



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD MONDAY, JULY 20, 2020 7:00 PM

Candace Hollingsworth, Mayor
Bart Lawrence, W1
Robert Croslin, W2
Danny Schaible, W2
Ben Simasek, W3
Edouard Haba, W4
Joseph A. Solomon, W5 (*arrived at 7:45 p.m.*)
Erica Spell Wolf, W5

Absent: Kevin Ward, W1 (Council President)
Carrianna Suiter, W3 (Council Vice President)
Daniel Peabody, W4

Also present were the following City staff members:

Tracey E. Douglas, City Administrator
Jim Chandler, Assistant City Administrator
Ron Brooks, City Treasurer
Chief Amal Awad, City of Hyattsville Police Department
Lesley Riddle, Director of Public Works
Vivian Snellman, Director of Human Resources
Laura Reams, City Clerk
Sean Corcoran, Deputy City Clerk
Cheri Everhart, Recreation, Programs, and Events Manager
Hal Metzler, Project Manager, Department of Public Works

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 July 20, 2020 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 hyattsville.org/meetings.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Public Comment may be made using the e-comment feature at hyattsville.org/meetings or emailing cityclerk@hyattsville.org. All electronic comments must be submitted by 5 PM on July 20, 2020. Comments received will be read by City staff during the public comment portion of the meeting.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Candace Hollingsworth called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag



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3. Approval of the Agenda

AMENDMENT

MOVE item 10.e) Purchase of Vehicles for Police Department from Consent to Action.

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

4. Approval of the Minutes

4.a) Approval of the Minutes

[HCC-1-FY21](#)

Lead Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Minutes Sept 16 2019 CM FINAL](#)

[Minutes October 7 Public Hearing FINAL](#)

[Minutes May 4 CM FINAL](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the minutes of the City Council meeting of September 16, 2019, May 4, 2020, and the Public Hearing of October 7, 2019.

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

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

City Clerk Laura Reams read a comment submitted electronically.

Ward 2 resident Doug Holland addressed the Mayor and Council with comments regarding item 11.d) Authorization of Correspondence Requesting a Special Session of the Maryland General Assembly stating that he did not believe the convening of a special session of the Maryland Delegation during a pandemic would not produce any meaningful action or discussion. Mr. Holland relayed that police reform discussions had already begun at the State level and many new initiatives were being implemented to address positive changes to the area's police departments. He questioned the research efforts of the motion sponsors and reiterated the long-standing reputation of the City of Hyattsville and the members of the Hyattsville Police Department.

Managing Editor of the Hyattsville Life and Times Newspaper Maria James addressed the Mayor and Council announcing that on June 30, 2020 she retired as the longest standing editor for the



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periodical and reported on some of the highlights and achievements of the newspaper. Ms. James thanked the readers, the volunteers, the City Council, for their support and welcomed the continued partnership between City officials and the media outlet.

Incoming Managing Editor for the Hyattsville Life and Times Newspaper Kit Slack addressed the Mayor and Council thanking Ms. James for her contributions and leadership and noting awards and the development of a talented, hard-working staff. Ms. Slack stated that it was a time with no shortage of world news and detailed the global issues on which would be reported as well as events and news specific to the community.

Thomas Haller, attorney for the developer of the Riverfront at West Hyattsville thanked the Mayor and Council for scheduling item 11.b) DSP-20004: Applicant's request that City Council waive its Right to Appeal, stating that Council comments were submitted to the Planning Committee and recommendations were submitted. Mr. Haller stated that the District Council would have to provide approval before the project could progress without delay and listed the steps that would be required thereafter.

6. City Administrator Update (7:20 p.m. - 7:35 p.m.)

City Administrator Tracey Douglas addressed the Mayor and Council with an update of City events and news reporting that a water main break had recently occurred on Lancer Drive and that repairs would continue over the next several hours.

Ms. Douglas announced that Prince George's County had announced the placement of cooling centers throughout the area due to high and rising temperatures and cited the locations.

City Administrator Douglas referenced the ongoing discussions regarding the renaming of Magruder Park and provided the Body with a history of the park and amendments that would be made to the deed of the land to remove racist and exclusive language which she expected to take place in the following weeks. Ms. Douglas stated that staff were prepared to address the renaming and noted several recommendations from staff that suggested different methods of collecting information for the name change and stated that the item would be back before the Council at a meeting scheduled for August 3, 2020.

