

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT  
PUBLIC SESSION  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023  
7:00P.M.**

**1. OPENING**

**1.1.1 Call to Order**

Council President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:10p.m.

**1.2. Roll Call**

Present: Councilmember Monica Higgs, Councilmember Hope Love, Council President Shireka McCarthy, Mayor Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald Raynor, Sr., Councilmember Kizzie Scott, Councilmember Gloria Sistrunk and Councilmember James Wright, Jr.

Staff: Dashaun Lanham, City Clerk, and Myneca Ojo, City Manager

**1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Councilmember Higgs gave the invocation.

**1.4 Approval of Agenda**

It was motioned by Councilmember Wright and seconded by Councilmember Raynor.

Motion by James Wright, Jr., second by Gerald Raynor, Sr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright, Jr.

**1.5 Approval of Regular Work Session Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, January 3, 2023**

Motion to approve the Regular Work Session Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, January 3, 2023

Motion by Monica Higgs, second by James Wright Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

Approval of Charter Amendment Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, January 3, 2023

Motion to approve Charter Amendment Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, January 3, 2023

Motion by Gerald Raynor Sr, second by James Wright Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

1.7 Approval of Public Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 9, 2023

Motion to Approve the Public Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 9, 2023

Motion by Monica Higgs, second by Hope Love.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

## **2. PRESENTATION**

### **2.1. Neighborhood Design Center, Allie O'Neill, Community Design Program Director**

- Ms. O'Neill stated that she wanted to speak about the phenomenal project of Re-Imagine Goodwin Park.
- Ms. O'Neill stated that she wanted to focus on some of the good activities that had been happening with focusing on the view and culture hub of Seat Pleasant.
- Ms. O'Neill shared her screen with the viewers on zoom showing the views of Goodwin Park from the Amphitheatre and below, and the sign of the cultural hub.
- Ms. O'Neill stated that it is a lot of gathering space with trees and potential and the imagination of the Seat Pleasant will be needed to bring the space to life for Seat Pleasant and what will represent Seat Pleasant.
- Ms. O'Neill stated that they have created a survey which will be dropped in the chat and encouraged the council to share with their neighbors.

- Councilmember Wright inquired of the targeted date to complete the re-imagining Goodwin Park.
- Ms. O'Neill stated that the design will be presented at Seat Pleasant Day.
- Councilmember Wright inquired of the cost for the reimagining of Goodwin Park.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that the Neighborhood Design Center had come to the City from Grants to design the Goodwin Park and different areas. The city had received the funding for this project, and it will be hard to say the amount of the design. She has a lot of ideas in her head for the front brick area, with smart technology, and the cultural hub, with seating for Jazz and social events.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that if anyone is still here when the city had the jazz festival in the past, and it was a lot of county people at the event that stated the city could do a lot with the area. The bathrooms are almost finish.
- Council President McCarthy inquired if the grant is limited to one or if the city could obtain unlimited designs.
- Ms. O'Neill stated that they will release the survey and will come back with the recommendation and design.
- Council President McCarthy inquired if we could get a Seat Pleasant flag placed at the park.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that they are looking for a flag and it has been hard to find one.
- Council President McCarthy stated that it looks incomplete without the third flag.
- Councilmember Raynor stated that when the city had the jazz festival, and the children were dancing and enjoying themselves it made him enjoy it and he is looking forward to the park being revitalize with more events in the park.
- Mayor Porter stated that we need to keep in mind with a walkable community and take into consideration with parking.
- Ms. Rhoda stated that they had increased the parking by eighteen spaces.
- Ms. Lanham read the question from the chat from Ms. Gzifa if the vision is for cultural connection and sports and recreation?
- Ms. Rhoda stated that sports and recreation will be in the lower area of the park but if you want to have a cultural event, it can be held at the top of the park.

- Ms. Rhoda stated that she will be meeting with Mr. Sweep in Congressman Glynn Ivey office and she will be presenting the reimagination of Goodwin Park. She has sent him the city's Master Plan and the seven strategic outcomes, and wanted to know if the council have any ideas that can be sent to her by next Thursday.
- Mayor Porter stated that he would like to include the other park areas in Seat Pleasant.
- Ms. Ojo inquired if the park had a soccer field?
- Ms. Rhoda stated that it is, and the city will be obtaining new mobile goals.
- Council President McCarthy inquired of the deadline for the survey.
- Ms. O'Neill stated that the deadline is the end of February, but they will keep it out there to obtain more ideas. She is willing to attend community meetings.
- Ms. Ojo inquired if the survey could be kept open for thirty days and placed in the city newsletter.

