



**HERNDON TOWN COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 18, 2023**

The Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, July 18, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Herndon Council Chambers Building, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were: Mayor Sheila Olem, Vice Mayor Clark Hedrick, and Councilmembers Naila Alam, Cesar del Aguila, Pradip Dhakal, and Keven LeBlanc.

Councilmember Donielle M. Scherff was absent.

Staff present during the meeting: William H. Ashton II, Town Manager; Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney; Chief Maggie DeBoard, Herndon Police; Cindy Roeder, Director of Parks and Recreation; Marjorie Sloan, Director of Finance; Scott Robinson, Director of Public Works; Dave Bracamonte, Systems Manager; and Margie Tacci, Deputy Town Clerk.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Olem called the July 18, 2023, Town Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Olem led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Determination of a Quorum

Mayor Olem determined there was a quorum of six Councilmembers, with Councilmember Scherff absent.

Mayor Announcements

Mayor Olem offered kudos to the Departments of Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and Herndon Police Department for hosting another successful Independence Day Celebration at Bready Park.

Mayor Olem stated that she wanted to publicly congratulate Town Manager William H. Ashton II, Director of Community Development Lisa Gilleran, and everyone on her team, as the Town of Herndon was awarded the Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for \$720,000 to go toward the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mayor Olem reminded those participating in tonight's meeting to follow the Town's meeting guidelines that are displayed in the Council Chambers.

3. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/COMMENTS

a. Town Manager Report

William H. Ashton II, Town Manager, commented on the RAISE Grant that Mayor Olem mentioned in her announcements. He said they had their first conference call that day to discuss the grant, and Ms. Gilleran told him that the acceptance rate for the grant was a very competitive ten percent.

Mr. Ashton announced that the Town launched its new website yesterday and there are placards with this information posted in English and Spanish in public locations throughout the Town. He pointed to the robust translation service on the new website and stated that he looked forward to getting feedback from the community.

Mr. Ashton stated that over the past few weeks, Comstock and staff have been working to update Comstock's lighting plan to align their building permits with current codes. He is meeting with Comstock on Thursday, and he will share any significant information from that meeting with the Council.

b. Councilmember Comments

Councilmember del Aguila: thanked the Town Manager and his staff for their leadership and support of last week's Strategic Planning meeting. He thanked his colleagues for participating in the meeting and appreciated the ideas that came out of it. He looked forward to the next Strategic Planning meeting to discuss these ideas.

Councilmember del Aguila stated that yesterday evening, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC), a group of which he is Chair, met. He will update the Council at their next work session meeting.

Councilmember del Aguila stated that he was not sure why, but the PBAC meeting agenda was not posted on the Town's Granicus page.

Councilmember Dhakal: echoed Councilmember del Aguila's comments on the Strategic Planning meeting.

Councilmember Dhakal echoed Mayor Olem's comments on appreciating the July 4th fireworks display and offering kudos to staff. He said that he received excellent feedback on the display from his friends and neighbors.

Councilmember Dhakal stated earlier that day, he attended the Fairfax County Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting, where they talked about the current office market and leasing trends. They discussed potentially converting office buildings to residential uses as a way to address office vacancies. He stated that he will keep the Council updated on the Committee's progress.

July 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Town Council Meeting

Councilmember Dhakal thanked Mr. Ashton for responding to Council about the Pickleball Court situation. He agreed with Mr. Ashton's assessment, which is if Chandon Park does not work as a site for the courts, they should consider the courts at Bready Park.

Mr. Ashton stated that he is meeting with staff on Thursday morning to evaluate the sites. They are looking at submitting a change order to use the courts that are the best option for Pickleball.

Councilmember Alam: echoed her colleagues' comments about the July 4th fireworks display.

Councilmember Alam stated she is excited for the new website because it will offer information in other languages.

Councilmember Alam stated that she was pleased to represent the Town last week at the API Coalition Civic Leadership USA Conference in Washington, DC, where 60 elected officials from across the country attended.

Councilmember LeBlanc: echoed his colleagues' comments about the July 4th fireworks display.

Councilmember LeBlanc stated that he was pleased to participate in his first Herndon Olympics earlier in the month and he discussed his experience. For more than 30 years, swim clubs in the Herndon area have been getting together to hold a "swimming Olympics" and he was honored to lead the Opening Ceremonies this year. He thanked the Department of Parks and Recreation, along with the athletes, their parents, supporters, and volunteers, who were part of the event.

Councilmember LeBlanc shared that he attended a Committee for Dulles meeting, where they discussed the future RIVANA development in Loudoun County, just across the Town border near Route 28. He encouraged everyone to pay attention to the development and to consider the potential economic, traffic, and resource impacts on the Town.

Historic District

Lastly, Councilmember LeBlanc stated that he was made aware of a letter/survey that was sent to some homeowners in the Historic District. He stated that he lives in the Historic District, and neither he nor his neighbors received it. He thought that the statements in the letter implied that the Town Council made a decision, and they are asking selected individuals for their opinions on the Historic District. He stated that he has been to all the Town Council meetings, and he did not remember discussing or voting on conducting a survey like the one he saw.

Councilmember LeBlanc stated that about a month ago, the Council discussed looking at the Historic District Review Board processes, but he said that matter is separate and apart from the Historic District. He thought the questions on the survey he saw were structured

in a way that felt biased. He asked the Town Manager to clarify if the Town had distributed a survey about the Historic District.

