

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT
COUNCIL VACANCY PUBLIC HEARING
MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2023
7:00P.M.**

1. OPENING

1.1.1 Call to Order

Councilmember President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:56p.m.

1.1.2 Roll Call

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

Staff: Pamela Boone, Chair of Seat Pleasant Board of Supervisors of Election, Dashaun N. Lanham, City Clerk, and Myneca Y. Ojo, City Manager.

Pamela Boone gave the Invocation.

2. Meeting Topics:

2.1. Pamela Boone, Chair of Seat Pleasant Board of Supervisors of Election

- Ms. Boone stated that the Seat Pleasant Board of Supervisors of Election had previously reviewed the candidate packet for Sean Michael Wilson and the candidate packet for Donovan Bilbro.
- Ms. Boone stated that both candidates qualified for the Ward V Council Vacancy.

2.1. Donovan Bilbro, Candidate for Councilmember Ward V

- Mr. Bilbro stated that he has been a resident of the city periodically for about twenty years. His family has been residents of the city for forty years.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that if given an opportunity to serve he will do his best to make a positive impact on the lives of the people he represents.
- Mr. Bilbro stated he is fully committed to being a collaborative team player and working closely with the fellow council members to identify and address the pressing issues the community faces.

- Mr. Bilbro stated that he is open-minded, respectful, and willing to listen to wise counsel that has been brought before him. He is still young and green behind the ears. He would like to think that he was raised right from wrong and stand by it when the opportunity presents itself.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that when seeing Representatives Justin Jones and Justin Pearson on CNN News that looked like him and representative to see someone around his age who wants to make a difference in his community.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that he has come back to the city in his attempt to grow.
- Mr. Bilbro stated quoted Proverbs 11:14 scripture and want his city to be a haven for residents that lived here for decades, and those who have yet to live a decade.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that he wants to keep the city memorable and impactful.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that he believes in the potential of the city, and he wants to offer his services to the council and the city to assist in the maintenance and the goals and betterment of the community.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that he feels that it is a privilege to serve in public, and he is no stranger to responsibilities in both his civil career and military career. When danger is ahead of you, we cannot back down, we must stand firm when we know what we are doing is right.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that the people we represent trust us to make decisions that will enhance their lives and the wellbeing of the community.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that he aims to work diligently to promote policies and events for economic development, social justice, and environmental growth. He wants to stand beside the council in a different position if the needs arise as it has with the House Ways and Means Committee. He is ready to make a positive impact on the community.
- Mr. Bilbro thanked the council for considering his application and he looks forward to serving alongside the council.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that he had the opportunity to work with the Economic Development department with the ARP and he had the opportunity to engage with the residents to see their needs. Some of the residents did not know who was in charge or involved with the city. They did not know their vote counted and did not know they had to vote. He sat in pleasant homes with the seniors and children and people want to see that someone cares. They want to see people that have helped them, not the gubernatorial community. He wants to help the residents.

2.2. Sean Wilson Candidate for Ward V Councilmember

- Mr. Wilson stated that he wanted to give honor to God for allowing him to come before the City Council.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he considers it an honor for two Black men to come before to represent the community. This speaks volumes of how far we have come as a community, and city as we are ever evolving and changing.
- Mr. Wilson stated that at the last hearing the council learned that he was adopted by Henry and Minnie Wilson who raised him in Cedar Heights. He endured many struggles of losing his biological mother at an early age and faced homelessness, abuse, and neglect, and you learned that through it all he had overcome many obstacles with a village of people by his side. Just as the village had stood up for him, he has an obligation to return and stand up to fight for others as well.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he strongly believes in the scripture, which says to whom much is given, much is required.
- Mr. Wilson stated that if he is appointed by this distinguish body, he will be required to serve the community with the upmost integrity, passion and commitment to service that we can collectively make sure that Seat Pleasant is fully staffed, and make sure it is safe with a respected police department that is focused on community focus oriented, and offer healthy food option, a grocery store, a community garden, a city that will take care of the backbone of the community, which is the seniors to make sure they can age in place. Seek programs of funding opportunities, offer transportation services to those that need it, offer competitive salaries, diversity, and retirement benefits amongst the staff. So that we can keep the best here in our city.
- Mr. Wilson stated that we are gateway from the District of Columbia, and we want to offer business that will have our travelers to stop and shop for the community, a city that will offer opportunities for our youth, and young adults, and work with non-profits and government to offer opportunities to our youth.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he had the opportunity to work with In-Put, Inc., to provide food and toiletries giveaway. He assisted with feeding the homeless in the community.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he had volunteered to support and pass out the petition to retain the Seat Pleasant Volunteer department.

