

Town of Riverdale Park
Legislative Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2018
8:00 p.m.

In Attendance

Alan K. Thompson, Mayor
CM Marsha Dixon, Ward 1
CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2
CM David Lingua, Ward 3
CM Christopher Henry, Ward 4
CM Colleen Richardson, Ward 5- sick
CM Alejandro Silva, Ward 6

John N. Lestitian, Town Manager
Leonard Addison, Public Works Director
David Morris, Police Chief
Jessica Barnes, Town Clerk
Kevin Simpson, Development Services Director

Call to Order

Mayor Thompson called the legislative meeting to order at 8:04 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by a moment of reflection.

Approval of Agenda

CM Henry made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by CM Dixon. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Presentation

Recognition of Riverdale Park Police Department Officers

Mayor Thompson and Chief Morris presented Sgt. Joe Sommerville, Cpl. Jeff Prawdzik and Cpl. Joe Walch with the Chief's Award for their actions that resulted in saving the life of a person who had attempted suicide.

Proclamation for Volunteer Week

Mayor Thompson read a proclamation for Volunteer Week in English and in Spanish. Mayor Thompson presented the proclamation to Nova Johns.

Correspondence Summary

No Correspondence Summary this month.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Alan K. Thompson reported:

- He had received a phone call from CM Richardson and she was unable to attend the meeting
- Recently attended a Purple Line Community Action Team meeting and more constructed activity would be happening such as the removal of trees and shrubs along Riverdale Road

- Update regarding new businesses in Riverdale Park Station (Gold's Gym has opened and Habit Burger and Jersey Mike's will open soon)
- Working to address issues identified during recent Community Walk
- The recent Easter Egg Party was a big hit!
- Participated in a Council-Manager Forum at University Park

Town Manager Report

Town Manager John N. Lestitian reported:

- The next Community Walk will be held on April 11 at 5:30 p.m. starting at Town Hall
- FY2019 Budget Public Hearings: April 21 at 1:00 p.m. and April 28 at 9:00 a.m. at Town Hall
- Financial Disclosure Forms have been distributed and are due to the Town Clerk by May 1st
- Staff are finalizing the FY2019 Proposed Budget and expect to have it ready early next week
- Update on 2018 Staff goals

Finance Report

As of March 31, 2018, subject to audit:

Expenses: \$556,267

Revenue: \$80,088

CM Lingua made a motion to adopt the Finance Report subject to audit. CM Henry seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Discussion:

Town Manager Lestitian gave an overview of the Revenue and Expense Comparison.

Fire Department Report

The Fire Department's report was included in the meeting materials.

Council Committee & Ward Reports

CM Marsha Dixon, Ward 1

CM Marsha Dixon reported:

- Great to highlight the wonderful work that the officers do- kudos to the officers and Chief Morris!
- Reminder to residents to contact animal control for any animal-related concerns.
- Encouraged residents to contact their councilmember to share their thoughts regarding proposed Charter Amendment.

CM Aaron Faulx, Ward 2

CM Aaron Faulx discussed the staff response during the recent snowstorm.

CM David Lingua, Ward 3

CM David Lingua reported:

- CKAR CDC meeting will be held on April 3rd at 6801 Kenilworth Avenue at 7:00 p.m.
- Overview of March PGCMA meeting with County Executive regarding the County budget
- Appreciative of Ward 3 residents Jay and Nova Johns for volunteering in Town- volunteering is so important!

CM Christopher Henry, Ward 4

CM Christopher Henry reported:

- Congratulations to officers on their outstanding response
- Great leadership from Chief Morris and Town Manager Lestitian
- Overview of March 23rd Public Safety Committee Meeting

CM Alejandro Silva, Ward 6

CM Alejandro Silva reported that he had walked his community but did not have anything to report.

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items and Consent Agenda Items

Nicole Williams introduced herself and stated that she was running for the House of Delegates.

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve consent agenda items:

1. Fence Permit Request for a 6-foot wooden fence located along property owned by the Madison Hill Home Owners Association near Silk Tree Drive (Ward 4)
2. April Work Session meeting date: April 30, 2018
3. Minutes from the February 26, 2018 Work Session
4. Minutes from the March 5, 2018 Legislative Meeting

CM Lingua made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. CM Henry seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, CM Dixon abstained)

Legislative Action Items:

1. Motion regarding the Mayor's nominations for the Riverdale Park Ethics Commission
Motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-07

CM Henry made a motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-07 regarding appointment of Ethics Commission members. CM Lingua seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Discussion:

Mayor Thompson administered the Oath of Office to Andrea Huberty.

2. Introduction of Legislative Committee recommendation regarding voter expansion

CM Dixon introduced Charter Amendment 2018-CR-01 regarding Voter Registration and Elections and read the proposed amendments to the Town Charter.

