



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Kevin Ward, W1, Interim Mayor
Carrianna Suiter, W3, Council Vice President
Bart Lawrence, W1
Robert Croslin, W2 (*arrived at 6:07 p.m.*)
Danny Schaible, W2
Ben Simasek, W3
Edouard Haba, W4 (*arrived at 6:16 p.m.*)
Daniel Peabody, W4 (*arrived at 6:09 p.m.*)
Joseph A. Solomon, W5

Absent: Erica Spell Wolf, W5

Also present were the following City staff members:
Tracey Douglas, City Administrator
Ron Brooks, City Treasurer
Lesley Riddle, Director of the Department of Public Works
Hal Metzler, Deputy Director of the Department of Public Works
Jim Chandler, Assistant City Administrator
Vivian Snellman, Director of Human Resources
Laura Reams, City Clerk
Adrienne Augustus, Media Relations and Mental Health Programs Manager
Cheri Everhart, Acting Community Services Director
Acting Chief Scott Dunklee, Hyattsville City Police Department

Meeting Notice:

As we continue to take precautions due to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the Hyattsville City Council will hold its meeting on Wednesday, March 24, 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 4 PM on March 24, 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_qJiYUWDDTt6OZI_eqGzCrg

1. Call to Order and Council Roll Call

Interim Mayor Kevin Ward called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

3. Approval of Agenda

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

4. Approval of the Minutes

4.a) Approval of the Minutes

[HCC-265-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Minutes Mar 1 2021 CM FINAL](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council approve the minutes of the Council meeting of March 1, 2021.

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

5. Public Comment (6:10 p.m. – 6:20 p.m.) Complete Speaker Card, Limit 2 minutes per speaker

There were no public comments.

6. Action Items (6:20 p.m. - 6:35 p.m.)

6.a) Authorization to Send Letter to Maryland General Assembly on Pending Police Reform Legislation

[HCC-248-FY21](#)

Sponsor: Solomon

Co-Sponsor(s): Schaible, Simasek, Peabody, Ward

[Council Motion Form Police Reform Letter, 3.19.21](#)

[Police Reform Bills draft letter 031921](#)

[PPSAC Memo on Current MD GA Police Reform Bills](#)

[Maryland-2021-HB108-Introduced](#)

[Maryland-2021-HB120-Introduced](#)

[Maryland-2021-HB411-Introduced](#)

[Maryland-2021-HB522-Introduced](#)

[Maryland-2021-HB537-Introduced](#)

[Maryland-2021-HB670-Introduced](#)



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

[Maryland-2021-HB977-Introduced](#)
[Maryland-2021-SB43-Engrossed](#)
[Maryland-2021-SB178-Introduced](#)
[Maryland-2021-SB245-Introduced](#)

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the Mayor, in consultation with the City Attorney, to send the attached correspondence to the Maryland General Assembly, Prince George's County Municipal Association, and Maryland Municipal League stating the City of Hyattsville's position on the proposed police reform House and Senate bills.

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

7. Presentations (6:35 p.m. - 7:50 p.m.)

7.a) Introduction of the Draft Budget for Fiscal Year 2022 (45 minutes)

[HCC-262-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

For presentation and discussion.

City Administrator Tracey Douglas addressed the Mayor and Council commencing the presentation introducing the Draft Budget for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) and explaining that the item would return before Council three (3) more times before the first reading scheduled for May 3, 2021.

Ms. Douglas announced that the budget was being presented with a \$2.6M revenue shortfall due to the uncertainty associated with the strength of the local economy regarding challenges from the COVID-19 global pandemic. She noted the steps taken by the administration and staff including virtual platforms, a hiring freeze, and other fiscally conservative measures while also continuing to provide services to the community including a vaccine testing site that would become a vaccination site and other charitable events. The City Administrator supplemented that federal funding was pending that would allow the City to be reimbursed for much of the additional costs incurred due to the health crisis.

