

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT
PUBLIC SESSION
MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023
7:00P.M.**

1. OPENING

1.1.1 Call to Order

Council President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:01p.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: LaShaya Johnson, Staff Assistant, Dashaun Lanham, City Clerk, and Myneca Ojo, City Manager

1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Councilmember Higgs.

1.4 Approval of Agenda

Motion to Approve agenda with amendments to 6.4. Approval of Lobbyist Firm

Motion by Monica Higgs, second by Gerald Raynor, Sr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

1.5 Approval of Regular Work Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 3, 2023

Motion to approve the Regular Work Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 3, 2023

Motion by Monica Higgs, second by Gerald Raynor Sr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

No: Kizzie Scott

1.6 Approval of Public Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 10, 2023

Motion to approve Public Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 10, 2023

Motion by Monica Higgs, second by James Wright Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

No: Kizzie Scott

1.7 Approval of Constant Yield Hearing Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 10, 2023

Motion to Approve Constant Yield Hearing Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 10, 2023

Motion by James Wright Jr, second by Monica Higgs.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

1.8 Approval of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 10, 2023

Motion to Approve the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 10, 2023

Motion by Hope Love, second by Monica Higgs.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

No: Kizzie Scott

1.9 Approval of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes for Saturday, April 15, 2023

Motion to Approve Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes for Saturday, April 15, 2023

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

1.10 Approval of Special Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 17, 2023

Motion to Approve Special Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 17, 2023

Motion by Monica Higgs, second by Gerald Raynor Sr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

1.11 Approval of Closed Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 17, 2023

Motion to Approve Closed Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 17, 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

1.12 Approval of Special Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 24, 2023

Motion to Approve Special Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 24, 2023

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

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

No: Kizzie Scott

1.13 Approval of Ward V Vacancy Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 24, 2023

Motion to Approve Ward V Vacancy Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 24, 2023

Motion by Monica Higgs, second by Gerald Raynor Sr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

1.14 Approval of Closed Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 24, 2023

Motion to Approve Closed Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, April 24, 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

2. PRESENTATION

2.1. Annual Ethics Commission Report, Garry Jones, Chair of Seat Pleasant Ethics Commission

- Mr. Jones stated that he is pleased to present the Annual Seat Pleasant Ethics Commission can be found in BoardDocs.
- Mr. Jones stated that members was approved on February 7, 2022, Jones, Dr. Patrice Copeland, Ella Lewis and Barbara Steward, and Mr. William Henderson on May 2, 2022
- Mr. Jones stated that the commission met on four occasions on April 7, 2022, Organizational Meeting, July 28, 2022, September 1, 2022, and October 20, 2022, the first order of business of the commission was to approve the bylaws, and procedures for the commission for issuing advisory opinions.
- Mr. Jones stated that the commission mandates is to ensure the governmental process of the city is fair to all residents by the high standards and integrity in government for residents, elected officials, and employees by following the laws.
- Mr. Jones stated that the commission did not issue any advisory opinions in the first year.
- Mr. Jones stated that the commission received two complaints prior to being appointed in January 2022, the commission finalized one complaint, and the second complaint is under review with the legal counsel.

- The commission will be reviewing the Annual Financial Disclosure Statement in June 2023.
- The commission stated that they recommended the elected and appointed official seek ethics training to ensure compliance of the law.
- It was requested for the illustration of accessing BoardDocs be included in the newsletter for the residents.

3. LEGISLATION

3.1. Ordinance O-23-06 Amendment of Chapter 30-Personnel Appeals Board 2nd Reading

- Ordinance O-23-06 Amendment of Chapter 30-Personnel Appeals Board was introduced on Monday, May 1, 2023, and the second summary reading was held on Monday, May 8, 2023.
- The motion failed and was placed back into the Governmental Affairs & Technology committee.
- Motion to Approve Ordinance O-23-06 Amendment of Chapter 30-Personnel Appeals Board
- Motion by James Wright Jr, second by Gerald Raynor Sr.
- Final Resolution: Motion Failed
- Yes: Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, James Wright Jr
- No: Monica Higgs, Kizzie Scott, Shireka McCarthy

3.2 Ordinance O-23-07 Adoption of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget 1st Reading

- Ordinance O-23-07 Adoption of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget was introduced by the City Council and read by the City Clerk on Monday, May 8, 2023.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Kelly Porter, Mayor Report:

- Mayor Porter stated his report can be found in BoardDocs.
- Mayor Porter stated that he attended the monthly council meetings.
- Mayor Porter stated that he submitted a letter of opposition on SB516 to ensure that revenues would flow to the municipalities. The opposition was successful.

- Mayor Porter stated that the Mayor Beautification Day was held on Saturday, May 6, 2023.
- Councilmember Wright stated that he heard great things about the beautification day, and he hopes it is done in the future, and he will be in attendance.

