

Town of Forest Heights
Town Council Work Session Meeting
Monday, March 7, 2022 - 7:30 PM
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order:

Roll Call: CM Atkinson, CM Barnes, CW Brownson, CW Noble, CM Lilly, CP Hines and Mayor Washington, CM Atkinson no present. Quorum established

Moment of Silence:

Pledge of Allegiance:

Approval of Agenda: Motion by CM Washington to approve the agenda; seconded by CP Hines.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Motion by CM Washington to approve the consent agenda; Motion by CW Brownson to amend Agenda for missing Minutes from Feb. 7, 2022; all in favor; motion passed.

Presentation by CDC Ms. Cynthia Mann on Small Act of Kindness: The CDC has a program called "Small Acts of Kindness" and they would like to recognize 20 seniors and people with disabilities for snow removal and lawn care. She recommended that each council submit a list of residents from their wards to her for the upcoming service. *CW Brownson:* wonders if disabled seniors, or those of a specific age or income level, might be eligible?

Ms. Mann: stated that if no one in the home can provide these services, they really don't want to impose any meaningful restrictions on the program.

CP Hines: asked how often does this grass cutting happen in the summertime?

Ms. Mann: Stated that they generally cutting lawn twice a month. Starting in March.

CM Lilly: inquired about properties with driveways, whether they would be plowing those as well, and whether he could also submit a list for Ward 1.

Ms. Mann: Stated yes, properties with driveways, would also be on that list but would need to be evaluated.

Presentation by Grant manager Mr. John O'Connor, the Town was awarded a one hundred sixty-four-thousand-dollar grant to facilitate the hiring of four police positions within the Town of Forest Heights by the Department of Justice. The total reward is eight hundred sixty-four thousand, but it's split into a two-portion funding scenario. It's known as a "matching grant opportunity," and the Department of Justice has found funding in the amount of \$500,000. So, the Town and two sites will be responsible for the matching portion of three hundred and sixty-four thousand dollars. So, during this three-year period, it supports four police positions directly related to community-oriented policing within the police department and affecting the residents of the town. Unfortunately, under this grant, the police equipment is not included. However, officer salaries, fringe benefits, health care, all of that is covered under this. Per capita, this is one of the largest awards in the state of Maryland. There were only three municipal agencies that were awarded a grant for cops in this funding cycle. We have the DOJ cops funding a \$500,000 American Rescue Plan with one hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars, automated speed enforcement revenue of \$150,000, and the use of seventy-nine thousand dollars of unrestricted fund balance. By allocating the funding through the ARPA, AFC, and fund balance, we make the total grant for the lifecycle of this program eight hundred sixty-four thousand dollars.

CW Noble: reference to the speed camera as part as the match. Because I guess prior the speed camera was allocated, or were something else, right? So how were we able to allocate for this? Or do we take in consideration all the other things as well?

Mr. O'Connor: Yes, we did. We looked at the revenues that were already allocated, the revenues that were encumbered and the revenues that were available to use on other funding sources or other programs from that funding source.

Public period:

Mr. Kennedy II: It was nice to see the number of volunteers that showed up for the COVID testing giveaway this past Saturday. It was also equally as nice to see new speed humps in various sections of the town, and they are painted, so you can't miss them. I have two questions. If somebody can get back to me with an answer about the couple of sidewalks that are basically leading into school that are trip hazards, I would appreciate it. I don't know where that's falling on our priority list right now or when that's going to get addressed. Also, it appears that there are an increasing number of residences with more trash than can fit in the restricted number of trash containers. I'm not sure how many folks are aware that they can buy another one. I don't know which department would follow up on that because obviously to see that, someone would have to be out at six, I guess, shortly after 6:00am, when the trash company comes through. This is a common misunderstanding.

Ms. McMillan: We have a parking issue: Woodland drives her house backs up to Black Hawk Lane. that's the only parking you have available for a few of us residents their I. I stopped by the town hall office in January because with all the big snowstorms, my car was hit and then someone drove off. And I never knew who hit my car, but that is the only parking I have available along Woodland Drive along with a few of my neighbors. Back in August of 2019, I attended a town meeting to inquire about the possibility of restoring parking on Black Hawk Lane. And at the time,

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CM Noble my other question will be, were we or did we look at what the total restoration would be in reference to price for this contractor?

Mr. Vaughn no, now at this time we're dealing with the safety issues and then we will go back and revisit. Vote 6 Yea; 0 Nay; motion passed

- e. **Charter Amendment Resolution 01-22** A Charter Amendment Resolution Of The Mayor And Council Of The Town Of Forest Heights, Maryland Amending Section 33-3 (Number; Selection, Term), Section 33-6 (Meetings); Section 33-15 (Number; Selection, Term); Section 33-32 (Election Of Mayor); And Section 33-33 (Election Of Councilmen); Of The Charter Of The Town Of Forest Heights, Maryland To Change The Term Of Office For Elected Officials From Two To Four Years To Commence After The General Municipal Election Held In March Of 2023; And Generally Relating To The Terms For Elective Office Within The Town Government. motion by Mayor Washington to waive the full reading; seconded by CM Bronson, all in favor; discussion. **CM Bronson** this charter stated an election every Two years. When you're working on projects that you dedicate to something, it may not be enough. That goes with council and mayor. **Mayor**, I do agree with Councilmember Bronson two years isn't enough time. **CM Nobles** So it will save the town money in reference to sponsoring elections every year. I mean, initially, we'll see it every year for the next three years, but this year and next year and 2023 and 2024. But after that, there will be some breaks in the time of elections, which will eventually save the town some money in time. *Town Attorney Best* move that we post this notice for 21 days and have and public hearing after and then you can pass the amendment right after.