Ms. Douglas characterized FY22 as a recovery year in which she anticipated the reimplementation of services and programs that had ceased in early 2020 and transferred the presentation lead to City Treasurer Ron Brooks.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

City Treasurer Ron Brooks addressed the Mayor and Council with a review of previous financial actions and data as well as projections for the coming months stating that while large cities suffered substantial negative impacts from the pandemic, small to mid-sized municipalities were able to maintain revenue levels to a fair extent and did not experience incapacitating effects.

Treasurer Brooks displayed an illustrative document containing data related to the City's revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances relaying that tax revenues looked stable, but projections had been decreased in consideration of the lack of economic stimulus. He stated that the City was doing well and in a typical fiscal year the revenues would be higher.

Mr. Brooks reviewed the data further explaining that he estimated small deficits in operating and admission taxes while amusement taxes were determined to be a complete loss of revenue as they were directly tied to the temporarily defunct movie theater. The City Treasurer estimated that revenues would meet projections by the end of the fiscal year and did not expect an increase in revenue going into 2022.

Mr. Brooks reported a loss in every aspect of the category entitled "other revenues" adding that interest earning on income had been consistently dropping the previous five (5) years. He mentioned that the City was expecting federal funding that would help reimburse costs from the health crises stating that they actual appropriations had not yet been determined and he was unable to provide an accurate impact assessment until the amount of funding had been realized.

Treasurer Brooks described that aggregate payroll costs had increased over the previous seven (7) years to approximately \$10.5M which included personnel benefits. Mr. Brooks relayed that, year to date, the City had \$12M in total expenditures with a final expectation nearing \$19M and stated that when the FY20 and FY21 audits were complete, he expected the fund balance would be approximately \$16M. He continued that the City's fund balance was very strong but cautioned that he did not support any reliance on the unencumbered fund balance aside from what had already been used for emergency purposes and the Pandemic Relief Fund that was passed by the Body.

City Administrator Tracey Douglas stated that, even under such challenges, the City continued to accomplish goals and introduced a short presentation reflective of the City's successes before the Department Directors would present their respective budgets. She provided a brief summary of the City's organizational personnel structure, actions taken in response to the COVID-19 health crisis, an overview of previously implemented budget and program highlights, and the prior fiscal year's challenges, successes, and recognitions.

Ms. Douglas reiterated the City's mission, vision, and goals as well as the FY22 programming and budget priorities including staff salaries and benefits, the implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), economic development, investment into City infrastructure, continued programs and services, new communications outreach initiatives, the Speak-Up sustainability Plan, and environmental protection and preservation.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Ms. Douglas displayed the proposed FY22 budget, identified the allocations by department, and transferred the presentation lead to City Clerk Laura Reams to explain the budget details regarding the Mayor and City Council.

City Clerk Laura Reams displayed an overview of the FY22 Mayor's budget explaining that it included a salary increase in accordance with the Compensation Review Committee that passed in 2019 and \$1K for discretionary funding.

Ms. Reams described the budget funding for the City Council stating that the overall budget increased by 9.3% and included funding for COVID-19 relief, professional development, member dues to the Maryland Municipal League (MML), National League of Cities (NLC), and the Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA). She added that money was allocated for contracted services to make the City's Charter and Code easily managed and navigated on the City's website, \$1700 would be allocated to each Ward for discretionary programming, and the issuing of new iPad computers for Councilmembers. Clerk Reams noted that funds had been appropriated to continue the annual Historic Preservation House Tour, the University of Maryland (UMD) bus ridership, Hy-Swap, and other previously regularly scheduled events.

City Treasurer Ron Brooks interjected that COVID-19 relief funding was sourced from the special revenues fund.

City Administrator Tracey Douglas addressed the City Administrator's budget for FY22 citing increased funding for contracts for professional services, retainment of the Emergency Operations Manager, grant training and writing consultation, and various membership dues. Ms. Douglas supplemented that money had been set aside to employ a Race and Equity Agent in collaboration with neighboring areas to share the cost and noted that fees for legal services saw no change.

