

City of Hyattsville

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



Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 1, 2024

7:00 PM

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_irBOtFK2S_KznEs4wNZljQ

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
Jimmy McClellan, Ward 3
Kareem Redmond, Ward 3
Edouard Haba, Ward 4
Michelle Lee, Ward 4
Rommel Sandino, Ward 5

ADMINISTRATION

Tracey E. Douglas, City Administrator
Laura Reams, City Clerk, 301-985-5009, 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 using the eComment feature at www.hyattsville.org/meetings or 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.

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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, April 1, 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:

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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_iRBOtFK2S_KznEs4wNZljQ

1. Call to Order and Council Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Also present:

Acting Deputy City Administrator-Suzanne Ludlow

Action Director of Community and Economic Development-Debi Sandlin

City Treasurer-Ron Brooks

Chief of Police-Jarod Towers

Director of Public Works-Lesley Riddle

Director of Human Resources-Jay Joyner

City Clerk-Laura Reams

Deputy City Clerk-Nate Groenendyk

Emergency Services Coordinator-Reggie Bagley

Deputy Director of Public Works-Hal Metzler

Deputy Director of Public Works-Priyanka Joshi

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 Rommel Sandino

Absent:

Councilmember Edouard Haba

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**3. Approval of Agenda****4. Public Comment (7:10 p.m. – 7:20 p.m.) Complete Speaker Card, Limit 2 minutes per speaker**

Melissa Schweisguth provided a written and oral comments in opposition to HCC-226-FY24.

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

Acting Deputy City Administrator Suzanne Ludlow provide updates on City related news and events.

6. Proclamations

All proclamations were adopted in a single vote.

A motion was made by Council President Solomon, seconded by Councilmember McClellan, that the Proclamations be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Absent: Haba

6.a. Proclamation Celebrating World Autism Acceptance Day and Autism Acceptance Month. [HCC-251-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt a proclamation celebrating April 2, 2024 as World Autism Acceptance Day and April as Autism Acceptance Month in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [CM 0401 Autism Acceptance Month and World Autism Awareness Day April 2024](#)

6.b. Proclamation Celebrating April 2024 as Arab American Heritage Month [HCC-252-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council adopt a proclamation recognizing April 2024 as Arab American Heritage Month in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [CM 0401 Arab American History Month 2024](#)

6.c. Proclamation in Honor of National Public Health Week [HCC-253-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council proclaim April 1 - 7, 2024 as National Public Health Week in the City of Hyattsville.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [CM 0403 Public Health Week 2023](#)

7. Appointments

All appointments were approved in a single vote.

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

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

Absent: Haba

7.a. Appointments to the Hyattsville Flag Redesign Committee [HCC-247-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the appointments of Jamila Hinds (Ward 1), Sam Jackson (Ward 1), Paul Hrusa (Ward 2), Katie Burk (Ward 2), Domonique Gibson (Ward 3), Michael Fischer (Ward 3), and Monica Gorman (Ward 5) to the Hyattsville Flag Redesign Committee.

Sponsors: McClellan, Croslin and Waszczak

Attachments: [Fischer Redac](#)
[Gibson Redac](#)
[Gorman Redac](#)
[Hinds Redac](#)
[Hrusa Redac](#)
[Jackson Redac](#)
[Burk Redac](#)

7.b. Appointment to the Code Compliance Advisory Committee [HCC-248-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the appointments of Susan Zahran (Ward 1) and Thoa Hoang (Ward 4) to the Code Compliance Advisory Committee for a term of two (2) years to expire on April 30, 2026.

Sponsors: McClellan and Redmond

Attachments: [Thoa Hoang, W4, Sep 23 redac](#)
[Susan Zahran, W1 Aug 17, 203 redac](#)

7.c. Appointment to the Hyattsville Environment Committee [HCC-249-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the reappointment of Melissa Schweisguth (Ward 5) to the Hyattsville Environment Committee for a term of two (2) years to expire on April 30, 2026.

Sponsors: Haba and Schaible

Attachments: [Melissa Schweisguth re-appointment April 2024 redac](#)

7.d. Appointment to the Shade Tree Board [HCC-250-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor, with Council approval, the reappointment of Gloria Felix-Thompson to the Shade Tree Board for a term of 3 years to expire on April 30, 2027.

