

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT
REGULAR WORK SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2023
6:00P.M.**

1. OPENING

1.1 Call to Order

Council President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 6:10p.m.

1.2 Roll Call

Present: Councilmember Monica Higgs, Councilmember Hope Love, Council President Shireka McCarthy, Mayor Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald Raynor, Sr.(Excused), Councilmember Kizzie Scott, Councilmember James Wright

Staff: Beverly Barber, Human Resources Manager, Demetrious Harris, Acting Chief, Dashaun Lanham, City Clerk, Myneca Ojo, City Manager, and Pearl Umoh, Public Engagement Manager

1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:

The invocation was given by Mayor Porter

1.4. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Monica Higgs, second by James Wright Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Kizzie Scott, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr

2. PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Ethan Sweep, Representative Ivey's Office

- Mr. Sweep stated that he is a representative from Congressman Ivey's Office, and he will be managing the grants. They will have a newsletter coming out soon and they will have grant training, and they are interested in viewing what the city is doing.
- Mr. Sweep stated that he placed the contact information was provided to the City Council in the community chat.
- Mayor Porter thanked Mr. Sweep for joining the meeting and requested that he say hello to Congressman Ivey.

3. REPORTS

3.1 Mayor's Report

- Mayor Porter stated that his report is included in BoardDocs and requested for the City Clerk to read the report regarding the legislation and events attended during the month of January 2023.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she was told that Delegate Lewis is meeting with the Mayors regarding the Blue Line Corridor.
- Council President McCarthy requested for the mayor to mention the Master Plan as he is attending the meetings.
- Council President McCarthy stated that the mayor was missed from the Municipal Retreat, and they will be having additional retreats in the future.

3.2 City Manager Report

- Ms. Ojo stated that she wanted to mention that we have a staff that is hopefully and willing to serve the city.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she is looking to streamline some of the administrative processes.
- Ms. Ojo stated that looking at the first thirty days and looking at collaboration and knowledge of each of the staff members, and centering management practices around sustainability and pre-planning. The city has been reactive, oppose to pro-active, and look at the things that can be scheduled and planned out for the year.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she had implemented executive meeting and we had three meetings this month.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she met with the City Attorney and LGIT regarding legal issues for Seat Pleasant. They have provided her with information on how the city can move going forward with regards to litigation.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she met with department heads individually to determine the needs and restructure for the budget.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she attended the hearing for SB116 with Mayor Porter.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she had held the CFO position for thirty days to evaluate the department and they will be interviewing within the next few weeks.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the FY2020 Audit is coming along and she met with an outside Accounting Firm to see if they can assist with these efforts.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she had attended a walk with Councilmember Scott regarding the down wires in the community and the city had made contact with Pepco and Comcast to ensure that the down wires can be repaired.

- Ms. Ojo stated that she met with Mr. Mosley regarding the property scheduled maintenance and this information will be in the next year's budget.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she worked with Ms. Barber regarding the advertisement of the CFO position, and they had received four resumes, as well as worked on two investigations.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she met with Mr. Cruz a teacher in the community to assist with the Spanish community residents.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she had discussion with the city attorney regarding the delinquent Business Personal Property Taxes.
- Mayor Porter stated that he wanted to commend Ms. Ojo on the awesome task she has taken on, since coming onboard and thanked her for assisting him with additional information as needed for the meetings that he had to attend.
- Mayor Porter stated that he wanted to thank her for being in the building and ensuring that the problems with the gas leaks are taken care of to allow the citizens to visit the building.

3.3. Departmental Reports

City Clerk:

- Ms. Lanham stated her report can be found on BoardDocs.
- Ms. Lanham stated that the Audio-Visual equipment has not changed, and the vendor will send a date of installation after receipt of 80% of the equipment.
- Ms. Lanham stated that the council did not have very busy month in the month of January, with three meetings, and one committee meeting on January 9, 2023 for Human Services, Health and Education.
- Ms. Lanham stated that the city council approved eleven of the twelve Charter Amendment Resolutions and they have been advertised.
- Ms. Lanham stated that the city had received two MPIA request in the month of January and one has been closed with the other pending.
- Ms. Lanham stated that city had mailed eleven business personal property taxes invoices in the amount of \$69,365.28 with an expected income.
- Ms. Lanham stated that the city received \$706, 783.50 for the current Fiscal Year through January 2023.

- Ms. Lanham stated that the outstanding Business Property Taxes report to the Clerk of the Circuit courts. The city has \$545,851.69 for the last three years.
- Ms. Lanham stated that she had attended the Region II Conference in January 2023 with a lot of information and class on Continuity in Government.

