TOWN OF Herndon VIRGINIA

HERNDON TOWN COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, December 3, 2024

1. Call to Order

Vice Mayor Hedrick called the December 3, 2024, Town Council work session meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Herndon Council Chambers Building, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were: Vice Mayor Clark Hedrick; and Councilmembers Naila Alam, Cesar del Aguila, Pradip Dhakal, Keven LeBlanc, and Donielle M. Scherff.

Mayor Sheila Olem was absent.

Staff present during the meeting: Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager; Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney; Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich and Scott Robinson, Acting Deputy Town Managers; Chief Maggie DeBoard, Herndon Police Department; Anne Papa, Chief Communications Officer; Lisa Gilleran, Director of Community Development; Marjorie Sloan, Director of Finance; Bob Williams, Director of Parks and Recreation; John Irish, Acting Director of Public Works; Captains Steve Pihonak and Jay Carson, Herndon Police Department; and Margie Tacci, Acting Chief Deputy Town Clerk.

Determination of a Quorum

Vice Mayor Hedrick stated that he was chairing the work session that evening on behalf of Mayor Olem, who was unable to attend the meeting. He determined there was a quorum of six Councilmembers present (Mayor Olem was absent), and he reminded the Council of the meeting decorum.

Vice Mayor Announcements

Vice Mayor Hedrick announced several upcoming events for the holiday season, including on Saturday, December 7: (1) Holiday Model Train Show, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at Arts Herndon, (2) Caboose Open House, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., (3) Herndon Homes Tour, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., in downtown Herndon, and (4) Holiday tree lighting and sing-along, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., Town Hall Square. On Sunday, December 8, the Herndon Community Center will host the Herndon Holiday Arts and Crafts Show. Vice Mayor Hedrick stated that more information about these events was available on the Town's website.

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Comments from Staff

Vice Mayor Hedrick recognized Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager, for comments. Mr. Martino then recognized Chief Maggie DeBoard, Herndon Police, to provide an update on two incidents that recently occurred in the Town.

Chief DeBoard and Captains Steve Pihonak and Jayson Carson, Herndon Police, discussed an assault incident that occurred off the W&OD trail two weeks prior, and provided details, including: (1) status of the investigation; (2) status of the apprehended individual currently in custody; (3) location where the crime took place; and (4) and safety concerns brought up by members of the public at the candlelight vigil held for the victim.

Chief DeBoard discussed an unrelated second incident that occurred on the night of the candlelight vigil involving a shooting. Chief DeBoard stated that they were able to quickly identify the shooter, thanks to the License Plate Recognition (LPR) cameras in the area that captured the suspect's vehicle and the license plate. Chief DeBoard and Captain Carson provided additional information on LPR camera technology in Town, including eight additional cameras that will be ordered and installed to aid the police department.

There was discussion between the Council and staff about incidents and public safety in the Town, including: (1) adding security cameras on the trail; (2) improving lighting on the trail; (3) managing vegetation on the trail to increase visibility; (4) ordering more LPR cameras; (5) increasing police presence on the trail and around Town; and (6) providing more information to the public in English and Spanish that encourages calling the police.

Responding to Councilmember Scherff, Scott Robinson, Acting Deputy Town Manager, stated that he believed the trail was maintained at the same rate in Town as it was outside of Town, and that while some vegetation was controlled by the Town, the rest was controlled by the Park Authority directly. Councilmember Scherff requested Scott Robinson confirm this information with the Park Authority.

There was further discussion among the Council and the staff about investments in resources and technology that the Town should consider as budget season approaches, as well as what private citizens can do to stay safe in public.

Vice Mayor Hedrick requested that Scott Robinson inquire with the Park Authority whether they have any cameras on the trail.

Amend the Agenda

Vice Mayor Hedrick asked that the Council amend the agenda to move Discussion Item 2(d), on actions the council can take to support increased safety initiatives, to

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the next item. With the concurrence of the Council, the agenda was so amended.

Discussion on actions the council can take to support increased safety initiatives - Councilmember del Aguila

Vice Mayor Hedrick recognized Councilmember del Aguila to begin the discussion, and he asked Chief DeBoard the following: (1) what budget proposals for personnel resources had been given to the Town Manager; (2) what other resources were needed by the police, such as additional foot and bike patrols, to increase safety; (3) how many LPR cameras and drones were needed to be effective; and (4) what options does the Town have for holding subjects.

