



**HERNDON TOWN COUNCIL
Special Meeting Minutes – Council Initiatives
Thursday, January 18, 2024**

1. Call to Order

Mayor Olem called the Thursday, January 18, 2024, Town Council Initiatives Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Herndon Police Department Community Room, 397 Herndon Parkway, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were: Mayor Sheila Olem, Vice Mayor Clark Hedrick; and Councilmembers Naila Alam, Cesar del Aguila, Pradip Dhakal, and Keven LeBlanc.

Participating remotely: Councilmember Donielle M. Scherff.

Staff present during the meeting: William H. Ashton II, Town Manager; Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney; Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich, Town Clerk; Page Kalapasev, Director of Information Technology; and Amanda Kertz, Chief Deputy Town Clerk.

Mayor Olem stated, for the record, under Section 2.2-3708.3, Subsection D, of the Code of Virginia, and in accordance with Section 2-4 of the Town Code, the Chair received a request from Councilmember Scherff to participate through electronic communication means in tonight's special meeting from her home, due to a medical condition that prevents her physical attendance.

Mayor Olem stated that there is a quorum of the public body physically assembled at the meeting location, with six Councilmembers present in the Herndon Police Department Community Room that evening. With the concurrence of Council, Mayor Olem stated that Councilmember Scherff will join the meeting remotely to participate in the special meeting.

Determination of Quorum

Mayor Olem determined there was a quorum of six Councilmembers present, with Councilmember Scherff participating remotely by telephone.

2. Discussion

a. **Council Initiatives and Strategic Plan - Moderated by Julie Rouge and Kristi Dooley, True Purpose Leadership**

1. Welcome, Overview, Check in, Agreements

Mayor Olem recognized the facilitators: Julie Rouge and Kristi Dooley, True Purpose Leadership, to begin the meeting that evening.

Ms. Dooley and Ms. Rouge provided an overview of the meeting, reviewed the Town Council Operating Agreement, and provided a check-in. Ms. Dooley stated that the bulk of the meeting agenda would be discussing the initiatives going forward.

The Council briefly discussed goals and shared their intentions for the coming year, both personally and with the Town Council. Several members of Council emphasized completing items that had been promised to citizens already in their term.

2. Update on Draft Strategic Plan and Process from Here

Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich, Town Clerk, provided an update on the Strategic Plan. She stated that staff is working on the Plan, and she has incorporated the edits Council submitted during their last review into the draft. She stated that staff is working on the action steps, with the aim of having a rough draft of the Plan ready for the Council's review in February.

There were brief comments from Council on the Strategic Plan.

3. Re-evaluating Quarterly Council Initiative Meetings

Ms. Rouge stated that she and Ms. Dooley started working with the Council on the initiatives meetings approximately two years ago. She asked the Council to consider the purpose of these meetings going forward, recognizing that several members mentioned that they wanted to close out items versus starting new ones.

The discussion between the Council, staff, and facilitators focused on the purpose, process, value, and scheduling of the initiative meetings. Council discussed having standing dates for initiative meetings on the fifth Tuesday of the month throughout the calendar year and focusing on one main topic per initiative meeting. Consideration was also given to how initiatives tied into other Town documents, like the Strategic and Comprehensive Plans, Annual Budget, and Vision.

Responding to the discussion, Ms. Rouge stated that no new initiatives had been submitted in time to be included on this meeting's agenda. She suggested taking some time at that night's meeting to discuss and identify key themes and topics for the Council to consider at future meetings.

Responding to the discussion, Ms. Dooley and Ms. Rouge suggested incorporating a meeting format that includes both a main topic for discussion and allowing time to discuss new initiatives.

Following discussion among the Council and facilitators, the Council decided to take a vote on the meeting scheduling process. Ms. Rouge identified that a 'yes' vote will establish a process for quarterly Town Council Initiative Meetings, which includes: (1) a content area focus, and (2) allocating time for new initiatives that arise.

Amanda Kertz, Chief Deputy Town Clerk, called the roll to follow the proposed meeting process, which passed by unanimous roll call vote. The vote was: Councilmembers Alam, del Aguila, Dhakal, LeBlanc and Scherff (remotely, by phone), Vice Mayor Hedrick and Mayor Olem voting "Aye."

4. Update on Council Initiatives Previously Raised

Ms. Rouge recognized William H. Ashton II, Town Manager, to provide the update on initiatives that had been previously submitted by the Council.

Mr. Ashton updated Council on what had occurred and what is planned to address each initiative, which are:

1. Historic District Inventory Survey
2. Town events, with a focus on smaller events in the future
3. Historic District and Greater Sense of Place
4. Combat invasive Plants
5. Uniform Zoning Setbacks
6. Affordable Dwelling Units
7. Mini-Festivals
8. Town Branding and Vision
9. Green Initiatives/Electric Vehicles (EV)
10. Stormwater Management Improvements
11. Regional Cut-Through Traffic
12. Traffic calming

During his update, Mr. Ashton identified the following items that Council could anticipate in the near future: (1) information from staff on housing stock in Herndon compared to the rest of Fairfax County, and inviting County housing staff to present an update at an upcoming work session, (2) scheduling of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Town brand after the

strategic visioning process is complete, (3) EV program as part of the upcoming Capital Improvement Program (CIP), (4) use of Fairfax County stormwater tax remittance funds toward stormwater improvements, to include staff that are dedicated to stormwater management, and (5) origin-destination study will be presented at the Council's first Regular Meeting in February.