GRANTS

- Ms. Rhoda stated that they had moved forward with the tree trimming efforts.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that the Alstnet courses will begin on February 11, 2023. The city received five residents and Ms. Alston will be funding one person.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that the Biden Bi-Partisan infrastructure boot camp and the city will be participating with the EV Charging stations, and they are trying to implement more in the county, and the city may be receiving more.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that she attended a Grant Writing course in January to participate with the energy program in Baltimore. The program will be for two years, and she would like to put together a full package so that next year they will be ready.
- Councilmember Wright stated that he is the Chair for Economic Development Committee and he would like to meet with Ms. Rhoda within the next two weeks.
- Council President McCarthy inquired of the Prince George's County Stewardship Grant for Stormwater Management for local governments only.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that if an entity has storm water projects maybe eligible, and she will send the contact information to Council President McCarthy.
- Mayor Porter requested for Councilmember Wright to include him on the meetings, as he has been contacted by individuals with housing projects in the city.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that she will be reviewing the Biden Infrastructure website to see what will match with the cities seven strategic goals.

Environmental Justice

- Council President McCarthy stated that if the City Council had the opportunity to review the report and ask any questions.

- Council President McCarthy stated that the report had information regarding the trash services, and she has requested for information to be placed in every mailbox.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the information will be going in the newsletter.
- Council President McCarthy stated that the newsletters had been virtual, and she wants this delivered to each home.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the newsletter will be mailed to the homes, and they should be receiving them shortly.
- Mayor Porter stated that the Police Department has signs that can be placed in the community.
- Ms. Ojo inquired of the Police Department regarding the signs, and Chief Harris stated that they are awaiting to train the department heads on the usage of the signs. They had training scheduled when City Hall had a gas leak.
- City Clerk Lanham stated that the training is scheduled for Thursday, February 9, 2023.

Human Resources

- Mrs. Barber stated that there are several vacant position EJD Waste Management and DPW interviews are scheduled for Wednesday, February 8, 2023, and the DPW and Staff Assistant positions interviews are scheduled for next week.
- Ms. Barber stated that she had several meetings with Ms. Ojo regarding staff issues.
- Ms. Barber stated that she had meetings with LGIT.
- Ms. Barber stated that this open season to allow the employees to make changes to their benefits.
- Ms. Barber stated that she had received a number request from former employees to withdraw from their retirement.
- Ms. Barber stated that she is working to get more employees enrolled in the retirement.
- Ms. Barber stated that the city had received several fraudulent Unemployment claims with one approved.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she wanted to know if the city can have an improved PayScale.
- Ms. Barber stated that her report has information regarding a compensation study.

- Council President McCarthy stated that she would like to see the PayScale before the next budget.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Chief Harris stated that they had received report from the Maryland Training Commission that the department had passed the audit of the records to ensure that the filings and certification efforts passed.
- Chief Harris stated that the department is working on the draft FY24 Budget.
- Chief Harris stated that Mayor Porter had sworn-in three officers and they are now on the road. The officers had each received awards when they graduated from the program.
- Chief Harris stated that they are seeking female applicants.
- Chief Harris thanked everyone who donated towards the polar bear plunge, and the donations go towards schools in the area.
- Chief Harris stated that Amber was able to assist with finding a critical missing person.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Ms. Umoh stated that they have busy planning Seat Pleasant Day, and they have the entertainment lined up for the event.
- Ms. Umoh stated that they have upcoming meetings with the volunteers.
- Ms. Umoh stated that she wanted to bring to the attention of the monthly highlights to show what has happened in the month with a short video.
- Ms. Umoh stated that this is Black History Month, and she will be sending an e-mail to council and staff to speak on why Black History Month is important to them.
- Councilmember Wright stated that he has received a lot of comments regarding the newsletter being circulated in the city. It was excellent newsletter.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she wanted to increase the social media presence, and she look at the followers and they are not all seat pleasant residents.
- Mayor Porter stated about individuals with using social media and having training to assist them. They have a program that has been put out, and he will be arranging to meet with her.

- Council President McCarthy stated that it can be table placed at Seat Pleasant Day to show individuals to show how to follow the city on social media. Research the next-door app, and the police department knows the pages, and it would be good to register to disseminate the information.
- Ms. Umoh stated that they had received several telephone calls regarding the trash being put out on the wrong day. They have developed a label to inform the residents of the days. They had collaborated with Officer Johnson, which is not a fine but notice of the days for trash and bulk trash services.

FINANCE

- Ms. Scarfo stated that they are getting through to finish the Audit.
- Ms. Scarfo stated that she had contacted Treasurer for Prince George's County to determine the amount of revenue the city had received.
- Ms. Scarfo stated that she had provided the auditor with the requested information.
- Ms. Ojo inquired of the percentage of completion of the audit?
- Ms. Scarfo stated about 95% completion.