Responding, Chief DeBoard stated that suspect cannot be detained in the Town and must be transported to the Fairfax County Detention Center.

Councilmember del Aguila provided further comments and stated that he thought that the budget for personnel should be doubled and that the LPR camera budget should also be increased.

There was discussion among the Council and staff regarding funding for public safety items, including: (1) additional drones; (2) technology and resources needed for the Real-Time Crime Center; and (3) dispatch system for the flock cameras and drones. The Council and staff also talked about how to add additional cameras, especially on the W&OD Trail and other public safety concerns in the Town.

2. Discussion

a. Strategic Plan Quarterly Discussion

Vice Mayor Hedrick recognized Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager, to begin the discussion on the Strategic Plan Quarterly Update. He provided introductory remarks, stating that this portion of the discussion related to strong fiscal stewardship goal and the Town's transportation network.

i. Presentation of the Town's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024 by Brown Edwards and Company, LLP, Certified Public Accountants

Marjorie Sloan, Director of Finance, recognized Matthew Heatwole, Partner, Brown Edwards and Company, LLP, the Town's audit firm. Mr. Heatwole reviewed the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for FY 2024 and stated that his firm had completed an audit of the accompanying financial statements. He stated that the Town's financial statements conform with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) in the United States. He stated that the result of the independent audit report is a clean, unmodified audit opinion, which indicates reasonable, but no

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absolute, assurances that the financial statements and disclosures are materially correct. He stated that the accompanying Yellow Book and Federal Expenditures audits also received a clean, unmodified audit opinion.

There was no discussion on this item.

ii. Briefing on the State of the Transportation Network

Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager, recognized John Irish, Acting Director of Public Works, to begin the discussion. Mr. Irish reviewed the transportation network in the Town, stating that approximately $250,000 is budgeted annually for sidewalks, minor trails, and bicycle facilities.

Mr. Irish reviewed the following as related to the transportation network: (1) roles of Town departments in the transportation network process; (2) funding methodology for maintenance and lane mileage projects; (3) completed street and sidewalk projects; (4) completed trail projects; (5) overview and general timeline of transportation grant funding; (6) Transportation Network Safety Action Plan (TNSAP) process; and (7) current TNSAP projects planned in Town.

There was discussion between the Council and the staff about the staff's presentation, including: (1) current unfunded transportation projects; (2) best bond/debt practices for funding transportation projects; (3) where residents can find the list of current proposed projects and their descriptions; (4) feasibility of Crestview Drive breezeway bridge; (5) Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) funding mechanisms; and (7) trail specific grants available.

Action Plan

Mr. Martino recognized Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich, Acting Deputy Town Manager, to provide a status update on the Action Plan related to the Town's Strategic Plan.

Ms. Jovanovich provided a status update on the FY 2024 Strategic Plan goals that were expected to have an impact in FY 2026: (1) Strong Fiscal Stewardship; (2) Secure and Interconnected Community; (3) Environmental and Economic Sustainability; (4) Good Governance; and (5) Thriving Community.

There was discussion among the Council and staff about the Action Plan goals outlined for FY 2026.

Responding to Councilmember LeBlanc, Ms. Jovanovich stated that a diversity award had been created as a category in the employee recognition awards given at the Annual Holiday Luncheon. She understood that the Parks and Recreation Department was working on including a diversity award for the Mayor's volunteer award for next year's event.

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Recess

At 9:30 p.m. Vice Mayor Hedrick called a brief recess, and at 9:40 p.m., the Town Council Work Session meeting reconvened, with six members present and Vice Mayor Hedrick presiding. Mayor Olem was absent.

b. Herndon Downtown Redevelopment Project Update

Vice Mayor Hedrick recognized Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager, to provide an update on the Downtown Redevelopment project. Mr. Martino stated that there is no update on the Downtown Redevelopment project, and that the Town is prepared to continue to move forward on the project. He stated the extension date remains December 10, 2024.