- Mr. Wilson stated that he protested Blue Sky Liquors standing alongside many residents for them not receiving the Sunday sale license.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he held his own toiletry drive, and he would thank Councilmember Kizzie Scott who was a big supporter.
- Mr. Wilson stated that you will see on his resume that with was a former employee of the city, which will give him a different prospective to bring to the city council. He knows what it means to work with the city and what it means to work with the council. He stated he worked for the State Government, and now he works on the county level where he works with many of the police.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he can stand up for those whose story is the same as his and they will see that there is hope. He comes with a spirit of collaboration to move the city forward with excellence.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he asks for the council of confidence to allow him to serve as their colleague.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS:

- City Clerk Lanham stated that she does not have any new comments for the Ward V Vacancy Hearing.
- Mr. Covington stated that he is in support of Donovan Bilbro who has worked with COVID. He stated that although is young, he is an old soul. He believes that he is a servant and can address the concerns of the community. He can embrace the wisdom of the current council and embrace the complex issue of Seat Pleasant. Mr. Covington stated that he had become a resident in 1968 and relocated in 2018 when he purchased the church. He has been working with the city since day one. He stated that Mr. Bilbro represents the city well and did so during the House Ways Committee. He believes that he will represent the community well and they have worked well together in the past.
- Ms. Wooten stated that she does not currently live in Seat Pleasant, but was born and raised in the community, she still has relatives in Seat Pleasant with a house full of seniors. She stated that she cannot get to Seat Pleasant often, and she is in support of Donovan Bilbro. She stated that he has assisted the seniors with technology, and he takes his time with the seniors, and he is willing to assist the seniors, and she trusts him. He is ambitious and wants to grow and learn a lot. She loves his heart and spirit, and she wants someone that is willing to listen and to help.

- States Attorney Aisha Braveboy stated that she wanted to voice her support for Seat Wilson to fill the vacancy for Ward V Councilmember. She has known him since he was in High School. She stated that when she had become the States Attorney, and wanted to hire someone younger, he was the first Municipal Liaison who had done a fabulous job, and he is a huge advocate for funding, and he can connect with people on all levels. It is important to have someone who can obtain the money from federal and state leaders. He was able to establish relationships with the federal, state, and local leaders, this a strong quality, and this he is someone who wants to serve Seat Pleasant, which is a city on the move.
- LaTasha Ward stated that she is here on behalf of Sean Michael Wilson, and she had the pleasure of meeting Sean in Cedar Heights in 2010. She stated that he was interested in working on the campaign and they have been working together ever since to assist candidates get elected and re-elected. She stated that she assisted him in passing out toiletries in the community. She stated that he was deacon in his church, he is a servant, he knows Robert Rules, he is a leader. She stated that she has witnessed people treating him unfairly, and he knows how to treat people, and knows how to work with tough people. He has overcome many obstacles, and he continues to persevere. She considers him family and he has been to her home, and she trusts him. She stated that he is committed and will show up no matter what the elements. She feels that he will be able to add much perspective to the City of Seat Pleasant. He is faithful and she hopes the council supports him.
- Jeanette Brandon stated that she is here to support Sean Michael Wilson and he is very pleasant, hardworking young man. She worked with him in the city, and he had taken the lead for the youth event in Seat Pleasant. She stated that anytime she has asked me to assist, he has always been there, and pleasant, and he is an advocate for seniors, and youth. She has seen him work in the rain, snow, sleet, or shine, and he has a very pleasant attitude. She has seen people yell at him, and he will tell people to calm down. She stated that he is a person that will get the job done.
- Ms. Kim Rhim stated that she has been founder and director of the Training Source for twenty-five years. Ms. Rhim stated that she had known Sean since he was young. She is here to support Sean Wilson and she is proud of him, and he is relentless, resilient, and ready to serve in the role. She stated that he was such a servant that he was perceived as a nuisance. She has worked with him in sub-degree weather. She stated that he works in the

States Attorney office and when he tells them to do it, they do it. He is aware of what is going on in Seat Pleasant and Prince George's County. She gives Sean her support.

- Judy Danso stated that if there is something to be said about the young people who live and serve in the community. She stated that Sean had submitted his name from the interception of the vacancy. Sean serves as her Assistant and they could not ask for a better servant to work as the municipal liaison, he lives with intent and passion. She is here to acknowledge his commitment and effort. She stated that he is the person that they rely on to assist with the municipalities. She stated that he had produced many ideas, and she had learned a lot from Sean with his engagement on the grounds. She stated that he has been effective with how they engage and address the concerns within the municipalities. She stated that the grassroots and on the grounds with public safety, gun violence, and he manages and coordinates to work with a bring that level of service in the community. They had the second annual state symposium at Bowie State University and Sean led the charge to ensure that the event was successful. She stated that Sean is a humble public servant, and though he is assigned with municipal liaison, he takes on other opportunities. He works with the diversion program to expand the efforts, and concerns with homeless population to address concerns with mental health. She stated that Sean is the right candidate to be an effective public servant who is effective. She shared a recent incident with a parent to address a concern regarding her son being detained. Mr. Wilson wasted no time in wasting and the matter was quickly addressed as the person should have been detained. She stated that this is the type of person that addresses wrongs to ensure that they are made correct. She fully supports Sean in the position.
- Garry Jones stated that his support is for Sean Michael Wilson, and he feels that Sean can bring what is needed with the connections on the State level. He feels that Sean will bring that to the council. He stated that Mr. Bilbro may do well but feels that Sean is what is needed on the council.
- Shannon Williams stated that she had the pleasure of meeting Sean Wilson, and he impressed her. She stated that she appreciates him for addressing the concerns that she had in Ward V. She is looking forward to working with him.