### **3. LEGISLATION**

#### **3.1. None**

### **4. REPORTS**

#### **4.1 Kelly Porter, Mayor Report:**

- Mayor Porter stated that his report can be found in BoardDocs.
- Mayor Porter reiterated the monthly council meetings he attended the month of January.
- Mayor Porter stated that he had recommended a piece a legislation to the city council that has been placed in committee and he hopes to work with the council on legislation.
- Mayor Porter stated that he submitted a letter of opposition to Senate Bill 116.
- Mayor Porter stated that he attended the swearing-in of States Attorney Aisha Braveboy
- Mayor Porter stated that he attended the People's Ball for Governor Moore and Lt. Governor Miller.
- Mayor Porter stated that he attended the graduation ceremony for Seat Pleasant Police Officers and had sworn in new officers for the police department.

- Mayor Porter stated that he attended the Vision Board Party hosted by the Council President.

#### **4.2 Shireka McCarthy Council President Report**

- Council President McCarthy stated that her report is in BoardDocs.
- Council President McCarthy stated that the council had two meetings and one hearing.
- Council President McCarthy stated that we had a lot of legislation for the Charter Amendments.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she hosted her Vision Board Party with mental health advisors in attendance.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she will be chairing the Health and Education Committee until the Ward V seat is filled.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she attended two meeting with TankO Lighting and Ms. Ojo, and they will be coming to the full council for a presentation regarding Pepco selling the street lights.

#### **4.3 Myneca Ojo, City Manager**

- Ms. Ojo stated that she is pleased to provide the City Council with the Annual Report that is available in BoardDocs for the calendar year 2022.
- Ms. Ojo stated that they have officially hired a Police Chief, Chief Demetrious Harris as the Chief.
- Ms. Ojo stated that in her short tenure in Seat Pleasant, the staff is filled with hope and she staff that is reinvigorated and anxious to go to the next level.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the city is officially open for business and staff is coming into the office as many days of the week as they can.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the weekly meeting has begun and they have been in vigorous. She envisioned running Seat Pleasant by moving away from silos and looking for cross connections and collaboration and building partnerships with each other. She believe the staff is pleased with the new look and way that we are going.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she's been in the city for two and half months.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the highlights from Administration, hired a Chief of Police and a permanent City Manager, herself. She wanted to evaluate the Chief Financial Officer, and they have moved to have the position posted.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the Seat Pleasant sign has been fully erected, and they are looking to renovate the home at 6224 Foote St., and the

renovation completed on City Hall and Environmental Justice building this will be a new build, and that has not happened in the area for a long time.

- Ms. Ojo stated that she and Ms. Rhoda will be working with a firm from Pennsylvania to work with the owner of the Brownfield. She is aware of their success, and there has been energy to reinvigorate Brownfields across the nation. They will be providing best practices with moving forward with that effort.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the city is financially sound, and the city has collected taxes and Business Personal Property Taxes, and sending delinquent notices, and working with the city attorney to prepare for litigation.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the City Clerk is acting as the tax collector for the Business Personal Property taxes, attended eighty-one meetings, prepared twelve legislation, and meeting minutes for each meeting.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the Public Safety department has seen community policing and engagement under the last year, and grants for the department. The gun violence stats by month and year. The calls of services had increased by 30.33% for 2022. The arrest for criminal warrants/DUI decreased from 436 to 299, and the UCR offenses decreased 11.42% and traffic data increased by 11.84%. This includes the annexed area from inner beltway to the DC line. They are pleased with the community engagement.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the PAL program was launched in October, and they interact with students at Seat Pleasant Elementary School. They lead and delivered gifts to the residents in December and shop with the cop program. They gave two hundred baskets in Seat Pleasant for Thanksgiving Day.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the Chief held a Meet and Greet to discuss the mission of the Police Department for fighting crimes, introduce department leaderships and accountability.
- Ms. Ojo stated that Environmental Justice consist of two departments, Public Works, and Waste Management. The department of Public Works had done a great job with preparing for the snow, and keeping the streets cleaned. The department of Public Works is continuing to work on Storm Water to ensure debris are not going into the bay. They had started the fall clean-up of the alleyway.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the Environmental Justice department continue to work with contracting for the Re-Imagining Goodwin Park, and the

storm water in Goodwin Park, clearing of dead trees, and the spent \$106,640.20 for trash removal. They accomplished four abatements in Ward V and Ward I. They had three hundred twenty-one tonnages for the year. The department secured a cleaning company for the bathrooms in Goodwin Park.

