

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

**Wednesday, January 12, 2022
Minutes**

Minutes adopted April 7, 2022

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Stewart, Councilmember Kovar, Councilmember Dyballa, Councilmember Kostiuk, Councilmember Seamens, Councilmember Smith, Councilmember Searcy

Also present: City Manager Fox, Deputy City Manager Clarke, City Clerk Carpenter, ARPA Manager Martin, HR Manager Smith, City Attorney Cornbrooks

The City Council convened at 7:30 PM via Zoom.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA / AGENDA SCHEDULING UPDATE

Mayor Stewart provided an update.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON VOTING ITEMS

- Sean Hendley, President of ASCME Local 3399 commented on the ordinance providing additional compensation to City employees. He asked that the recognition of the risks of public service employees not be limited to a certain time frame and that this be an ongoing consideration in conversations between city management, Council, and city staff and the unions.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rebecca Woodings, on behalf of the Racial Justice and Social Witness Committee of Takoma Park Presbyterian Church urged the Council to provide direct cash assistance to residents through ARPA funding.

Priscilla Labovitz commented and requested the City Council to adopt a resolution and communicate to M-DOT and the County Council to establish a bus route connecting the Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue and the Takoma Park Community Center.

Arthur David Olson urged the Council to adopt rules and procedures that mandate public comments at all of its meetings.

David Reed recommended that the City Council reconsider the allocation of ARPA funds to include a comprehensive climate and stormwater strategy and water management initiatives.

Sue Miller requested revisions to the Council draft procedures to include a clause referencing some form of follow up to constituent comments and questions at City Council meetings.

Wayne Sherwood requested that additional ARPA funds be provided for direct financial assistance. He also recommended funding for mental health unit planning, aid to property owners and managers of rental property, broadband improvements, and distributed community learning centers.

Mary Jane Muchui commented on the ARPA spending recommendations, traffic safety on Eastern Avenue, building a cover over the Community Center basketball court, and requested an accessory dwelling unit for her son.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Ms. Kostiuk commented on redistricting outreach and urged residents to share their thoughts with their Council representatives and the consultants and noted continued efforts to resolve safety concerns at the Lincoln/Carroll intersection.

Ms. Dyballa announced two volunteer projects for Martin Luther King Jr. Day; noted a meeting held regarding Auburn Avenue speed hump locations and one on a request for traffic calming on Prince Georges Avenue; and provided an update on Montgomery County energy performance standards.

Ms. Searcy announced that MHP had closed on the Hillwood Manor property and thanked residents for their input on use of ARPA funds.

Mr. Kovar commented on the redistricting meetings and announced a meeting he was arranging for his ward; requested that corrections be made to the impervious area maps before the next stormwater billing cycle; asked for the return of the information on where to find translations of Takoma Park Newsletter articles; and noted residents' request for a meeting with staff on the sidewalks to be installed on upper Maple Avenue.

Mr. Smith wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked staff and A.J. Campbell for installation of the benches at the Library. He supported pursuing the comments made by Sue Miller during public comments. He referenced his priorities for the next year.

Ms. Stewart announced that a subgroup of Council (Mayor Stewart, Councilmember Kovar and Councilmember Dyballa) would be following up on the proposal from Adventist HealthCare to establish primary care in Takoma Park. She testified before the County Council regarding tax duplication. She thanked residents who have been advocating on this. She drafted a letter for Council review regarding the composition of the Police Accountability Board proposed by the

County Executive. Ms. Stewart noted that the Legislative Session has begun. The subgroup of Councilmembers Kovar, Dyballa, and Mayor Stewart had their first meeting with staff and the legislative advocate. Ms. Stewart is serving as the vice chair of the COG Board this year.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Fox recognized staff for their work during the snowstorms. He also thanked staff for the work they do each day for the community. He announced that City has hired an ARPA manager. He recognized the Finance Department for receiving the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the fourth consecutive year. He reported that an RFP for the public space management plan has been issued.

PRESENTATION

1. Staff Recommended Spending Plan for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding

Mr. Fox introduced the newly hired APRPA Manager, Vernae Martin and gave a presentation on the staff recommended spending plan for the ARPA funds. (Presentation attached)

The City Council commented on the recommendations and asked questions:

- It is important to get cash into people's hands because they are hurting now as a result of the pandemic.
- Concentrate on targeted projects for people most affected by COVID. Devote more to nutrition assistance.
- Would like more information on the use of funds for the Library project.
- Would like to see the stormwater study included on the list.
- There is an expectation that staff will come back to Council for touchpoints.
- Would like to know more about how the annual budget and ARPA funds interact.
- Hoped to see more about reimagining public safety.
- Would like to see direct support for childcare providers.
- How will the recommended projects impact staff capacity?
- What about the proposal to use \$200,000 for a city-wide traffic study and plan?
- Would like to know how the projects integrate with existing efforts.
- What are we doing to fund local groups?

Staff will provide responses and additional information over the next few weeks.

Ms. Stewart announced that there would be a public hearing and work sessions before the Council votes on the plan.

VOTING SESSION

- 2. Resolution Approving FY 2022 Wage Adjustment Memoranda of Agreement**
- 3. First Reading Ordinance Amending the Annual Budget in Order to Provide Additional Compensation to City Employees in Recognition of Their Efforts During the Last Year**

Ms. Smith gave a brief overview of the wage adjustment agreement and presented the resolution and ordinance.

Ms. Searcy moved the resolution. Mr. Seamens seconded the motion. The motion carried (VOTING FOR: Stewart, Kovar, Dyballa, Kostiuik, Seamens, Smith, Searcy).

Resolution 2022-1 (attached)

Ms. Searcy moved the ordinance. Mr. Kovar seconded the motion. The motion carried (VOTING FOR: Stewart, Kovar, Dyballa, Kostiuik, Seamens, Smith, Searcy).

Ordinance 2022-1 (attached)

WORK SESSION

- 4. City Council Meeting Rules and Procedures**

Council reviewed and discussed the draft meeting rules and procedures. Mr. Cornbrooks will revise the document per Council's discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned for the evening at 11:26 PM.