

City of Hyattsville

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



Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 4, 2024

7:00 PM

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TD6w6yCeQ9i_uBEMCcXtbA

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.

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

Absent: Councilmember Rommel Sandino

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 4, 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_TD6w6yCeQ9i_uBEMCcXtbA

1. Call to Order and Council Roll Call**Call to Order:****Also in Attendance:**

City Administrator Tracey Douglas
Deputy City Administrator Laura Reams
City Treasurer Ron Brooks
Chief of Police Jarod Towers
Director of Public Works Lesley Riddle
Director of Community Services Sandra Shephard
Director of Human Resources Jay Joyner
City Clerk Nate Groenendyk
Deputy City Clerk Quianna Taylor

Present:

Mayor Robert Croslin
Council President Joseph Solomon
Council Vice-President Joanne Waszczak
Councilmember Sam Denes
Councilmember Danny Schaible
Councilmember Emily Strab
Councilmember Jimmy McClellan
Councilmember Kareem Redmond
Councilmember Michelle Lee
Councilmember Edouard Haba

Absent:

Councilmember Rommel Sandino

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

A motion was made by CM Denes and seconded by CM Haba to move Consent Agenda item 10.c. to Action Items. Approved, Unanimous.

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

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

Absent: Sandino

4. Approval of the Minutes**4.a. Approval of the Minutes**

[HCC-141-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the minutes of the April 15, 2024, City Council Meetings.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [Minutes Apr 15 2024](#)

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

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

Absent: Sandino

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

Noura Estavie stated that she is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

Melissa Schweisguth thanked CM McClellan for his service as a council member. She also expressed concerns about the debt service agenda item and stated that she is not in favor of contract for wireless internet in the parks, asking for more detail. Lastly, she stated she's in favor of the ceasefire resolution.

Paul Abowd (Ward 2) stated that he is in favor of ceasefire resolution.

Raheela Ahmed stated that she is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

Mai Abdul Rahman stated that she is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution and asked that the council to use their voice to oppose the genocide in Palestine.

Robert Meyers stated that he is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

Owen Anderson testified in support of ranked choice voting.

Elias Johnson (Ward 2) stated that he is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

Rrezart Beqa (Ward 2) stated that he is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution and asked for the resolution to include a request for an arms embargo.

Mr. Marshall stated that he is opposed to ranked choice voting and the proposed parking fine increase. He inquired about the need to replace the generator in the City building which is scheduled to be renovated. Lastly he stated that he is opposed to the ceasefire resolution, stating that the City Council should focus on City matters.

Greg Smith stated that he is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

Sarah Harper stated that she is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

Laura Caldwell (Ward 1) stated that she is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

Dan Broder thanked CM Denes for removing item 10.c. from agenda, and stated that he is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

April Downs stated that she is in favor of Ceasefire Resolution.

6. City Administrator Update (7:20 p.m - 7:40 p.m.)

City Administrator provided updates on City projects and events and thanked CM McClellan for his service.

Treasurer Brooks provided an update on soon to be released RFPs for a compliance audit and City financial advisor.

7. Presentations (7:40 p.m. - 8:10 p.m.)**7.a. City Auditor Presentation: City Auditor Robert Diss Overview of the FY22 Audit**[HCC-152-FY25](#)

For Presentation

Sponsors: City Administrator

Treasurer Brooks introduced Bob Diss from Lindsay & Associates who gave an overview of the FY22 financial audit. The FY22 is available on the City website.

The Council asked for an explanation of OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits), actionable items under the law in the FY22 audit, and the status of any errors, misstatements, or edits found in the audit. The Council also inquired about a decrease in liabilities in the FY22 audit.

The Council was advised that OPEB refers to health insurance benefits for retired City employees. In reference to actionable items, audits are required by law and serve to assess financial control. Mr. Diss noted there has been a great improvement from older audits. He also stated that there was a restatement of funds provided to the fire department, which was an internal measure taken to account for a budgetary change. The decrease in liabilities in the FY22 audit was prompted by a return on investments. City Administrator Douglas advised that past audits aid in better aligning the budget with Council goals and priorities.

