



# Town of Capitol Heights

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**TOWN COUNCIL  
PUBLIC SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
September 13, 2021  
7:00 PM**

<b>Meeting Purpose:</b> Mayor and Town Council Work Session		
<b>Date:</b> 09/13/2021	<b>Time:</b> 7:15 PM	<b>Room:</b> Teleconference
<b>Chair:</b> Renita A. Cason, Mayor Pro Tem		<b>Scribe:</b> Acting Town Clerk – Robin Bailey-Walls
<b>Call-in Number:</b> (301) 715-8592 Meeting ID: 960 1200 3975		<b>Password:</b> 487704

*P= present; E = Excused Absence T = present via teleconference; A= absence (not excused) R= Resident G = Guest*

Chair/Voting Members:			
<b>T</b>	Mayor Pro Tempore – Renita A. Cason		Town Administrator – Beverly Habada <b>T</b>
<b>T</b>	Council Member Rhonda A. Akers		Acting Town Clerk – Robin Bailey-Walls <b>T</b>
<b>T</b>	Council Member Caroline Brown		
<b>T</b>	Council Member LaTonya Chew (arrived late)		
<b>T</b>	Council Member Faith T. Ford		
<b>T</b>	Council Member Elaine Williams		
Guests/ Residents			
<b>R</b>	James Brown		Monica Johnson <b>R</b>
<b>R</b>	Netina Finley		Former CM Linda Monroe <b>R</b>
<b>R</b>	Mr. Guttierz		Chris Stevenson <b>G</b>

## PUBLIC SESSION MINUTES

- **Call to Order:** Mayor Pro Tem – Renita A. Cason
- **Roll Call:** Robin Bailey-Walls, Acting Town Clerk
- **Non-Denominational Prayer – CM Ford**
- **Pledge of Allegiance - All**
- **Approval of the Agenda – Council**
  - **CM Akers Motioned to approve the agenda; Seconded by CM Brown with a friendly amendment to get a copy of the Zoom recording to verify the language; Council approved the agenda**
- **Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 7, 2021 Work Session – Council**
  - No Motion was made to approve the minutes
  - Motion to discuss by CM Ford; Seconded by CM Williams
    - CM Ford inquired about CM Chew statement under #8 regarding Bates Trucking; Clarification she is happy with their service
    - Also asked to be excused from the last meeting due to technical difficulties; No Motion was made to excuse CM Ford’s absence
    - CM Williams requests full disclosure regarding Bates; have more detailed discussions
- **Legislative Items – None**
- **Public Comments**
  - **Chris Stevenson** announced his candidacy to fill the soon to be vacant seat of Delegate Erik Barron.



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- **Ms. Finley**
  - Inquired about the minutes and links on the website
  - Concern about trash and recycle cans being left out on the street; what is the requirement for them to be properly stored after pickup has occurred?
  - Rolling agenda needed
  - Inquiry about dog park regarding the walking path to extend with new development
- **TA Habada** – Will alert Property Standards to resolve trash and recycling issue, re: trash cans
- **Mr. Guttierz**
  - Police force less visible around the Metro
  - An elderly man left human waste on his property; he called for Police assistance; no response
- **Chief Cummings**
  - In the process of rebuilding the police department – seven new hires
  - Chief will come out to investigate
  - Department is not 24/7 yet. They are on duty everyday
- **CM Cason** – Can you explain the call system?
- **Chief Cummings** – A call broadcast is sent out to Capitol Heights Police; if they aren't available to assist; PG County is the back up. They have not been as responsive; A meeting is scheduled with the new Commander to discuss this
- **Former CM Linda Monroe**
  - What are the hiring practices; protocol for hiring
  - Should have been done by Resolution
  - ATA hired with authority
  - TA makes recommendation and Council votes on
- **CM Cason** – Prefers not give her comments right now; This Administration has done both; This discussion should come to a Work Session then a Public Session
- **CM Williams** – We have options. We use the tools we need to; This is what was proposed at that time
- **CM Ford** – Requested Article C2 be read from the personnel manual
- **TA Habada** read Article C2
- **CM Cason** – ATA Miller came back before the Council with a personnel action; the body voted and a Resolution for the laborers was done. I can't agree with CM Williams.
- **CM Akers** – There was a conversation with the Attorney. We have done things differently and things were never corrected. Documentation is very important and should have been passed on. We do want to do thing correctly.
- **CM Cason** - Documentation at Town Hall; as stated there have been inconsistent practices; ATA did correct the problem
- **CM Akers** – Yes, add to the Work Session and the rolling agenda
- **CM Brown** – A lot of documentation is missing at Town Hall; Looking for the new TA to help get things back on track; everyone on the same page
- **CM Williams** **Motioned on a continue the discussion of hiring and provide documentation at a Work Session; Seconded by CM Brown; Agreed by all Council**
- **Monica Johnson** –
  - Has made a request to have documentation on the funds spent on the Town Attorney for removal of Mayor Maldon – TA Habada will follow through on this
  - Hiring practices – New employees just appear; needs to be a consistent practice
  