Council Committee Reports

- Finance and Budget Committee met on January 30, 2023 to review the proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Review for City Council. The committee met and reviewed the current budget, to increase the professional development to \$11,500 per council person due to the increase in registration and airfare, Increase to the Council Ward Events \$17,500, PGCMA to plan for the city to host a meeting, Increase the Council Contingency to \$75,000 to cover the cost for the 2021 and 2022 audit and remain \$65,000 for the current audit.
- Human Services, Health and Education Committee met on January 9, 2023 to discuss the Fifth Grade trip to Annapolis. Council President McCarthy stated that the trip has been postponed.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she will be chairing the Human Services, Health and Education Committee until further notice.
- Mayor Porter stated that the Essay for If I Were Mayor Contest Essay will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

4.1. Sean Wilson thanked the members of the Seat Pleasant Council who has been very active with the States Attorney Office and attending the Municipal Retreat. Mr. Wilson stated that there will be follow-up and Chief Harris has been involved with fighting crime in communities with crime reduction events.

5. LEGISLATION

5.1 Ordinance O-23-05 Amendment Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget for Professional Development of the Mayor 2nd Reading

- Ordinance O-23-05 Amendment of Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget for Professional Development of the Mayor was introduced by the City Council and read by the City Clerk on Tuesday, January 3, 2023, and the second reading on Monday, February 6, 2023.
- Motion to Approve Ordinance O-23-05 Amendment of Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget for Professional Development of the Mayor
Motion by Gerald Raynor Sr, second by James Wright Jr.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Monica Higgs, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr
No: Hope Love

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1 None

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 Update on Filling Vacant Ward V Seat

- Council President McCarthy announce the resignation of Councilmember Sistrunk.
- City Clerk Lanham stated that the flyer will be posted on the City's website on Tuesday, February 7, 2023
- City Clerk Lanham stated that the Council Vacancy Packet will be posted on the city's newsletter.
- City Clerk Lanham stated that the mailing of the postcards will be mailed by February 13, 2023.
- City Clerk Lanham stated that the vacancy announcement will be placed in the Prince George's post on Thursday, February 16, 2023.
- City Clerk Lanham stated that the packets are due on Friday, March 10, 2023.

- City Clerk Lanham stated that the Public Hearing is scheduled for Monday, March 20, 2023.

7.2 Chapter 30-Personnel Appeals Board Recommendation for Amendment

- The City clerk read the recommendation of the amendment of Chapter 30-Personnel Appeals Board.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she is in agreement with most of the recommendations, but she feels that the board should either consist of three or five without any alternates.
- City Clerk Lanham asked if the City Council could by show of hands as it relates to the number of members for the committee.
- Mayor Porter stated that the city had a difficult time with getting five members and he does not have a problem with the three members.
- Councilmember Higgs and Councilmember Scott stated that they do not agree with the recommendation.
- Councilmember Higgs stated that she feels that the recommendation should be placed in the Governmental Affairs committee.
Councilmember Love stated that she is not in agreement with the recommendation.
- Council President McCarthy stated that the recommendation will be placed in the Governmental Affairs Committee for a recommendation to the City Council.
- Mayor Porter stated that this is something needs to be done and a recommendation should be made. This is something that is supposed to take place and we cannot not do anything.
- Mayor Porter requested a timeline for the committee to report back.
- Council President McCarthy stated that the recommendation will be provided on the Regular Work Session on Monday, March 6, 2023.
- The City Council agreed for the Governmental Affairs committee to review the code and the recommendations.

7.3 Recommendation for Chief of Police Position

- Ms. Ojo stated that in accordance with the City Charter C-701 City Manager has the authority to hire department heads with the approval of the City Council.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the Acting Chief Harris has been the acting chief since April 2022, and he has been instrumental in leading the department with the use of technology.

- Ms. Ojo stated that she believes that the Chief Harris the acumen to perform the duties.
- Motion to approve the City Manager recommendation to appoint Demetrious T. Harris as the Chief of Police.
Motion by Gerald Raynor Sr, second by Hope Love.
Final Resolution: Motion Carried
Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr
No: Kizzie Scott

7.4 Recommendation for Consultant Firm for the Finance Department

- Ms. Ojo has respectively requested to table this item until next month and she would like to request for them to amend the proposal for next month.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

8.1 Public Session, Monday, February 13, 2023, by Zoom Webinar at 7:00p.m., Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, Seat Pleasant, MD

8.2 Regular Work Session, Monday, March 6, 2023, by Zoom Webinar at 6:00p.m., Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, Seat Pleasant, MD


8.3 Public Session, Monday, March 13, 2023, by Zoom Webinar at 7:00p.m., Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, Seat Pleasant, MD

8.4 National League of Cities Congressional City Conference, Washington, DC Saturday, March 25-Tuesday, March 28, 2023

9. ADJOURN

9.1 Adjourn-The meeting adjourned at 7:56pm

Submitted by,

DocuSigned by:

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Dashaun N. Lanham, CMC
City Clerk