Ms. Douglas highlighted the continued efforts of the Department of Public Works (DPW) citing road repair and maintenance, stormwater facility management, and general services associated with University Hills. She reported Farragut and other areas had been recently resurfaced and that there would be a webinar offered to inform residents of future scheduled road work throughout the City.

Ms. Douglas announced that the Maryland Census participation had reached 66.1%, Prince George's County had reached 63.8%, and Hyattsville recorded 56.7%. She reported that the Complete Count Committee was planning and conducting outreach including multiple advertising methods, and informational services provided through contact with staff at the Municipal building and described how Census takers were being scheduled to promote participation in public areas.



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City Administrator Douglas provided an update regarding the COVID-19 pandemic relief fund reporting that both Hyattsville Community Development Corporation (CDC) and Casa de Maryland expected to have distributed approximately half of their respective allocated funding and that participation and volunteer efforts were abundant in both resident and small business relief.

Ms. Douglas announced that the COVID-19 test site located in Hyattsville would potentially close on July 31, 2020 but had received much positive feedback and participation. She stated that residents had been granted an extended timeline and details were soon to follow with a possible reopening in August.

She reported that food distribution to residents in need continued but the allowance of food boxes to the City had been reduced from 600 to 400 and emphasized that there were still many individuals and families who needed donations.

Ms. Douglas stated that free masks were available at the City Municipal building and relayed the dates and times in which they could be received including availability at food distributions and infection test sites.

Ms. Douglas updated the Body stating that summer programming for Creative Minds and Camp Hyattsville were being well received and that there was substantial participation and a great deal of positive feedback. She stated that discussions had taken place regarding future outdoor camp events and other events such as outdoor movies that could potentially take place in future months contingent upon the status and evidence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Douglas reported that tutoring services had commenced and there were several tutors placed on the waiting list as well as twice the amount of students as compared to the previous school year.

7. City Treasurer Update (7:35 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 he met with Moody's Financial Services the previous week and had provided an AA2 rating to the City for general order bonds.

Mr. Brooks explained that the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) audit had returned findings of outstanding, unpaid costs and added that he would be implementing policies, in full transparency, to avoid such occurrences in the future. He reported that the FY18 audit revealed a combined fund balance decreased by approximately \$810K due mostly to the construction of the new DPW facility and police headquarters while the general fund's unassigned fund balance increased approximately 9.2%; \$1.5M.

Treasurer Brooks informed the Body that during his discussion with Moody's, he provided audited financial reports for FY19 and the City still remains on a watch from Moody's due to outstanding audits. Mr. Brooks informed Council that he was still on schedule to file the FY19 audit before the deadline.



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

8.a) Housing Action Agenda: Phase I Summary Report

[HCC-11-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Hyattsville City Council Slide deck FINAL DRAFT](#)

[Hyattsville Housing Action Agenda Phase 1 Report](#)

Assistant City Administrator Jim Chandler addressed the Mayor and Council with an introduction of Enterprise Community Partners and the agenda item stating that the group had embarked on a two (2) phased affordable housing study to develop a housing action plan that consisted of tools that could be used to improve the availability of affordable housing in the City over the next 10 years.

Senior Program Director for Enterprise Community Partners, Laura Searfoss, addressed the Mayor and Council providing a brief background on the company and introducing David Huaman who would conduct portions of the presentation.

Ms. Searfoss described the Housing Action Agenda and its purpose stating that the primary goal was to build awareness of housing needs to residents and phase one would include interviews with stakeholders, a baseline conditions analysis, a housing ecosystem assessment, and case studies of action areas to develop potential solutions. Ms. Searfoss stated that phase two would prioritize action areas and create tools and develop a Housing Action Agenda consistent with the capacity and metrics of the City.

David Huaman addressed the Mayor and Council with the continuation of the presentation reporting that four (4) major takeaways from stakeholder meetings were the need for more types of homes based on demographics, changing market conditions, further housing availability, and the improvement of housing quality.

Mr. Huaman explained that overcrowding was evident, specifically with low-income households and if displacement concerns were not addressed it could lead to gentrification. Mr. Huaman reported that 34% of residents use most of their income on housing and stated that the team was researching what level of income was necessary to not be considered house burdened.