City Treasurer Ron Brooks led the Finance Department portion of the presentation stating that staffing levels would remain as they were, however, an additional Grants and Procurement position was being explored to fill a vacancy created before the pandemic. Mr. Brooks explained that the proposed payroll increase would be implemented at 3.2% based on the aggregate and that funds for travel and professional training would not be increased.

Treasurer Brooks relayed that he was satisfied with technological resources but awaited the ERP system that would enhance financial research and reporting capabilities and stated that the Department worked with two (2) auditors and, due to the pandemic, performance of the audits required more time and processes had become delayed.

Mr. Brooks stated that expenditures that were reimbursable under the federal Rescue Program were being closely tracked and would save a substantial amount of time when applying for reimbursement funding. He stated that he was readily anticipating the requirements that would be issued by the federal auditor.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

City Clerk Laura Reams addressed the Mayor and Council with a presentation regarding the proposed budget for the Department of Communications and Legislative Services noting that the Department had been compelled to explore creative and innovative ways to conduct operations in consideration of challenges presented due to the COVID-19 virus. Ms. Reams stated that no additional personnel would be requested as the Department had recently hired bilingual communications specialist Yeny Villalta.

Ms. Reams referenced accomplishments of the Clerk's office citing the transition of Council and Committee meetings to a virtual platform which resulted in increased resident participation and awareness. She noted that a new, easily navigable, charter and code service had been implemented on the City's website to allow for extended detail regarding the City's regulations and ordinances as well as the addition of electronic signature capabilities for contracts, correspondence, and legal documentation and a faster, more efficient, production of meeting minutes for public consumption. Clerk Reams expressed that it was an honor to be recognized by the MML for the achievements of the video department and their integral part in communications and outreach.

The City Clerk displayed an illustrative document describing outreach and processes for the 2021 City election as well as associated events and initiatives. She referenced a significant decrease in funds allocated for election activities as FY22 was not an election year but stated that there was potential for a special election after the primary election for which some funding had been allocated.

Ms. Reams stated that the Communications team had been very active and had launched a communications survey which led to a communications plan that was presented to City Council and was near completion. She reported promising increases in social media interaction and the increase of viewers and subscribers and expanded advertising throughout the City as well as well-received videos that highlighted essential workers, new parks and improvements, the 2021 City election, and City services and personnel.

Clerk Reams displayed the FY22 Communications budget stating that the budget remained relatively flat with the most significant adjustment in salaries after the restructuring of the department and noted that funds were to be allocated to strengthen resident engagement, redesign of the City's website, a style guide, and branding.

She continued that the Department would continue to proactively work to enhance public relations and civic engagement and was investigating resources for more streamlined communication to residents. Ms. Reams noted that the team would sustain video production to tell the stories of the community and intended to add more original content while also exploring ways to improve upon the communications system of the Council chambers.

The presentation was transferred to Director of Human Resources Vivian Snellman. Director Snellman indicated that while COVID-19 had impaired some of the Department's operations, she and Human Resources and Special Projects Coordinator Cindy Canfield had many accomplishments in serving 140 employees.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Ms. Snellman stated that no additional staff were being requested for the Human Resources Department, however the City was tentatively planning to hire a Deputy City Administrator, a Director of Community Services, and a Grant and Procurement Officer. She noted that, additionally, staff were looking into hiring a Race and Equity Consultant to be shared with neighboring municipalities and were implementing a police cadet program similar to an internship program.

Director Snellman explained that the Department's messaging was consistent with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prince George's County advisements and guidelines and that limited daily attendance remained at a minimized capacity. She noted that the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allowed for 12 weeks of unpaid leave and a program passed in the Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) budget required the Department to provide a five (5) year review of the plan detailing the various costs to the City.

Ms. Snellman relayed that of the 140 employees, 26 had been employed for 15 years or more and six (6) with more than 30 years. She added that mental health programming would be expanded to include all City staff, employee enrichment programs and compensation would be continued, and that further virtual training, certification opportunities, and professional development were being explored.

