

**Town of Bladensburg
Work Session Minutes
January 13, 2020 @ 5:30PM**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor James called the meeting to order at 5:30PM with Council Members, Blount, Lundy and Route present.
- II. **APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 9, 2019 WORK SESSION MINUTES:** Council Member Route moved to approve the minutes as presented; Council Member Lundy seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.
- III. **APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 21, 2019 WORK SESSION MINUTES:** Town Administrator Sandlin stated the October 2019 minutes could not be approved without the presence of Council Member Mendoza, as new Council Members Blount and Route were not sworn in at the time. Mayor James stated, the October minutes will be distributed to Council Members and included on the February Work Session Agenda for approval.

Mayor James stated Council Member Mendoza asked to be excused from the meeting for a family commitment. Council Member Lundy moved to approve the absence of Council Member Mendoza; Council Member Route seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

IV. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. Town Council Discretionary Funds Policy

Town Administrator Sandlin presented the Town's Discretionary Funds Policy and stated it was proposed, but not approved. Ms. Sandlin stated it was proposed by the previous Mayor and Council, the use of the funds was to go toward nonprofits providing services or programs to Town residents. Ms. Sandlin stated, in a conversation with Council Member Mendoza, the Council concluded a rigid process was not necessary for \$500, and the Council was instructed to govern itself on the matter.

Mayor James stated some type of process was needed to ensure taxpayer dollars are accounted. Council Members Route and Lundy stated \$500 was too small for a rigid process. Council Member Blount asked if the funds could only be used for nonprofits; Mayor James stated it was open to other organizations, but general practice provided funds to organizations in the Bladensburg community. Council Member Route recommended no process be put in place, but receipts must be submitted. Mayor James stated discussion for vote will be moved to televised Council Meeting, following Work Session.

2. Prince George's County Mayors Coalition

Mayor James provided a brief report on the Maryland Board of Public Works I-495 & I-270 P3 Program, stating the RFP process was shortened without the public's input or

knowledge. Mayor James stated a letter was sent to the Department of Public Works from the Prince George's County Mayors Coalition. Additional details could be found in her December 2019 Report.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Request for Use of Discretionary Fund

Council Member Route presented a request to approve a total of \$550 from her discretionary funds, as well as Council Member Mendoza's for an upcoming trip to the Harriet Tubman Museum, a collaborative activity with Council Member Blount between Ward 1 and Ward 2. Ms. Route stated the event will commemorate Harriet Tubman Day in March for Women's History Month; and will reflect a multi-generational experience with seniors and young students. Ms. Route stated a total of 30 tickets will be provided (15 Ward 1) and (15 Ward 2).

Mayor James expressed concern for seniors regarding adequate mobility; Ms. Route stated that accommodations will be in place for seniors. Mayor James asked if there was a rain date; Council Member Route stated there was no rain date, as the purpose is to commemorate the event on Harriet Tubman Day, March 10, 2020.

The request will be voted on in the Council Meeting, following the Work Session.

2. COG Appointment

Town Administrator Sandlin stated Council Member Lundy would like to serve on the Human Services Committee instead of the Region 4 Coalition Committee. Mayor James stated a primary is needed for the Region 4 Committee and asked Ms. Sandlin to read the description of the Region 4 Committee. Mayor James also stated Officer Rinehart is the primary on the Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee and a backup is needed. Mayor James stated she serves on the Climate and Energy Policy Committee and needs a backup. Council Member Route stated she would serve as back-up on the Chesapeake Committee.

Council Member Route motioned to approve the COG assignments. Council Member Blount seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

3. Black History Month

Interim Town Clerk Cunningham provided a report on the upcoming Black History Month event on February 22nd from 4PM-6PM, stating Dr. Monica Goldson will be the keynote speaker. Mayor James stated the High School Varsity Basketball Team would like to participate in the event.

4. Bladensburg Day

Town Administrator Sandlin stated no planning has started regarding Bladensburg Day, but it is scheduled for May 16, 2020, from 2PM-5PM. Ms. Sandlin stated Council Member Mendoza will spearhead the event. Ms. Sandlin stated planning for the event will commence within the upcoming weeks. Mayor James stated she asked Ms. Dodson, Finance Specialist to serve on the planning committee to assist with past traditions reflecting a more carnival theme. Council Members Route and Lundy stated they would like to serve on the planning committee. Ms. Sandlin reiterated if more than three (3) members of the council serve on the committee, it has to be a public meeting and will not allow for flexibility of meeting schedules for committee members.

5. Grants Update

Interim Clerk Cunningham provided an update on the various grants the Town has been awarded; grant applications submitted and funding opportunities for the council to consider.

6. New Zoning

Mayor James reported on the new zoning re-write stating she has reached out to County Council Member Ivey regarding concerns. Officer Rinehart proposed facilitating a meeting with Council Members to discuss the proposed zoning changes; and a second meeting with residents. Council Member Lundy asked Mayor James to reiterate the Town's position on the matter; Mayor James stated the Town is not in favor of a corridor with cars, as that will prohibit growth. Mayor James further stated the Port Towns Sector Plan was not a consideration regarding the proposed changes, despite the approval of the sector plan by the County. Council Member Lundy proposed a one-pager document be sent out to residents to highlight the pros and cons regarding the proposed zoning changes.

7. Port Towns Day

Mayor James spoke about the upcoming Quarterly Port Towns meeting and asked to hear input from Council Members and staff regarding Bladensburg's participation in Port Towns Day. Council Members and staff provided pros and cons of participating in Port Towns Day, stating the need to remain as part of the collaborative and possibly participating every year. Council Member Lundy proposed an MOU among the Towns to solidify each communities' financial and staff support. It was concluded that the discussion will continue in the February Work Session and Council meetings.

8. Census Discussion

Mayor James informed everyone the next Census meeting will be on Wednesday, January 15th at Town Hall. Mayor James and Ms. Sandlin are working to develop a marketing and action plan to identify community outreach and engagement activities and initiatives to help increase participation in the 2020 Census and wanted to include input from the council. Ms. Sandlin presented a copy of the Census Toolkit for local government.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

At 6:33PM, Council Member Route motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Council Member Blount and passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Cecile K. Cunningham
Interim Town Clerk