He stated that only 3% of residents live and work in the City and all others commuted outside the incorporated limits and that 70% of the homes were built before 1970 which increased the possibility of the inclusion of lead or the need for other safety updates as 9% of residents, or more, experienced health conditions that could be attributed to outdated housing standards.

Mr. Huaman explained the housing ecosystem which he described as the interconnected nature of a community and the region's housing market noting that the City of Hyattsville has a limited tool box for development and many neighboring areas rely on funding or grants from the County or State. He cited four (4) main tools that were identified to ease some of the challenges in developing in the City: the revitalization tax credit, the commercial façade program, payments in



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lieu of taxes (PILOT), and State funding. He stated that there should be a prioritization of affordability, variation in housing types, and the quality of housing.

Laura Searfoss addressed action areas on which she suggested the City should focus and noted that meetings with stakeholders returned recommendations to involve affected residents in the planning process and to also to take a collaborative approach with the County. Ms. Searfoss proposed increasing and preserving affordable, accessible, housing options, preventing involuntary displacement and the stabilization of neighborhoods, the preservation and expansion of existing affordable home ownership, and ensuring that internal policies and practices advanced equity.

Ms. Searfoss closed her presentation by projecting the next steps in phase 2 of the project which included prioritizing action areas and related tools, developing a Housing Action Agenda, creating tools for the City, and aligning with capacity and metrics.

Ward 5 Councilmember Erica Spell Wolf requested clarity regarding a timeline for the project and elaboration of the assistance available at the City, County, and State levels to which Ms. Searfoss responded that they were projecting a 10-year timeline citing the short term challenges to be addressed at three (3) to four (4) years, mid-term at five (5) to seven (7) years, and the remainder categorized as long-term. David Huaman fielded the portion of the inquiry regarding government assistance stating that there was data in the report that showed what groups were utilizing grants and funding, whether it was direct or indirect assistance, and potential benefits that could be provided from other entities. Ms. Searfoss added that there was extensive data in the report that went into meticulous detail.

Ward 3 Councilmember Ben Simasek inquired as to what data was available to the City or to Enterprise regarding evictions and demographics by geography to which Mr. Huaman responded that they did view data on evictions but that it was not broken into enough detail to be helpful.

Councilmember Simasek referenced the generation of revenue to assist in creating affordable housing and asked at what point in a development project it would be too late to take advantage of assistance to which Assistant City Administrator Jim Chandler replied that it would generally be too late once the land for a project had been procured. Mr. Chandler explained that it was important to assess impact fees and the City's capacity to absorb that fee and what monetization could be placed upon it.

Ward 2 Councilmember Danny Schaible expressed an interest in reviewing data related to homes once owned by families that were subsequently owned by businesses to which Ms. Searfoss relayed that it had not been researched thoroughly, but was something they could look into further. Assistant City Administrator Chandler added that it was important to recognize that the data was by percentage of the quantity of the type of home and an overall count of home usage. **Councilmember Schaible** noted that he made multiple recommendations associated with rent stabilization and asked why it was omitted from the report to which Ms. Searfoss responded that rent stabilization programs could control rents over time, but work best in places where one is able to support a level of rent regardless of the home quality. She explained that they could



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investigate the option, but would have to be weary of the risks when accounting for an area with a large number of simultaneous developments.

Councilmember Schaible stated that there were many approaches to rent stabilization depending on market rates and reported that he and many residents had discussed experiencing extensive tax increases and it was in his interest to explore methods with which drastic tax increases could be lessened or avoided. He inquired as to what the next steps regarding public input were to which Mr. Chandler responded that phase 1 would mostly focus on the assessment of condition and phase 2 would gauge elements affecting the City. He projected that staff would conduct a virtual open house for resident discussion in late September or early October in which they would be developing policy guidance.

Ward 5 Councilmember Joseph Solomon requested elaboration on the ways in which the representatives had built their professional opinion on rent stabilization to which Laura Searfoss responded that it was derived from a combination of experience with similar areas and developments, an in-depth understanding of the market in the City, and the quality of housing. She stated that investment tools would be needed to entertain the idea of rent stabilization.