Sponsors: Croslin

Attachments: [Gloria Felix Thompson reappointment April 2024 redac](#)

7.e. Appointment to the Education Advisory Committee [HCC-259-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the appointment of Vallorie Watson (Ward 1) to the Education Advisory Committee for a term of two (2) years ending on April 30, 2026.

Sponsors: Strab

Attachments: [Vallorie Watson redac](#)

7.f. Appointment to the Health, Wellness, and Recreation Advisory Committee [HCC-261-FY24](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the reappointment of Peter Stockus (Ward 4) to the Health, Wellness, and Recreation Advisory Committee for a term of two (2) years to expire on April 30, 2026.

Sponsors: Denes and Lee

Attachments: [Peter Stockus Re-appointment April 2024 redac](#)

8. Consent Items (7:40 p.m. - 7:45 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 President Solomon, seconded by Councilmember Denes, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Absent: Haba

8.a. 43rd Avenue Traffic Study[HCC-256-FY24](#)

I move the Mayor and Council authorize an expenditure not to exceed \$60,000 to Toole Design Group to perform a traffic study on 43rd Ave between Oglethorpe Street and Jefferson Street under their existing contract with the City.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [2023-10-02_43rd-Ave_Jefferson-to-Oglethorpe_Scope-Fee](#)

9. Action Items (7:45 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.)

9.a. Renovation of Council Chambers - Phase 1 (ARPA)[HCC-207-FY24](#)

I move the Mayor and Council authorize the City Administrator to enter into an agreement, pending legal review, with the following companies for the renovation of the Council Chambers to facilitate hybrid meetings and create a multi-function space.

- Moore Construction for the general contracting work to include carpentry, painting, electrical, and other related trades in an amount not to exceed \$25,000
- Empire Today for the replacement of the carpet in an amount not to exceed \$15,000
- CL Hibbard for the plumbing modifications in an amount not to exceed \$7,500
- Budget Blinds for the installation of blinds in an amount not to exceed \$5,600
- Douron for the furnishing and installation of new furniture in an amount not to exceed \$45,000

This work is funded using ARPA funds as previously authorized. The Treasurer is authorized to make the necessary budget amendments to facilitate these expenditures.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [Council Chambers Tables and Chairs 030824](#)
[Budget Blinds OPP 1960 - 4554-1960](#)
[City Council Chambers - Flooring Proposal](#)
[CityofHyattsvilleDeptofPublicW WO2549 Quoteq1187 2024020220122144](#)
[Moore Construction Proposal 6](#)

Director of Public Works Lesley Riddle and Deputy Director of Public Works Hal Metzler gave an overview of the scope of work to be undertaken.

Council Vice President Waszczak asked for more information about the hybrid meeting capability and security upgrades. City Clerk Reams provided details on the technological capabilities to provide hybrid meetings and Director Riddle added that the construction of the dais is a critical piece in terms of improving safety.

Councilmember McClellan asked about the process to selecting vendors and supporting local vendors, what the timeframe estimate is to get back to in person, and for further explanation about the meaning of hybrid meetings. Director Riddle explained the procurement process and there is a preference for local vendors but that price is also a consideration. Clerk Reams stated that any policy regarding Council participation for hybrid meetings would come to Council for approval. She added that the public will retain the ability to join via Zoom as an attendees, and the policy of not allowing attendees cameras to be on will still be in place. Deputy Metzler said the work will take 2-3 months, the dais will take a couple of months, and that there are also technology connections that need to be installed and tested.

Councilmember Denes asked for more clarity on timing. Deputy Metzler replied that some of the renovations can happen concurrently while others must happen in a particular order. He estimated that the project could be completed in less than 6 months. Councilmember Denes asked if all of the technology was purchased and ready. Clerk Reams replied that most is purchased but there may be some additional items based on how the dais is constructed.

Councilmember Redmond suggested that the furniture should be easily cleanable. Deputy Metzler explained that the material of the furniture is plastic or micro fabric that repels liquids and stains.