Ms. Snellman cited the incoming Enterprise Resource Management (ERP) software explaining that many of the Department's records and files had been digitized to make for easier access and increased efficiency in operations. She relayed that Council requested priorities included a compensation study for personnel, a restructuring of the performance evaluation program, continuation of the work study internship program, launching the police cadet program, reassessment of overtime policies, relief programs, and cost-saving initiatives.

Assistant City Administrator and Director of Community and Economic Development Jim Chandler addressed the Mayor and Council presenting the budget priorities for the Information Technology (IT) Department and stating that the three (3) primary areas of focus were network security, capital project support, and mobilization or workforce. Mr. Chandler noted that City employees had become more adept at requesting support and that IT personnel had been more efficient and prompter in fulfilling requests and managing workflow. He added that the IT Department had also been instrumental in assisting with the needs of the Police Department and the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Mr. Chandler explained that the team was currently in the process of preparing a protocol and plan in response to a technological disaster or crash adding that upon the implementation of the ERP the group would set up access to staff for single sign-on capabilities over multiple software as well as designing and installing the network and hardware infrastructure for both the new DPW facility and the new Police and Public Safety facility.

Director Chandler relayed that the budget would remain operationally flat but they would be exploring options regarding employee training, various platform education programs.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Mr. Chandler reported on the Department of Community and Economic Development (CED) referencing several building and construction projects in the area and conducting business and processes by mostly all virtual means. He noted the progress made in developing an affordable housing plan that would be eventually adopted by Council and described the ways in which the Department had been working closely with Prince George's County to amend the Countywide map with completion anticipated by the end of the fiscal year.

Director Chandler updated the Body regarding the progress made on the Trolley Trail stating that it was currently in phase 2 and expressed confidence that an announcement would come in the following week to allow for the project to proceed with procurement and that groundbreaking would commence at the end of the calendar year.

Mr. Chandler reported that two (2) name changes to area Metro Stations were to occur including the transition to Hyattsville Crossing (HVX) station and that changes to signage and associated wayfinding would be updated to reflect the changes. He stated that plans existed to incorporate a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) consultant to help build a toolkit for existing businesses who intend to serve the City long-term, expanding their business, or would like to volunteer in the City of Hyattsville.

Mr. Chandler cited the triannual economic development business roundtable series stating that it had been very well received and several topics had been discussed by the area's small business leaders and entrepreneurs including ways in which to bring new businesses to the community, share concerns or experiences, and share information regarding COVID-19 relief and grant funding opportunities.

Director Chandler reported on the Code Compliance Department expressing appreciation for their efforts and accomplishments stating that service hours had been expanded to address requests, citations, and concerns during off-peak hours making it easier for property owners license processing. He noted a heavier reliance on online resources that have allowed the Department to be more productive and the implementation of personnel to respond to requests at a faster pace and with more availability.

Mr. Chandler reported on the Parking Compliance Division acknowledging that they had entered the second cycle of the Residential Parking Zone (RPZ) permit program noting that the process had become more streamlined over the previous years since implementation and that, over time, the program had become well-appreciated. He provided details regarding the City's transportation master plan noting that the development of a pedestrian safety action plan and collaboration with the City's DPW to address issues with intersections, roadways, and standards and practices for new construction.

Mr. Chandler stated that outside funding for the rebranding of area Metro stations was likely as the County had identified Prince George's Plaza as one of the top three (3) locations for rebranding, improvement, and upgrades and would also allow for the Department to plan for the next several fiscal years. He stated that the permit program was operating well, and the Code Compliance department would be upgrading ordinance language and virtual accessibility.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Director Chandler cited a slight increase in health-related costs for personnel benefits and relayed that the Department would be seeking grant funding for the City's corridor investment and could expect scheduled replacement costs for capital outlay and referenced the proposed \$8,500 in the budget. He transferred focus to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) stating that the budget would remain relatively flat with increased costs for licensing, hardware, and noted that travel and training would be conducted virtually.

