



City of Bowie

15901 Excalibur Road
Bowie, Maryland 20716

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Regular Meeting of the Bowie City Council was held on Monday, December 7, 2020 virtually. Mayor Adams called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

Mayor Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

QUORUM:

In attendance were Mayor Adams, Councilmembers Bofo, Esteve, Gardner (arrived at 8:10 p.m.), Harrison, Ndebumadu (arrived at 8:07 p.m.), and Woolfley; City Manager Lott; Assistant City Manager Mears; City Attorney Levan; City Clerk Hernandez; and Staff.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELECTIONS/AMENDMENTS:

Councilmember Esteve made a motion to move Consent Agenda Item D) Adoption of Resolution R-87-20 Approving a Joint Use Agreement with Bowie State University Regarding the Bowie Racetrack Property to New Business for further discussion. Councilmember Woolfley seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

1. John Cabala, Bowie Resident – Comment attached.
2. Ann McDonald – Comment attached.
3. Sue Livera, Bowie Resident – Comment attached.
4. Stephen Wehrenberg, Kittery Lane – Comment attached.
5. R. LaMont Johnson, Bowie Resident – Comment attached.
6. Don A. Phillips, Oat Farm Ct. – Comment attached.
7. Michael Uzzo, Echoes of Nature Executive Director – Comment attached.
8. Mike Lange, Running Park Ct. – Comment attached.

PRESENTATIONS:

Mayor Adams read aloud Proclamation P-17-20 recognizing the Bowie Police Department's CALEA Accreditation. Councilmember Harrison extended the Council's gratitude to Lieutenant Rachel Jefferson for all her hard work in helping the Bowie Police Department obtain the accreditation. Police Chief Nesky, Deputy Chief Preston, and Lieutenant Jefferson thanked Council for their support and acknowledging the Police Department's work.

CITY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

Councilmember Woolfley made a motion to appoint Mr. Arthur Rogers to the Economic Development Committee and Mr. Joseph Wright to the Community Outreach Committee. Councilmember Esteve seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0. Mr. Rogers and Mr. Wright were sworn into their respective committees.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Adams spoke of the COVID-19 restrictions, asking citizens to please follow them and to stay safe.

Mayor Pro Tem Boafo discussed the Police Department's new Bowie Camera Rebate Program. For any resident who purchases and installs one outdoor security camera at their home, they will receive a \$50 rebate.

CITY MANAGER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

City Manager Lott spoke of the approximately 400 staff members who continue to seamlessly deliver essential services to the residents of Bowie during this pandemic while still maintaining their health and well-being. City Manager Lott gave special recognition to the Emergency Management Team, Lee Cornwell and Stephanie Robinson; the Solid Waste division employees; the Police Department; Animal Control officers; Parks and Grounds, and the IT Department.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilmember Woolfley made a motion to approve items: A) Approval of June 15 Regular Meeting Minutes; B) Adoption of Resolution R-79-20 Waiving the Competitive Bidding Requirements of Section 61 "Purchasing and Contracting" of the Charter of the City of Bowie and Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into a Software as a Service Contract with Tyler Technologies, Inc. Munis Division, to Enable the City's Continued Use of its Enterprise Resource Planning Software System; C) Adoption of Resolution R-86-20 Waiving the Bidding Requirements to Allow for the Purchase of One Refuse Truck by Piggybacking a Costars Pennsylvania Department of General Services Bid; E) Adoption of Resolution R-88-20 Accepting Bid for Rehabilitation of Cast Iron Pipe (CIP) Water Mains Using Class IV Structural Cured-In-Place (CIPP) Lining in the Heather Hills Section of the City; and F) Introduction of Ordinance O-8-20 Amending Chapter 5, "Building and Property Maintenance", of the City of Bowie Code, Article II, "Housing and Property Maintenance Code", Section 5-9, "Licensing and Inspection of Rental Dwellings", to Require a Property Owners to Obtain a Rental License For Any Dwelling or Part Thereof that He or She Rents, Including Dwellings Rented to Family Members and Below Grade Room Rentals, and Without Regard to the Length of Stay By Any Tenant or Group of Tenants. Councilmember Harrison seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Bowie Town Center – Mr. John Henry King, Bowie's Economic Development Director, introduced Mr. Louis Conforti, CEO of Washington Prime Group (WPG). Mr. Conforti and his team briefed Council on Washington Prime Group's plans to improve the Bowie Town Center. Mr. Conforti's team discussed several special projects that are proposed including winter igloos outside of Party HQ, an amphitheater green space, a seating area refresh, and an open-air exercise space. In the interest of time, Councilmembers planned to follow up with Mr. Conforti individually to have their questions answered.