Councilmember Solomon requested to review the data cited by Ms. Searfoss regarding market data and noted that most of the City consists of rentals and it seemed to be a continuing trend. He stated that many of the recommendations presented would be helpful to single family home ownership, but asked if there were any additional recommendations regarding multi-family units to which Ms. Searfoss replied that there was a need to align housing developments with the income and cost burdens of potential renters and explained ways by which it could be funded, such as the tax revitalization credit, or reserve funds. She relayed recommendations that could be implemented immediately including inspections and upgrades to homes, homelessness prevention, emergency short-term rental assistance,

Councilmember Solomon stated that outside of setting aside money for construction, it seemed that remainder was mostly focused on those nearing homelessness and asked if there were any long-term comprehensive recommendations for those who were currently suffering to which Ms. Searfoss responded that the best opportunities were unsubsidized and determining how to incentivize owners to invest and provide financial cuts for renters from grants. She stated that some of the recommendations addressed the items, but they had been tasked with bringing forth a broad range of ideas.

Mayor Hollingsworth raised questions regarding the categorization of law enforcement when considering home affordability, the specific scope of the study and its researched populations, the inclusion of undocumented residents, and categorization by race to which David Huaman responded that he would need to review some of the items to return answers with certainty, but the study included all types of housing and properties, did not take into account undocumented residents, and data showing actions by ethnicity was available nationally, but not for the local area.

Mayor Hollingsworth sought clarity regarding the estimate of housing in the next 15 years as determined by the Transit District Development Plan (TDDP) to which Assistant City Administrator



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Chandler responded that the area between Prince George's Plaza and the City of Hyattsville would see the addition of several thousand units and that discussions with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) revealed that it could reach approximately 300K. Mr. Chandler stated that growth in Hyattsville was beyond the average and that partially due to two (2) accessible metro stations he expected to see extensive construction at both sites.

9. Appointments (8:00 p.m. – 8:05 p.m.)

9.a) Reappointment to the Health, Wellness, and Recreation Advisory Committee

[HCC-2-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Dyann Waugh Reappointment](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council reappoint Dyann Waugh (Ward 2) to the Health, Wellness, and Recreation Advisory Committee for a term of 2 years to expire on July 20, 2022.

9.b) Appointment to the Code Compliance Advisory Committee

[HCC-4-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Laurence Wildgoose redac May 26 2020](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council reappoint Laurence Wildgoose (Ward 3) to the Code Compliance Advisory Committee for a term of 2 years to expire on July 20, 2022.

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

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

10.a) Hyattsville Resolution 2020-06: Authorize Negotiations for Verizon Franchise

[HCC-7-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[07.01.20.Franchise.Renewal.Agreement](#)

[07.01.20.Letter.Franchise.Agreement.Renewal](#)

I move the Mayor and Council introduce and adopt Hyattsville Resolution 2020-06, a resolution authorizing the City of Hyattsville to negotiate the renewal of the Franchise Agreement with Verizon Maryland, Inc., and to join Prince George's County and other municipalities in negotiating the renewal of the Franchise Agreement with Verizon Maryland, Inc.



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10.b) Annual Service Agreement with Motorola for Radio Communications Dispatch System, Portable and Mobile Radios

HCC-8-FY21

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[motorola service agreement](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the expenditure of \$32,860.13 for the renewal of the Annual Motorola Service Agreement for the maintenance on our dispatch console, portable and mobile radios.

10.c) Teen Center Tutoring

HCC-12-FY21

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Northstar Contract FY21](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the FY21 contract with Northstar Tutoring for tutoring and mentorship management at a cost not to exceed \$60,000, upon the review and approval of the City Attorney for legal sufficiency in support of the City's teen programming.

10.d) FY21 CIP Budget Amendment: Laptop Computer Equipment

HCC-14-FY21

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

I move that the Mayor and Council amend the FY21 Capital Improvements Budget and to adjust and transfer budget appropriations to cover the cost of laptop computer equipment NTE \$30,000 due to COVID-19.

10.f) FY21 Budget Amendment: Maryland DHCD Community Legacy Grant Award Funds

HCC-17-FY21

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[FY20 Community Legacy Resolution and Agreement Commercial Facade Improvement Program](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council amend the FY21 Special Revenue Budget in Fund 23 for Contracted Services State DHCD Commercial Improvements by appropriating the balance of \$50,000 in Community Legacy Grant Funds that were approved in prior fiscal years to support capital improvement projects.



