



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2021 7:00 PM

Kevin Ward, W1, Interim Mayor
Carrianna Suiter, W3, Council Vice President
Bart Lawrence, W1
Robert Croslin, W2
Danny Schaible, W2
Ben Simasek, W3
Daniel Peabody, W4
Joseph A. Solomon, W5
wolf Spell Wolf, W5

Absent: Edouard Haba, W4

Also present were the following City staff members:

Tracey Douglas, City Administrator
Jim Chandler, Assistant City Administrator
Ron Brooks, City Treasurer
Lesley Riddle, Director of the Department of Public Works
Laura Reams, City Clerk
Deputy Chief Scott Dunklee, City of Hyattsville Police Department
Cheri Everhart, Recreation, Programs, and Events Manager
Marci LeFevre, Age-Friendly Program Lead
Kate Powers, City Planner

Meeting Notice:

As we continue to take precautions due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the Hyattsville City Council will hold its meeting on Monday, February 1, 2021 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:

Public comment may be made using the e-comment feature at www.hyattsville.org/meetings or by emailing cityclerk@hyattsville.org. All electronic comments must be submitted by 5:00 PM on February 1, 2021. 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 Council meeting must register in advance using the link below.

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_E_AGSNgESmeRf04xVmE2GA

1. Call to Order and Council Roll Call

Interim Mayor Kevin Ward called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag



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3. Approval of Agenda

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Suiter
SECONDER:	Croslin
AYES:	Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSENT:	Haba

4. Approval of the Minutes

4.a) Approval of the Minutes

[HCC-207-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Minutes Jan 4, 2021 CM FINAL](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the Council Meeting Minutes of January 4, 2021.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Suiter
SECONDER:	Simasek
AYES:	Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSENT:	Haba

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

City Clerk Laura Reams read the public comments that were submitted electronically.

Ward 3 resident Chuck Perry addressed the Mayor and Council expressing concern regarding the difference in funding allocated to educational grants and Police Department initiatives respectively stating that funding for law enforcement contributes to the incarceration of black males and perpetuation of white supremacy.

Corrie Pond addressed the Mayor and Council requesting action regarding traffic calming on the 3900 block of Jefferson Street stating that a study collected data that showed 345 speeding violations over a three (3) week period and thanked the Body for their attention to the matter.

Through virtual means via webinar resident Scott Wilson addressed the Mayor and Council with concerns regarding the construction of the new Hyattsville Middle School stating that the building should be built in the same location as the current school as the proposed site would block sunlight to nearby homes. Mr. Wilson continued that residents were not made aware of the details of the project in a timely manner and that the capacity of the school was too large for the land on which it was being built. He opined that all traffic should enter at the current entrance, the adjacent street needed to be widened, and that the City should maintain all of the perimeter streets surrounding the site.



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6. City Administrator Update (7:20 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.)

City Administrator Tracey Douglas provided the body with an update of events, news, and programming in the City reporting that COVID-19 infection rates were slowly subsiding while the City's testing site was able to provide approximately 200 tests each of the three (3) days a week of operation. Ms. Douglas noted that County Executives had authorized indoor dining at 50% capacity and the 10 o'clock closing requirement had been lifted.

She stated that the COVID-19 vaccine distribution was in Phase 1C and that several pharmacies would be able to distribute the vaccine. Ms. Douglas reported that Hyattsville would have a vaccine distribution site that was expected to be operational just before the following March at the First United Methodist Church. Administrator Douglas announced that a COVID-19 vaccination information hotline was being developed for residents without access to the internet.

Ms. Douglas relayed that food distribution would continue the next day and that 990 boxes were given out weekly and there were plans to combine the giveaway with the distribution of diapers for registered recipients. She segued into election news and transitioned the lead of the update to City Clerk Laura Reams.

Ms. Reams addressed the Mayor and Council with updates regarding the all Vote-by-Mail 2021 election scheduled for May 11, 2021 reporting that the Board of Supervisors of Elections and the Ethics Committee had been of great help in preparation for the election in review and revision of pertinent required documentation. She announced that candidate registration would close on March 12, ballots were expected to be mailed in early April, and provided further detail regarding voter deadlines, registration information, the voting process, and same day voter registration.

City Administrator Douglas took the opportunity to highlight and thank the City's Department of Public Works (DPW) who were navigating the challenges of inclement weather expressing her appreciation for clearing the roads of ice and snow and their thorough oversight for resident safety and able transportation.