4.2 Council President Report-Council President Shireka McCarthy, Councilmember-At-Large

- Council President McCarthy stated that her report is in BoardDocs. Council President McCarthy stated that she attended the regular meetings of the council, Constant Yield, Budget Hearings and Council Vacancy Hearing, Three Special Sessions and one Closed Session.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she attended the regular monthly meetings outside of Seat Pleasant for PGCMA, NBC-LEO, which she is a board member for each.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she attended the Re-Imagine Good Park Charrette.
- Council President McCarthy stated there a few committee meetings in the month of April.
- Council President McCarthy stated that the last page of her reports reflects the attendance of the council, and she wanted to thank the council for showing up for their residents.

4.3 Myneca Ojo, City Manager

- Ms. Ojo stated that her report is BoardDocs, and she will briefly summarize the report.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the City Hall is fully open from 9-5, and the lobby has books for reading for children and adults in English and Spanish.
- SB516 allows the municipalities to collect taxes on marijuana sales, which will be seen soon.
- The city hired a CFO Betty Logan who began her employment today, Monday, May 8, 2023.
- She attended the meetings of the council and the meeting in Harrisburg on community policing, Ward V Vacancy, and the budget hearings.
- Ms. Ojo stated that four offices attending the academy, hired a new Administrative Assistant
- Ms. Ojo stated that revised the Personnel Rules and Regulation Manual, and the onboarding of new hires.

- Ms. Ojo stated that the City Clerk assisted with the preparation of the budget and prepares the agendas and flyers for the meetings. The department prepared the Best Yard Award Certificates.
- Ms. Ojo stated that Public Engagement prepared for the beautification event, call a bus service, March, and April newsletter.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the Grants Manager completed the ARP report on April 30, 2023, and the completion of Goodwin Park.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the Finance department is reconciling for DOJ Grant and leave balance report.
- Ms. Ojo stated that EJD maintenance schedule with PG County, trash trucks and eventually the street sweeper, the street sweeper will resume in June with four drivers trained on the street sweeper. The interim Foreman and DPW Supervisor attended the training for Stormwater Management for two days.
- Councilmember Higgs inquired of the updates for the Call-A-Bus schedule?
- Ms. Ojo stated that the report will be provided on Friday, May 12, 2023.
- Councilmember Love requested an update on the FY2020 Audit. Ms. Ojo stated that she submitted quite a few documents last week and continue to submit requested data.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the city is moving on the audit quite nicely and they had submitted information to the auditing firm.
- Councilmember Love stated that the Finance Committee will be requesting a meeting soon as the 30 days are approaching, and she will be requesting a meeting soon.
- Council President McCarthy requested a copy of the Annual report for ARP.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the report may be an electronic report and not a written report, but she will request the report from Mr. O'Connor.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- City Clerk Lanham stated that the city did not receive any written comments.
- Pamela Boone, 66th Ave., stated that she there were changes made in the city and for years she had drug transactions, shooting and robberies were taken place. She had given serious thought to selling her home. She stated that the police department is engaged and the

concerns in the community are surprising to my children when they return. The police department has a commitment to the community, and she wonders why they would want to stay in a job that does not pay them or provide them with retirement benefits. She serves as the CPAC Chair, and she feels that their needs should be supported in the city's budget. She wants the community to remain safe.

- Mr. Nicholas Griffith stated that he has been employed in the city in 2020, and the experience equates to ten years of experience. He stated that the benefits and salary is unequal adjustment, and the salary is not competitive, and the other departments are doing less work than they are doing in Seat Pleasant. He feels that they are not supported and as an officer, we are asking for fair compensation and benefits across the board. The other agency has retirement, and they pay 100% of the health coverage. He would hate to see the city lose good officers.
- Paul Corridean stated that he has been an officer for thirty-one years, and the retention is a challenge, as we are losing officers. The nearby jurisdiction starts at \$60,000 with 100% health coverage, Hyattsville is starting off with \$62,000. The Seat Pleasant Police Department had received 25,000 calls of service, and Glen Arden and Capitol Heights calls of service was less. They had received \$143,000 since January in Speed. What can we do to obtain the people we have.
- Garry Jones stated that he supports the police and feels that the council and mayor can find creative ways to compete with other jurisdictions. He feels that the police officers are so good that he has not seen a county police officer. He would like to invite the two at-large councils, the mayor and city manager to come to Pleasant Valley to review the concerns of the safety issues. Mr. Jones wishes the council would decide on filling the Ward V vacancy.
- Council President McCarthy stated that typically the comments made tonight are in the budget hearings.
- Officer Ocie Miller stated that he has been employed with the city for three years, and he loves working for the department. He is a

visionary, and a planner to see things come to fruition. Officer Miller stated that he had been offered other positions with more money and he had decided to stay due to the command staff. They had lost a lot of officers due to the pay and benefits. Officer Miller stated that he will not be able to stay with Seat Pleasant if the pay and benefits do not change.