- **Senior Management Reports** –
  - TA Habada
    - Getting the TA office set up and learning the workflow in Town Hall for mail, financial matters, how to use the phone system, and taking resident phone calls for service.
    - Calls were received from residents who needed a trash can repaired or replaced. Their names and addresses were placed on a list with others who had called in about their trash cans; A resident on Brenner who was having a parking problem with neighbors parking too close to their driveway and who reported a streetlight that was out and the No parking signs on the opposite side of the street were missing. This was referred to the police department to check the parking and location of the street light that was out in order to report it to PEPCO; A resident on Opus calling about trees from a neighbor growing into the yard. A call from received



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from a resident on Southern Avenue requesting action on the number of cars that have been hit from traffic on Southern Avenue who requested a stop sign. This was referred to the Police Department for follow up; A resident on Clovis stopped by Town Hall to report over grown grass at a property that had been renovated and another property that appeared to be occupied by squatters. This was referred to the Property Standards Authority staff.

- New Town software Citibot will be the place where citizen requests will be recorded. Town staff is setting up a time for training on this software to start the process of entering citizen requests for service into a database that is retrievable.
- Meetings held/scheduled for Green Street on August 24th, September 2<sup>nd</sup> and September 7<sup>th</sup>. There's a September 21<sup>st</sup> virtual meeting scheduled with the County DHCD staff and Toole Design.
- Modular building – August 26<sup>th</sup> was the first virtual meeting with Carlton Wilkins, Barry Caison, Ben Dyer, Police Chief Cummings and CM Williams. Other meetings were held on September 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Town staff will be taking charge of the bidding out of the construction for the modular building.
- Meetings with Councilmembers requested; Councilmember Williams and CM Chew so far Councilmember Akers this week
- Coming up in September - Ride along with police staff on a Saturday night
- Recommended having a Town Hall – opportunity for me to meet residents and Council to take public comment
- Personnel Changes – Four new police officers were sworn in on August 24, 2021; Charles Simpson was appointed Director of Neighborhood Services (NSD) for Public Works (only) as of September 6, 2021; PSA as the other part of NSD will report to the TA; Former Town Clerk Robin Bailey-Walls has returned as Acting Town Clerk and has accepted full time status with the title of Town Clerk/Asst. Town Administrator to establish the chain of command for Town Staff in the absence of the TA.
- Discussion per CM Chew of the Public Works trailer; no AC or running water; Cost of repair is \$2522 for AC only. I've made the decision to close the trailer and PW will operate out of the multi-purpose room in the interim.
- Instituted process for staff requests for legal services; business license currently charges \$125 for churches; no other municipalities charge a fee for churches; There is a business with an incomplete license application and no Use and Occupancy Permit; they haven't been cooperative.
- Audit Status – I've received a list of items requested by the auditors. Some of my second and third week have been spent with Minerva Phillips and Robin Bailey-Walls assisting in gather the requested materials.

**CM Williams** – Quite a report; Asked about modular building movement; Include in Citibot meeting

**CM Ford** – CARES funds for Citibot? Reorg in NDS – Hiring process? Work Session- TA Protocol

**CM Chew** – Great report; Modular meeting; concrete contract in place; Reach out to the Attorney

**TA Habada** – Rescue money status – Funds are I the bank; Council hasn't allocated them yet; These funds have to be included in the budget; October 31<sup>st</sup> report dues expenditure of funds deadline is 2024. There are three upcoming initiatives; lots of money coming; i.e.: Federal Infrastructure funding.