Council President Solomon expressed his desire to keep the virtual option to meet for Councilmembers especially if the Council retains the 7pm meeting time.

Rommel asked for a recap of the phases of the project. Director Riddle explained that the next phase will be the installation of the dais and Clerk Reams added that the final stage of implementation would require testing of the new equipment and an update to Council Rules and Procedures.

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 Sandino

Absent: Haba

9.b. Throne Public Bathrooms - Contract Extension[HCC-226-FY24](#)

** This item was tabled at the Council Meeting of March 18, 2024. A motion to remove this item from the table must be voted on prior to Council consideration of this motion. **

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the renewal of Throne Labs rental services for five public restrooms for 1-year under their existing contract with the City. This expenditure, not to exceed \$230,000, will be funded using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds as part of the Public Restrooms and Shower Facility project pre-approved by the Council during the April 17th, 2023, meeting. The Treasurer is authorized to make the necessary adjustments to the budget to facilitate this expenditure.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [Throne Labs Proposal Hyattsville 022024](#)
[Throne Usage Analysis 2023 Aug thru 2024 Feb](#)
[Equity Considerations for Throne Public Bathrooms Contract Extension - Final](#)
[Future Service](#)
[Throne Access Overview & Hyattsville Usage](#)
[Hyattsville Restroom Cost Comparison Calculator](#)

Council President Solomon made a motion to remove this item from the table. Councilmember Strab seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Councilmember Strab asked for the estimated time on the installation of the Portland Loos. Director Riddle replied that the current delay was due to permitting, and once permits are approved, construction will take 2-3 months.

Council Vice President Waszczak asked for information regarding access and tap cards. Deputy Metzler said that they have only given out a few tap cards. Council Vice President Waszczak asked about anonymizing private data. Jessica Heinzelman from Throne explained that each user is given a unique user ID and that personal data is only accessible by a few Throne employees. Council Vice President Waszczak asked about the decision making process between the Thrones and other portable restrooms and the status of public showers. Director Riddle explained the accessibility, cleanliness and security of the Throne is much better than other portable restrooms. She added that staff capacity is an issue regarding public showers and that the City is looking at options to partner with other organizations.

Councilmember Denes asked if there is anything the elected representatives can do to push the installation of the Portland Loos along. Director Riddle responded that she will reach out at a later time to discuss.

Councilmember Schaible provided a correction to the calculations he provided at the previous Council Meeting. He stated he would not be supporting this item because of the financial impact of the contract.

Council President Solomon expressed that he would like to vote on the motion as it is written and added that Hyattsville has been written about and praised for its use of the Thrones to provide facilities to the public. He expressed his support for the Thrones to stay in their current location and that anonymization of data is not an issue for him.

Councilmember Redmond asked what the options are for the City if this item does not pass. Director Riddle replied that the option for Council is to continue with Throne tonight or to decide not to continue. Redmond asked about the finances of installing a Portland Loo versus a Throne. Director Riddle explained that a Portland Loo installation is much more expensive than a Throne.

Councilmember Lee asked for clarity around the distribution of access cards and how they are managed. Director Riddle explained the City is in charge of distributing the cards. Ms. Heinzelman added that each card is connected to a number that can be deactivated if there is misuse, and that City staff keep track of who has been given a card to track anyone that may be misusing the card.

Councilmember Schaible stated that the access process to the Throne is not as open as a regular public bathroom. He expressed support for using the Throne as a test in different areas to determine usage needs.

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

Aye: Croslin, Solomon, Waszczak, McClellan, Redmond, Lee, and Sandino

Nay: Denes, and Schaible

Absent: Strab, and Haba

10. Discussion Items (8:45 p.m. - 9:45 p.m.)

10.a. Hyattsville Charter Amendment Resolution: 2024-03: Removing the Requirement that Council Meetings Start at 8 PM [HCC-246-FY24](#)

For discussion. A public hearing will be held at 6 PM on April 1, 2024, to hear input from the community on the proposed amendment to the City's Charter.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [2024-03 Charter Amendment Resolution Meeting Time Hyattsville Meeting Time Charter April 2024](#)

Council President Solomon agrees with removing 8 p.m. from the Charter, but warns that in person meetings may require a start time later than 7 p.m. He asked about changing the meeting schedule and if that would require a Charter change.