- Council President McCarthy requested a blanket response for the police department and allow the Chief to disseminate the information.
- Officer Bates stated that he wanted to piggyback on what the officers had said. The city has the best police department in the county, they are compassionate about what they do, and they are family oriented. He has been employed as an officer since 2009, and the potential is amazing with the technology. He stated that he has three sons, and he is consistently working to make ends meet and that is taking away time from his family. The amount of money that we are making is not sufficient. We believe in making a certain amount of money and this is a dilemma and hardship, as they want to be in Seat Pleasant.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1. Filling of Ward V Vacancy

- Council President McCarthy stated that she had requested for this be on the agenda due to the neither candidate has been chosen, and we cannot continue to operate with six-member council, and we cannot get work done.

It was motioned to have Donovan Bilbro fill the Ward V Vacancy.

- Motion by James Wright Jr, second by Hope Love.
- Final Resolution: Motion Carried
- Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr
- Abstain: Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott

6.2 Approval of Personnel Appeals Board Recommendation

- Motion to approve Jones and Kearney to serve on the Personnel Appeals Boards.
- Motion by Gerald Raynor Sr, second by James Wright Jr.
- Final Resolution: Motion Carried
- Yes: Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr
- No: Monica Higgs, Kizzie Scott

6.3 Approval of ADP Service Agreement

- Ms. Ojo stated that ADP Resources will allow the staff to review and approve their time electronic with the approval tree.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the request will cost the city of \$54,390.45 Councilmember Wright inquired if implementing the system will require for the payroll clerk.
- Ms. Ojo stated that the implementation of the system will allow the employees to approve their time and review their leave.
- Council President McCarthy stated that she uses the system for work, and she was requested time off and it was approved by her supervisor.
- Motion to Approve ADP Service Agreement for the City of Seat Pleasant
- Motion by James Wright Jr, second by Gerald Raynor Sr.
- Final Resolution: Motion Carried
- Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr
- Abstain: Kizzie Scott

6.4 Approval of Lobbyist Firm

- Ms. Ojo stated that we had the pleasure of having Greenwill Consulting present to the council on Monday, May 1, 2023.
- Ms. Ojo stated that she is recommending that the city approves Greenwill Consulting Firm who represented the city at the last minute for SB116 and HB450, and we need to be at the table as we seen things happening and moving. The city contacted the firm at the last minute, and they were able to work on behalf of the city to rally the citizens and the staff to support Seat Pleasant. The city has been able to avert some serious damage to the city. Although not totally unscathed, it did help, and they provided the city with strategy, and they have the band width, and it was not a day that she did not talk

with any member of the team. She had worked with them and engaged with the city, and they assisted the city with SB516, and it was moving forward through the house and senate. They were able to pick-up that piece and lobby for seat pleasant and other municipalities. It is always a good thing to have someone represent the city, and many of the conversation happens before the session. The recommendation is to hire Greenwill for one year at the rate of \$2,5000 per month.

- Council President McCarthy stated that they mentioned grants when they discussed their scope of services, and the proposal does not reference grants.
- Ms. Ojo stated that they are not grant supporting services, but they will send the grants towards to the city, and they are in the room and ears are open for the opportunity.
- Ms. Ojo stated that they may be able to connect the city with some major grants in the western part of Maryland.
- Councilmember Wright stated that it appears that they are not done with Seat Pleasant and the city needs to have as much protection as possible. The people are very powerful in Annapolis, and they need the firm to address the concerns with the actions in Annapolis.
- Motion to Approve the Lobbyist Firm Greenwill Consulting
- Motion by Gerald Raynor Sr, second by James Wright Jr.
- Motion Carried
- Yes: Hope Love, Gerald Raynor Sr, Shireka McCarthy, James Wright Jr
- No: Monica Higgs
- Abstain: Kizzie Scott

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 None

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

8.1. Special Session, Monday, May 22, 2023, by Zoom Webinar at 6:00p.m., Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, Seat Pleasant, MD

8.2 Regular Work Session, Monday, June 5, 2023, by Zoom Webinar at 6:00p.m., Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, Seat Pleasant, MD

8.3 Best Yard Competition, Ward I April 1, 2023-September 30, 2023

8.4 Best Yard Competition, Ward IV April 1, 2023-September 30, 2023

8.5 Public Session, Monday, June 12, 2023, by Zoom Webinar at 7:00p.m., Meeting Link details are available on the city's website, Seat Pleasant, MD

9. ADJOURN:

9.1 The meeting adjourned at 8:51pm

Submitted by,

DocuSigned by:
Dashaun N. Lanham

88619229C0EA45B...
Dashaun N. Lanham, MMC
City Clerk

APPROVED 06/12/2023