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10.g) FY21 Budget Amendment: Maryland DHCD Grant Funds

HCC-18-FY21

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[FY2019 Hyattsville Resolution 2019-03 and Current Agreement for the Armory Apartment Project](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council amend the FY21 Special Revenue Budget to create a new Fund and appropriate under Contracted Services the balance of \$250,000 from the National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund (NCSEDF) awarded to the City of Hyattsville by the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development for the purpose of supporting demolition and site development activities for the Hyattsville Armory Apartments project, subject to the legal review of the City Attorney.

10.h) Hyattsville Resolution 2020-07: Support for Re-designation of Enterprise Zone Program

HCC-26-FY21

Sponsors: Solomon

Co-Sponsor(s): Haba, Spell Wolf

[07.17.20.Second.Resolution.Enterprise.Zone.Program](#)
[Ex. 1 \(Second Resolution - Enterprise Zone Program\)](#)

I move the Mayor and Council introduce and adopt Hyattsville Resolution 2020-07, a resolution of the City of Hyattsville, Maryland to support Prince George's County's application for re-designation of its Enterprise Zone Program, which is in part comprised of four geographical areas located in the City, namely: the Gateway Arts and Entertainment District, the West Hyattsville Transit District Overlay Zone, the 38th and Hamilton Street Business Corridor, and the University Town Center.

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

11. Action Items (8:10 p.m. – 9:10 p.m.)

11.a) FY21 Hyattsville Life and Times Contract

HCC-5-FY21

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the FY21 contract for advertising in the Hyattsville Life and Times at a cost not to exceed \$30,400, upon the review and approval of the City Attorney for legal sufficiency. I further move that the Mayor and Council amend the FY21 communications budget in the amount of \$400.



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

11.b) DSP-20004: Applicant's request that City Council waive its Right to Appeal

HCC-10-FY21

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Memo - DSP 20004 Right to Appeal Request](#)

[Applicant Request - Waive City Right to Appeal](#)

[Notification of Planning Board Action on Detailed Site Plan DSP-20004](#)

[DSP-20004 Kaiser Med Bldg - Hyattsv](#)

[2020-88](#)

I move the City Council authorize the Mayor to send correspondence waiving the City's right to appeal Planning Board Resolution Number 2020-88, for the approval of Detailed Site Plan 20004, Riverfront at West Hyattsville Metro - Parcel 1, for the development of a 44,362 square foot medical office building, amending the land-use category to 'Mixed-Use Residential and adding medical laboratory and eating establishment as allowed uses on the subject property. The correspondence shall be submitted to both the M-NCPPC Planning Board and Prince George's County District Council.

Assistant City Administrator Jim Chandler stated that staff and the City attorney had discussed the item at length and reviewed the resolution adopted by the Planning Board that included Council's comments and they had no inclination of an appeal and no intention to contest the waiver of the 10-day waiting period for the applicant.

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

11.c) FY20 PRAR Grant Budget Adjustments and Year end Closeout

HCC-16-FY21

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the FY20 Police Recruitment and Retention year-end budget adjustments and closeout to cover pay-out costs in an amount not to exceed \$9,000 and approved by the Governor's Office of Crime and Prevention.



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City Treasurer Ron Brooks addressed the Mayor and Council stating that response from the Governor's Office of Crime and Prevention was received at nearly the end of the fiscal year and the adjustments to the budget for the grant and would be viewed as a Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) closure upon approval.

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

11.d) Authorization of Correspondence Requesting a Special Session of the Maryland General Assembly

HCC-28-FY21

Sponsor: Solomon

Co-Sponsor(s): Haba, Schaible

[Letter to MDGA HCC-28-FY21 AJones](#)

[Letter to MDGA HCC-28-FY21 BFerguson](#)

I move the City Council authorize the Mayor to send a letter to the Maryland House Speaker and Senate President requesting a special session of the Maryland General assembly to address overriding the Governor's Veto of Kirwan funding, the need for a coordinated statewide COVID-19 response, and police reform to address the disproportionate impact on minority communities.

Councilmember Simasek expressed support for the general intent of the letter but questioned some of the language in the correspondence as there was further clarity required to determine which actions were the responsibility of the State. He sought clarity regarding whether funding would be reallocated to contract security services for schools to which **Councilmember Solomon** responded that it was a request for parameters to be added to allow for additional social workers in schools and it would be left to the discretion of each school district to move forward as they choose.