Councilmember Denes asked if there is an expected time for the start of the Council Meeting when the schedule is approved. Clerk Reams responded that the time is stated on the approved schedule and added it is good practice to have a regular time for the public's awareness.

Councilmember Waszczak proposed that the Council change the Charter to require a minimum number of meetings per year rather than per month. Clerk Reams stated that it is common to have specific days of the week and/or month for Council Meetings so that the public knows when their Council will meet.

Council President Solomon cited the issue that Councilmembers often have to take vacation during a time when a meeting is scheduled and therefore miss a meeting. He expressed his support to have a recess that didn't require the Council to meet every month.

Mayor Croslin reiterated that the summer recesses removes two meetings and that as long as the Council meets quorum, meetings can still take place if members are absent.

10.b. Hyattsville Charter Amendment Resolution: 2024-02: Amending the Charter to Utilize Gender Neutral Language and Modernize the Charter's Gender Equality Provision [HCC-245-FY24](#)

For discussion. A public hearing will be held at 6 PM on April 1, 2024, to hear input from the community on the proposed amendment to the City's Charter.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [2024-02 Charter Amendment Resolution Gender Neutral Language and Equal Protection for All Genders Hyattsville Gender Neutral Language Charter April 2024](#)

Councilmember Strab reiterated her comment from the Public Hearing that she prefers titles be used instead of the pronouns they, them, or their.

Council President Solomon asked if the City had an expert look over the proposed changes to make sure that the City is making the appropriate changes. Clerk Reams responded that staff, including the City's Race and Equity Officer, reviewed the Charter Amendment and gave feedback. Equity Officer Louimarre suggested that an expert in gender advocacy could also review the language. Council President Solomon expressed that feedback from someone in that field would be helpful.

10.c. Hyattsville Charter Amendment Resolution: 2024-01: Modernizing the City's Procurement Provisions and Hyattsville Ordinance 2024-01: Procurement & Contracting Procedures [HCC-242-FY24](#)

For discussion. A public hearing will be held at 6 PM on April 1, 2024, to hear input from the community on the proposed amendment to the City's Charter.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Attachments: [2024-01 Charter Resolution Procurement](#)
[Hyattsville Ordinance 2024-01 Chapter 6 Procurement FINAL](#)
[Hyattsville PPT Procurement Charter and Code April 2024](#)

Acting Deputy City Administrator Ludlow and Treasurer Ron Brooks gave a brief overview of the proposed Charter Amendment.

Council Vice President Waszczak asked how procurement procedures are audited. Treasurer Brooks responded that the procurement procedures or policies are not typically part of the financial audit. Deputy Ludlow added that the auditors will look to see if there are procedures regardless if it is in Charter or the Code.

Council President Solomon asked if it is possible to increase the contract spending by different limits for different departments. Deputy Ludlow responded that it is difficult to provide different limits to different departments. She reiterated that while the threshold in terms of amount may be increased, there are policies associated with particular purchases below the dollar amount threshold which will require those purchases to come before the Council. She added that she believes this a step towards better transparency in the purchasing process.

Council President Solomon expressed his concern that there are items that will fall below the threshold that he still believes should come before Council for input. Deputy Ludlow explained the balance to allow for more efficient purchasing by department and the need to have sufficient review of items, and how the Charter change works to achieve that.

10.d. Open FY25 Budget Discussion [HCC-262-FY24](#)

Open discussion to provide time for follow-up items pertaining to the FY25 Budget.

Sponsors: City Administrator

Councilmember Strab expressed that she is not in favor of a hiring freeze or lay offs. She supports doing less programs instead of trying to do more with less.

Councilmember Redmond asked for an estimate of when the sustainability plan will be finalized to help guide budget decisions. He added that he would like to explore areas that can be cut or delayed to decrease expenditures.

11. Council Dialogue (9:45 p.m. - 9:55 p.m.)

12. Motion to Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lee, seconded by Council President Solomon, that the meeting be Adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Absent: Haba