B. Adoption of Resolution R-87-20 Approving a Joint Use Agreement with Bowie State University Regarding the Bowie Racetrack Property – Dr. Aminta H. Breaux, Bowie State University President presented to Council on what this joint use agreement will mean for the university. Dr. Breaux mentioned uses such as multipurpose fields for teams and athletic clubs, as well as the community; expanding space for their ROTC program, including providing an outdoor ropes course; and providing hands-on learning opportunities for their natural sciences program. This partnership would allow them to expand their offerings and give back to the community in new ways.

Mr. Joseph Meinert, Director of Planning and Community Development, gave the staff report on this Joint Use Agreement between the City and Bowie State University. The City will become the owner of the Racetrack property on or before January 1, 2023 provided this joint use agreement comes to fruition as mandated by the State of Maryland. He stated that they have not yet settled on any specific location or plans for the property: that will be determined in the days to come as they jointly create an overall recreational master plan. According to the wording of the agreement, the City does have the final say as to what is built on the property, and this agreement does not preclude the City from using the property. Mr. Meinert spoke to resident concerns, stating that there will be no use of firearms on the property by the ROTC program, and that it is the intent of the City and the University to minimize the traffic impacts to the surrounding area. Staff recommends approval of Resolution R-87-20.

Council thanked Dr. Breaux and the University, and Mr. Meinert and staff for their hard work on this. Councilmember Gardner stated that this project and agreement has been a long time coming.

Mayor Pro Tem Bofo made a motion to adopt Resolution R-87-20. Councilmember Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Adoption of Resolution R-83-20 Approving FY20 (HUD FY19) Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report – Mr. Jesse Buggs, Director of the Office of Grant Development and Administration introduced Mr. George Jones, Grants Manager, who presented the staff report. This report is for year two of their five-year plan that is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG). The report details their expenditures and program achievements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. The grant amount was two-fold this year: entitlement funding amounting to \$188,505.00, and CARES Act funding amounting to \$116,863. Programs funded with the entitlement funding were the single-family housing rehabilitation program, fair housing training, and workforce development training for residents ages 15 to 25. CARES Act funding was used for an emergency food assistance program, purchasing personal protective equipment for those in need, and the emergency rental assistance program. Having satisfactorily completed all the requirements, staff recommends that Council approve Resolution R-83-20 so they can submit this report to HUD for their review and approval.

Public Hearing:

Since there were no speakers signed up to speak and no comments received for this item, Mayor Adams declared the public hearing to have been held.

Councilmember Harrison made a motion to adopt Resolution R-83-20. Councilmember Gardner seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0 (Ndebumadu did not vote.)

D. Adoption of Resolution R-84-20 Approving 2020-2025 PGC/Bowie Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice – Mr. Jesse Buggs Director of the Office of Grant Development and Administration introduced Ms. Kay Starr, Grants Writer, who presented the staff report. This joint report between Prince George's County and the City of Bowie is required to be completed every five years as a requirement of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant

(CDBG) funding to comply with the Fair Housing Act of 1968. The top fair housing issues are inadequate fair housing enforcement, limited housing choices for persons with disabilities, Hispanic residents face persistent housing challenges, there is insufficient funds for non-profits, there is limited homeownership options for subgroups of county and city residents, there is a need for affordable housing for vulnerable populations, and the access to high-quality neighborhoods is limited. Once the report has been submitted and approved, HUD will certify that Prince George's County and the City of Bowie have analyzed housing discrimination and are working towards its elimination, promoted fair housing choice for all, provided racially and ethnically inclusive patterns of housing, promoted housing accessible and usable to persons with disabilities, and promoted and enforced the Fair Housing Act and related laws and regulations. Staff recommends that Council approve Resolution R-84-20.

