



# Town of Capitol Heights

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**TOWN COUNCIL**  
**SPECIAL MEETING Minutes**  
**January 13, 2022**  
**6:30 PM to 7:20PM**

<b>Meeting Purpose:</b> Town Council – Special Meeting – Peace Walk/Ethic Commission Recruiting		
<b>Date:</b> January 13, 2022	<b>Time:</b> 6:45 PM	<b>Room:</b> Teleconference
<b>Chair:</b> CM Elaine Williams		<b>Scribe:</b> Acting Town Clerk – Robin Bailey-Walls
<b>Call-in Number:</b> (301) 715-8592 Meeting ID: 853 1701 4485		<b>Password:</b> 813940

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

Chair/Voting Members:			
<b>A</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		
<b>A</b>	Council Member Faith T. Ford		
<b>T</b>	Council Member Elaine Williams		
Guests/ Residents			
<b>R</b>	James Brown		

I. Call to Order: CM Williams

II. Roll Call: Robin Bailey-Walls, Acting Town Clerk

**CM Akers** asked if Mr. Brown would announce himself as part of the roll call.

**Acting Town Clerk** asked Mr. Brown to answer that he’s on the call.

**Mr. Brown** responded by stating he was in attendance. **(Conversation at 2:30)**

**Acting Town Clerk** asked if CM Williams would explain the rescheduling of the parade as some Council may have not read the email sent by Chief Cumming regarding the parade. **(Conversation at 2:48)**

**CM Williams** shared that the effort is to prepare for the parade and to be in concert with the Council as to this being a Town effort. This a county event and it seems we have some late breaking news. She asked the Acting Town Clerk to reveal the latest that will impact the conversation. **(Conversation at 3:00)**

**Acting Town Clerk** stated Chief Cummings sent out an email to Council alerting Council that the event had rescheduled for February 21, 2022. The event was rescheduled due to parade permitting issues and because of the inclement weather forecast. **(Conversation at 3:40)**

**CM Williams** stated the question for today is our involvement in the parade and the establishing of the board that can respond the crowd that we expect. She asked CM Brown to share the initiative of the parade; what it



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has to do with us and then I'd like to get our vote on how we will participate in the parade. **(Conversation at 4:20)**

III. Discuss the Peace Walk; logistics for Martin Luther King Birthday Parade –

**Council CM Brown** discussed the parade is a celebration for peace for Martine Luther King and therefore the parade route will start at the Town of Capitol Heights, which was won over and she's appreciative it's starting at the Town of Capitol Heights. It is a peace march and it will be via vehicle; we will stop at the different municipalities. We will get out and wave to a couple of people. They have things planned and then we'll get back in to the cars and move forward to the next municipality. A piece of great importance is that historical information was shared through the conference calls. She didn't know that the Martin Luther King Avenue that is off of 704 is the longest in the DMV area. It went all the way back to the 1940's. She stated that was an important piece of information. She's hoping that Council joins in this great celebration. There are other municipalities and this is a great way to talk positive about that we're doing great things and that we're uniting and networking with other municipalities and other advocates. She thinks this is a great thing. **(Conversation at 4:54)**

**Motion by CM Brown** that we push this forward on behalf of the Town of Capitol Heights and work together as a unit.

**CM Akers** asked for clarification of CM Brown's Motion as CM Brown stated push this forward; was she speaking of the parade? **(Conversation at 7:02)**

**CM Brown** responded yes, and work together as a Council **(Conversation 7:11)**

**CM Akers** asked for the Motion to be restated. **(Conversation at 7:30)**

**CM Brown** restated the **Motion to be on the same accord as a full Council and work together with the Martin Luther King parade and PG County (Conversation 7:31); Seconded by CM Akers (Seconded at 8:31)**

**No Objections. Vote passes 3/0.**

**CM Brown** discussed the mural that's going to be produced. She stated if Council remembers there was going to be a mural produced for the Town of Capitol Heights that has all the Council on it. During the Town of Capitol Heights parade mixed with the Juneteenth parade there were some individuals that noted the mural and they thought it was so amazing so they chose the one that was in the Town of Capitol Heights to request that this individual do one for PG County. It will end up I, she didn't know if it will Alsobrooks or with one of the higher officials and it will go in to history. She has included some of the Council and some of the police department. There are a lot of high officials that are going to be there. She definitely wanted the Council to know that. This will be an historical thing that we're doing. **(Conversation began at 9:46)**

IV. Recruiting Ethics Commission members – Council

**CM Williams** stated there has been a need to have our Ethics Board report to the Ethics Commission who serves in the Town of Capitol Heights. We've not yet gathered that body. The opportunity to gather that body is here when we have people with expertise and skill levels beyond those that we know; people coming to our town for this parade. We formally planned 9AM to 10AM as a time when the Town of Capitol Heights will be able to greet people. Can we offer the opportunity to be on the Ethics Board for the Town of Capitol Heights on that day; to have people sign-up? She needs the consensus and the thoughts to the Council. That's what the connection between the parade and the Ethics Board development looks like. **(Conversation 10:42)**

**CM Akers** asked if CM Williams could explain more in detail the Ethics Board and the parade? She's having an issue connecting the Ethics Board with the parade **(Conversation at 12:21)**



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**CM Williams** responded the Ethics Board's members are commissioned to come together on a regular basis as needed to decide on how morally, how correct things are being done. It would be the effort to have people sit on that commission; some would be neighbors; some maybe have a skill level that's outside of our neighbors; some may have experience on Ethics Boards elsewhere. They would be helpful; they could guide it. People are here for the parade. Her vision is that there is a sign-up sheet for not only the Ethics Board but also anything else that we may have that people may be interested in. The Ethics Board relates to the parade in that the parade brings people. People bring notoriety; notoriety brings information. If we take the opportunity to market the fact we need an Ethics Board, we can get names of people that are interested and begin to build from there.

