

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT
PUBLIC SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2021
7:00P.M.**

1. OPENING

1.1.1 Call to Order

Council President Porter called the meeting to order at 7:03p.m.

1.1.2 Roll Call

Present: Mayor Eugene W. Grant, Councilmember Monica Higgs, Councilmember Hope Love, Councilmember Shireka McCarthy, Councilmember Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald Raynor, Sr., Councilmember Kizzie Scott, Councilmember Gloria Sistrunk

Staff: Dashaun N. Lanham, City Clerk, Devan A. Martin, Interim Deputy City Manager and Chief of Police, Jeannelle B. Wallace, Interim City Manager, Karen Dojan, Auditor, and Mike Lightfield, Interim Chief Financial Officer

1.1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The Invocation was given by Councilmember Higgs.

1.1.4. Approval of Agenda

It was motioned by Councilmember Sistrunk and seconded by Councilmember Love to approve the Public Session Agenda. The motion carried, and the agenda was unanimously approved by the Council.

1.1.5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Approval of Regular Work Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 4, 2021

Motion to Approve Regular Work Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 4,2021.

Motion by Gloria L Sistrunk, second by Monica Higgs.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Shireka McCarthy, Kelly Porter, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Gloria L Sistrunk

Approval of Public Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 11, 2021
Motion to approve Public Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 11, 2021

Motion by Gerald Raynor Sr, second by Monica Higgs.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Monica Higgs, Shireka McCarthy, Kelly Porter, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Gloria L Sistrunk, Hope Love

Approval of Closed Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 11, 2021
Motion to approve Closed Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 11, 2021.

Motion by Gloria L Sistrunk, second by Hope Love.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Monica Higgs, Shireka McCarthy, Kelly Porter, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Gloria L Sistrunk, Hope Love

Approval of Special Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 25, 2021
Motion to approve Special Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 25, 2021

Motion by Gerald Raynor Sr, second by Monica Higgs.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Shireka McCarthy, Kelly Porter, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Gloria L Sistrunk

Approval of Closed Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 25, 2021
Motion to Approve Closed Session Meeting Minutes for Monday, January 25, 2021

Motion by Gerald Raynor Sr, second by Gloria L Sistrunk.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Monica Higgs, Hope Love, Shireka McCarthy, Kelly Porter, Gerald Raynor Sr, Kizzie Scott, Gloria L Sistrunk

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Stephen Sturdivant- Mr. Sturdivant submitted the following comment:
- When questions are asked and submitted by residents at any Seat Pleasant City Council meeting, I would suggest that the Council post

all responses on the Seat Pleasant website or newsletter, this will promote full transparency and allow residents to view responses to any and all questions submitted to the Council.

- Barbara Kennedy-Mrs. Kennedy submitted the following comment:
- I would like to have clarification on the benefits such as paid insurance by the city; is it for the staff, employees as well as the councilmembers and the Mayor. Is this information written somewhere that the residents can find it to go over the insurance benefits package?
- Is Devan Martin holding two positions at this time, and if so, what are the positions or title?
- Who is the vendor for the Speed Camera Program?
- The newsletter seems to have a lot of fluff in my opinion. Instead of wasting city's funds, on months that you do not have enough reading that is necessary to the residents, it may need to go from an eight-page article to a four page. Considering that we have gone from a two page than a four page now an eight-page newsletter. Since the newsletter is to inform the residents, and not for campaigning or for the Mayor's purpose we should be able to scale down and save the taxpayers money. I know just recently the residents were offered to submit information for the newsletter. Why not have a section called Residents corner or Citizen's concerns something like that or whatever you want to call it. Just a suggestion. I hope everyone is being safe, we are all in this together. Let us all work together, thank you.

- **John L. Walker, Sr.-6510 Adak Street, Seat Pleasant, MD 20743**

1. Since September 1, 2016 to Present, how many changes have been made to the Seat Pleasant Charter?
2. Why is the Seat Pleasant Charter changed so much?
3. Have the Seat Pleasant City Council considered alternatives to changing the Seat Pleasant Charter?
4. Would the Seat Pleasant City Council consider formulating a committee to include citizen not in City Government to review the Seat Pleasant City Charter with an eye toward revising it to make it more compatible with contemporary times?
5. Having to register for the meeting does not comply with Open Meetings Law (this question was posted in the chat during the meeting) Open meetings law were established.