7. Treasurer Update (7:30 p.m. - 7:40 p.m.)

City Treasurer Ron Brooks addressed the Mayor and Council with an update regarding the City's financial position reporting that the Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) audit was approximately two (2) weeks away from approval while the FY20 audits had begun.

Treasurer Brooks recalled that during a previous report he noted that the City was underperforming with regard to personal property taxes, operating taxes, and income taxes but that City real estate taxes were stable with results above projections. Mr. Brooks postulated that income taxes were likely to fall short of expectations, but the City was maintaining an adequate general financial position given the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Brooks noted that many projects had been delayed and would soon be reinstated as revenues were becoming realized and as capabilities became evident.



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8. Presentations (7:40 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.)

8.a) Educational Facilities Task Force

[HCC-209-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Presentation to Council 2-1-2021](#)

[PGCPS PPC Hyattsville](#)

[BlueprintSchools Hyattsville Townhall Jan 12 2021.amemded1.21.21 \(1\)](#)

Presentation Only

Chair of the Educational Facilities Task Force (EFTF), Daniel Muth, addressed the Mayor and Council with a presentation regarding resident feedback pertaining to the construction of the new Hyattsville Middle School (HMS).

Mr. Muth showed illustrative documents explaining that schools in the area, and furthermore throughout the County, were in dire need of improvement regarding student overcrowding, a severe lack of basic health and safety resources, and physical and structural conditions. Mr. Muth detailed that the current HMS had experienced a fire emergency from which they deduced that the school was absent a fire and evacuation system additionally noting drinking fountains infested with rodents and mold. He stated that the County had committed to delivering five (5) new middle schools and a pre-kindergarten facility in the area.

Mr. Muth elaborated that due to a historical lack of funding a new capital improvement staff investigated the conditions of local schools encouraged by resident advocates and groups such as the EFTF and HMS was identified as a substantial bottleneck. He stated that many methods for resolution were explored including the acquisition of land and other potential construction sites but the chosen site for the new HMS was one (1) of very few options.

Mr. Muth described that the new HMS would be a “double-stacked” school with a four (4) story side and showcased detailed intentions for open areas, arts and humanities facilities, a gymnasium, performance stage, and dining common area and provided detail about the individual classrooms.

He noted that there was resident concern about likely vehicle congestion at the entrances and exits, a lack of team sport field space which could service after school sports programming, and the placing of trash receptacles and their proximity to homes. Mr. Muth suggested the City seek partnerships to address the expansion of sports fields and the implementation of zero-waste regulations. He stated that the widening of Oliver Street would not increase traffic volume as it would be meant for specific delivery and waste vehicles and not intended as a through street.

Mr. Muth explained that residents would like a privacy fence to separate them from the site and elaborated about the placement of the school noting that the new HMS would uncover more homes from shade than it would cover, and most residents were content with the intended placement. He stated that every effort was made to consider the needs and preferences of all



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affected parties and explained the rationale behind the placement of the school stating that it would make for an easy construction, it could accommodate the aggressive timeline, and improves the environment for a vast majority of adjacent residents.

Ward 5 Councilmember Joseph Solomon thanked Mr. Muth and the EFTF for their research, review, and recommendations and inquired as to the general consensus of residents to which Mr. Muth replied that while there had yet to be a vote taken on the issue, a majority of residents with whom he had been in personal contact were supportive and excited about the project and would consider the Councilmember's suggestion to exercise tools, such as polls, to assess the opinion of the community with more detail.

Ward 1 Councilmember Bart Lawrence thanked Mr. Muth for the Task Force's efforts and sought clarity regarding the next meeting of the EFTF to which Mr. Muth responded that the next meeting was scheduled for February 18, 2021 and that all questions, concerns, and general input would be welcomed.

Ward 2 Councilmember Danny Schaible expressed concerns with the incorporation of synthetic turf of the sports field and questioned whether other materials could be considered to which Mr. Muth assessed that he would have to present the concern to the architects and builders for confirmation of what type of materials would be used noting that there had been improvements made to synthetic turf over the previous five (5) years and that many health concerns had been addressed.

Councilmember Schaible asked if Creative and Performing Arts (CPA) programming would be made available to 6th graders at the school to which Mr. Muth replied that the capacity was available but adequate staffing would need to be implemented.