**CM Chew** – Wants a separate account for the American Rescue funds; place on a Work Session for discussion

**CM Brown** –

- Requested an email reminder for meetings with contractors
- Previously requested summary of expenditures and current balance of the 1.6 M loan

**CM Akers** – Very educational report; include me in the Citibot discussion; What's the status of the Call-A-Bus

**TA Habada** –

- Mr. Simpson is in the process of getting a cost estimate for the bus repairs
- COVID – looking at protocol to open safely; what is Council's priority?
- Kenneth Warren's tech savvy is greatly appreciated

**Chief Cummings** –

- Chief's Community Council: Will be adjusted to find better dates and times, to get better participation after COVID 19 social distancing is lifted.
- The Capitol Height Police Department has hired and a total of seven (7) officers. These new officers replaced the officers who left the department earlier in the year. This has been a huge undertaking due to the large number of new hires at one time, and the training and adjusted of our normal patrol hours and patrol patterns. The Department will begin its normal patrol in mid- October, after the new officers are released from Field Training.



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- The members of the Capitol Heights Police Department are continuing its efforts to have officers conduct foot patrols throughout the communities within the Town of Capitol Heights. This is a great opportunity for the new officers to get to know the citizens of Capitol Heights, and the citizens to get to know our new officers.
- The Capitol Heights Police Department will also continue its investigation of the incident.
- On August 24, 2021 the Capitol Heights Police Department had a swearing in ceremony for Ofc. T. Goode, Ofc. D. Lowery and Ofc. A. Thomas.
- On September 8, 2021 officers of the Capitol Heights Police Department conducted traffic direction and welcomed the students of Capitol Heights Elementary and Doswell Brooks Elementary Schools.
- The Capitol Heights Police Department has received three new Ford Explorer Patrol vehicles to add to its existing fleet.  
**CM Brown** – With the shooting in Town, are you linked to County databases  
**Chief Cummings** – Yes, data system reports are available.

**CM Chew** –

- Highview Place concerns expressed about speeding; 70 to 85 MPH in that area
- Running of Stop sign by services such as Amazon and FedEx
- Police stayed in vehicles rather than making a presence at Doswell School on the first day

**Chief Cummings** – Will address these issues; officers were directed to get out and meet the students and staff at the schools

**CM Ford** – Website needs to be addressed; Explorers Program

**Chief Cummings** – The website does need updating; I have identified an officer to manage the Explorers Program.

- **Action Item Tracker Discussion/Additions - Mayor Pro Tem Cason**

**CM Akers** – No additions

**CM Brown** – No additions; Plan to address Action Item Tracker in a Work Session

**CM Chew** – No Additions

**CM Ford** –

- Virtual Meeting Protocol – Feedback required; add to Tracker for the Work Session on the 20<sup>th</sup>
- Website for Committees – add input
- Communication and Out Reach – lack of participation

**CM Williams** – Add Hiring/Documentation to Work Session

- **Council Announcements**

**CM Williams** – Community, Health and Environment meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday from (:30am to 10:30 AM; Provide a website link for food vendor- Abundant Life Market; Brooks Road organizational meeting again; possible collaboration; First Baptist Listening Session; October Safety Month; Domestic Violence; Roe vs Wade legislation- Will we take a stand? Prioritize document of history-Committee work; Propose to engage technology; PEG Funds; Motion Picture at Town Hall on October 1<sup>st</sup>;

**CM Akers** – NSD Safety Committee- Domestic Violence Zoom Conference with Ms. Twyman; Working on virtual dates for the Young Explorers; Public Safety Night – Working with Charles Simpson

**CM Ford** – Toastmasters 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday@6pm; Raffle for new members; Kindles for the first 10 people who register; New leadership for the Committee

**CM Brown** – Resume Charter Meetings for the end of September and October; Citizens have requested classes which are forthcoming; Newsletter – upcoming; Bingo activities requested using COVID guidelines

**CM Chew** – Town Hall Meeting again

**CM Williams Motion to advertise a Town Hall on October 1<sup>st</sup>**

**CM Brown – Friendly amendment for a later date in October**

**CM Williams – Motioned for a Town Hall on November 5<sup>th</sup>; Seconded by CM Brown; Listening Session**

**CM Brown** – Outside and on Zoom

**CM Ford** – Make meetings more resident friendly; add space for open discussions for them on current meetings; No COVID Plan- Keep residents safe

**CM Chew** – Still have Town Hall as opposed to meetings

**CM Akers** – I agree with CM Chew; Should be held

## Vote

<b>CM Akers</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>CM Brown</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>CM Chew</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>CM Ford</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>CM Williams</b>	<b>Yes</b>



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**Vote Carries 5/0**

**TA Habada** – Safety measures will be in place; wear masks and social distance.

**XV. Adjournment**

**CM Ford Motioned to adjourn; Seconded by CM Akers; All in agreement; Meeting adjourned at 10:48PM**

APPROVED