There was no discussion on this item.

c. Proposed Cycling Event Status

Vice Mayor Hedrick recognized Scott Robinson, Acting Deputy Town Manager, External Operations, to discuss the proposed cycling event requested in the August 7, 2024 and September 3, 2024 Town Council Work Sessions. Mr. Robinson provided an update on the three follow-up meetings held to evaluate the feasibility of a large-scale cycling event within the Town.

Mr. Robinson stated this large-scale cycling event proposed would be a criterium, which is a closed-circuit bicycle race with a short track. He stated that the Green Lizard Cycling and the Green Lizard Foundation proposed three possible courses in the downtown area for this event, and briefly discussed the logistics of each proposal. Mr. Robinson stated that the estimated cost of the event for the Town would be approximately $109,800. He stated that the event organizer was willing to reimburse the Town for some or all of the Town’s costs, but would most likely request a grant through the Town as well.

There was discussion among the Council and the staff about the following: (1) the event's cost to the Town; (2) the timing of the event; (3) permits and licenses that would be needed; (4) possible routes possible impact on businesses; (5) safety precautions, including staff and police requirements to support the event; and (6) businesses and neighborhoods that may be impacted by event traffic.

d. Discussion on actions the council can take to support increased safety initiatives - Councilmember del Aguila

[Note: the discussion on actions the council can take to support increased safety initiatives was held at the beginning of the meeting]

e. Discussion on proactively driving revenues into the town - Councilmember del Aguila

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Vice Mayor Hedrick recognized Councilmember del Aguila for discussion on this item. Councilmember del Aguila stated the purpose of this discussion was to start tracking how Town events help generate and retain new revenue for local businesses.

Councilmember del Aguila asked staff to provide a revenue projection report for upcoming events, tracking items such as: (1) analysis of meals tax collected; (2) traffic to Town businesses generated by event attendees; and (3) locality of event attendees. Councilmember LeBlanc stated that he seconded this request. Both stated they would like to see the fiscal impact of this on a quarterly basis, and suggested focusing on the WinterMarkt and Friday Night Live! events.

Councilmember Scherff requested that the Council receive an update at a future meeting from Marc Smith, Director of Economic Development, regarding his progress on initiatives within the Town.

There was further discussion among the Council.

f. Discussion on steps the Town can take to protect our most vulnerable residents - Councilmember del Aguila

Vice Mayor Hedrick recognized Councilmember del Aguila for discussion on this item.

Councilmember del Aguila stated that a lot of the community is feeling vulnerable, due to fear of mass deportations. He inquired if there is anything the Council can do to help reassure family units in the Town, such as making a public statement.

Councilmember LeBlanc stated that he drafted a resolution that he had reviewed with the Town Attorney, and confirmed it met legal requirements. He distributed this draft resolution to the Council.

There was discussion among the Council and staff regarding the need to adopt and make a clear statement to the Town. Topics included (1) a policy adopted by Alexandria that may be a good sample for Herndon; (2) recommendations from the Herndon Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee (HDEIC); (3) communication needed to ensure citizens can safely call police and (4) ways to create a safe space for businesses and schools.

Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager, stated that the resolution would be included on the next regular meeting agenda. Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney, stated it would be brought forth as a general item.

3. <u>Roundtable</u>

<u>Councilmember Alam</u>: thanked the Council and staff for all the ideas brought forward that evening.

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Councilmember Dhakal: no comments.

Councilmember del Aguila: stated that there is a Stars and Stripes event on Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m., where food and clothing will be given away to those in need.

Councilmember Le Blanc: no comments.

Councilmember Scherff: thanked members of the community who participated in the coat drive at Herndon Middle School.

Vice Mayor Hedrick: no comments.

Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager: provided a quick update on the holiday decorations that he stated would be put up in the downtown by the end of the week.

Mr. Martino also confirmed the action items that were assigned during the meeting, including: (1) inquiring about security monitoring on the trail by the Park Authority; (2) adding eight LPR cameras to the police budget; (3) putting together fiscal year plan in place to fund Capital Improvement Projects; and (4) continuing to work with the cycling event organizers on the feasibility of the proposed criterium race.

4. Adjournment

There being no further business, Vice Mayor Hedrick adjourned the December 3, 2024, Town Council work session meeting at 11:17 p.m.

Amanda E.M. Kertz
Acting Town Clerk

Minutes approved by Town Council : _____

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