Councilmember Schaible expressed concern regarding street parking for buses suggesting that consideration be made that the spaces also be used for cars associated with after school and weekend programming to which Mr. Muth replied that he was confident the parking spaces could be multipurposed and noted that some of the parking area could be reduced to make for better use of the parcel and implored that the asphalt be permeable to allow for stormwater mitigation.

Council Vice President Carrianna Suiter inquired as to the possible inclusion of electric vehicle charging stations to which Mr. Muth responded that there were several environmentally conscious items that many people would like to see incorporated and, given that the building was expected to exist for at least 30 years, the group and residents would aggressively advocate for as many clean energy items as possible.

Interim Mayor Ward thanked Mr. Muth for the presentation and reiterated the meeting and discussion scheduled for February 18 in which all were invited to participate.



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9. Proclamations (8:00 p.m. - 8:05 p.m.)

9.a) Proclamation Celebrating February 2021 as Black History Month in the City of Hyattsville
[HCC-206-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator
Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[CM 0201 Black History Month 2021](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt a proclamation recognizing February 2021 as Black History Month in the City of Hyattsville.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Suiter
SECONDER:	Croslin
AYES:	Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSENT:	Haba

10. Consent Items (8:05 p.m. - 8:10 p.m.)

10.a) Hyattsville Ordinance 2021-01: Close of Candidate Registration (Adoption)
[HCC-204-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator
Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Sec. 8-7, Ordinance Changing Candidate Registration Date 1.4.20](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt Hyattsville Ordinance 2021-01, an ordinance whereby the City Council amends Chapter 8 of the Hyattsville Code to change the day by which candidates for office are required to register as candidates (SECOND READING & ADOPTION).

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Suiter
SECONDER:	Simasek
AYES:	Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSENT:	Haba

10.b) Disbursement of FY21 Education Enrichment Grant Funds
[HCC-205-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator
Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

- [Memo - EEGP 2021.01.26](#)
- [BARS Felegy Redacted](#)
- [Development Library University Park](#)
- [Distance Learning Rosa Parks Redacted](#)
- [Parent Workshops Rosa Parks](#)
- [KEMS HMS Redacted](#)
- [Little Mermaid NWH Redacted](#)



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I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the expenditure of \$2,809.19 to support the grant proposals recommended from the Education Advisory Committee and listed in the attached memo for the dissemination of the FY21 Education Enrichment Grants.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Suiter
SECONDER:	Lawrence
AYES:	Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSENT:	Haba

10.c) Schedule Public Hearing for Traffic Calming Petition - Oliver Street
[HCC-211-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

- [PetitionOliverStSpeedBump_Redacted](#)
- [20210113_TrafficCalming_4000Oliver](#)
- [Traffic Calming Flowchart](#)
- [114-8 Traffic Calming Devices](#)

I move that the City Council schedule a Public Hearing for Monday, March 1, 2021 at 6:30 PM, to consider public testimony regarding a Traffic Calming Petition submitted for the 3900 block of Oliver Street, located in Ward 3.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Suiter
SECONDER:	Croslin
AYES:	Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSENT:	Haba

11. Discussion Items (8:10 p.m. - 8:40 p.m.)

11.a) Hyattsville COVID-19 Restaurant Relief
[HCC-210-FY21](#)

Sponsor: Suiter

Co-Sponsor(s): Lawrence, Simasek, Spell Wolf, Ward

- [Hyattsville COVID-19 Restaurant Relief Suiter](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council amend the Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) Special Revenue Funds Budget and re-appropriate \$66,000 of the remaining \$74,000 originally allocated to Employ Prince George’s from the Hyattsville Pandemic Relief fund to support regionally and locally owned full-service restaurants, distilleries, breweries, and wineries/meaderies in the City of Hyattsville. This funding will provide \$2,000 to each qualifying restaurant to be used towards rent, utilities, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), takeout supplies, and other pandemic related overhead. These funds should be allocated by April 30, 2021.



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Council Vice President Suiter provided a summary and background of the item stating that there was a significant increase in cost when relying on ride share services to deliver food amid dining restrictions and she wanted to explore the possibility of reappropriating leftover funds from the COVID-19 Pandemic Relief Fund to assist with the operational needs for restaurants and other food and drink establishments.