8. Proclamations

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

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

Absent: Sandino

8.a. Proclamation Recognizing November 2024 Native American Heritage Month[HCC-121-FY25](#)

I move that Mayor and Council adopt a proclamation to declare November 2024 as Native American Heritage Month in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [CM 1104 Native American Heritage Month 2024](#)

8.b. Proclamation Recognizing November 2024 as Municipal Government Works Month [HCC-122-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt a proclamation recognizing November 2024 as Municipal Government Works Month in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [CM 1104 Municipal Government Works Month 2024](#)

8.c. Proclamation Recognizing November 11, 2024, as Veterans Day [HCC-123-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council proclaim November 11, 2024, to be Veterans Day in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [CM 1104 Veterans Day Proclamation 2024](#)

8.d. Proclamation to Recognize November 2024 as National Family Caregivers Month [HCC-125-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council Recognize November 2024 as National Family Caregivers Month in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [CM 1104 National Caregivers Month 2024](#)

9. Appointments

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

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

Absent: Sandino

9.a. Appointment to the Education Advisory Committee [HCC-143-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the appointment of Mercy Ogutu (Ward 4) to the Education Advisory Committee for a term of two (2) years ending on November 30, 2026.

Sponsors: Strab

Attachments: [Mercy Ogutu W4 appl Mar 28 2024 redac](#)

10. Consent Items (8:10 p.m. - 8:15 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.

Consent Agenda item 10.c.was removed in a motion made by CM Denes during approval of the agenda.

A motion was made by Council President Solomon, seconded by Councilmember McClellan, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Absent: Sandino

10.a. FY25 Budget Appropriation: COPS Hiring Program Grant[**HCC-103-FY25**](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council accept and appropriate into the FY25 Budget, the COPS Hiring Grant award in the amount of \$1,000,000 to hire eight (8) entry-level officers.

Sponsors: City Administrator

10.b. Replacement of the backup generator at 4310 Gallatin St[**HCC-116-FY25**](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the City Administrator enter into an agreement with Kelly Generator & Equipment, Inc for the replacement of backup generator at 4310 Gallatin St for an amount not to exceed \$224,000, pending legal review using FY25 Capital Improvement Plan funds. The Treasurer is authorized to make the budget amendments necessary to encumber these funds.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [City of Hyattsville Generator Replacement](#)

10.d. Disbursement of Ward 2 Discretionary Funds[**HCC-126-FY25**](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the disbursement of Ward 2 Discretionary Funds in the amount of \$260.00 to Councilmember Strab for reimbursement for refreshments at the Ward 2 block party on September 29, 2024.

Sponsors: Schaible and Strab

Attachments: [Receipt.pdf](#)

**10.e. FY25 Budget Appropriation: Governor’s Office of Crime Control and Prevention - [HCC-127-FY25](#)
Project Safe Neighborhoods - License Plate Reader Program with the City of
Mount Rainier**

I move that the Mayor and Council accept and appropriate into the FY25 Budget, the GOCCP Project Safe Neighborhoods award in the amount of \$279,422.00 to purchase 12 stationary license plate readers and provide overtime for officers of HPD and Mt. Rainier for a Gang Violence Task Force.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [Budget Notice - 2024-10-24T092319.763](#)

10.f. Disbursement of Ward 4 Discretionary Funds [HCC-148-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the disbursement of Ward 4 Discretionary Funds in the amount of \$333.74 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_5052.jpeg](#)
[IMG_5053.jpeg](#)
[IMG_5048.jpeg](#)
[IMG_5049.jpeg](#)

11. Action Items (8:15 p.m. - 9:15 p.m.)

11.a. Hyattsville Resolution 2024-03: Ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon[HCC-137-FY25](#)

I move the Mayor and Council adopt Hyattsville Resolution 2024-03, affirming the City of Hyattsville's commitment to human rights and support for congressional and worldwide calls for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon.