Mr. Chandler explained that a year and a half prior, the City had approximately 80 short-term rentals that were not regulated by the City but were monitored and, since that time, the number had diminished significantly, and it was decided that any funding considered for preparing ordinances or assuming responsibility in any way should not take place in FY22.

He stated that contract services for forced cleanup of properties would increase as operations move away from strict health guidelines and some new hardware purchases would be required. Mr. Chandler spoke about parking compliance stating that staff were exercising cost-saving measures and potential budget cuts over time but would continue to offer services as much as possible dependent on demand and staffing availability. He noted eventual changes to the ticketing fine structure stating that there would be a 15% reduction in revenue and that costs would be incurred for shelter, cleaning and maintenance, parking lot rental, and hardware replacements.

Mr. Chandler communicated the potential of decreased revenue and stated that Code Compliance licensing rental fees would amount to \$20K, while Parking Compliance saw great decreases in parking revenue due to the health crisis and lack of commerce and expected the fiscal year revenue to reach approximately \$180K.

City Administrator Tracey Douglas added that there was a possible opportunity to improve the business district and was hopeful that process could begin in the coming fiscal year.

Cheri Everhart addressed the Mayor and Council regarding the budget proposal for Community Services displaying an illustrative document showing the Department staff structure stating that an additional bus operator had been added by allocating grant funding for enhanced mobility. Ms. Everhart reviewed highlights from the previous fiscal year which included creative initiatives to provide emergency assistance to residents, using virtual means to continue youth services such as mentoring, tutoring, and summer camps, virtual field trips, and charitable donations.

Ms. Everhart reported that volunteer and senior service programs were operational and would continue to support residence during the COVID-19 crisis. She stated that the City continued to receive and distribute food boxes to the community through food drives as well as Meals on Wheels and was able to provide diapers to residents in need.

She noted that the Age Friendly Program continued to prioritize services laid out in the action plan including the implementation of a community survey to identify opportunities to enhance provision services and outreach as was as coordinate distribution and donated smart phones to senior residents.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Ms. Everhart relayed that the FY22 program and budget priorities included a gradual return to social events as the challenges of the health crisis subsided and the Department would explore events and programming, provide leadership for student development, and staff would coordinate the development of a volunteer team to enhance the City's ability to recognize and respond to disaster situations.

Ms. Everhart stated that upon the completion of the new recreation facility, residents would be provided space and resources for tutoring and mentoring. She explained that the previous fall the City secured funding from the Transportation Planning board of the Washington Council with the Enhanced Mobility Program that would allow for two (2) buses with wheelchair accessibility and the hiring of a bus operator for residents of the community.

She described the Age-Friendly priorities which included community initiatives and workshops, identifying partner and national organizations to provide a series of workshops on topics associated with older populations and developing an emergency preparedness registry for vulnerable populations accompanied by technology to identify and expand outreach to senior and vulnerable residents.

Ms. Everhart referenced contracted services as a placeholder due to the uncertainty of public events and cited an increase in funding to further expand the tutoring and mentoring program from three (3) nights a week to five (5) and to include fourth and fifth grade students. Additionally, she reported that contracted service funding had been increased to support the additional participation in the City's subsidized Meals on Wheels program which had seen an increase in participation of over 100%.

Ms. Everhart noted that funding for volunteer services would include materials for ongoing volunteer projects and the development of a certificate program and reiterated that the community survey would be pursued.

City Administrator Douglas expressed her appreciation for the efforts of the Department elaborating on their various accomplishments amid significant challenges.

Director of the Department of Public Works Lesley Riddle addressed the Mayor and Council with the proposed budget acknowledging the difficulty of the year in general and expressing appreciation for the staff and their work. She displayed a photograph of residents who displayed signs of appreciation for DPW outside of their homes.

