



City of Bowie

15901 Fred Robinson Way
Bowie, Maryland 20716

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2024

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Regular Meeting of the Bowie City Council was held on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, in Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Adams called the meeting to order at 8:04 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

Mayor Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

QUORUM:

In attendance were Mayor Adams, Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley, Councilmembers Brady, Estève, Ndebumadu, Rogers, and Truesdale, City Manager Lott, Assistant City Manager Mears, City Attorney Ruff, City Clerk Hernandez, and Staff.

PRESENTATIONS:

Mayor Adams swore-in Dwayne Preston as the City of Bowie Police Chief.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Adams asked for a moment of silence for the passing of former City Councilmember, County Councilmember and State Senator Douglass J.J. Peters.

Councilmember Ndebumadu asked for a moment of silence for the passing of a young Bowie resident Jarreau Sanders. She also announced that the Prince Georges County School Board has determined to keep Pointer Ridge elementary school open and it will become a regional site for a new autism program and a new STEM charter school will also be opened in Bowie in the next year.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manager Lott commented that the HR department has been busy filling vacancies, filling the Police Chief position with Dwayne Preston, Community Services Director with Nick Spurgeon and Community Services Assistant Director with Lori Cunningham.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilmember Esteve motioned to approve Consent Agenda items: A) Approval of November 27, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes; B) Adoption of Resolution R-1-24 Awarding a Contract to Com-Bro Contracting for Phase 1 of Sludge Pumping Station Upgrades (RAS/WAS) at the Wastewater Treatment Plant in the Amount of \$403,900; C) Adoption of Resolution R-2-24 Accepting Bid Proposals for On-Call HVAC Services; D) Adoption of Resolution R-3-24 Accepting the Proposal from G.E. Fielder &

Associates, Chartered for the Bowie Railroad Museum Permitting and Construction Administration in the Amount of \$57,425. Councilmember Truesdale seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Council Budget Guidance FY2025 – Finance Director Byron Matthews summarized the FY25 Budget Guidance. The City maintains its Triple A Bond rating, has maintained a constant tax rate over the last 15 years and maintains a robust core of services to its residents. Some of the current threats to the FY 2025 budget is inflation cost, supply chain costs as well as declining intergovernmental revenues.

Mayor Adams stated that he would like a strong emphasizes to be placed on the maintenance and recruitment of our officers for public safety, as well as making a very robust economic development, easy accessibility at all city facilities, and the maintenance of trails.

Councilmember Ndebumadu stated that she knows that human capital is going to get worse with the rise in workforce training costs which helps the city to garner a good workforce. She also asked if any of the City's core services are duplicated by services that the County offers that can be removed/cancelled on the City's part to save some dollars. She also encouraged staff to continue looking for federal grants and PPE programs for infrastructure projects.

Councilmember Rogers will be looking carefully at operational efficiencies, with technology/workflow improvements.

Councilmember Esteve asked what the cost of the speed camera program is. Mr. Matthews responded about \$350,000 and the city had a revenue of \$923,000. Councilmember Esteve asked if it is possible to divert those funds to strictly fund public safety programs. He also commented that his colleagues will seriously need to consider a tax increase this year.

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley commented that although the General Fund is up, it is because of projects that were not completed/accomplished; cannot rely as extra revenue as it will not always be available revenue. He also asked if the 25% balance in the General Fund is adequate, should Council revisit that percentage. Mr. Matthews stated that it has worked fine in the years since incorporating but it is up to Council to decide if the amount should be changed.

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley asked when will revenue from the Melford and South Lake development begin to come in. Mr. Matthews responded that the City is already receiving tax revenue from Melford, mainly hotel taxes; from South Lake it will be several years before the revenue starts.

Councilmember Truesdale commented that recruitment for the police force needs to be a top priority for the City.

Councilmember Brady asked if Highway User Revenues are increasing this year. Mr. Matthews responded that they will be lower this year. Councilmember Brady stated that he agrees that taxes will need to be increased this year and he feels that the 25% threshold for the General Fund balance is adequate and should not be lowered.

Mayor Adams thanked staff for the presentation.

B. Discussion of the Size of the Public Safety Committee – Councilmember Esteve commented that a few months back there were two applicants that were well suited to serve on the Public Safety Committee but there was only one vacancy. Would his colleagues consider changing the size of the committee by one member to be able to appoint both applicants.

Mayor Adams commented that he feels it should remain the same and maybe offer the other applicant to fill a vacancy in another committee.

Councilmember Rogers suggested looking at the structure of all the committees and possibly revising them but not making a change at this time for just one committee.

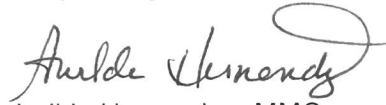
Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley agrees with revision of the structure of the committees since it has not been done in quite a few years.

Council concurred to maintain the Public Safety committee as is.

ADJOURNMENT AND MOVE TO CLOSE SESSION:

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley motioned to adjourn to closed session under the statutory authority of the Md. Annotated Code, General Provisions Article §3-305(b)(3): "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto". Councilmember Truesdale second the motion. Motion passed 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Awilda Hernandez", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Awilda Hernandez, MMC
City Clerk

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT")
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)**

This form has two sides. *Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.*

1. **Recorded vote to close the meeting:** Date: 1-2-24; Time: 10:15; Location: City Hall;
Motion to close meeting made by: Woolfley Seconded by Brady;
Members in favor: All; Opposed: _____;
Abstaining: _____; Absent: _____.

2. **Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).**
This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:

(1) ☐ "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; (2) ☐ "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; (3) ☒ "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; (4) ☐ "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; (5) ☐ "To consider the investment of public funds"; (6) ☐ "To consider the marketing of public securities"; (7) ☐ "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; (8) ☐ "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; (9) ☐ "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; (10) ☐ "To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans"; (11) ☐ "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination"; (12) ☐ "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; (13) ☐ "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; (14) ☐ "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process." (15) ☐ "To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to: (i) security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology; (ii) network security information . . . or (iii) deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

Continued →

3. For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b) ☒	Real Estate	Consider acquisition of real property
§3-305(b) ☐		
§3-305(b) ☐		
§3-305(b) ☐		
§3-305(b) ☐		

4. This statement is made by Samuel J. Adams, Presiding Officer.

WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)

➤ **For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:**

Time of closed session: 10:20pm
 Place: City Hall
 Purpose(s): (3) Real Estate
 Members who voted to meet in closed session: TA, DB, WR, ME, DH, CT, RN
 Persons attending closed session: Adams, Rogers, Brady, Estevé, Wolfley, Truesdale, Ndeburu, Rader, Mainert, Lott, Mears
 Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: (3)
 Topics actually discussed: Acquisition of County Property
 Actions taken: _____
 Each recorded vote: _____

➤ **For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104):** Time: _____
 Place: _____
 Persons present: _____
 Subjects discussed: _____