**(Conversation at 12:43)**

**CM Akers** asked if CM Williams is saying we need to establish an Ethics Board anyway and as she stating now is the time to establish an Ethics Board?

**CM Williams** replied yes.

**CM Akers** suggested there needs be a protocol on how we're going about establishing one. **(Conversation 14:21)**

**CM Chew** stated there is already a process in place. She thinks the only thing we have to do now is solicit for people who would like to join the Ethics Board. There is already a process in place that we used when we tried to get the Board established about two years ago. She suggested reverting back to that process as opposed to trying to re-invent the wheel. We can just review that process and use that process going forward.

**(Conversation at 15:04)**

**CM Brown** stated that she thinks that process was denied by the State. So, we have to first of all find out why the State denied the process and to make sure that even if we use pieces of that, that we're not using pieces that the State denied. She does agree that we should not re-invent the wheel but take that and make it stronger. She thinks that what CM Williams was stating is that while we have the opportunity to for residents to partake in the parade, we should have a table there to get people to sign-up for the Ethics Board. She thinks we need to go further than that and suggested having a separate flyer that goes to every resident. Any Boards we want to create for the town We need to do that. **(Conversation at 15:48)**

**CM Akers** stated she's understanding that we did have or we attempted to have an Ethics Board but the State denied the Ethics Board. Her question is if the Ethics Board was supposed to be established two years ago, when did the State deny the Board? This is something we could have been working on a lot sooner than now. Is there any penalty for having the Ethics Board denied considering the time that it took the Town to get another Ethics Board? Was there a deadline because this is first time, I'm hearing that State denied the Ethics Board? I think CM Cason was on that committee. Please let me know if I'm understanding right. She requested that if she's wrong, please correct her. **(Conversation 17:38)**

**CM Chew** stated this is her first-time hearing about the State denying the process for the Ethics Board. From her understanding the reason the Board wasn't established was because some Council Members had reservations of the people selected to be on the Ethics Board. That's why we didn't implement t h e people for the Board and that's why we didn't have an Ethics Board. I've never heard the Ethics Board process was denied. This is my first time and she's with Council Woman Akers; can someone please shed light on that? **(Conversation at 18:56)**

**TA Habada** stated the first Ordinance that Council passed in 2017 didn't pass muster with the State Ethics Commission and the effort in 2018 was to correct what needed to be corrected in the 2017 Ordinance. We sent the 2018 Ordinance that was adopted over to the Town Attorney to confirm with the State's Ethics Commission that they have received that Ordinance and approved it. Therefore, it's valid. We don't have anything in the files



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to indicate that the second Ordinance has been rejected. It was the first Ordinance that was rejected and it was modified in 2018. We've asked the Town Attorney to confirm what the status is of the 2018 Ordinance that was adopted by the Council. That went to him on Tuesday. She has not heard back from him yet. The Ordinance passed in 2018 is valid until she hears otherwise that it's not. **(Conversation at 19:57)**

**CM Williams** stated the 2017 Ordinance had been challenged and the 2018 seems to have passed muster. We're in the process of verifying it. With those things in mind, do we have a Motion? **(Conversation at 21:39)**

**CM Brown** thanked TA Habada for that update. She just remembered the last time the Attorney spoke he indicated that it had not passed. She's not sure if it's 2017 or 2018 so she thanked TA Habada for update. She stated we'll definitely have to find out if the 2018 is in good standing. That's good to know to see if we have to start at a certain point. **(Conversation at 22:21)**

**TA Habada** thinks they have time now and between the February the 21st deadline to before she gets a response back from the Attorney on whether it's valid or you need to pass additional legislation to make it conform to what the State Commission requires. She suggested not stopping the process of getting interest to fill the Town Ethics Commission. She thinks you can go ahead and if you have to pass an Ordinance to fix some deficiencies you can go ahead and do that. She thinks it's already been solved. We'll find out when Mr. Best checks in with the State Commission. **(Conversation 23:02)**

**CM Williams** reminded Council of the time left as there's a Charter Review meeting to follow. She asked for a Motion as to how to proceed with the Ethics Board recruitment. **(Conversation at 23:52)**

**CM Brown Motioned to set-up a committee to start the process of the Ethics Board recruitment; Seconded by CM Akers.** CM Williams as if there were any objections. CM Brown clarified this is to make sure we're in accordance with what the State requires. The State is saying we need an Ethics Board so, together we work with that as a unit to make sure we have an Ethics Board and we're following all the rules and guidelines of the State. She didn't want the message mis-interpreted **(Conversation at 24:16).**

**CM Williams asked if there were other questions or comments. CM Williams stated the Motion has been properly Motioned and Seconded; No Objections. The Motion was passed. (Conversation at 25:44)**

**CM Williams** asked if there's anything that needed to be added to the agenda since the 17<sup>th</sup> date has been cancelled. After tonight our next meeting will be on the 18<sup>th</sup> **(Conversation at 26:22)**

**TA Habada** stated that right now we have the public protocol on there. We have review of the Engineer/Surveyor proposals; annexation of the Metro site; Mid-year review and budget amendment and she's asked for a Closed Session to discuss legal Counsel for final adoption of legal agreements. We'll finalize it tomorrow. There are no guarantees on the one firm that she'll be able to pin down them by tomorrow. **(Conversation at 26:55)**

**CM Williams** asked if there's acceptance with the agenda changes. She asked if there are any objections. No objections. She thanked everyone for participating.

## V. Adjournment

**CM Brown Motioned to adjourn; Seconded by CM Akers; Meeting adjourned at 7:17PM (Conversation at 31:37)**