

April 8, 2019 Town Council Meeting

- Approved the Town Meeting Minutes from March 11, 2019.
- Agreed to enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Kids House, Bilingual Child Care Center, for the use of certain facilities at St. Paul Park, pending approval by the Town Attorney.
- Held a Public Hearing on Ordinance No. O-02-2019 - An Ordinance to adopt the Town's Operating and Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-20 (FY20) and levying a tax on all assessable property within the Town. The Public Record will remain open until 4:00 pm on Friday, May 10, 2019.
- Approved Resolution No. R-08-2019 - A Resolution confirming the Mayor's appointments of Mark Hudson and Leslie Maxam to the Development Review Board (DRB)

Town Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Furman; Council Member Bartram, Crimmins, Hill-Zayat, and Rollins; Town Manager Daily; Assistant Town Manager Hoffman; and Clerk-Treasurer Engels were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed.

The Town Meeting Minutes from March 11, 2019 were reviewed and approved. See Council Actions.

From the Mayor and Council

Mayor Furman announced that the Town Election will be held on Monday, June 3, 2019, and that nominations are due by 4:00 pm on Monday, May 13, 2019.

Voting Age Discussion

The Mayor and Council discussed the possibility of lowering the voting age from 18-years-old to 16-years-old, as requested by Miles Carr, for Town Elections. The Council discussed the merits of the request and how to proceed with reviewing future Charter Amendment requests. The Council concluded that they will discuss the possible Charter Amendment with the Town Attorney at an upcoming Work Session.

Joe Campbell requested additional background information on the Charter Amendment request.

Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA 19-01) Discussion

The Council discussed Montgomery County's proposed Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA 19-01) to allow greater access within Residential Zones for accessory apartments and dwelling units. The Council concurred that although the amendment had some merits for well-intended purposes, there are a number of concerns with regards to parking, setbacks, and ownership that still need to be addressed by the County Council. The Council will request that Montgomery County continue to review concerns prior to moving forward with the proposed ZTA.

David Romeo questioned whether accessory apartments were a viable solution to providing affordable housing.

From Town Manager and Staff

Town Manager Daily reported that the Town's Traffic Engineer has provided him with a sketch plan for the proposed pedestrian island ('plug') to help with traffic calming at the intersection of University Boulevard at Farragut Avenue, and that he is coordinating with the State Highway Administration on implementing the plug. Mr. Daily also noted that the 20 MPH signs have been installed along the 3700 block of Farragut Avenue; and that staff has submitted the permit application for the St. Paul Park pavilion, which will be moved slightly so not to affect any existing trees.

Council Member Rollins opposed that the Town should be responsible for the maintenance of the storm drains within the recently annexed area.

Town Manager Daily stated that the County will require the Town to accept control of the storm drains in order to have control of the streets; and the Town will be having the storm drains inspected.

Julie O'Malley asked if the storm drains originate from Silver Creek.

Town Manager Daily stated that the Town has received a request from the The Kids House Bilingual Child Care for the use of St. Paul Park during certain hours. Mr. Daily noted that the Town currently has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Spring Bilingual Montessori School and The Kids House is requesting a similar arrangement.

The Council discussed the request and confirmed with staff the requested hours. See Council Actions.

The Council discussed traffic calming concerns along Summit Avenue and noted that they plan to meet with a representative from MCDOT to discuss their concerns.

The Mayor thanked the 125th Anniversary Committee for a wonderful job planning the event.

Public Appearances

Jack Gaffey suggested that the traffic signals at the intersection of Knowles Avenue and Summit Avenue be synchronized with Connecticut Avenue; thanked the Town for the 125th Anniversary Celebration; and noted an upcoming astronomical event.

Julie O'Malley stated that Madge Darneille, a charter member of the Kensington Historical Society, passed away on April 5th.

Ordinances, Resolutions, Regulations

Ordinance No. O-02-2019 – A Public Hearing was held on Ordinance No. O-02-2019 adopting the Town’s Operating and Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-20 (FY20) and levying a tax on all assessable property within the Town. The Public Record will remain open until 4:00 pm on Friday, May 10, 2019. See Council Actions.