Ward 2 Councilmember Robert Croslin asked whether the School Board would have the opportunity to provide comment regarding the item to which **Councilmember Solomon** explained that the School Board should be provided the opportunity, but that it was necessary to make decisions regarding citations in the motion during the State budget approval process.

Councilmember Croslin referenced a public comment from earlier in the meeting in which he agreed that schools had done well in their efforts to provide resource officers in schools and reiterated the need to include commentary and input from schools and the School Board

Councilmember Solomon clarified that the motion requested potential changes to the way that funding was allocated and not to move or remove any set funding in its entirety to which **Councilmember Croslin** inquired as to the possibility of amending the language in the correspondence to the Maryland Delegation.



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Ward 1 Councilmember Bart Lawrence expressed confusion regarding the detail of the items of note listed in the correspondence stating that many were substantial, important, and complex issues that Council had not yet discussed to which **Councilmember Solomon** replied that some of the items listed in the correspondence address outside areas that would be experiencing the same challenges from the COVID-19 health emergency and would require a coordinated State response. He continued that adherence to the requests in the letter would provide a framework from the State with which the Council could use to form their own initiatives.

Councilmember Solomon noted that the State Delegation was not in session and, absent of response to the letter, any legislation referenced in the letter would not be acted upon until October of 2021.

Councilmember Lawrence questioned the level of public input that would be available during the discussions implying that more than a time-restricted public comment would be necessary to adequately navigate points of each matter to which **Councilmember Solomon** stated that City Council could not dictate how the State conducted its public outreach and the motion was set forth to compel the Delegation to hold a special session to provide the platform in which the issues could be addressed.

Councilmember Simasek made a motion to amend the language in the correspondence to the Maryland Delegation which was seconded by **Councilmember Solomon** and approved unanimously.

Mayor Hollingsworth announced that she would not be supporting the motion as she believed it went beyond general correspondence to state policy positions that the Body had not yet had the opportunity to discuss. She stated she had no concern with the content of the letter, but stated that the Body should perform due diligence before correspondence was sent.

Amendment approved to augment language in letter to Maryland General Assembly:

~~Reallocation of police funding for armed officers to provide training for security personnel and staff at every school in addition to adequate mental health counselors and social workers.~~

Appropriate allocation of school security funding to include adequate mental health counselors social workers at every school.

RESULT:	APPROVED, AS AMENDED [6 – 2]
MOVER:	Lawrence
SECONDER:	Solomon
AYES:	Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Haba, Solomon, Spell Wolf
NAYS:	Hollingsworth, Lawrence
ABSENT:	Ward, Suiter, Peabody

10.e) Purchase of Vehicles for Police Department

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Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A



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I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the Police Department to purchase six (6) vehicles from Hertricht Fleet Services and upfitting equipment from Global Equipment together in the amount not to exceed \$331,312.

Councilmember Schaible expressed specific interest in the motion stating that the maintenance of the fleet, the cycling in of new vehicles, and the increase of the presence of electric vehicles were all very important steps to achieving a cleaner and safer community. He stated that he would like to hold further discussions regarding the implementation of electric vehicles into the fleet and why there was not a recommendation for electric vehicles for the Police Department.

City Administrator Tracey Douglas stated that it was preferred that the City employ an increasing amount of hybrid and electric vehicles and noted that those types of purchases had been made several times among other departments. She explained that police operated vehicles were subject to additional standards than those of the other departments that make it more difficult to be approved for the use of hybrid and electric vehicles. She explained that three (3) of the six (6) vehicles were hybrid and that staff wanted to gauge their performance before completely committing and that there was concern regarding the recharging times for exclusively electric vehicles.

Hyattsville Chief of Police Amal Awad concurred with the statements of the City Administrator and clarified that the electric motorcycle in the fleet was an administrative vehicle and not one that would be used in the field or for pursuit. Chief Awad stated that there were currently no electric vehicles that met the rating standards to be used as a police vehicle as they did not possess adequate specifications or elements to support the needs of a police department.

Councilmember Schaible expressed his support for further research and a transition to an all-electric fleet and encouraged staff to continue to seek out options and opportunities to move toward that accomplishment.

