

**Town of Bladensburg
Work Session Minutes
March 9, 2020 @ 5:30PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER - Mayor James called meeting to order at 5:30PM

II. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2020 WORK SESSION MINUTES

Mayor James asked for a motion to approve the January minutes. Council Member Mendoza moved to approve the motion. It was seconded by Council Member Lundy. The motion was approved with edits to the following sections:

- **Section 6** - Taussig Road (spelling)
- **Adjournment**- “Mayor Asked...”

Mayor James stated Town Attorney Sue Ellen Ferguson was running late and will move forward on the agenda until she arrives.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Noise Ordinance- Town Attorney, Suellen Ferguson

Ms. Sandlin asked if Council had any questions regarding the ordinance for Ms. Ferguson. Mayor James stated Council Member Route was not present for the last Work Session where the subject was discussed and asked Ms. Ferguson to provide a revision for that purpose.

Ms. Ferguson provided an update on the noise ordinance, stating the Town has planned for training with noise meters as they will be used as the standard regarding noise level. She further communicated that the County does not use meters, but instead distance. However, Maryland law recognizes state requirements, where the Town can include its restrictions.

Mayor James and Ms. Sandlin stated the Town’s ordinance now incorporates fines for owners, stating the 1st offense is a written warning, 2nd offense a fine of \$100 and the 3rd offense a fine of \$500.

Ms. Ferguson stated if the offense is with the same owner, it should not be treated as a 1st offense. Operationally, the 1st offense is a warning and the 2nd offense the owner should be cited. Ms. Ferguson stated the laws proposed are taken from the Town of College Park, as they frequently deal with noise related cases, particularly from students.

Ms. Ferguson suggested when complaints come in, Town should offer opportunity to individual if they want to be anonymous, as it reduces the opportunity for retaliation. Additionally, she stated give the owner the same rights given to tenants. Council Member Lundy asked what methods of mailing will go out to the owner. Per Ms. Ferguson, mailing is sent by regular and certified mail. Code Enforcement Supervisor Rinehart stated the Town currently uses both methods, as well as track the complaints. Mr. Rinehart further stated the Town will use all platforms to post the new noise ordinance.

Mayor James and Mr. Rinehart both stated there will be extenuating circumstances regarding noise such as work conducted by WSSC and the use of a generator in the event of an outage.

Council Member Route asked if only code will participate in training, Mr. Rinehart, stated training will include both Code and Police Departments.

IV. AJOURNMENT FOR CLOSED MEETING- LEGAL ADVICE- (15 MINS.)

At 6:03PM, Mayor James asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting for a closed session to seek legal counsel from Attorney Ferguson. Council Member Route moved to approve the motion and it was seconded by Council Member Mendoza. The motion was approved and passed unanimously.

At 6:04PM, Mayor James called the meeting to order. At 6:35PM Mayor James asked for a motion to adjourn the closed meeting. The motion was approved by Council Member Lundy and seconded by Council Member Mendoza. The motion passed unanimously.

At 6:37PM, the Work Session reconvened.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Staff Monthly Report Format- Town Administrator, Debi Sandlin

Ms. Sandlin stated the Town staff reports will be consolidate starting April 2020. The Town Administrator's report will incorporate highlights from Marketing, Clerk and Public Works. A second report will include the Police Department and Code Enforcement.

Council Member Route suggested to include a blurb on the Town's website regarding the consolidation of the reports to inform residents of the change.

2. Senior Picnic- Council Member Blount

Council Member Blount requested approval to use funds for the Older Americans Month senior event in May, where more than 150 seniors will enjoy a day of fun and engagement at the David Harrington Park, located behind the Town Hall. Mayor James stated she loves the idea of the event, as it will appeal to all seniors in the community, not only those from the senior apartments.

Town Administrator Sandlin stated funds for the event will be repurposed from monies already allocated in the budget for Community Events. These funds were slated to be used for Bladensburg Day, which has been rescheduled for September 2020. Council Member Route asked if there will be available funds for Bladensburg Day. Ms. Sandlin stated funds will be allocated for Bladensburg Day from the FY21 budget. Mayor James asked Treasurer Tinelli to incorporate that notation in the current budget to reflect how the funds will be repurposed and allocated.

The request was moved to the Council Meeting at 7:00PM for voting.

3. 2020 Dept. of Agriculture Mosquito Spraying Program

Town Administrator Sandlin stated the Town participated in the Department of Agriculture's Mosquito Spraying Program in the past. The cost is \$1400 to participate, and the Town will be notified before spraying is conducted. Mr. Rinehart stated they will not spray within 75 feet of an individual that does not want to be sprayed; however, a request must be sent to Town. The Town will only be sprayed if a mosquito is tested positive for the West Nile Virus.

Ms. Sandlin asked if the Town should continue its participation. The Council will vote on this matter at the Council Meeting at 7:00 PM.

4. Budget Amendments- Treasurer, Vito Tinelli

Treasurer Tinelli presented the first budget amendment. It will be voted on at the April 13, 2020 meeting. Council Member Route asked if there is a way to add laptop expenses for Council Members under the equipment line item. Ms. Sandlin stated 3 laptops were purchased to be used for the Census Count Initiative but will be repurposed for the Council.

Mayor James requested \$2000 from the Town to support the Strategic Collegiate through Harvard University, where students who attend High Schools in Bladensburg, with Chaperones will receive support from the Town. Council Member Mendoza was concerned that not all the students live in the Town and the Towns they resided should contribute regarding their participation.

The Council will vote on this matter at the Council Meeting at 7:00PM.

5. FY21 Budget Calendar- Treasurer, Vito Tinelli

Treasurer Tinelli provided a tentative budget calendar to ensure that it aligns with Mayor and Council's calendars. Council Member Route suggested to add pop up events to the calendar to engage community regarding Town's budget. Ms. Sandlin stated the Town will engage the senior facilities. Mayor James recommended the addition of a community pop up for Saturday, May 9th, with location to be determined. Council Member Mendoza stated he may not be present for April 13th meeting. Mr. Tinelli will incorporate the suggested changes to the calendar.

6. Discussion on the Coronavirus - Town Administrator and Mayor James

Mayor James stated information is being provided through the Town's platforms mainly from the County. Ms. Sandlin further communicated that per the County, Towns will be contacted if residents have been tested positive for the virus. Mayor James stated that information will be in the Newsletter going out to Towns. Additionally, she said she is

working with Chief Collintgton to reinstate the Community Engagement Response Team (CERT) program.

7. Testimony on the rezoning of 450/Annapolis Road to Commercial Services- Mayor James

Mayor James provided an update for the upcoming hearing for March 23rd and recommended the Council work with Debi on a collective letter from the Mayor and Council. She also encouraged participation to testify. Council Members Route and Lundy stated they will participate in the testimonies. Ms. Sandlin also encouraged Council to share the information with their respective constituents to garner local support. Mayor James asked Council Member Mendoza if he could attend the hearing as his support to address concerns in Spanish would be crucial. Ms. Sandlin will start a draft of the letter and coordinate with Mayor and Council for input.

Ms. Sandlin stated she asked Brittany what designation the Town should include in its submission. Ms. Sandlin shared she is hoping for support from County Council Member Ivey. Ms. Route suggested inclusion of the at-large Council Member in the correspondence.

8. Maryland Mayor's Association Conference Update- Mayor James

Due to time restraints, Mayor James did not provide an update regarding the Maryland Mayor's Association Conference.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:11PM, Council Member Route made a motion to adjourn and it was seconded by Council Member Mendoza. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Cecile K. Cunningham
Interim Town Clerk