

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

**Wednesday, January 26, 2022
Minutes**

Minutes Adopted on July 20, 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, City Attorney Cornbrooks

The City Council convened at 7:32 PM via Zoom.

Ms. Stewart asked for a moment of silence to remember Mayor Kevin Ward of the City of Hyattsville.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA / AGENDA SCHEDULING UPDATE

Mayor Stewart updated the Council on upcoming agenda items.

SWEARING-IN OF THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Ms. Stewart swore-in the appointed members of the Board of Elections: Timothy Anderegg, Curtis Antonucci, Ben Bellows, Matthew Ling, Margaret Morehouse, Trevor Parry-Giles, and Angel Tabe.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Public Hearing on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Spending Proposals

Kayleigh Gunnoud, Executive Director of Takoma-Langley CDA, commented on the ARPA proposed funds dedicated to the grants for small business. She stated that she was concerned that the funds were not adequate, She also supported funds allocated to the Takoma-Langley Crossroads business incubator.

Laura Heaven, Ward 3, shared her thoughts on the overall goals of the spending proposal and the critical impact each project would have. She commented on racial equity. She was in support of direct cash assistance and the formation of a community safety team. She recommended that the proposed mental health program not be managed by the police,

Paul Chrostowski, Takoma Avenue, spoke on behalf of Takoma Stormwater Solutions. He urged the Council to include funding on a strategic plan for stormwater resilience. He reminded the Council that a strategic plan was developed and circulated by Takoma Stormwater Solutions.

Byrne Kelly, Ward 3, commented on financial assistance to residents in need and racial equity. He recommended not moving forward with the current library renovation plans and reallocating the renovations funds into ARPA to assist the community members in need.

Mary E. Jacksteit, Takoma Park Resident and CHEER president, urged the Council to move quickly in aiding the community members in need of food and financial assistance. She stated that she was in support of responding to mental health.

Ferd Hoefner, Ward 3, commented on the urgency of aiding the community members in need. He was in support of direct cash assistance. He commented on the scoring system of some of the proposed projects. He stated that the scoring system was faulty and recommended that it only be used as a guide when coming to a final vote.

Troy Jacobs, Ward 5, stated that he hoped the remaining ARPA funds are distributed to the most vulnerable community members and address racial and ethnic disparities. He spoke in support of increasing the proposed ARPA funds for small businesses.

Wendy Lukehart, spoke on behalf of the Presbyterians for Police Transformation. She commended the City Council and staff for the proposed ARPA spending plan. She commented on the mental health counselor proposal. She recommended that the Council consider some features of the Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS) program, a mobile crisis intervention program.

Diane Curran, Ward 3, urged the Council to quickly provide aid to community members that are in most need while addressing the long-standing inequities in the community. She commented on the funding for eviction relief, food assistance, and direct cash assistance.

Mark Harper, Takoma Park Presbyterian Church pastor, urged the Council to provide immediate cash assistance to the community members that are in need.

Katherine Katzin, recommended allocating the remaining ARPA funds to aiding the community members in need. She spoke in support of funding mental health, food assistance and direct cash assistance.

Paul Huebner, commented that the ARPA funds were intended for pandemic relief. He stated that there were proposed projects in the plan that were not related to the pandemic. He urged the Council to allocate all of the ARPA funds to pandemic relief.

Rebecca Woodings, Ward 2, asked the Council to re-examine the funding proposal for the library expansion and emergency dispatch operations. She spoke in favor of reallocating funds to support programs that aid community members in need.

Priscilla Labovitz, Takoma Park Lunch and Learn President, asked the Council to develop a process in which non-profit programs like Lunch and Learn can apply for ARPA funds to meet the growing needs of the community.

Mary Jane Muchui, Boyd Avenue, spoke in support of providing aid to Black community members. She urged the Council to help with housing for adults with disabilities.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON VOTING ITEMS

No comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON OTHER MATTERS

Jessica Landman, Ward 1, thanked the Council for the letter to the County Planning Board requesting the board to deny the any conditional approvals for the Takoma Junction redevelopment project. She commented on the time limit for public comments.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The City Council was updated on Maryland General Assembly legislative matters.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Ms. Kostiuk thanked residents for their public comments on the ARPA funds. She recommended revisiting the matter of increasing the opportunity for public comment to five minutes. She commented on upcoming community meetings on redistricting. She encouraged residents that cannot attend meetings to email her directly to share their thoughts.

Ms. Dyballa thanked residents for their comments. She also thanked the residents that emailed her with their thoughts on the redistricting plan. She commented on an event and meetings she attended. She requested clarification from the City Manger on food security grants.

Mr. Smith thanked city residents who commented on the ARPA spending plan. He said he was disheartened that the City had not found a way to provide direct cash assistance to residents in need.

Mr. Kovar thanked residents for their comments. He stated that he would like to discuss options for providing direct assistance to community members in need. He said he would also like to discuss stormwater infrastructure and grants to non-profits in relation to the ARPA spending plan. He commented on event and a community meeting attended.

Ms. Searcy thanked the residents for their comments. She spoke in support for increasing the ARPA funds for small business and setting aside funds for non-profit organizations. She commented on the proposed mental health program. She announced that the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Maryland Urban and Community Forest Committee established an urban tree grant program.

Ms. Stewart thanked the residents that commented. She stated the Council continues to work with Adventist Healthcare on opening a primary care office that would provide behavioral health services to the community. She commented on discussions with school principals, the Police and Recreation Department on tutoring and mental health programs for young people. She recognized staff for their work on helping the residents displaced by the fire on Maple Avenue.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Fox addressed the Council question regarding the food security grant. He announced that the City would be hosting a COVID testing site at the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center starting February 2nd.

2. Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute National Settlement Agreements with Jassen and the Distributors in the Opioid Litigation and Maryland Subdivision Agreements

Mr. Cornbrooks gave a brief overview of the resolution.

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

Resolution 2022- 03 (Attached)

3. Discussion of FY22 Budget Amendment No. 3

Ms. Clarke explained that there a combination of revenue reductions and cost increases in the budget amendment.

4. Spending Plan for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding

The City Council continued their discussion on the ARPA fund 5-year spending plan.

Ms. Clarke gave a brief overview of the City Council and staff discussion held last week on the recommended projects presented by staff. She stated that the purpose of tonight's presentation was to answer Council questions from last week, provide an update on the Library

projects, and to introduce new projects for consideration as requested by Council.
(Presentation attached.)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 p.m.