Councilmember Schaible sought clarity regarding qualifying business to which **Council Vice President Suiter** responded that the focus would be on businesses demonstrating the most severe need such as indoor businesses, kiosks in the mall, and full-service restaurants that rely on indoor dining.

Councilmember Schaible asked if the allocation amounts were specifically intentional to which **Council Vice President Suiter** responded in the affirmative adding that they would be able to provide \$2K to each qualifying establishment.

Ward 3 Councilmember Ben Simasek sought clarity regarding the terms “regional” and “local” to which **Vice President Suiter** confirmed that the primary focus would be on non-franchise or chain restaurants but supplemented that some independent owners of franchises would be eligible.

11.b) Purchase of BolaWrap Devices and Cartridges

[HCC-214-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[BolaWrap Pictures](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the expenditure in the amount of \$12,039 to East Coast Tactical for the purchase of 10 BolaWrap devices and 90 cartridges to be divided between each squad and our Emergency Response Team. The funding source for this purchase is the speed camera special revenue fund.

I further move that, upon procurement, the Hyattsville City Police Department move swiftly to adequately train and staff members of each squad and the Emergency Response Team on the appropriate use and deployment of the BolaWrap Device.

Interim Chief of Police Scott Dunklee addressed the Mayor and Council with a summary of the device and its applications stating that the tool could be deployed to passively restrain an individual by non-lethal means wrapping a cord around extremities. He noted that it had been tested by members of the Department and presented a video featuring the device.

Interim Chief Dunklee reported that the device was being used in 365 police departments throughout the Country as well as in Maryland in Lanesburg, Fruitland, Landover Hills, and others. He stated that he did not know of any deployments from the local departments but opined that the device could be beneficial in future scenarios.

Councilmember Simasek requested detail as to the type of situation or suspect in which the device would apply to which Interim Chief Dunklee responded that it is applicable to specific



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situations in which the recipient would be relatively still. He continued that the intent would be to have two (2) officers trained and equipped from each squad and would be used sparingly when appropriate.

Councilmember Simasek requested elaboration regarding the associated cartridges to which the Interim Chief stated that many of the proposed cartridges would be used for training and that the Police Department would likely use only a few each year. He noted that law enforcement officers were improving their de-escalation skillset, but at times, other means would be necessary.

Councilmember Croslin raised questions regarding the results of the testing of the device by officers to which the Interim Chief explained that there were no painful effects and while one could receive an abrasion accidentally, the device was not capable of significant physical damage.

Councilmember Lawrence expressed reservations regarding the item stating that he did not approve of a marketing video from the manufacturer of the device as the basis to garner support for its use in the City and questioned the device's competence citing personal research conducted that highlighted that a Los Angeles, CA-based agency deployed the weapon several times with only one (1) successful result. He noted that the Police Department implemented multiple non-lethal tools during an incident in 2019 that still ended with a fatality and stated that he held skepticism with the performance of the device and did not approve of incurring the cost.

Interim Chief Dunklee responded that the Councilmember made very good points and he opined that the device would only be appropriate for specific situations. He added that the video shown included body camera footage from a Virginia Police Department.

12. **Council Dialogue (8:40 p.m. - 8:50 p.m.)**

Councilmember Solomon wished his colleague **Ward 4 Councilmember Edouard Haba** a happy birthday and a happy Black History Month to the community.

Ward 5 Councilmember Erica Spell Wolf wished residents a happy Black History Month and recognized the passing of entertainer Cicely Tyson.

Councilmember Lawrence thanked the City Committee members, specifically the work done regarding education enrichment grants, and wished **Councilmember Haba** a happy birthday.

Interim Mayor Ward wished all a happy Black History Month and concurred with the statements of **Councilmember Lawrence** and expressed appreciation for the efforts of City Committees.

Ward 2 Councilmember Robert Croslin wished **Councilmember Haba** a happy birthday and expressed his excitement for the construction of the new library on Adelphi Road.



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13. Community Notices and Meetings

13.a) Main City Calendar February 2 - February 16, 2021

[HCC-208-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Main City Calendar Feb 2 - Feb 16 2021 FINAL](#)

14. Motion to Adjourn

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Croslin
SECONDER:	Suiter
AYES:	Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSENT:	Haba

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

ATTEST:

February 16, 2021

Laura Reams, City Clerk

Sean Corcoran, Deputy City Clerk