- Autumn Joy stated that here to speak about her friend Sean and he is person that can fix anything. She stated that he knows how to get things done. He is proficient at organizing events and makes sure that things get done.
- Council President McCarthy thanked both candidates and stated that no matter which ways this goes. She hopes that both will remain active in the community.
- Councilmember Love inquired if the council could ask questions of the candidates.
- Councilmember Love stated that she has heard about the duties and responsibilities of people higher up than Seat Pleasant and wanted to know how Mr. Wilson will divide his time.
- Mr. Wilson stated that Ms. Braveboy has allowed the staff to serve their public service duties.
- Councilmember Love inquired of Mr. Bilbro if he had served in the armed forces?
- Mr. Bilbro stated that he served in the Army right after High School, and served in Psychological Operations for six years and was wounded and had come back after combat.
- Councilmember Love stated that the previous councilmember was engaged with the residents, and she wanted to know if they had done any work volunteer with the residents.
- Mr. Bilbro stated that he has volunteered with the city beginning in 2018, Seat Pleasant Day in 2019, Turkey Drive during COVID in 2020. He has done several years volunteering for the city.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he began his volunteer in High School, and he served the homeless, he volunteered at the States Attorney office for expungement, and he met Ms. Williams by driving around and she had a concern with crime at the end of her street. He has been volunteering in the city for many years in the city, with the health partnership, and toiletries drive without pay for many years. He was a faithful attendee of the Ward V Breakfast meeting, and he attends to continue those monthly meetings.
- Council President McCarthy stated that if the council needs more time to vote, we can come back to discuss this later.
- Councilmember Wright stated that he does not want to wait because the seat needs to be filled.

- Council President McCarthy stated that this can be discussed at another meeting, and she does not know how much time the council needs.
- Councilmember Wright motioned, and it was seconded by Councilmember Raynor to consider Sean Michael Wilson for the Ward V Vacancy.
- FOR: Raynor, Wright and McCarthy
- ABSTAIN: Higgs, Scott as she prefers a process time
- No: Love
- Motion Failed.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Love and seconded by Councilmember Wright to consider Donovan Bilbro for the Ward V Vacancy.
- FOR: Love, Wright, McCarthy
- Abstain: Higgs, Raynor, Scott
- Motion Failed.
- Council President McCarthy stated that this matter will be added to a future meeting and the candidates will be apprised of the meeting.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 Regular Work Session, Monday, May 1, 2023, by Zoom Video at 6:00pm. Meeting Link details will be on the city's website. Seat Pleasant, MD

4.2 Public Session, Monday, May 8, 2023, by Zoom Webinar at 7:00p.m., Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, Seat Pleasant, MD

5. ADJOURN

5.1 Adjourn and Logout-Motion to go into Closed Session under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only: (1) To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals”.

Motioned to go into Closed Session under General Provisions Art. §3-305 (b) only:

Motion by Hope Love, seconded by James Wright

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

- The City Council departed for the Closed Session at 9:05p.m.
- The City Council reconvened in the Public Hearing at 11:26pm.

- Ms. Ojo stated that as the City Manager she does not have the authority to transfer funds, and the only one who has authority is one of the signers of the account in the absence of a Chief Operating Officer. All the funds are apart from the city, and the funds are housed in different accounts. They need to transfer funds from the red-light camera account to the general fund.
- Council President McCarthy stated that this is the city slow season and we had transferred funds in the past.
- City Clerk Lanham confirmed the statement made by Council President McCarthy.
- Mayor Porter stated that he just wanted the council to be aware of what he was doing.
- Council President McCarthy stated that the account is not the restricted account.
- The consensus of the council was to allow the transfer of the funds.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she will add the vacancy on next week's agenda and requested for the candidates to be online.
- Council President McCarthy requested for City Clerk Lanham to notify the candidates in writing of the meeting.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he has the full support of his office, and he has attended every meeting of the council.
- Councilmember Love stated that the council has meetings at various times, and they can call a Special meeting at any time.
- The meeting adjourned at 11:36pm

Submitted by,

DocuSigned by:
Dashaun N. Lanham
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Dashaun N. Lanham, CMC

City Clerk