Town Manager Daily stated that the Budget was very similar to previous years, except that the Town is no longer funding the Defined Benefit Plan, which had been closed. Highlights include funding for a full-time Code Enforcement Officer; the hiring of two part-time police officers to provide up to 20 hours of coverage per week; and noted that the unappropriated surplus of \$765,000 from FY19 was allocated to the CIP, which includes funding for the Town’s street resurfacing program.

Council Member Bartram questioned whether the annexation area was taken into consideration when the State calculated the Constant Yield.

Town Manager Daily stated he provided the State Assessment Office with the annexation information and that he did not know for certain if the properties were included in the assessment calculation.

Council Member Crimmins questioned the proposed revenue of \$18,000 from the Town’s Safe Speed Camera even though FY19 projections currently project zero revenue.

Town Manager Daily explained that the revenues from the Safe Speed Camera program are uncertain due to the costs associated with renting the equipment.

David Romeo clarified that the Town’s portion of the speed camera revenue is less than the rental from the County for the equipment; and whether the Town has considered any measures to help reduce the glare from existing streetlights.

Town Manager Daily confirmed that the Safe Speed program was not generating revenue above the cost of the equipment; and noted that the Town is looking into purchasing the street lights from Pepco so they may be replaced with LED fixtures.

Council Member Hill-Zayat stated that LED lights project downward and would help with the glare issue.

Julie O’Malley noted that Chevy Chase View has decorative light fixtures along Connecticut Avenue.

Joe Campbell stated that he once again was requesting enhanced transparency within the Town’s Budget by including the salary of the top five paid employees as a line item or within the Budget highlights; noted that the Budget highlights were not available online; questioned if there were any surprises within the budget, questioned the reasoning behind the proposed 4.6 percent salary increase; questioned when the Town Manager’s contract expires; and noted that Council Member McMullen stated last year that when the Town Manager’s agreement was renewed the terms of the agreement would be disclosed.

Mayor Furman stated that the proposed FY20 Budget includes the hiring of two part-time police officers for up to 20 hours a week, which would replace the current rotational contract with Montgomery County Police; and funding for a full-time Code Enforcement Officer.

Town Manager Daily noted that salary increases are evaluated against the Consumer Pricing Index and that the 4.6 percent compares with other localities that use step plans; and stated that his employment contract is non-lapsing.

Jon Gerson noted the importance of having a stable and professional staff serve the Town and commented on the following Budget items: noted the public utility property tax increased eight percent; questioned whether the increase in general government salaries includes the marketing position; questioned the increase in professional services; asked why municipal events decreased; questioned why trash and recycling was increasing; and asked what was included within the vehicle equipment and capital replacement CIP fund.

Town Manager Daily stated that a portion of the general government increases were due to the communications and marketing position; however, this position does not include benefits; professional services is increasing for website support and land surveying costs; trash and recycling are increasing due to the new annexation of 41 additional homes; municipal events is scheduled to decrease because the one-time payment to Noyes Children's Library was removed from the line item; and the CIP includes future replacement of fixed assets.

Resolution No. R-08-2019 – A Resolution confirming the Mayor's appointments of Mark Hudson and Leslie Maxam to the Development Review Board (DRB) was presented. See Council Actions.

Mayor Furman noted that Mark Hudson and Leslie Maxam will be replacing the expiring terms of Brian Hak and Paul Sexton.

Council Member Crimmins thanked Mr. Hak and Mr. Sexton for their service on the DRB.

Council Actions

Council Member Crimmins moved to approve the Town Meeting Minutes from March 11, 2019. The motion passed unanimously. Council Member Hill-Zayat was not present.

Council Member Crimmins moved to authorize the Town Attorney to draft a MOU with The Kids House for use of St. Paul Park for certain hours. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Crimmins moved to close the Public Hearing on Ordinance No. O-02-2019 adopting the Fiscal Year 2019-20 (FY20) Budget and leave the record open until Friday, May 10th at 4 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Rollins moved to approve Resolution No. R-08-2019 confirming the appointments made by the Mayor of Mark Hudson and Leslie Maxam to the Development Review Board (DRB). The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Hill-Zayat moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.