- **Aretha Stephenson, 604 64th Pl., Seat Pleasant, MD 20743**

1. Who is paying for the City's investigation & the Mayor's Attorney?
2. What is the outcome of the investigation, it has been some time since we have heard anything?
3. Would the Council be in favor having an open meeting with the SP residents to answer questions regarding what is the status of the SPICE fund and explain where and how the \$600 thousand taken from our budget is benefiting the citizens of SP i.e., what type of return on our investment are we receiving?
4. Can we do better with responding in a timely manner as to how our Citizen's questions are being answered and perhaps give your responses in an open form so that other citizens can obtain the same feedback to your responses? I think this would help with more transparency.
5. How do citizens obtain a recording of both Work Session and Public meetings and is there a way to make the steps available so that people can easily obtain the instructions i.e., on the website.
6. Do we have the technology to post the recorded meetings on our city's website yet?

7. The Central Corridor that is to be Annexed, is its primary purpose geared for residential, commercial or for profit in traffic ticketing?
8. What are the criteria for the use of the camera money? How is the City's contract worded or stated that we are to be held in compliance with the use of those funds according to government regulations? Not just Optic Traffic or Red-Light regulations.
9. Could Optic Traffic be a conflict of interest in the Annexation of the Central Corridor? If so, how do we plan to fix that?
10. Will the City once the Annexation is done be responsible for the maintenance and repairs of the highway or roads? Or are we just using the Annexation as a Cash Cow?
11. Can you provide a detailed report of how the camera money has been used for 2020 along with invoices and receipts?
12. Lastly, I am perplexed as to why the Citizen must register each time for a Work Session or Public Meeting? I was not able to find such ordinance or charter stating that it was a prerequisite. I only have knowledge that the meeting is open to all the public who wants to attend. When and Why is the city forcing this to be a requirement now.

3. PRESENTATION

3.1. Fiscal Year 2018/2019 Draft Audit Update Karen Dojan, Principal and Gray Farquharson, Staff Accountant Weyrich, Cronin and Sorra

- Mrs. Dojan stated that they had several discussions with management, Mrs. Wallace and Mr. Lightfield and she wanted to come on to explain to the City Council on the status of the audit for FY18/19.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that they were awarded as the auditing firm in 2018.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that they needed a trial balance and bank reconciliation.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that they had come to the City in December 2018 and they realized that the books were not closed for the fiscal year.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that the required information was not there. They reached out to Mr. Ashton with a copy to Mrs. Wallace on the e-mails every six weeks.
- Mrs. Dojan stated they had received the trial balance in March 2020. The trial balance was out of balance, and it must balance. They had requested additional information from the city's finance department to figure out what was wrong.

- Mrs. Dojan stated they received a balanced trial balance in April 2020. The bank reconciliation was not balanced, and the cash balance was also inaccurate.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that their subsidiary ledger did not agree with the trial balance.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that they had started to receive information this past fall in October 2020. It had taken them almost a year to receive books and records to begin the auditing process.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that they had more progress in the last two months than in the last sixteen months.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that there were some other items that had come up recently that need to be discussed and it is slowing down progress.
- Mrs. Dojan stated they believed that they would have an audit draft this week, but due to some recent information it may have slowed down tremendously.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that they still need more information, and they were receiving information from the city up to 3:00p.m., today, Monday, February 8, 2021.
- Councilmember Sistrunk inquired when will the audit for 2020 be completed?
- Mrs. Dojan stated that the 2020 Audit cannot begin until the completion of the 2019 audit is complete.
- Mrs. Dojan stated that if the finance staff has all the transactions for 2020, they can begin the audit. They cannot audit something without a good start up on cut-off point to begin the auditing processing.

4. LEGISLATION

4.1. Resolution R-21-10 Amending Resolution R-21-02 Adoption of Annexation Plan for the City of Seat Pleasant 1st Reading. The City Council introduced Resolution R-21-10 on Monday, February 8, 2021 and it was read by the City Clerk.

4.2 Charter Amendment Resolution CA-21-07 To Amend Charter Amendment Resolution CA-21-03 Annexation of Corporate Boundaries of Seat Pleasant. The City Council introduced Charter Amendment Resolution CA-21-07 on Monday, February 8, 2021 and it was read by the City Clerk.

5. REPORTS:

5.1. Council President Report

- Council President Porter stated that the monthly report can be viewed in Board Docs.

5.2. Mayor Eugene W. Grant

- Mayor Grant stated that he did not have a report for the Public Session on Monday, February 8, 2021.

