

City of Hyattsville

*Hyattsville Municipal Building
4310 Gallatin Street, 3rd Floor
Hyattsville, MD 20781
(301) 985-5000
www.hyattsville.org*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 18, 2024

7:00 PM

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_K5RexM1OTZ61o-ONQ7PKlg

Virtual

City Council

Robert S. Croslin, Mayor
Joseph Solomon, Council President, Ward 5
Joanne Waszczak, Council Vice President, Ward 1
Sam Denes, Ward 1
Danny Schaible, Ward 2
Emily Strab, Ward 2
Kareem Redmond, Ward 3
Edouard Haba, Ward 4
Michelle Lee, Ward 4
Rommel Sandino, Ward 5

ADMINISTRATION

Tracey E. Douglas, City Administrator
Nate Groenendyk, City Clerk, 301-985-5001, cityclerk@hyattsville.org

WELCOME TO THE CITY OF HYATTSVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING!
Your participation at this public meeting is valued and appreciated.

AGENDA/PACKET: The Agenda/Packet is available for review at the Hyattsville Municipal Building and online at www.hyattsville.org prior to the scheduled meeting (generally available no later than the Friday prior to the scheduled Monday meeting). Please note, times given for agenda items are estimates only. Matters other than those indicated on the agenda may also be considered at Council discretion.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT: In compliance with the ADA, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting or other services in conjunction with this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (301) 985-5009. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

AUDIBLE DEVICES: Please ensure all audible devices are turned off or otherwise not audible when the City Council is in session. Thank you.

PUBLIC INPUT: If you wish to address the Council during the Public Comment period, please use the "Raise Hand" feature in the virtual meeting interface. Participants may also submit statements electronically via email to cityclerk@hyattsville.org no later than two (2) hours prior to the start of the meeting. Submitted electronic statements will be sent to Councilmembers prior to the meeting and will not be read aloud. All participants shall remain respectful in their contributions and associated functions of the virtual meeting interface are not intended for public dialogue or discussion.

WAYS TO WATCH THE MEETING LIVE: City Council meetings are broadcast live on cable television channel 71 (Comcast) and channel 12 (Verizon). You may also view meetings live online at hyattsville-md.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?camera_id=2

REPLAY SCHEDULE: The meetings will be re-broadcast on cable television, channel 71 (Comcast) and channel 12 (Verizon) daily at 7:00 a.m., 1 p.m., and 8 p.m. Meetings are also able for replay online at www.hyattsville.org/meetings.

CITY INFORMATION: Sign up to receive text and email notifications about Hyattsville events, government, police and programs at www.hyattsville.org/list.aspx

INCLEMENT WEATHER: In the event of inclement weather, please call 301-985-5000 to confirm the status of the Council meeting.

Meeting Notice:

The Hyattsville City Council will hold its meeting on Monday, November 18, 2024, remotely via video conference. The Council meeting will be conducted entirely remotely; there will be no in-person meeting attendance.

The meeting will be broadcast live on cable television channel 71 (Comcast), channel 12 (Verizon), and available via live stream at www.hyattsville.org/meetings.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

If you wish to address the Council during the Public Comment period, please use the "Raise Hand" feature in the virtual meeting interface. Participants may also submit statements electronically via email to cityclerk@hyattsville.org no later than two (2) hours prior to the start of the meeting. Submitted electronic statements will be sent to Councilmembers prior to the meeting and included in the official meeting record. Electronically submitted statements will not be read aloud. All participants shall remain respectful in their contributions and associated functions of the virtual meeting interface are not intended for public dialogue or discussion.

Members of the public who wish to comment during the virtual Council meeting must register in advance using the link below.

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_K5RexM1OTZ61o-ONQ7PKlg

1. Call to Order and Council Roll Call

Call to order at 7:03 PM.

