



City of Bowie

15901 Fred Robinson Way
Bowie, Maryland 20716

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2024

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Regular Meeting of the Bowie City Council was held on Monday, February 5, 2024, in Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Adams called the meeting to order at 8:10 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 (virtual), City Manager Lott, Assistant City Manager Mears, City Attorney Levan, City Clerk Hernandez, and Staff.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

1. Jamal Sutton, Mt. Oak Road – Spoke regarding the speeding that occurs on Mt. Oak Road.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmember Ndebumadu mentioned that so far Friendship Charter school has received 361 applications with one week left for applications to be submitted. She also stated that Councilmember Truesdale and herself met with SHA in October and is requesting staff to schedule the District 3 SHA Representative, Mr. Derek Gunn, attend a Council meeting for a briefing.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manager Lott commented that staff is working on the FY 2025 budget for presentation to Council in April.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley motioned to approve Consent Agenda items: A) Approval of November 20, 2023 Swearing-in Ceremony Minutes; B) Approval of December 4, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes; C) Approval of January 2, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes; D) Approval of January 16, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes; E) Adoption of Proclamation P-1-24 Proclaiming February 2024 as Black History Month in the City of Bowie; F) Adoption of Resolution R-4-24 Approving the Facilities Ground Lease Agreement Between the City of Bowie and Dish Wireless, LLC. At 16500 Annapolis Road and Authorizing the City Manager to Sign the Agreement; G) Adoption of Resolution R-5-24 Approving the Request to Join the Maryland Public Sector Time to Care Act Insurance Collaborative; H) Adoption of Resolution R-6-24 Waiving the Bidding Requirements of Section 61 "Purchasing and Contracting" of the City Charter to

Allow the City Manager to Issue a Purchase Order to Turf Equipment and Supply Company and Authorize the Purchase of One (1) Toro 5510 Reelmaster Riding Mower. Councilmember Esteve seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

New Business:

A. Diversity Committee Request – Former Chair of the Diversity Committee, Tisha Hillman, requested to have Council reconsider bringing back the International Festival as its own event like the previous years and not in conjunction with the Old Bowie Festival. Last year's combined festival did not work, there was no visual representation of the International Festival and the diversity in the City.

Councilmember Esteve commented that he has no issue with separating the two events.

Mayor Adams asked City Manager Lott if it's feasible to separate the events. City Manager Lott responded that staff is prepared to do whatever Council decides.

Council concurred to have the International Festival be its own event and not be in conjunction with the Old Bowie Festival.

B. Police Department Update – Police Chief Preston summarized the report for Council. The department is authorized to have 66 sworn officers, it currently has 57. They are actively pursuing the recruitment of new officers. Calls for service increased by 19.3% in 2023 compared to 2022, and there were also increases in 2023 on auto thefts, moving violations and photo enforcement citations. The department held the 10th annual Citizen's Police Academy from April through June, National Night Out on August 1st, partnered again with the Marine Corps Reserves in the Toys for Tots campaign as well as hosting its annual Shop with a Cop on December 10th. Chief Preston has also hosted several community meetings with HOA's.

Councilmember Esteve asked if they are able to separate intoxication impairments (alcohol vs. marijuana) during moving violations. Chief Preston responded that at the moment they do not. Officers are getting training to better help with diagnosis.

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley asked if the speed camera by Tasker qualify for extended hours operation. Chief Preston responded no, since it is located in a school zone.

Mayor Adams thanked Chief Preston for his presentation.

C. Complete Streets Pilot Project (Kenhill Drive) – Planning Director, Mr. Joe Meinert, summarized the staff report. In 2019 City Council approved a Trails Master Plan and a Complete Streets Policy for the City. In February 2021, the City adopted the Complete Streets Design Guide and Standards as a supplement to the City's General Specifications and Standards for Storm Drain and Street Design and Construction. The Kenhill Drive project is the first of its kind to be designed using the new standards. The project has been fully designed, and construction funding is available in the FY2024 City Capital Improvement Program.

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley stated that he has concerns about the effect of no street parking to allow for the bicycle lanes. He would also like to see more public input not just from residents off of Kenhill but all areas affected up to the park where it will connect to the trails.

Councilmember Rogers has the same concerns as Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley on street parking restrictions.

Mr. Meinert stated that staff and consultants followed Council's direction on the Trails Master Plan/Complete Streets Policy. Of the options presented in the presentation, Mr. Meinert recommends option #5 Redesigning the project with cycle track (two way) on one side of the right-of-way, replacing the sidewalk and providing a dedicated parking lane of acceptable width.

Mayor Adams asked if staff knows what it will cost to expand the streets. Mr. Meinert responded that they do not but imagines it would be costly since utilities would have to be moved also.

City Manager Lott will have staff get more input from residents and develop another option.

D. Council Discussion on Constituent Services Response Process – Councilmember Ndebumadu would like clarification on the process to responding to constituents' requests/complaints and why it takes so long for them to get a response. City Manager Lott responded that requests and/or complaints could come in directly to staff in corresponding departments depending on the issue and they are addressed immediately. City Manager is notified or copied on responses.

Councilmember Rogers mentioned that this would be a perfect subject to discuss during a Strategic Planning discussion.

Councilmember Esteve understands the frustration with lack of response sometimes, but it can depend on the initial question going to the wrong department. He is also in agreement with Councilmember Rogers suggestion on the Strategic Planning.

Mayor Adams commented that he would also like to have City Manager Lott include in the budget discussions the possibility of having a Council Liaison position added to help with constituent responses.

E. Council Discussion on Budget for the Smart Cities Task Force or Work Group – Councilmember Ndebumadu invited the Chair of the Information Technology Committee, Mr. John Eidsness, to speak on Smart Cities. Mr. Eidsness spoke on providing safe broadband access to everyone, no infrastructure for new developments to have multiple choices for internet access, especially apartment buildings. Easier access of documents especially legislation, on the City website.

IT Director, Mr. Todd Peterson commented that a Task Force was under the Business Operations FY 2022 budget, but no other information is available. He also commented that the department is more internal focused and not external. The City is a Smart City currently but could be expanded and could use the assistance of the IT Committee.

City Manager Lott commented that a designated Smart Cities Task Force was never created, will include it as an objective under the IT Department for FY25 budget.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Pro Tem Woolfley motioned to adjourn the regular City Council meeting. Councilmember Rogers seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Awilda Hernandez, MMC
City Clerk