Councilmember Solomon inquired as to a long-term plan that could eventually result in the majority of City vehicles being hybrid or electric to which Chief Awad reiterated that some hybrid vehicles had been purchased in order to assess their performance with the intention of including them in the fleet and a goal of, at least, a completely hybrid vehicle fleet. She added that staff would continue to monitor emerging technologies that were beneficial to the environment and could perform to the rating standards of a police vehicle.

RESULT:	APPROVED [7 – 0 – 1]
MOVER:	Lawrence
SECONDER:	Haba
AYES:	Hollingsworth, Lawrence, Croslin, Simasek, Haba, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSTAIN:	Schaible
ABSENT:	Ward, Suiter, Peabody



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

12.a) Election 2021 - Proposed Changes to City Charter & Code for an all Vote-by-Mail Election
[HCC-9-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Election Presentation July 20](#)

[Charter Resolution - Changing Day of Election and Organizational Meeting](#)

[Chapter 8 Revisions 7.7.20 SC](#)

[Election Calendar 2021](#)

[2018 VBM Motion](#)

City Clerk Laura Reams introduced the item and provided a background and summary stating that the City of Hyattsville held non-partisan elections every two (2) years and elected officials served staggered, four (4) year terms.

Ms. Reams described the groups that were integral in elections highlighting the Board of Supervisors of Elections, the Ethics Commission, and the City Clerk's office and detailed each of their roles in the process.

Ms. Reams commented on the City's philosophy on voting citing that voting should be easy and convenient, safe, secure, and accessible, and fun. She referenced the initiatives the City had taken to improve elections including voting for 16 and 17 year-olds, early voting, expanded voter outreach, candidate outreach and training, non-U.S. citizen voting, campaign finance reforms, same day voter registration and pop-up polling.

She reported statistics that showed voter turnout over the previous six (6) years and recanted the actions taken by Council to initiate an all vote-by-mail election. City Clerk Reams recognized the national push for vote-by-mail elections and reported that neighboring jurisdictions such as Rockville, MD and New Carrollton, MD had recently implemented vote-by-mail elections and had seen a drastic increase in participation.

Ms. Reams detailed some of the processes and methods of an all vote-by-mail election as well as some advantages and disadvantages. She explained that ballots would be mailed to all registered votes without the requirement of an application or cost for postage, at least one (1) drop box for ballot submission would be available within the City, the implementation of an election day polling location, a partnership with the Post Office and the County, and required infrastructure investments. She identified the advantages of convenience, increased participation, and accuracy against the potential disadvantages of a substantial increase in overall cost, the replacement of a traditional and familiar election, and the possible increase in cost to campaigns and candidate expenditures.

Ms. Reams relayed some of the new aspects that would be evident with the adoption of the new election method citing an associated resolution, recommendations from the Board of Supervisors of Elections, a proposed change to the date of the election, and measures to make voting more



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convenient and accessible and featured a possible timeline that reflected the steps for finalization.

Ms. Reams stated that increased cost was to be expected but opted not to speculate about exact amounts until staff received responses from election management vendors which were sent that week. She showcased the increased costs for vote-by-mail elections for Rockville, MD and New Carrollton, MD as examples and projected that staff would have further recommendations regarding the item at a Council meeting the following October.

City Clerk Reams expressed the importance of safe and secure elections and described the methods in which this could be achieved including investments into American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, semi-permanent, ballot drop off areas that would be under camera surveillance and secure ballot storage and processing location. Ms. Reams added that policies and procedures should have rigid guidelines that included secure ballot design to ensure privacy, a chain of custody for ballot transfers, sound ballot canvas procedures, a transparent ballot return procedure, and a secure mechanism for reissuing ballots.

She reiterated the outreach methods that would be employed in greater detail which addressed reaching out to voters with multiple informational mailings and informational opportunities and public events; establishing accessible information about candidates as well as training for candidates, and the multiple media in with which outreach could be conducted.

Ms. Reams presented an illustrative document that showed a great difference between registered voters in the City compared to voter participation and announced the next steps for the initiation and eventual implementation of an all vote-by-mail election in the City of Hyattsville for 2021.

