

Town of Riverdale Park
Legislative Meeting Minutes
April 3, 2023
7:30 p.m.

In Attendance

Mayor Alan K. Thompson
CM Richard Smith, Ward 1
CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2
CM David Lingua, Ward 3
CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4
CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6

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

Absent

CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5

Call to Order

Mayor Thompson called the Legislative Meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed.

Approval of Agenda

CM Faulx made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by CM Smith. Vote: 5-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained
CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye
CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye
CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye
CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye
CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent
CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Aye

Discussion:

There were no stated conflicts of interest.

Mayor Thompson discussed the need to add an item of New Business, a letter of support for the University of Maryland's grant application for electric buses.

Presentations

Proclamation in recognition of Arbor Day

Mayor Thompson read a proclamation in recognition of Arbor Day in English and in Spanish.

Proclamation designating April as Earth Month

Mayor Thompson read a proclamation designating April as Earth Month in English and in Spanish.

Presentation of the FY2024 Proposed Operating and Capital Improvement Budget

Town Manager Lestitian provided a high-level overview of the FY2024 Proposed Operating and Capital Improvement Budget.

Town Manager Lestitian discussed the stressors related to the FY2024 Proposed Budget and the need to balance costs with the demands of future development in Town.

CM Lingua asked if staff were planning to do a cost comparison for electric vehicles related to vehicle maintenance, performance maintenance, and energy usage and Town Manager Lestitian replied in the affirmative.

Town Manager Lestitian discussed the accuracy of the budget projections over the last 5 years and highlighted the Operating Expenditure Summary.

Mayor Thompson thanked the staff team for their efforts in preparing the FY2024 Proposed Budget.

CM Lingua discussed the importance of reviewing the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) section of the Proposed Budget to offer comments on the proposals and provide direction to staff. Mayor Thompson agreed. Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff had proposed programming for all of the ARPA funds.

CM Smith stated that he recognized the amount of staff time that went into preparing the budget and he looked forward to more discussion about the projects.

CM Sadiq recognized the Town's achievements and stated that the staff team was great.

Resident Ifiok Inyang recognized the staff team's projections and asked if there was concern that there would be limited "wobble room" over time. Town Manager Lestitian discussed the need to be cautious and to plan carefully now as it related to structural changes to the Town's budget.

Mayor Thompson asked about the anticipated rate of increase in salaries and benefits and noted that it was something to consider.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Alan K. Thompson reported:

- It is spring and the weather is fantastic.
- COVID-19 update: new variant and impact of new variant worldwide; discussion regarding case numbers in Canada
- SB011 died in Committee. Thank you to resident Dan Behrend and others for opposing the legislation, thank you to Delegate Healey.
- Upcoming budget public hearings: April 15th and April 22nd
- Reminder regarding Town Election on May 1st and upcoming filing deadline on April 6th.

Town Manager Report

Town Manager John N. Lestitian reported:

- Thank you to Mayor Thompson for leading the charge against SB011 which would have had a direct impact on all residents.
- Upcoming Budget Public Hearings: April 15 and April 22 at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom

Monthly Finance Report

Gentry Jones, Deputy Director of Finance Services, reported, subject to audit:

March

Revenue: \$423,999

Expenditures: \$597,787

Year-to-Date

Revenue: \$8,582,833

Expenditures: \$5,865,462

CM Lingua made a motion to approve the monthly finance reports subject to audit. The motion was seconded by CM Smith. Vote: 5-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained

CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye

CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye

CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye

CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye

CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent

CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Aye

Discussion:

CM Lingua asked if the projections were consistent with previous years and Deputy Director Jones replied in the affirmative.

Correspondence Summary

The Correspondence Summary was included in the Meeting Materials.

Mayor Thompson highlighted Correspondence Summary Item 4, a notice regarding a Site Development Concept Plan for 5801 Cleveland Avenue, and stated that he would be registering as a person of interest.

Fire Department Report

Fire Department President Steve Lamphier provided an overview of the Fire Department's report.

Council Committee & Ward Reports

CM Richard Smith, Ward 1

CM Richard Smith reported:

- Appreciated Earth Day proclamation.

- Concerned about transit-oriented development that has a large number of parking spaces.
- Discussion regarding bran related to Manifest Bread

CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2

CM Aaron Faulx reported:

- Worked in yard and garden all day; UMD is a good resource for gardening information.

CM David Lingua, Ward 3

CM David Lingua reported:

- Upcoming CKAR CDC Job Fair
- Riverdale Park Business Association (RPBA) meeting rescheduled for May 10th
- TRP Hockey News- overview of Bowie Bruins team wins and Ward 3 residents' participation.

CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4

CM Thomas Sadiq reported:

- Transit oriented development would be very valuable near Town Hall
- Suggested putting housing at 5000 and 5002 Queensbury Road

CM Hala Mayers left the meeting at 9 p.m.

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items and Consent Agenda Items

There were no public comments on non-agenda items or Consent Agenda items.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve consent agenda items:

1. Curb Cut Request: 4802 Queensbury Road for expansion of driveway.
2. Minutes: February 6, 2023, Legislative Meeting

CM Faulx made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. CM Smith seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained

CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye

CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye

CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye

CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye

CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent

CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Absent

Legislative Action Items

1. Introduction of Ordinance 2023-OR-04 regarding Chapter 75 Stormwater Management

CM Smith introduced Ordinance 2023-OR-04 regarding Chapter 75 Stormwater Management.