There was discussion among Council and staff regarding Mr. Ashton's updates, focusing on: (1) Town branding and vision, (2) Regional cut-through traffic and data collection, and (3) future Town events and mini festivals.

Responding to Councilmember Dhakal, Mr. Ashton stated that the RFP for Town branding has been issued and is available on eVA.

5. Identifying Current Initiatives for Additional Discussion

Ms. Dooley and Ms. Rouge suggested that the Council talk about the topics they want to focus on for the next three Town Council Initiative Meetings. During their discussion on upcoming initiatives, it was the consensus of Council to tie topics to Strategic Focus Areas in the Strategic Plan.

Following discussion among the Council, staff, and facilitators, the following topics were slated for the next three Town Council Initiative Meetings: (1) economic and environmental sustainability (April), (2) secure and interconnected community (tentatively July), and (3) thriving community (tentatively October). That evening, the Council decided to discuss traffic calming at the end of the meeting.

There was discussion among the Council, staff, and facilitators about the data the Council would like to have for their meeting on economic and environmental sustainability, which included: (1) tree inventory study, (2) data on past or requested Town events or mini-festivals, (3) update on the brand RFP process, (4) gathering information on small business associations, and (5) impact of planned developments near the Town borders (which could be also be a work session discussion item). The Council requested the Economic Development Manager to attend the April Town Council Initiatives Meeting, if they are hired by that time.

Councilmember Scherff asked if Council can have data related to critical items expedited, giving the examples of the traffic study and inventory of Historic District properties. She expressed concern about responsiveness to citizens.

(Note: Councilmember Scherff left the meeting remotely at 9:06 p.m. and returned remotely at 9:14 p.m.)

Recess

At 9:04 p.m. Mayor Olem called a brief recess, and at 9:12 p.m., the Town Council Initiatives Meeting reconvened, with four members present and Mayor Olem presiding. Councilmembers Alam and del Aguila returned to the meeting at 9:13 p.m. and Councilmember Scherff rejoined the meeting remotely at 9:14 p.m.

6. Implementing Process for Ranking, Prioritizing, and Future Review of Council Initiatives

Traffic Calming

Ms. Dooley stated that, as discussed earlier, it was Council's consensus to have a focused conversation on traffic calming that evening. The main topics of discussion among the Council, staff, and facilitators included: (1) defining the scope and identifying current problem areas, (2) Town's current process for processing traffic calming requests, and (3) finding solutions that will work throughout the Town.

Responding to the discussion, Mr. Ashton outlined how the Town analyzes traffic calming requests through the Traffic Engineering Improvement Committee (TEIC). The committee includes staff from Public Works, Community Development, and the Herndon Police Department, who follow a process to recommend solutions to address traffic problems.

There was further discussion among the Council, staff, and facilitators on defining traffic problems and addressing potential solutions, specifically: (1) current and expected staffing levels at the Herndon Police Department, (2) relationship between the Fairfax County and Town of Herndon police departments, (3) proposed General Assembly bill allowing traffic cameras, (4) gathering traffic safety data from other jurisdictions to understand regional problems, (5) a 'safe neighborhoods' campaign, (6) ways for residents to report traffic safety issues, and (7) promoting multi-modal transportation.

(Note: Councilmember Scherff left the meeting remotely at 9:39 p.m.)

Responding to Councilmember Dhakal, Mr. Ashton confirmed that traffic safety concerns should go to him, Herndon Police non-emergency call center, or to the Department of Public Works, to be submitted to the TEIC group.

Kirstyn Jovanovich, Town Clerk, confirmed citizens can submit complaints related to traffic through the "Herndon on the Go" app on the Town's website.

Wrapping up the discussion, Ms. Rouge stated that she understood the next steps on the traffic calming initiative to be: (1) staff providing the requested data to the Council, (2) Councilmembers to connect with their State Legislators regarding the speeding cameras, and (3) Councilmembers to discuss successful traffic safety solutions with their counterparts in other jurisdictions.

7. Wrapping up and Next Steps

Ms. Rouge stated that the next Town Council Initiatives Meeting is tentatively scheduled for the fifth Tuesday in April – April 30, 2024 – with the topic of economic and environmental sustainability. She stated that in the future, the Council can consider swapping out a scheduled work session meeting to have a Town Council Initiatives Meeting, but with the budget being reviewed in April, she thought it made sense to have a standalone session.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Olem adjourned the January 18, 2024, Town Council Initiatives Meeting at 10:03 p.m.

Amanda E. Monaw Kertz

Amanda E.M. Kertz
Chief Deputy Town Clerk



Minutes approved by Town Council: March 12, 2024