5.3. City Manager Report-Jeannelle B. Wallace, Interim City Manager

- Mrs. Wallace stated that City Manager Reported on February 1, 2021.
- The following is a summary of activities and tasks that the City Manager's Office worked on the for the month of December 2020 through January 2021:
 - → FY 2019 Audit - 22 emails were sent to auditing team and staff concerning follow up to journal entries and responses to auditor's questions; draft report is expected February 8, 2021. This effort also included meetings with the auditing team and the city's finance team.
 - → Annual Report preparation including dispel of rumors and summary of investigation.
 - → Conferences and consultations were held with city attorney.
 - → Preparation of the Summary of Investigation which the attorney is currently reviewing.
 - → Two Annexation meeting was held to respond to the Maryland Department of Planning about a potential "Enclave" that was included on the meets and bounds survey; the engineers and survey team Ben Dyer and Associates, corrected the survey and reduced the acreage that initially appeared on the draft survey document. The City Clerk has forwarded the revised document to all concerned parties to address their review questions.
 - → Three Meetings with Government Affairs Committee of the City Council were held to review and revise numerous outdated sections of the City Charter.
 - → Meetings with the Economic Development Committee of the City Council were held concerning potential economic efforts in consultation with the grants manager, and grants consultant and any possible grants may be available for upgrades; partnership with

Maryland Planning Department and University of Maryland will result in a development study report of potential development at the CVS strip mall and the Got Rice strip mall on Martin Luther King, Jr, Highway. Two meetings were also held with the committee regarding the Maryland Housing Trust Grant to review proposals from five (5) architectural firms to develop a housing guidebook for desirable designs of housing renovations and new housing in the community; the goal is to prevent what is commonly referred to as McMansions or other housing designs which will either distort the aesthetics of the neighborhood or price smaller homes out of the market with any potential growth and development.

- – A Charrette was held to discuss and hear from the students participating in the study and residents in the community as to what they would like to see in this area; 39 people were on the Zoom meeting call which including 10 student participants, the city council, and approximately 20 residents, staff, and Maryland planning sponsors.
- – Two Meetings were held with the Finance Committee to discuss follow-up with the Seat Pleasant Investment Corporation Enterprise (SPICE) to gather information pertaining to how the “Loan” funding was spent for anticipated investment purposes; a meeting to review all documentation and bank statements is scheduled for February 10, 2021.
- – Several consultations were held with City attorneys concerning annexation, personnel issues, and the investigation.
- – The Council and staff were presented with the investigation report during a closed session.
- – The Council and staff were presented with the investigation report during a closed session on Monday, January 25, 2021
- Council President Porter inquired on the status of the COVID Vaccine availability.
- Mrs. Wallace stated that the information is shared with the Public Engagement Department to disseminate immediately. Prince George's County is currently in 1B, but it is difficult to get through for an appointment to obtain the shots. The recently opened site at Six Flags has the same concerns.
- Councilmember McCarthy stated that she has received information from Ola Hill on a daily basis regarding the Vaccine availability.

Chief Martin stated that we had sent an e-mail to the staff on Friday, February 5, 2021 that states that the county is moving to 1C and he encouraged the residents to call 311 and they will be spread out to the grocery stores and CVS.

- Council President requested for the vaccination information be disseminated again.
- Councilmember Sistrunk stated that Giant grocery stores are giving the vaccination as well.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6.1. None

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1. None

8 ANNOUNCEMENTS

8.1 Regular Work Session, Monday, March 1, 2021, by Zoom Video at 6:00p.m., Meeting link details will be provided.

8.2. Ward I Virtual Meeting, Wednesday, March 3, 2021, by Zoom at 7:00p.m.

8.3 Annexation of Central Avenue Public Hearing, Monday, March 8, 2021, by Zoom Video at 6:00p.m. Meeting link details will be provided.

8.4 Public Session, Monday, March 8, 2021, by Zoom Video at 7:00p.m., Meeting link details will be provided.

9. ADJOURN:

9.1 Adjourn and Logout-Request Motion to go into Closed Session under Statutory Authority 3-305(b) (8) "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation."

It was motioned by Councilmember Love and seconded by Councilmember Raynor and approved by the City Council to go into the Close Session at 8:15pm

The City Council adjourned the Closed Session at 9:41pm

Submitted by,

DocuSigned by:

Dashaun N. Lanham

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Dashaun N. Lanham, CMC
City Clerk

APPROVED 03/08/21