Discussion:

Mayor Thompson discussed the ground rules for comments and reminded attendees to keep their remarks as short as possible as there will be more opportunities to comment on the legislation.

Resident Spiro Dimakas of 4804 Somerset Road stated the voting is important but he was not supportive of non-citizens voting. He stated that the Town is small enough for someone to be able to talk to an elected official if they have an issue or concern.

Resident Juan Carlos of 4807 Rittenhouse Street stated that he was present because he felt that everyone who lives in the town should have the right to vote. He stated that when he pays his taxes, no one asks for documentation.

Resident Rachel Malcolm of 6008 Riverside Drive asked about the referendum process and reminded attendees that if the Charter Amendment was passed then there was a way say that they do want it.

Resident Joe Kelly of 4522 Tuckerman Street stated that the proposed legislation does not offer anything other than a voice in the community in which people live. Mr. Kelly stated that the proposed legislation did not offer a voice in County, State or Federal elections and simply recognizes that a person voting lives in Town and is equal to everyone else. He stated that everyone gets one vote.

Resident Robert Walker of 4520 Tuckerman Street stated that he thought the proposed legislation was a positive thing as it encouraged participation in the civic process and sends the message that we are a welcoming community that gives everyone the chance to participate.

Resident Ana Lopez of 5412 Kenilworth Terrace stated that she had lived in Riverdale Park for almost 7 years, is a US citizen and voted in the last election. Ms. Lopez stated that she was supportive of legislation because her family and neighbors deserve the right to have a voice in the community. She also thanked everyone who supported the legislation.

Resident Sabrina Smith of 4500 Garfield Street stated that she supported the legislation because everyone should be able to vote where they live and directly weigh in on the issues that are closer to home and impact day-to-day life. Ms. Smith also stated that she was supportive of decreasing the voting age.

Resident Kay Troup of 5311 Taylor Road stated that she was opposed to the legislation. She stated that lowering the voting age does not serve a useful purpose and there were other ways to get the youth involved. Ms. Troup stated that the Charter Amendment would deteriorate the integrity of the polls and make it difficult to maintain voter records. She stated that she had just learned about the proposed Charter Amendment yesterday and was very opposed to it.

Resident Miles Spicer of 4609 Riverdale Road stated that he had lived in Riverdale Park since 2000 and he has a 15-year old who can't wait to vote and who has everything needed to make an informed decision. Mr. Spicer stated that there was a difference between involved and empowered.

Resident Elizabeth Bolen of 4817 Longfellow Street stated that she was not in favor of the change because there were already many ways to engage with the elected officials and many opportunities to participate. Ms. Bohlen stated that she was concerned about the administrative burden and cost to Town staff. She stated that she wanted to know more about the goals of the legislation and if other jurisdictions had met that goal. She also stated that it was her personal mission to be sure that no one is excluded because of their status.

Resident Alex Hirtle of 4816 Madison Street stated that he was strongly opposed to the proposed Charter Amendment. Mr. Hirtle stated that there was a process for citizenship and voting is a responsibility of citizens. He also stated that 16-year-olds do not have a clear

understanding of our government and how it works. Mr. Hirtle stated that he was neutral on same day voter registration and he did not see the need for a 5-day extension for election results announcement.

Resident Sheila Smith of 5001 Riverdale Road stated that she had many questions and concerns regarding the proposed Charter Amendment and she would like to know the rationale for the changes. Ms. Smith asked if it was possible to separate out each section of the legislation so that each piece could be considered separately. Ms. Smith discussed the development of the front lobe of the brain with regard to age and noted that 16-year-olds cannot enter into legal contracts. She also stated that citizenship was a duty and a responsibility and should be required for voting. Ms. Smith stated that the Town had many registered voters that currently do not come out to vote and she wasn't sure how same day voting would be verified.

Resident Bob Smith of 5001 Riverdale Road stated that he was concerned with the process and the lack of information. Mr. Smith asked how the proposed changes would be implemented. Mr. Smith suggested that the Charter Amendment process be changed to include at least two public hearings before the amendment is voted on. Mr. Smith also stated that the legislation is not time sensitive and the Town should take its time and do this right.

Resident Catherine Bergmann of 6205 43rd Street stated that she had lived in Riverdale Park for 25 years. She stated that citizenship was not relevant in Town elections and those who live and work in Town and pay taxes should have a say. Ms. Bergmann stated that Riverdale Park is different and should take a stand.

Resident Heather Cronk of 6304 46th Avenue stated that the Town should be creating more pathways for people to be involved and the idea that a person's vote is diminished in power by others voting is wrong because their vote has more integrity when more people can vote.