Ms. Riddle displayed the Department's organizational chart and announced that they would not be requesting any additional staff for the incoming fiscal year. She reported that Department staff were eager to inhabit the new DPW facility, expressed appreciation for the stormwater educational workshops, and cited the purchase of a new all electric trash truck that was expected to be in use by May 2021.

Director Riddle highlighted the work of Superintendent of Safety and Services Mike Schmidl reporting that he was responsible for retrofitting several of the areas parking lots with solar powered lights and referenced the residents' appreciation for bulk trash pick up services. Ms.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Riddle noted that composting in coordination with the County continued and spoke about efforts to ensure efficiency and safety. She relayed that playground maintenance and deep cleaning of City facilities would continue and stated that for FY22 the Department expected the design and construction of the new Police and Public safety facility, the installation of Portland Loos, bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements, a five (5) and 10-year canopy restoration in which a study was being conducted with the intention of making recommendations to Council in the following months.

Ms. Riddle reported that administrative costs would remain flat as the Department was able to make some expense reductions, contract certain services to minimize costs, and reduced supplies and materials substantially. She cited a small increase in sanitation operations mostly related to the new DPW facility, a small reduction in funding for vehicle maintenance, and relayed that staff were eager to include the City's police vehicles in their vehicular maintenance. Director Riddle added that funding for parks had been increased to allow for tree planting but, ultimately, the Department's budget would remain relatively static.

Acting Hyattsville City Chief of Police Scott Dunklee addressed the Mayor and Council with a review of the Department's proposed FY22 budget stating that no additional personnel would be sought but they were monitoring the expected 25% increase in the City's population due to new development projects.

Chief Dunklee explained that the Department sought a Dispatch Manager as an additional staff member to allow for dispatchers to address other areas and allow for more resources and overall competence. He expressed eagerness on behalf of the Department for the completion of the new Police and Public Safety building detailing efforts to improve the City's camera surveillance program and reimbursements from the County for overtime hours due to increased need for law enforcement.

The Acting Chief stressed the importance of traffic safety programs and pedestrian safety, a review and upgrade of the Departments general orders to remain consistent with the best practices throughout the country. He stated that crime and foster service had decreased over the prior year while speeding and vehicular citations had increased.

Chief Dunklee described several ways in which the Department entertained different methods of containment and de-escalation, increased training to address mental health crises, and Crisis Intervention Partners (CIP) training noting that it was not required by any governmental entity and referenced an incident involving an individual suffering from a mental health episode which was successfully resolved by exercising the related training that was received and also received attention from local media.

Chief Dunklee cited the 21st Century Policing Initiatives and brought attention to the Department's facility dog, Nola, who was trained to be a helpful and calming presence in the time of crisis stating that her presence was helpful at a recent building fire and at the COVID-19 vaccination sites.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

The Acting Chief reported that the Department was understaffed but they continued to recruit a diverse team under high standards. He stated that the entire Department was working several extra hours out of necessity and that a cadet program was being implemented to provide further support and serve as a pipeline for future officers.

He stated that examinations and assessments of officers would be performed on a regular schedule as well as access to mental health wellness programming and said that the additional funds required for the Media Relations Specialist would come from the speed camera budget. He described that the investigative team had increased from two (2) officers and a sergeant to four (4) investigators and a sergeant which was allowing for the closing of several open cases and more efficiency overall.

Chief Dunklee expressed interest in slightly increasing patrol services and the responsibilities of a dispatcher to manage and maintain the speed camera operations.

City Treasurer Ron Brooks explained that the speed camera budget was based on a contracted third-party vendor and that an increase in revenue was expected. Mr. Brooks explained that red light cameras were managed in the same way and, similarly, remained financially consistent for multiple years.

City Administrator Tracey Douglas added that the Maryland Criminal Intelligence Network (MCIN) was initiated in Hyattsville and that neighboring areas quickly followed suit followed by involvement from the County noting that the City lost funding due to the rapid growth of the program but still maintained some participation.