Also Present:

City Administrator Tracey Douglas

Deputy City Administrator Laura Reams

Interim Director of Community Business & Economic Development Jeff Ulysse

Treasurer Ron Brooks

Chief of Police Jarod Towers

Deputy Director of Public Works Hal Metzler

Director of Community Services Sandra Shephard

Director of Human Resources Jay Joyner

City Clerk Nate Groenendyk

Emergency Services Manager Reggie Bagley

Present:	Council President Joseph Solomon
	Council Vice-President Joanne Waszczak
	Councilmember Sam Denes
	Councilmember Danny Schaible
	Councilmember Emily Strab
	Councilmember Kareem Redmond
	Councilmember Michelle Lee
	Councilmember Edouard Haba
	Councilmember Rommel Sandino
Absent:	Mayor Robert Croslin

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**3. Approval of Agenda**

Amendments to the agenda are as follows:

-Remove Consent Agenda item 9.b (Federal Bureau of Investigation Cross Border/Cross Jurisdictional Task Force Memorandum of Understanding).

-Amend the reimbursement of Consent Agenda item 9.a to \$300.05 from \$268.04.

-Amend the language of agenda item 10.b. to "I move that the Mayor and Council adopt the following legislative and bond bill priorities to be presented at a Joint District 22 Legislative dinner on December 3rd 2024, and shared with the District 47 Delegation."

A motion was made by Councilmember Haba, seconded by Councilmember Sandino, that this item was Approved as Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Solomon, Waszczak, Denes, Schaible, Strab, Redmond, Lee, Haba, and Sandino

Absent: Croslin

4. Moment of Silence for Earl Isaac**5. Approval of the Minutes**

A motion was made by Council Vice-President Waszczak, seconded by Councilmember Strab, that this item was Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Solomon, Waszczak, Denes, Schaible, Strab, Redmond, Lee, Haba, and Sandino

Absent: Croslin

5.a. Approval of the Minutes

[HCC-154-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the Council Meeting Minutes of April 15, 2024, August 5, 2024, and October 21, 2024.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [Minutes Oct 21 2024](#)
[Minutes August 05 2024](#)

6. Public Comment (7:10 p.m. – 7:20 p.m.) Complete Speaker Card, Limit 2 minutes per speaker

Eden Aaron (CASA) spoke in support of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance .

Melissa Schweisguth expressed gratitude for the City providing self defense classes for community members. She also described the fear she feels for herself and other community members due to an increase in crime, and asked that the police department share statistics more consistently. Lastly, she expressed support for the Rent Stabilization Ordinance and asked the Council not to delay passing it.

Hugo Cantu (Apartment and Office Building Association) expressed concerns about the Rent Stabilization Ordinance, stating that it would jeopardize hundreds of millions of dollars in planned housing investments and development.

Tram Hoang (PolicyLink) spoke in support of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

Owen Anderson (Ranked Choice Voting Maryland) spoke in support of ranked choice voting in the City of Hyattsville.

Greg Smith spoke in favor of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance and ranked choice voting.

Jenny Lesselbaum spoke in favor of a 3% cap on rent increases.

Michael Bonds spoke in support of a referendum question for ranked choice voting. He also encouraged the Council to research proportional ranked choice voting.

Kelly Geishauser spoke in reference to agenda item 10.a. (Variance V-70-24) and asked for the support of the Council.

Mr. Marshall stated that he is opposed to ranked choice voting in Hyattsville. He also expressed concern about the Rent Stabilization Ordinance and juvenile justice reform as a legislative priority for the City of Hyattsville, stating that this requires a lot of research and insight that the Council may not have. Lastly, he stated that the City is safer than many cities in the surrounding area.

Michael Romero spoke in reference to agenda item 10.a. (Variance V-70-24) and offered potential solutions that would allow the Council to support the resident.

Dan Broder (Ward 2) expressed support of a referendum question for ranked choice voting, the Rent Stabilization Ordinance, and the FY25 Legislative Agenda.

Alexander Houck discussed concerns about increased traffic in University Hills from Metro purple line construction which has caused quality of life issues for residents. He encouraged the Council to consider implementing measures to prevent drivers from using that area as a cut through which will increase residential safety.

7. City Administrator Update (7:20 p.m - 7:45 p.m.)

The City Administrator provided updates on City related programming and events.