- Ms. Ojo stated that Grant Management and Economic Development, the city received the second launch of the ARPA Funds \$2,334,264.08. The city received a grant from the Department and Housing and Community Development to construct two properties and they are down to one and half properties. The funds assisted with the planning and construction of the house on Foote Street, forty residents received foreclosure and eviction relieve in the amount of \$67,000 for nine residents and \$15,000 in utility relieve and over seven hundred residents with food vouchers in the amount of \$48,000 and held several session on career and coping with mental health and advise them on pandemic seclusion. The city spent \$204,774 for Audio-Visual Equipment for City Hall. Key staff members attended the Brownfield Conference in Oklahoma City. The EPA Brownfield selected Seat Pleasant to receive assistance for the Brownfield for site testing and the city is awaiting the results of the test. The city started the design and construction of 6224 Foote, and we are hopeful to receive funding to complete the second home. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources with the clearing of debris of the community park.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she has no information on SPICE, and she is assuming it was disbanded.
- Ms. Ojo stated that they are moving forward with the 2020 Audit and lacking on having the Chief Financial Officer position filled. The position is out for review, and they will be interviewing soon. The audit was started in March 2022 and she is confident that it will be completed in the next few weeks.
- Ms. Ojo stated for 2023 the administration will be focused on the Fixed Asset, accountability and monitoring spending, and will be bringing a recommendation to the city council.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the Public Engagements has been doing many of the events and had increased the social media presentations. The former public engagement management participated in a panel discussion at MML last June 2022. The bus services receive 10-15 calls per week. The department has worked alongside the council and

participated with the breakfast meetings, and vision board event. They have placed the newsletter out.

- Ms. Ojo stated that the Human Resources Department is looking at ways to engage with other entity to note the job openings. They filled the following positions, EJD Laborer, posting of the Chief of Police, and Chief Financial Officer, they hired an Accounting Manager, and ARP Coordinator, and the Public Engagement Manager, and several police officers' position, and the City Manager position.

## **5. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

- City Clerk Lanham read the Citizen Comment from Aretha Stephenson with five questions, 1. When will City Hall reopen its doors be opened to the Public, 2. Why was a speed camera placed on Greig Street, 3. How did Seat Pleasant annex Central Avenue, was it done legally, and why did the sign move further down Central Avenue. 4. Does the City Council plan on attending the MML Conference and any other state conferences this year, 5. How did the city pay for the Ward II Prayer Breakfast to include gifts and staff time.
- Ms. Gzifa stated that she enjoyed hearing the report from the City Manager, and she is glad the city has steps in clearing the brownfield, and where is the brownfield, behind Dunkin Donuts. Ms. Ojo stated that it is correct the Brownfield is located behind Dunkin Donuts, and it is not owned by the city, and the city participated in the reports with looking at how others had completed the brownfields. The city is awaiting the results from Environmental Protection Agency.
- Councilmember Scott stated that the Brownfield is located from City Hall across the street.

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **6.1. None**

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7.1 None**



## **8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**8.1 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**

**8.2 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**

**8.3 Ward V Vacancy Public Hearing, Monday, March 20, 2023, by Zoom Webinar at 6:00p.m., Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, Seat Pleasant, MD**

**8.4. Mayor Porter stated that the Blue Line Corridor and Transient Oriented Development with Community Leadership Meetings will be held on Wednesday, February 16, 2023, Pepper Mill, 610 Hills Rd., Hyattsville, MD at 6:30pm**

**Wednesday, February 23, 2023, Largo/Kettering Community Center, 431 Watkins Park Dr., Largo, MD. If the council can attend the meeting to allow the city to have a seat at the table. They had an MOU for bonding in which the corridor was slated for was to enhance the inner beltway community, and some of the money had been shifted with a lot going to New Carrollton. Our communities are the ones to help with the qualifications, and receive the crumbs, and it will be nice, if they see us at the table and we are looked at and ready to do business and have the funds allocated in the city, and we are ready to do business. It will be helpful if we can have some representation at the Table. Council President McCarthy stated that if the council will be present to push the Master Plan and the Strategic Plan.**

## **9. ADJOURN:**

9.1 The meeting adjourned at 8:32pm

Submitted by,

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*Dashaun N. Lanham*

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Dashaun N. Lanham, CMC  
City Clerk