



## CITY OF HYATTSVILLE PUBLIC HEARING MAY 4, 2020 – 7:30 PM

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Candace Hollingsworth, Mayor  
Kevin Ward, W1 (Council President)  
Carrianna Suiter, W3 (Council Vice President)  
Bart Lawrence, W1  
Robert Croslin, W2  
Danny Schaible, W2  
Ben Simasek, W3  
Edouard Haba, W4  
Daniel Peabody, W4  
Joseph A. Solomon, W5  
Erica Spell Wolf, W5

Absent: None

Also present were the following City staff members:

Tracey E. Douglas, City Administrator  
Ron Brooks, City Treasurer  
Chief Amal Awad, City of Hyattsville Police Department  
Lesley Riddle, Director of Public Works  
Laura Reams, City Clerk  
Sean Corcoran, Deputy City Clerk  
Hal Metzler, Department of Public Works Project Manager  
Kate Powers, City Planner

### **Notice of Public Hearing:**

The City of Hyattsville Mayor & Council will conduct a Public Hearing on Monday, May 4, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. (prior to the City Council Meeting). The purpose of the Public Hearing is to allow for residents to comment on the proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Real Property Tax Rate of \$0.63 per \$100 of assessed value. It is anticipated that the Council will set the tax rate during this Public Hearing.

Budget Documents can be found at [www.hyattsville.org/budget](http://www.hyattsville.org/budget). Paper copies of the budget can be requested by calling 301-985-5009 or via email at [cityclerk@hyattsville.org](mailto:cityclerk@hyattsville.org).

Public Comment may be made using the e-comment feature at [hyattsville.org/meetings](http://hyattsville.org/meetings) or emailing [cityclerk@hyattsville.org](mailto:cityclerk@hyattsville.org). All electronic comments must be submitted by 5 PM prior to the meeting. Comments received will be read by City staff during the public comment portion of the meeting. Members of the public who wish to attend the virtual public hearing must register in advance using the link below.

Register in advance for this webinar:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_jCEOIVg0Re6RhUaouN6YFA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jCEOIVg0Re6RhUaouN6YFA)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.



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The hearing will be conducted entirely remotely, there will be no in person meeting attendance. The Public Hearing will be broadcast live on Comcast Channel 71, Verizon Channel 12 and online at [www.hyattsville.org/meetings](http://www.hyattsville.org/meetings).

### 1. Call to Order

**Mayor Candace Hollingsworth** called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

### 2. Public Comment

City Clerk Laura Reams read the sole public comment submitted electronically from Yvette Shaw on behalf of Hyattsville Corridor Community. The comment expressed concern about increased taxes and the impact on seniors and unemployed residents. Ms. Shaw requested the City retain the current tax rate.

Michelle Walker asked what the current rate was to which **Mayor Hollingsworth** replied that it was \$.063 per \$100 of assessed value stating that Council was taking action to keep the rate the same but that the effective rate that residents pay would vary dependent on property value assessments.

City Clerk Laura Reams read the public comments of Ward 2 resident David Marshall which expressed opposition for the COVID-19 pandemic fund stating that it was premature and that residents would be better served by a tax decrease to \$0.53 per \$100 of assessed value.

### 3. Action Item

#### 3.a) Fiscal Year 2021 Real Property Tax Rate

**HCC-316-FY20**

**Lead Sponsor:** At the Request of the City Administrator

**Co-Sponsor(s):** N/A

Cover Page: [Fiscal Year 2021 Real Property Tax Rate](#)

[FY2020 Constant Yield Tax Rate Certification.pdf](#)

[PGPost 4-16 4-22 2020 A3.pdf](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council set the City of Hyattsville's Real Property Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2021 at \$0.63 per \$100 of assessed value.

City Treasurer Ron Brooks addressed the Mayor and Council with a summary of the motion reiterating the proposed tax rate and the resulting revenues.

**Ward 5 Councilmember Joseph Solomon** asked whether the Treasurer had explored lower tax rates to assess what the City could sustain to which Mr. Brooks responded that the tax rate determination is the responsibility of the Council and that planned projects for developments had increased the City's obligations substantially and he stated that he was of the opinion that the proposed tax rate was necessary.



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**Councilmember Solomon** acknowledged the debt obligations and inquired as to whether lowering operational expenses could contribute to the possibility of lowering the tax rate to which Treasurer Brooks responded that the proposed rate would be an exercise in good judgement considering fluctuations in property values and historical data.

**Ward 4 Councilmember Daniel Peabody** stated that he had pondered ways in which the tax rate could be lowered but cited expenses that would be resolved from funds from the unencumbered funds balance and asked whether the decreasing reserves would affect the City's bond rating or impact the City in any way. Mr. Brooks responded that the Councilmember's assessment was accurate and continued that property appraisals took place every three (3) to four (4) years and that there was a possibility the appraisals would decrease in value and that the proposed rate would help to ensure the City's financial stability.

**Councilmember Peabody** stated that he was supportive of the proposed tax rate and asked how long the rate had remained the same to which Mr. Brooks reported that the rate had not changed since fiscal year (FY) 2005/2006 and was set at \$0.58 per \$100 prior.

**Mayor Hollingsworth** sought confirmation that each cent of the tax base was equivalent to \$218K to which Mr. Brooks answered in the affirmative.

**Ward 4 Councilmember Edouard Haba** inquired as to the details of the constant tax yield to which Mr. Brooks explained that the tax rate would generate \$13.8M, but that values had increased the previous several years and funds had been set aside for a potential decrease in values that had actually created a net decrease in the budget as the projections of future revenues also decreased.

**Councilmember Haba** sought clarity regarding the constant yield and the current tax rate's effect on the City and referenced **Mayor Hollingsworth's** previous comments to which she and the Treasurer confirmed that each cent of the \$0.63 per \$100 was equal to \$218K. Discussion between the Body members and the Treasurer continued regarding intricate details of the methods used to reach the specific sums and calculations and ultimately agreed to continue the explanation outside the Public Hearing.

Treasurer Brooks addressed a question posed through the virtual meeting interface and stated that the tax base takes into account the current fully assessed properties and future properties and half-year construction.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ward
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Simasek
<b>AYES:</b>	Hollingsworth, Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Haba, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None



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**4. Motion to Adjourn**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Croslin
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Spell Wolf
<b>AYES:</b>	Hollingsworth, Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Haba, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
<b>ABSENT:</b>	None

The public hearing adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

**ATTEST:**  
**May 11, 2020**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Reams".

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**Laura Reams, City Clerk**