Councilmember Spell Wolf thanked Ms. Reams for the presentation and all of her efforts on behalf of the City especially regarding elections and recalled initial reluctance for a transition to an all vote-by-mail election due to transparency concerns and the resources required for a successful election. She briefly shared her position on the democratic process, noted other, similar, successes and expressed her support for the measure.

Councilmember Schaible expressed enthusiasm about the item noting that the associated metrics regarding voter turnout were dramatic and speculated about increased civic engagement, overall, being synonymous with an increased voter turnout. He acknowledged the increased cost, but expressed his full support and sought details about the process to which City Clerk Reams described a series of scenarios and how they would be mitigated.

Councilmember Simasek commended Ms. Reams and staff for the efforts thus far contributed and the quality with which it was carried out and requested clarity regarding primary outreach to residents to which Ms. Reams responded that at least one (1) mailing will be sent to every household in the City and that subsequent mailings would be filtered accordingly. She projected that many different outreach methods would be used and expected to use all tools at the City's disposal. **Councilmember Simasek** expressed his full support for the measure.



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Councilmember Solomon thanked Ms. Reams and the Board of Supervisors of Elections for the presentation and their undertaking of a substantial progression of the election process and expressed concerns regarding postmarked ballots and the assurance of all valid votes being recorded to which Ms. Reams explained that much discussion had taken place regarding post marked ballots and referenced Rockville's outreach which gave several early notices about the election that stated that post marked ballots would not be accepted to have that rule received and understood long before election day. She added that ballot boxes were used for almost 50% of ballot submission in Rockville and they had also established a communicative partnership with the post office to spread awareness from multiple perspectives.

Councilmember Solomon proposed the deadline for ballot submission be two (2) to three (3) days after the election to allow for validly submitted ballots to reach their destination and asked how the City was able to identify the voting pool of registered voters to which Ms. Reams responded that it was tracked by those who have registered to vote in the State of Maryland and those who only registered to vote in the City.

Councilmember Solomon and the City Clerk agreed that it was very important to reach and gain as many residents as possible including undocumented members of the community and **Councilmember Solomon** expressed his full support for the measure and endorsed spending whatever amount was necessary to implement an all vote-by-mail election.

Ward 4 Councilmember Edouard Haba expressed support for the item and commented that he was anticipating seeing how the measure would be executed. He expressed his preference that there be two (2) polling places in the City and sought clarity regarding the date of election of the Council President and Vice President to which it was confirmed that those designations would be determined in July 2021 at the first meeting of the new Council.

12.b) Revisions to Chapter 108, Revitalization Tax Credit

[HCC-13-FY21](#)

Sponsor: Hollingsworth

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[03.09.20.Amending.Revitalization.Tax.Credit](#)

[Revitalization Tax Credit](#)

Mayor Hollingsworth introduced the item and provided a background and summary stating that the revision would create tax abatements that would support creation of new affordable units and the rehabilitation of existing units.

Councilmember Simasek sought clarity regarding whether the amended language made a distinction between rental and ownership properties to which **Mayor Hollingsworth** responded that the initial iteration considered rental properties and single-family properties which was revised through discussion to only consider rental properties because it was not clear how the mechanisms available could be used for single-family homes given the nature of their purpose. Assistant City Administrator Jim Chandler provided details regarding tax assessments and other affective variables that could alter fees and revenues.



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Councilmember Simasek suggested working with COG to investigate other affordability metrics other than Area Median Income (AMI) to which Mr. Chandler supplemented that there would be an opportunity to revise the method of research as the affordable housing effort progressed.

14. Community Notices and Meetings

14.a) Main City Calendar: July 21 – August 3, 2020

[HCC-24-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Main City Calendar Jul 21-Aug 3](#)

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

Councilmember Simasek sent best wishes to **Ward 4 Councilmember Daniel Peabody** congratulating he and his family on their newborn child and honored U.S. Congressman John Lewis who had recently passed.

Councilmember Haba reminded residents that pandemic relief gift cards were still available and to contact the City if there were any residents in need.

Councilmember Lawrence advised everyone to stay safe during the COVID-19 emergency.

Councilmember Croslin honored U.S. Congressman John Lewis and shared an instance in which he met the Congressman and how he was affected and expressed hopefulness for change in the world regarding race relations.

15. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:04 p.m.

ATTEST:

September 2, 2020

Laura Reams, City Clerk

Sean Corcoran, Deputy City Clerk