

HERNDON TOWN COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, September 17, 2024

1. Call to Order

Mayor Olem called the September 17, 2024, Town Council meeting to order 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: Chrisopher Martino, Interim Town Manager; Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney; Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich and Scott Robinson, Acting Deputy Town Managers; Chief Maggie DeBoard, Herndon Police Department; Lisa Gilleran, Director of Community Development; Page Kalapasev, Director of Information Technology; Marc Smith, Director of Economic Development; John Irish, Acting Director of Department of Public Works - Engineering; Tammy Chastain, Acting Director of Department of Public Works - Operations; Mike Mueller, Golf Course General Manager; Nick Maletta, Arborist/Landscape Architect; Ben Schitter, Development Program Planner; and Margie Tacci, Acting Chief Deputy Town Clerk.

Mayor Announcements

Mayor Olem stated that a Special Town Council Meeting on affordable housing will be held this Thursday, September 19, 7:00 p.m. in the Herndon Council Chambers. Tom Fleetwood, Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, will facilitate a discussion with the Town Council on affordable housing.

Comments and Disclosures for the Record

Mayor Olem asked Margie Tacci, Acting Chief Deputy Town Clerk, if she received comments for the record or signed disclosure declarations from Council.

Ms. Tacci stated that comments were entered into the record on Discussion item #4(a), Strategic Plan Quarterly Discussion. She stated that the Town Clerk did not receive additional public comments or disclosures on any other items listed on that meeting's agenda.

2. Public Hearings

- a. **Resolution to approve a Special Exception Amendment SE #24-02, 1031 Sterling Road, Suite 104 [Presentation at September 24, 2024 Meeting];**

3. Consent

- a. **Resolution to award a contract for Folly Lick Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater Improvement Project;**
- b. **Ordinance to amend Chapter 26 (ENVIRONMENT), Article III. (Erosion and Sediment Control), Sec. 26-49 (Erosion and sediment control program), Article VIII. (Stormwater Management), Sec. 26-322 (Definitions), Sec. 26-325 (Stormwater pollution prevention plan contents), Sec. 26-328 (Pollution prevention plan contents), and Sec. 26-329 (Technical criteria for regulated land disturbing activities), to replace repealed Virginia Administrative Code references with the newly adopted Virginia Administrative Code references; and**
- c. **Resolution to appoint a member to the Police Supplemental Retirement Plan Administrative Committee (PSRPAC).**

Mayor Olem stated that there is one public hearing item and several consent items on the schedule for next week's regular meeting, and information on these items are included in tonight's meeting materials. She recognized Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager, for comments. Mr. Martino briefly went through the agenda.

There were brief comments from the Council.

4. Discussion

- a. **Strategic Plan Quarterly Discussion: Strategic Focus Area #3 - Environmental and Economic Sustainability**

1. Welcome, Overview, Check-in

Mayor Olem recognized moderator Kristi Dooley, with True Purpose Leadership, to begin the discussion on the Strategic Plan Quarterly Update. Ms. Dooley provided an outline for this portion of the meeting, which focused on the Environmental and Economic Sustainability Focus Area of the adopted 2024-2029 Strategic Plan.

2. Environmental Briefing; and

3. Facilitated discussion related to environmental strategies.

Staff Briefing: Energy and Air Quality, and Increasing Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station Availability

Scott Robinson, Acting Deputy Town Manager - Operations, provided an overview of how the Town was addressing energy and air quality, including: (1) strategies to improve energy efficiency in town-owned buildings, (2) using the Virginia Department of Energy's Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESPC) program toward the Town's energy efficiency goals, (3) review of the energy savings project, through which a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with a contractor - CMTA - is being utilized, and (4) strategies to increase EV charging stations in Herndon on both public and private property.

There was discussion among the Council and staff on ways to optimize energy efficiency including: (1) elements of the energy savings project using the ESPC program: (a) MOU with CMTA; and (b) project timeline, (2) funding for energy savings projects, (3) cost savings resulting from energy efficiency, (4) infrastructure needed to increase EV stations in the Town, (5) potential incentives to encourage EV stations on private property, and (6) considering the installation of solar panels on Town buildings.

Staff Briefing: Community Forestry

Nick Maletta, Town Arborist, provided an overview of urban forestry management, which included an overview of the following: (1) environmental benefits of trees, (2) Town's tree equity score and tree inventory, (3) tree planting opportunities; challenges and solutions, and (4) strategies for a successful urban forestry management program.

There was discussion among the Council and staff on the urban forestry presentation, which included: (1) Council expressing concern over the low tree equity score; looking at ways to improve it, (2) ways to increase the tree inventory and canopy, (3) best practices for tree planting, (4) impacts of invasive plants and tree species, (5) community engagement opportunities, (6) including a tree fund in the budget; with a goal of adding to the tree canopy each year, and (7) current tree planting projects.