Sponsors: Haba, Schaible and McClellan

Attachments: [City of Hyattsville Resolution 2024_03.pdf](#)

Mayor Croslin outlined guidelines for Council to provide amendments to the resolution.

Council President Solomon offered amended language to the resolution, striking language in the preamble and body of the resolution. CM Strab asked to include language that states support for the letter sent to Prime Minister Netanyahu issued by US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, to allow humanitarian aid. Council Vice President Waszczak asked for language requiring the release of hostages being held by Hamas to be included and supports language calling for an arms embargo. CM McClellan stated that he is in favor of passing the language as is.

Council President Solomon moved to adopt his amendments to the Resolution. This was seconded by CM Strab.

Yes: 5/No: 5 The motion does not carry.

CM Denes recommended language to clarify that a person's place of birth should not impact their individual rights. CM Haba recommended including language that shows support of Secretary Blinken's letter to PM Netanyahu. CM Schaible recommended language that states that the arms embargo is contingent upon humanitarian aid to Palestinians. He stated that he is against removing "Whereas number 4"

A friendly amendment was made by CM Strab moved to include language that shows support of Secretary Blinken's letter to PM Netanyahu, and to strike the language in "Whereas number 4", (Whereas the city of Hyattsville recognizes that the United States has a shameful history of racialized violence, white supremacy, and segregation, and we have come too far as a nation to blindly support the state of Israel, which treats Palestinians as an inferior class.), language that demands humanitarian aid and striking language in the preamble recommended by Council President Solomon.

CM Schaible stated that he does not agree with the changes in the language in the resolution.

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

Aye: Croslin, Waszczak, Denes, Strab, McClellan, Redmond, Lee, and Haba

Nay: Schaible

Absent: Solomon, and Sandino

11.b. Final Adjustment to American Rescue Plan Act Fund Allocation and Obligations[HCC-140-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the reallocation of American Rescue Plan Act Funds to the projects and amounts listed in Exhibit A, which reflects final adjustments to 20 project budgets and moves \$1,360,058 from previously planned projects to FY25 General Fund Salaries. I further move that the Mayor and Council earmark the projects and amounts listed in Exhibit B to the General Fund Capital Budget and General Fund Operating Budget as the Treasurer determines appropriate for each project.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [ARPA Budget Adjustments November 2024 Exhibit B.pdf](#)
[ARPA Budget Adjustments November 2024 Exhibit A.pdf](#)
[ARPA Update Presentation 11.04.2024.pdf](#)

ARPA Manager Paschall provided an overview of the final ARPA spending plan motion to obligate the remainder of ARPA funds.

Councilmembers inquired if the City is in danger of being required to return funds. They also asked if this spending plan is in line with what other municipalities are doing, and if the attorney has provided feedback on legal sufficiency. ARPA Manager Paschall advised that if the spending plan is passed, there will be no need to return funds. He also stated that smaller municipalities are changing their plans comparably with Hyattsville.

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

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

Absent: Sandino

11.c. Zoning Variance Request V-65-24 - 5803 33rd Ave, Hyattsville[HCC-144-FY25](#)

I move the City Council authorize the Mayor to send a letter to the Board of Zoning Appeals requesting the denial of application #V-65-24, for subject property at 5803 33rd Ave, Hyattsville specifically for the waiver of the parking area location requirement. The purpose of the zoning variance request is to validate existing conditions for net lot area, lot width at the building line, front yard depth and waiver of the parking area location requirement to obtain a building permit for a proposed 25'x20' driveway.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [V-65-24 Binder](#)
[City of Hyattsville Zoning Variance Policy Statement & Variance Process ENGLISH](#)
[2024-10-24 Memo-V-65-24 .ju](#)

Interim Director of Community Business and Economic Development Jeff Ulysse discussed an application for a variance for a property on 33rd Avenue that was received on October 18, 2024. He recommends denying the application as it does not meet the existing standards and would require removing a City tree to permit driveway functionality. He would like to submit a letter to the Board of Appeals to that effect.