Mr. Ashton stated that he did not hear about the survey until he received several citizen inquiries, who asked him if the Town had sent it out. He said that it did not look familiar to him, and he informed the citizens who contacted him that staff was not involved in this survey.

Councilmember LeBlanc indicated that he wanted to alert everyone that this body and the Town did not distribute this survey. He said he was led to believe that individuals in the community had distributed it.

Councilmember LeBlanc asked Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney, if there is any recourse for individuals that misled or misrepresented themselves as elected officials in communications.

Ms. Yeatts stated she did not know at that time, but she could research it if the Council wanted her to look into it.

Councilmember LeBlanc stated he is not asking staff to research it at that time. While he believes there needs to be a discourse, he hopes that if the body considers a survey instrument like this, it would be unbiased. He would want such a survey to include not only the Historic District, but the entire Town, since he believes that all residents are impacted by the Historic District.

Councilmember LeBlanc asked the record to show that: “this body did not vote or provide any direction to the Town, and the Town did not pursue putting out that survey.”

Councilmember LeBlanc stated that, since the questions about the Historic District were put out there, he feels that the Council needs to discuss it. He asserted his opinion, which is that while he wants to look at matters like shifting some the Historic District borders that do not fit in with the district, he personally will not be “doing anything that would undermine or remove the pinnings of the character of this community.”

Vice Mayor Hedrick: echoed his colleagues’ comments about the July 4th fireworks display.

Vice Mayor Hedrick echoed his colleagues’ comments and thanked staff for their work on last week’s Strategic Planning meeting.

Vice Mayor Hedrick offered kudos to the Department of Public Works for all their work in cleaning up downed trees and branches during a severe storm last week. He believed that the Police Department likely helped out as well. He thought that these efforts highlight the work that Public Works and the Police Department do behind the scenes, which is in addition to the daily work that they have.

July 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Town Council Meeting

Mayor Olem: stated that in a few weeks, they will be celebrating the 40th annual National Night Out. She stated that communities throughout Herndon are joining with the Herndon Police Department on Tuesday, August 1, 2023. Additional information is posted on the Town's website.

Mayor Olem stated that the next Town Council work session is on Wednesday, August 2, 2023, so everyone can participate in National Night Out the prior evening.

Mayor Olem provided details on two community events she attended that past weekend: (1) 105th Annual Convention for the American Legion, Department of Virginia, and (2) Town Calendar Competition Reception at Arts Herndon. She encouraged everyone to stop by Arts Herndon to see the photos, which will be displayed until the end of the month.

4. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Mayor Olem reviewed the process and asked those who wanted to provide Comments from the Audience to come forward.

The following individuals provided comments:

- Syeda Shahab, 310 Holly Court, with the aid of Yasmeen Durrani, provided information about a scam that she was unwillingly involved with through her cell phone. Ms. Durrani, on behalf of Ms. Shahab, stated that Ms. Shahab is thankful that Councilmember Alam is drawing attention to scams.
- Thomas Buchan, 1451 Bluemont Court, stated that he founded the "Council for Sustainability and Community Development" in 2021, and he provided comments about how the organization aims to address international cybercrime and similar threats.
- Mohammad Islam, 114 Madison Ridge Lane, provided comments on adding more Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations in Herndon, and explained why he is making this request.
- Bessie Denton, 496 Virginia Avenue, addressed the first speaker. She stated that the scammers unfortunately prey on the elderly. She encouraged anyone who is concerned about scams to contact emergency services. She also encouraged everyone to communicate with each other about these scams and to look out for one another.

5. CONSENT

- a. **Resolution 23-G-49 to Award IFB Contract #23-05 Swimming Pool Whitecoat**
- b. **Resolution 23-G-50 to approve a funding agreement between the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County and the Town of Herndon to receive funds to**

design and implement the Sugarland Run (North) Stream Restoration Project

- c. **Resolution 23-G-51 to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign a Third Sublicense Extension between Town of Herndon and The Elden Street Players d/b/a NextStop Theatre Company, to extend the expiration date to June 30, 2024, for space at 750 Center Street**
- d. **Resolution 23-G-52 to endorse and authorize a funding application to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for the allocation of VDOT FY 2027 and FY 2028 Revenue Sharing Program funding towards the VDOT administered 'East Elden Street Widening and Improvements (UPC 50100)' project**
- e. **Resolution 23-G-53 to endorse and authorize a funding application to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for the allocation of VDOT FY 2027 and FY 2028 Revenue Sharing Program funding towards the 'Herndon Parkway at Sunset Park Drive Intersection Improvements' project**
- f. **Resolution 23-G-54 to endorse and authorize a funding application to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for the allocation of VDOT FY 2027 and FY 2028 Revenue Sharing Program funding towards the 'Locust Street ADA Sidewalk Improvements' project**
- g. **June 6, 2023 Town Council Work Session Minutes**

On motion of Councilmember Dhakal, seconded by Vice Mayor Hedrick, the Consent Agenda items were approved and carried by a 6-0 roll call vote, without comment. The vote was: Councilmembers Alam, del Aguila, Dhakal, LeBlanc, and Vice Mayor Hedrick and Mayor Olem voting "Aye." Councilmember Scherff was absent.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Olem adjourned the July 18, 2023 Town Council Regular Meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Amanda E. Moraw Kertz

**Amanda E.M. Kertz
Chief Deputy Town Clerk**



Minutes approved by Town Council: September 12, 2023

[Note: Approved resolutions and ordinances are on file in the Town Clerk's office.]