New Business

CM Barnes mention that he had speaking with the Chief, about the people speeding throughout the town and not stopping at the stop sign. And moved cameras to different locations.

Mayor stated that Mr. Robinson, the Chief, and himself have a meeting on Tuesday, and there will be further discussion to see what additional enforcement can be done about these speeders. We will also have public works to go around and do an assessment to make sure that all our signs are properly posted, and the white lines are painted in.

CM Barnes ask the status on the speed humps for pit lane.

Mayor mentioned that the public works department and the Council Liaison will be meeting on Thursday to finalize what we're going to do as far as speed humps are concerned.

Town attorney Best, explain some things about speed cameras, up until the last General Assembly session, you could only have speed cameras run in a school zone at a designated school zone within a half mile of the school hours. Now you can place two speed cameras in residential areas anywhere on a municipal street or county highway. That's residential. The thing is, though, you must declare what's called a residential district. You must be approved by an ordinance or resolution. But you can put speed cameras in all your residential streets now if you do it properly by legislation and give proper notice to the public before you operate your speed cameras on residential streets.

CM Lilly mentioned despite the presence of speed cameras on the lower sections of 210, racing and vehicle noise are becoming a frequent occurrence in the morning and evening. I was hoping we might look at some ideas for how we might be able to deal with it. Then there were the comments regarding speeding enforcement. Is it possible that some of the new cops we hire will be able to perform some physical enforcement? I agree that cameras can be beneficial, but I believe that remedial action would be more effective if we were able to speak with the resident or nonresident and inform them of our presence.

Mayor stated that Forest Heights is situated in such a way that we have the Beltway. We have 210. We have Oxen Hill Road. We have limited the road. I know that the police patrol, we just don't solely depend on the cameras. They are active patrols. They are active traffic stops. We're on a flight path the noise from mufflers and aftermarket exhaust systems, things of that nature. We have a new generation of fast and furious. This is a serious issue. I understand that residents want peace and quiet. I want it to because I hear it all night on top of the planes and helicopters and everything else that goes on around here.

Chief, address **CM Lilly**. I'm a member of a committee that meets once a month in the 210-corridor. I'll take your concerns about the noise on 210 and address them in terms of what we can do about the noise barrier from a state or highway safety standpoint. What I'd want to talk about is an expungement clinic we held on February 26 in collaboration with the state attorney's office. Yes, we police the law, but we also go out of our way to assist folks in receiving a second opportunity. I'd want to thank the mayor publicly because he was the driving force behind it when we had to serve 124 Maryland citizens, not just in Prince George's County, but across the state. We were successfully able to expunge or start the process of one hundred and twenty-four people, but a lot more were served,

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and they were very appreciative. CM Noble and CM Lilly also came out. I think we forged a relationship with the newly elected council, Glenn Ivey, his wife, and the state attorney. So, I just want to say thank.

CP Hines, I just wanted to tell the chief of police that you have a great set of officers on your hands. Thank you for showing me around and talking to the residents on Saturday and the COVID-19 Kits.

CM Lilly: I want to thank each person that was involved with the planning and execution of our existing distribution event on Saturday. I wanted to specifically call out Captain Jones, who was the driving force behind logistics, technology, and the implementation of so much of what we did that day, and everyone who showed up, including Mayor Washington and all the council people. It was just a great time to connect with residents and also do some bond building, get a project done together, and also learn from it. Our newly elected District Council member, Ed Burrows, is hosting an event on Tuesday where residents can call in from 3-7 pm to ask questions and provide feedback or concerns. I'll get that to the town clerk so that residents can get the actual phone number and other information.

Mayor's town meetings are back in-person starting with the third Wednesday meeting. We are in-person for the swearing-in and would like to see each of you. We'll still wear masks and maintain social distance.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:00PM.



**Town of Forest Heights
Town Meeting – 8:00 PM
Wednesday, March 16, 2022
Municipal Building Meeting**

Minutes Call to Order: 8:05 PM

Roll Call: CPW Hines; CW Noble, CM Lilly, CM Barnes and Mayor Washington, not present CM Atkinson; CW Brownson; quorum established.

Moment of Silence:

Pledge of Allegiance:

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Mayor Washington to approve the agenda; seconded by CW Hines; all in favor; motion passed.

Freddie Colston Election Chairman readied FH Election Board Talley Sheet for Town New Council Members: Ward I - Troy Lilly 21; Ward II - Theresa Brownson 14 and Jonathon Kennedy, II 34; Ward III - Paula Noble 34; Write-ins 6; Absentee 7

Mayor Washington adopted the Talley Sheet and swore in its new councilmembers: Troy Lilly, Ward I, Jonathan Kennedy, II, Ward II, and Paula Noble, Ward III.

Public Period: Mrs. Burnette on Fox Way, discusses the house next door that is undergoing repairs. What are you going to do about it? She shouldn't have to look at the property every day in that state.

Legislation: None

New Business:

CM Lilly mentioned that there was a difference between the text alert that was sent out and the information in the newsletter about snow emergency parking. That we are clearer, so that there is no confusion about what people must do.

CP Hines stated that she walked throughout Town handing out COVID-19 kits to residents, and that they were very appreciated, and that they wanted to make sure the Council knew it.

CM Barnes stated that a new residents received a nasty note for parking in front of someone's house. He'd want to know if anything can be done regarding the parking situation, and if homeowners should be aware that there are no allotted parking spaces unless someone in the household has acquired a disability parking space from the county.

CM Noble mentioned that March is Women's History Month, and she would like to mention that Sue McGinnis was the first African American woman mayor in the Town of Forest Heights.

Meet Adjourned: 8:24pm