Councilmembers inquired about the proposed location of the driveway and potential impacts of a storm drain at the site. Mr. Ulysse advised that he would be meeting with the residents later in the week to discuss options for the driveway.

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

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

Absent: Sandino

11.d. FY25 Budget Amendment: FY25 Debt Service Fund Budget Appropriations[HCC-151-FY25](#)

I am move that the Mayor and Council amend the FY25 Debt Service Funds Budget appropriations and authorize the Treasurer to adjust the appropriations to reconcile the cost associated with the sale of the FY25 General Obligation Bonds authorized in Resolution 2024-01 approved by the City Council on July 15, 2024.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Treasurer Brooks gave an overview of the FY25 debt service budget appropriations which included the original debt service budget and the proposed debt service amendment and adjustment. Council President Solomon inquired if this motion would amend the budget that was passed and was advised by Treasurer Brooks that it would. He also inquired why the costs for the issuance of the bond were not included in the budget. Treasurer Brooks advised that at that time the Council wanted to look into deferring the note for the BAN for another year, which is not permitted by the State of Maryland. Additionally, constructions costs for the new police facility increased, which factored into issuing a General Obligation bond. CM Strab asked for more information in the agenda when items such as this are being presented.

The Council agreed to add a "Not to Exceed" amount of \$13,639,893 to the motion.

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

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

Absent: Sandino

10.c. Approval of Contracts for Installation of INet and Public Wifi pilot Project - Phase 1a & 1b [HCC-119-FY25](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the City Administrator to enter into two separate contracts for Phase 1a and Phase 1b of the Inet and Public Wifi Pilot Project, pending legal review and approval of the agreements by the City Attorney.

Phase 1a will be to construct the Inet fiber backbone from 4310 Gallatin St to 3505 Hamilton St and will be performed by Nucleus Tech Solutions, LLC for an amount not to exceed \$247,000, to be funded by FY25 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funds.

Phase 1b, will be to construct turn-key wifi networks in multiple park locations along the route of the fiber trunkline to be performed by Systems Application & Technologies, Inc (SA-Tech) for an amount not to exceed \$200,000, to be funded using FY25 CIP Funding.

The Treasurer is authorized to make the budget amendments necessary to encumber the funds required.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [Sa Tech City of Hyattsville Police Department and Access Points Latetrals Fiber Project Quote Submittal CJ 2024 06 25 \(1\) NTS-0379 for Hyattsville](#)

The Council did not vote on, or discuss this item.

12. Discussion Items (9:15 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.)

12.a. Ranked Choice Voting Referendum for May 2025 City Election [HCC-138-FY25](#)

For Discussion

Sponsors: Schaible, Waszczak and Denes

A motion was made by Council President Solomon and seconded by CM McClellan to table this item until the November 18, 2024 meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

12.b. Parking Violation Fine Increase [HCC-153-FY25](#)

For Discussion

Sponsors: City Administrator

CM Strab recommended including language stating that the maximum penalty for this violation would be \$500. Emergency Operations Manager Bagley recommended an equity analysis before making a final determination. He advised that having the City Attorney draft an ordinance would allow time for an equity analysis to happen. Additionally, he stated including language that states the fine will be up to \$500 provides the City flexibility in setting violations. Further background was provided by City Administrator Douglas and Emergency Operations Manager Bagley about the decision of previous administrations to lower violations and the process of setting fines for violations. CM Denes added that this violation has not changed since 1998.

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

Aye: Croslin, Solomon, Waszczak, Denes, Strab, McClellan, Redmond, Lee, and Haba

Absent: Sandino

Abstain: Schaible

13. Council Dialogue (10:00 p.m. - 10:10 p.m.)

14. Motion to Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 PM.

A motion was made by Councilmember Strab, seconded by Councilmember Redmond, that this item was Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Absent: Sandino