CM Redmond reiterated the need for more comprehensive safety measures in University Hills. Council Vice President Waszczak agreed, citing complications with school bus pick-ups and drop-offs, and asked for greater outreach to local and state elected officials on the issue.

CM Haba inquired about the status of the electronic sign on Ager Rd. Deputy Director of Public Works Hal Metzler advised that the City has a signed agreement with Kirkwood Apartments and the sign should be up in the next few weeks.

CM Schaible asked about the impacts of the pending construction at "The Spot" will have on Hamilton Street and the surrounding businesses. City Administrator Douglas and Deputy Director Metzler stated that there is no plan immediately for a street closure but if that changes, they will ensure that residents and businesses are notified.

8. Proclamations

A motion was made by Council Vice-President Waszczak, seconded by Councilmember Denes, that this item was Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Solomon, Waszczak, Denes, Schaible, Strab, Redmond, Lee, Haba, and Sandino

Absent: Croslin

8.a. Proclamation Recognizing November 18-22, 2024, as American Education Week [HCC-124-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt a proclamation recognizing November 18-22, 2024 as American Education Week.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments:

8.b. Proclamation Recognizing December 1, 2024, as World AIDS Day in the City of Hyattsville [HCC-133-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council recognize December 1, 2024, as World AIDS Day in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments:

8.c. Proclamation Recognizing November 30, 2024, as Small Business Saturday in the City of Hyattsville [HCC-149-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt a proclamation recognizing November 30, 2024, as Small Business Saturday in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [Small Business Saturday 2024](#)

9. Consent Items (7:45 p.m. 7:50 p.m.)

Items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered routine in nature, and are approved in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless the Mayor/Council request specific items be removed from the Consent agenda for separate action.

A motion was made by Council Vice-President Waszczak, seconded by Councilmember Haba, that the Consent Agenda be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Solomon, Waszczak, Denes, Schaible, Strab, Redmond, Lee, Haba, and Sandino

Absent: Croslin

9.a. Disbursement of Ward 3 Discretionary Funds [HCC-155-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the disbursement of \$268.04 of Ward 3 FY25 discretionary funds to Councilmember Redmond as reimbursement for the Ward 3 Check-In.

Sponsors: Redmond

Attachments: [Receipt.pdf](#)

9.b. Federal Bureau of Investigation Cross Border (Cross Jurisdictional) Task Force Memorandum of Understanding [HCC-160-FY25](#)

I move that Mayor and Counsel authorize the City Administrator to enter into an Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FB) Cross Border Task Force pending legal sufficiency.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [DRAFT CBTF Hyattsville PD MOU](#)

9.c. Disbursement of Ward 4 Discretionary Funds [HCC-161-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the disbursement of Ward 4 Discretionary Funds in the amount of \$324.97 to Councilmember Lee as reimbursement for refreshment and supplies for the Ward 4 Check-in on October 12, 2024.

Sponsors: Lee and Haba

Attachments: [IMG_5247.jpeg](#)
[IMG_5246.jpeg](#)

10. Action Items (7:50 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.)**10.a. Variance Request V-70-24, 5408 40th Ave**[HCC-164-FY25](#)

I move the City Council authorize the Mayor to send a letter to the Board of Zoning Appeals requesting the denial of zoning variance application V-70-24, for the subject property located at 5408 40th Avenue; specifically for the request for additional net lot coverage.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [2024-10-24_Memo-V-70-24_.ju](#)
[V-70-24 Binder](#)
[City of Hyattsville Zoning Variance Policy Statement & Variance Process_ENGLISH](#)

Interim Community Business & Economic Development Director Ulysse provided an overview of the variance request and stated that the current policy is that the City does not submit letters of support with conditions for residential properties, or variances for additional lot coverage when the intent is to add off street parking.

CM Schaible and CM Strab asked for Council support for the variance. CM Denes stated that he is not in support of setting new precedents, such as providing letters of support with conditions.

The following amended motion was made by CM Strab and seconded by CM Schaible.