Ms. Douglas stated that she was hopeful to receive grant funding for the proposed mental health programs for City personnel reporting that meetings with County officials were planned to explore options and thanked officers for their continued efforts and extended hours which had been amplified by the COVID-19 testing center and charitable events such as food drives.

Ms. Douglas displayed a document containing data related to the FY22 – FY26 Capital improvement budget to which City Treasurer Ron Brooks commented that the Capital Improvements Program was a capital plan which was paid for predominantly out of the City's general fund.

Administrator Douglas detailed some of the ways in which the City obtained grant funding to minimize cost noting that partnerships and collaborations had decreased expenses by approximately \$2M supplemented by an RFP process that supported competitive bidding and options for service.

Ward 4 Councilmember Edouard Haba inquired as to the constant yield to which City Treasurer Ron Brooks responded that the constant yield was 1% above the recommended constant yield and was expected to result in \$495K mentioning some adjustments and various effects due to the volume of development in the region.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Councilmember Haba sought clarity regarding the increased estimated assessed evaluation for tax base to which Mr. Brooks replied that assessments were rising noting increases in tax revenue and explained that the estimated revenue for 2022 had been exceeded and those revenues ultimately affect the designation of the constant yield.

Ward 5 Councilmember Joseph Solomon sought details regarding “AirBnB” revenues and whether revenue sharing or a mechanism for surcharges existed to which Mr. Brooks stated that, while he would need to perform more research, the municipality was to receive a 25% return from surcharges that would go to public safety purposes. He added that it was approximately three (3) to four (4) years prior that Hyattsville had received and revenue from the County and that he would follow up to see if any more money was owed.

Councilmember Solomon reiterated the request for clarity regarding amounts owed to the City from the County to which Mr. Brooks explained the complexity of the process and noted that resolution would come over time.

City Administrator Tracey Douglas supplemented that staff were waiting for the State to complete their budget cycle before entering into meetings to resolve the unpaid funds issue.

Ward 2 Councilmember Danny Schaible requested details regarding the federal American Rescue Plan Act grant funding noting that it could be used to cover the costs for hazard pay, food donation, security at the vaccination site, and COVID-19 relief related expenses spent in the FY21 budget cycle. Ms. Douglas responded that staff were in talks with officials regarding the receipt of funds under the federal act and regulations allowed for those funds to be spent through the end of 2024. She stated that the funding required thorough oversight to ensure that it was being used in appropriate areas and for allowable applications.

8. Council Dialogue (7:50 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.)

Councilmember Haba reminded residents about the 2021 City election and encouraged all to register and vote.

Councilmember Solomon thanked staff for their efforts and commended the cadet program being developed by the Hyattsville City Police Department.

Ward 4 Councilmember Daniel Peabody thanked the staff for their hard work and expressed appreciation for the services performed and organization of the COVID-19 testing center.

Ward 1 Councilmember Bart Lawrence recognized the staff for their committed and efficient work and performance and reiterated the importance of being diligent during the pandemic.

Ward 3 Councilmember Ben Simasek stated that he was grateful for the staff and expressed that they set the standard for production and progression.

Councilmember Schaible thanked the staff and acknowledged recent mass shootings in the country imploring that changes were needed to prevent future tragedies.



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, HYATTSVILLE MD
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021 6:00 PM

Interim Mayor Ward thanked the staff and encouraged all to maintain cautionary measures during the health crisis.

9. Community Notices and Meetings

9.a) Main City Calendar March 25 - April 5, 2021

[HCC-266-FY21](#)

Sponsor: At the Request of the City Administrator

Co-Sponsor(s): N/A

[Main City Calendar Mar 25 - April 5, 2021 FINAL](#)

10. Motion to Adjourn

RESULT:	APPROVED, AS AMENDED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Croslin
SECONDER:	Schaible
AYES:	Ward, Suiter, Lawrence, Croslin, Schaible, Simasek, Haba, Peabody, Solomon, Spell Wolf
ABSENT:	None

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

ATTEST:
May 17, 2021

Laura Reams, City Clerk

Sean Corcoran, Deputy City Clerk