2. Motion regarding letter of support for County legislation, CR-018-2023 regarding Guaranteed Basic Income Pilot Program

CM Smith made a motion to send a letter of support for County legislation, CR-018-2023 regarding Guaranteed Basic Income Pilot Program. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 4-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained
CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye
CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye
CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye
CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye
CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent
CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Absent

Discussion:

CM Smith expressed his support for the program.

CM Sadiq asked about the selection process and CM Smith stated that he would forward an email that he received from the County with additional information about the program to the Council.

New Business

1. Motion to authorize the Town Manager to sign a Task Order Agreement for CIP# 20DS06: Building Demolition and Parking Lot Development

CM Lingua made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to sign a Task Order Agreement for CIP# 20DS06: Building Demolition and Parking Lot Development. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 4-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained
CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye
CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye
CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye
CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye
CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent
CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Absent

Discussion:

CM Lingua noted that the topic had been discussed before and briefly provided an overview.

Town Manager Lestitian discussed the nature of the contract to include the design and stormwater management aspects of the parking lot.

CM Smith asked if staff had spoken to Riverdale Elementary School (RES). Mayor Thompson noted that the school system had expressed support in the past. CM Smith recognized CM Sadiq's previous comments about the use of the properties and stated that there was a more immediate need related to parking. CM Smith suggested designing the parking lot so that it could be easily converted to another use in the future.

2. Motion to authorize the acquisition of two license plate readers through FY2023 Technology Grant from the State of Maryland

CM Lingua made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with ELSAG for \$29,100 for the purchase and installation of two license plate readers. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 4-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained
CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye
CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye
CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye
CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye
CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent
CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Absent

Discussion:

Town Manager Lestitian discussed the time sensitive nature of the request.

Deputy Chief Turner discussed the funding source, a Technology Grant from the State of Maryland, and the requested action to authorize the purchase of two License Plate Readers (LPRs) from ELSAG for \$29,100. Deputy Chief Turner noted that the LPRs would be installed by Front Line Mobile. Deputy Chief Turner reported that ELSAG held the State of Maryland contract and was the only provider of the LPR program.

Deputy Chief Turner discussed how LPRs were used as well as the security of the information collected.

CM Lingua noted that the Town had LPRs in the past and discussed the Town's history related to LPRs.

CM Smith asked if other cruisers had similar capabilities and Deputy Chief Turner provided additional information.

Mayor Thompson stated that there had been some privacy concerns in the past but that the State's program was run very well. Mayor Thompson noted that the data was provided only to the State Police, and he had not heard of any abuses of the data.

3. Acquisition of Leaf Vacuum Truck

CM Faulx made a motion to authorize the purchase of a Leaf Vacuum Truck for the Department of Public Works. CM Lingua seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained
CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye
CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye
CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye
CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye
CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent

CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Absent

Discussion:

Director Lewis provided an overview of the requested action to authorize the Town Manager to purchase a new, all-in-one, one-person crew leaf vacuum truck for an amount not to exceed \$262,275. Director Lewis noted that the purchase would be made through a cooperative purchasing agreement held by Sourcewell.

Director Lewis discussed the features of the vehicle and the impact on DPW staff operations. Director Lewis also discussed the changes to the planned purchases of DPW vehicles if the purchase of the leaf vacuum truck is authorized by the Mayor and Council.

Mayor Thompson asked about the capacity of the vehicle and Director Lewis provided additional information.

CM Faulx noted that residents preferred the leaf vacuuming service and the capability to vacuum storm drains would be beneficial. CM Faulx stated that he supported the purchase.

4. Request for letter of support for University of Maryland Electric Buses grant

Mayor Thompson provided an overview of the request for a letter of support for the University of Maryland's Electric Bus grant application. Mayor Thompson reported that the grant would be for 35 electric buses and the related infrastructure. Mayor Thompson noted the significant environmental impact as well as the deadline to submit a letter of support.

CM Lingua made a motion to direct staff to send a letter of support for the University of Maryland's grant application to acquire 35 buses and the related infrastructure, due by April 14, 2023. The motion was seconded by CM Sadiq. Vote: 4-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained

CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye

CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye

CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye

CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye

CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent

CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Absent

Discussion:

CM Lingua stated that he was in favor of sending a letter of support.

Unfinished Business

1. Sidewalk Café Standards

Director Chelton provided an overview of the proposed sidewalk café standards and requested feedback from the Mayor, Council, and public.

CM Lingua discussed examples in Town and stated that he was trying to envision how the standards would apply. CM Lingua discussed the need for enough space on the sidewalk for pedestrians and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

CM Smith stated that he supported more open designs and activating public spaces. CM Smith discussed allowing businesses to use the parallel parking spaces in the Town Center and stated that he hoped the program could be launched soon.

Mayor Thompson shared a picture of a restaurant in Bethesda as another example.

Town Manager Lestitian stated that there appeared to be general consensus for design standards, a process for reviewing requests for sidewalk cafes, and a process for determining if public parking spots could be altered. Town Manager Lestitian stated that staff would draft a process and some design standards for licensing agreements for the Mayor and Council's review. There were no objections.

Adjournment

CM Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. The motion was seconded by CM Sadiq. Vote: 4-0-1 (Favorable)

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Alan K. Thompson: Abstained

CM Richard Smith, Ward 1: Aye

CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2: Aye

CM David Lingua, Ward 3: Aye

CM Thomas Sadiq, Ward 4: Aye

CM Karen Mejia, Ward 5: Absent

CM Hala Mayers, Ward 6: Absent