Mayor Olem suggested that staff review the recent tree study done by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission that took inventory of trees in the Northern Virginia region.

Responding to Councilmember Alam, Mr. Maletta stated that he could investigate her suggestion about growing fruit trees that residents could use for food. Mr. Maletta stated that there may be grant monies available for that type of project.

There was a brief question and answer session between Ms. Dooley and the Council about the process for the rest of the meeting. Following the discussion,

staff was asked to proceed with the economic development presentation, and after that, the Council would discuss prioritizing items.

4. Economic Development Briefing; and
5. Facilitated discussion related to Economic Development strategies.

Marc Smith, Director of Economic Development, provided an introduction of his background, and he reviewed his observations about economic development in the Town. He provided a presentation on economic development, which included reviewing: (1) the business profile of the Town, including (a) size and type; (b) top sales companies; and (c) locations, (2) staff's top priorities going forward, including: (a) downtown redevelopment; (b) working with and expanding existing businesses; (c) attracting investment; (d) promoting Herndon as a business location; (e) collaboration with internal and external partners; and (f) data collection and measurement, and (3) a market study, which would be related to the Comprehensive Plan update, to aid in forming an economic development strategic plan.

There was discussion among the Council and staff on economic development and Herndon's business community, focusing on: (1) rebranding effort, (2) promoting the Town to businesses, (3) evaluating why businesses leave the Town; along with talking with those that choose to stay, (4) suggestion to create an economic development website, and (5) suggestion to contact businesses that have leases that are about to expire.

6. Wrap Up – Next Steps

Ms. Dooley stated that the Council would review the topics that were discussed that evening and consider next steps.

There was discussion among the Council, staff, and Ms. Dooley about items to discuss that evening, including:

1. Improving the tree canopy and green space; including "no net loss" of trees;
2. Educational campaign for residents on environmental matters;
3. EVs; and
4. Promoting economic development for the town; following data collection and analysis.

Following input from Ms. Dooley and with the consensus of the Council, the following topics were selected for focused discussion that evening: (1) educational campaigns for matters pertaining to the environment, and (2)

improving the tree canopy.

There was discussion among the Council, staff, and Ms. Dooley about ways to educate the public on trees and increasing the tree canopy including: (1) an educational campaign through various means, including videos on the Town's website and social media channels, (2) having a table at the Farmers Market or other events providing educational information, (3) working with local businesses and nonprofits to promote tree planting, and (4) working with neighborhoods on removing invasive plants and diseased trees.

There was discussion among the Council, staff, and Ms. Dooley on additional ways to increase the tree canopy, including: (1) exploring a partnership with the Northern Virginia Park Authority to increase the tree canopy along the W&OD Trail in Herndon, (2) considering changes to the zoning ordinance to increase the required number of trees, (3) considering changes to parking requirements to potentially increase green space, and (4) working with Fairfax County on solutions to increase the tree canopy.

Following up on the discussion, Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager, stated that staff is working on a comprehensive tree program, which would have short, mid, and long term components, to be incorporated into the upcoming budget and capital improvement plan (CIP) cycles.

There was discussion among the Council, staff, and Ms. Dooley about the meeting format used that evening, including: (1) data and information being available prior to the meeting to better facilitate discussion, (2) having open discussion between the Council and staff, with staff sitting at the table, (3) suggestion to time the discussion and/or presentations to streamline the meeting, and (4) not using Roberts Rules of Order during strategic planning work session discussions.

Following up on the discussion, Mr. Martino stated he and the staff intend to pursue a work session meeting format for future meetings similar to the meeting held that evening.

There were brief comments from the Council about the meeting format for work sessions.

5. Roundtable

Councilmember del Aguila: shared that there is a group working with Comstock to plan a Fall Festival near the Arts Herndon property, and he wanted to advise staff that was coming down the pike. He indicated that Comstock had agreed to be a sponsor for this potential event.

Councilmember Dhaka: stated that he enjoyed the first Que Pasa Herndon event that was held in the downtown last weekend. He thought it was a great success and thanked everyone who was involved in it.

Councilmember Alam: no comments.

Councilmember Le Blanc: no comments.

Vice Mayor Hedrick: no comments.

Mayor Olem: no comments.

Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager: no comments.

6. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mayor Olem adjourned the September 17, 2024 Town Council work session at 10:21 p.m.

Amanda E. Monaw Kertz

Amanda E.M. Kertz
Chief Deputy Town Clerk



Minutes approved by Town Council : December 10, 2024