CM Faulx commended those in attendance for a civil debate.

The Council took a five-minute recess and was back in session at 9:32 p.m.

3. Motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-06 regarding Vision and Commitment to Infrastructure

CM Lingua made a motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-06 regarding Vision and Commitment to Infrastructure. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Discussion:

Town Manager Lestitian stated that this was another core foundational area that will be used to create a succinct vision statement for the Town.

4. Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-02 to amend the Town's personnel regulations to comply with the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act

CM Faulx made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-02 to amend the Town's personnel regulations to comply with the Maryland Healthy Working Families Act. The motion was seconded by CM Lingua. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Discussion:

Town Manager Lestitian noted that he had spoken to Town Attorney Fred Sussman regarding the Work Session question about common law marriages.

5. Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-03 Rental Licenses and Inspections Programs – Chapter 55

CM Dixon made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-03 Rental Licenses and Inspections Programs – Chapter 55. The motion was seconded by CM Henry. Vote: 4-0-2 (favorable, CM Henry and Mayor Thompson abstained)

Discussion:

CM Dixon stated that Ordinance 2018-OR-03 clarifies rules for rental licensing and inspection.

Resident Corey Bettenhausen of 4512 Riverdale Road stated that he was disappointed that the owner occupied section of the ordinance was removed and he hopes that it will be considered again in the future. CM Lingua stated that staff will monitor he owner occupied rentals and report back to the Council.

6. Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-04 Appeals – Chapter 56

CM Dixon made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-04 Appeals – Chapter 56. The motion was seconded by CM Faulx. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

7. Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-05 revising Chapter 67 – Housing Standards

CM Faulx made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-OR-05 revising Chapter 67 – Housing Standards. CM Lingua seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

8. Introduction of Ordinance 2018-OR-06 establishing Redevelopment Zone Initiative Incentive Program

CM Dixon introduced Ordinance 2018-OR-06 establishing Redevelopment Zone Initiative Incentive Program.

9. Introduction of Ordinance 2018-OR-07 establishing Go Green Initiative Incentive Program

CM Lingua introduced Ordinance 2018-OR-07 establishing Go Green Initiative Incentive Program.

10. Motion to authorize HGACBuy membership and waive bid requirements for the Town Manager to enter into an agreement to purchase a street sweeper as approved in FY2018 Budget CIP #11PW06

CM Faulx made a motion to authorize HGACBuy membership and waive bid requirements for the Town Manager to enter into an agreement to purchase a street sweeper as approved in FY2018 Budget CIP #11PW06. CM Lingua seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

1. Chapter 68, Weeds, Rubbish and Garbage Maintenance

Development Services Director Kevin Simpson stated that staff were requesting introduction of the legislation as the spring season was just around the corner. Development Services Director Simpson also stated that staff had reviewed the County Code and did not find any substantive changes that needed to be incorporated into the proposed legislation.

CM Lingua introduced 2018-OR-08 regarding Chapter 68, Weeds, Rubbish and Garbage Maintenance.

Discussion:

Resident Corey Bettenhausen of 4512 Riverdale Road suggested that bee and butterfly habitat be considered when defining vegetative growth.

Resident Sheila Smith of 5001 Riverdale Road suggested that the Council be cautious when defining terms as dandelions are also medicinal.

CM Lingua suggested that the term “food waste” should be used to include all types of waste related to foods.

2. Direct report employees to Town Manager

Town Manager Lestitian gave an overview of the proposed housekeeping edits to enable the Council-Manager form of government to be more fully implemented. Town Manager Lestitian stated that he worked with the Town Attorney to create the analysis of the proposed edits.

Mayor Thompson stated that the Council was aware that further edits and revisions to the Charter and Code would be needed after the form of government had changed. CM Lingua asked how the Council should provide comments to staff and Town Manager Lestitian requested that comments be directed to him in advance of the April 30th Work Session.

3. Budget: project planning and debt

Town Manager Lestitian gave an overview of the Town’s current debt, the intended uses of existing loans and advanced refunding (defeasance) as well as recommendations for moving forward.

The Council discussed several projects that would have a useful life of 20 years or more such as the reconfiguration of Rhode Island Avenue/Maryland Avenue, a new park at Tuckerman Street and Lafayette Avenue and reconfiguration of the intersection at Mabelle Munch Park and Natoli Place. Mayor Thompson stated that the Council was in consensus on holding back on the defeasance and working to identify potential projects.

Resident Bob Smith of 5001 Riverdale Road suggested that the Council consider additional crossings for pedestrians. CM Lingua clarified that the projects must have a useful life of 20 years or longer

Adjournment

CM Faulx made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:39 p.m. The motion was seconded by CM Lingua. Vote: 5-0-1 (favorable, Mayor Thompson abstained)