I move the City Council authorize the Mayor to send a letter to the Board of Zoning Appeals requesting the approval of zoning variance application V-70-24, for the subject property located at 5408 40th Avenue; specifically for the request for additional net lot coverage with the condition that 300 square feet of the driveway be permeable material.

A motion was made by CM Starb seconded by CM Schaible, that this agenda item be Approved as Amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Solomon, Waszczak, Schaible, Strab, Redmond, Lee, Haba, and Sandino

Nay: Denes

Absent: Croslin

10.b. Adoption of FY25 Legislative Agenda[HCC-163-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt the following legislative and bond bill priorities to be presented at a Joint District 22 Legislative Dinner on December 3, 2024.

Legislative Priorities:

- Affordable Housing
- Environmental Sustainability & Justice
- Grants/Programs for Recruitment & Retention of Police Officers
- Infrastructure & State Rd Improvements
- Juvenile Justice Reform
- Land Use Authority
- Mental Health & Addiction Support
- Regional Economic Development & Growth

Bond Bill Priorities:

Municipal Building Renovation - 2nd floor renovation after Police relocation - \$650K

West Hyattsville Green Alley Public Safety : Alley Lighting and Streetscape - \$350K

Public Infrastructure Public Safety Green Street Project (Jamestown Road Greenstreet and Stormwater project - \$1M.

Sponsors: City Administrator

CM Denes and Council Vice President Waszczak expressed concerns about juvenile justice reform as one of the legislative priorities, as this has not been designated as a community priority. City Administrator Douglas advised that this list of priorities was created in partnership with the other municipalities in District 22 and the priority of the most importance to the City of Hyattsville is affordable housing.

CM Denes made a motion that was seconded by CM Strab to remove juvenile justice as a legislative priority.

Yes: 4/No: 5 The motion does not pass.

A motion was made by Council Vice-President Waszczak, seconded by Councilmember Sandino, that this agenda item be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Solomon, Waszczak, Denes, Schaible, Strab, Redmond, Lee, Haba, and Sandino

Absent: Croslin

11. Discussion Items (8:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.)

11.a. Rent Stabilization Ordinance[HCC-132-FY25](#)

Discussion

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [Updated 10.8.14 Copy V.1 City Attorney Draft to Staff 9.4.24](#)
[AOBA Comments on Draft Ordinance Oct 2024](#)
[CASA Comments on Draft Ordinance Oct 2024](#)
[Memo to City Council Rent Stab. Meeting Dev. Summary Oct 16](#)

Housing Manager David Cristeal provided an overview which included a comparison of the main differences between the City's draft ordinance and the County's adopted legislation.

Councilmembers Haba, Strab, Redmond stated that they would be comfortable with waiting to see the effects of the County Rent Stabilization Ordinance before passing the City Ordinance. Councilmembers Schaible, Sandino and Council Vice President Waszczak spoke in favor of the ordinance stating that this ordinance has been designated as a priority for the City.

Councilmembers also expressed concerns about the long term impact this ordinance will have on the implementation of the business improvement district, loss of City revenue, as well as funding for this department and if the designated staffing will be enough.

11.b. Ranked Choice Voting Referendum for May 2025 City Election[HCC-162-FY25](#)

For Discussion

Sponsors: Schaible, Waszczak and Denes

CM Schaible provided an overview of the initiative to bring ranked choice voting to the City of Hyattsville via a non-binding referendum question in the May 2025 election.

Councilmembers and staff discussed potential means to implement ranked choice voting, the current priorities for the Board of the Supervisors of Elections, the need to increase voter turnout in elections, and the timeline to add a referendum question to the ballot. They also discussed how to implement a residential education campaign for ranked choice voting.

Council member Strab asked to hear from the Board of the Supervisors of Elections about necessary manpower, overall costs, and communications.

12. Council Dialogue (9:30 p.m. - 9:40 p.m.)**13. Motion to Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 PM.

A motion was made by Council President Solomon, seconded by Councilmember Haba, that this item was Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Solomon, Waszczak, Denes, Schaible, Strab, Redmond, Lee, Haba, and Sandino

Absent: Croslin