes that needed to be made to the draft minutes.

New Business

Draft Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) General Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Letter

Mayor Thompson provided an overview of the letter from the City of College Park regarding WMATA's Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget.

CM Lingua discussed his position related to WMATA and the services provided. CM Lingua stated that he had no objection to joining in or crafting a similar letter.

Mayor Thompson stated that he would prefer crafting a similar letter.

CM Lingua discussed items that he would like to include in a draft letter.

CM Smith stated that fare evasion was a major issue but the best way to address it would be to waive fares. CM Sadiq stated that fee waivers were a bad idea and more frequent and reliable transportation was needed.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.