Public Hearing:

Since there were no speakers signed up to speak and no comments received for this item, Mayor Adams declared the public hearing to have been held.

Councilmember Harrison made a motion to adopt Resolution R-84-20. Councilmember Gardner seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0 (Ndebumadu did not vote.)

E. Proposed Communications Policy Regarding Virtual Meetings – Councilmember Ndebumadu made a motion to move this item to the January 4, 2021 Council meeting. Councilmember Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Pro Tem Bofo motioned to adjourn the Regular City Council meeting. Councilmember Esteve seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Awilda Hernandez, MMC
City Clerk

Awilda Hernandez

From: John Cabala <jrockjrock@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 12:07 PM
To: cityclerk
Cc: jrockjrock@comcast.net; Michael Esteve; Geraldine.Valentino@house.state.md.us; Timothy Adams; dwoolfley@gmail.com
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Citizen Participation on Resolution R-87-20: Approving a Joint Use Agreement with Bowie State University Regarding the Bowie Racetrack Property
Importance: High

Although I reluctantly agree with the City of Bowie approving of the Joint Use Agreement with BSU tonight, to allow further planning, I'd like to make comments tonight, and if that's not possible, please accept the below in writing:

I am highly disappointed that the first time I've ever even seen the Draft Joint Use Agreement was when Michael Esteve shared it with our community this past Friday. I understand this was on a fast track, but City of Bowie and BSU must do better in the future to allow and accept public input from the communities most negatively impacted. My neighborhood, Saddlebrook West, and our sister neighborhood, Saddlebrook East, are currently quite neighborhoods, but we back up to the Race Track property. We will no longer be quite (or as safe) if we do not limit the growth of activities at the Race Track property. Going forward, I implore the City Council and BSU to seriously consider the impact to our communities as this progresses.

Our communities are already impacted by existing high noise events at BSU (we can hear music, announcers, etc during games, events, etc), and the campus is about ½ mile away. We also have high traffic and unsafe conditions for our children and even adults on Race Track Rd, and this will certainly get worse with more traffic. How will the City and BSU prevent students and visitors from using our neighborhood as a parking lot during large group events? This happens already now when there have been parties at the existing park. Every one of these issues is alarming in itself, but they are compounded by the fact that they can also reduce our home values, and even dissuade potential buyers!

Below are my concerns that I expect to be addressed in the near future:

1. We must cap large group events to the already agreed upon 4 per year! Noise can be very loud already from the campus ½ mile away during summer game and homecoming-like events. Imagine how loud it will be with the events in your backyard? Will this affect prospective buyers looking in our neighborhood, and thus market prices? Of course it will.
2. Since there certainly will not be enough parking for large events, what will the City and BSU do to ensure students and visitors do not park in our neighborhood?
3. What will the City and BSU do to control or improve the already high traffic load on Race Track Rd? It's very likely that traffic will back-up through our neighborhood entrances/exits, preventing us from entering or leaving our homes. Not only does this pose a threat to our commute time, and work, but what about emergency situations when we need to go to the hospital or there's a house fire, or emergency services need to get to my home? I can assure you it will be an issue, because we have proof it happens, because it already did when hundreds of students and parties parked their cars along Race Track, and in our community during a large party at the park behind the Race Track. It took forever for the police cars to make it through to our neighborhood that day. Luckily, no ambulances or fire trucks were needed.
4. What will the City and BSU do to improve safety for adults and children walking and riding along Race Track Rd, or crossing at the dangerous cross-walk? I've seen very close calls where speeding cars almost hit children. The City and BSU must make road improvements to ensure every child and adult are able to safely walk or ride!

Thank you for your consideration.
John Cabala

Awilda Hernandez

From: Ann McDonald <quiltdog277@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 1:21 PM
To: cityclerk
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: 20201207 - RESOLUTION R-87-20.PDF

I am writing to express a few concerns about section 2.3 - which states the University may operate track and field events on the property. The only current development listed in 2.2 as the ROTC fitness/obstacle course. This particular section implies either the creation of a track or the use of newly created fields for field events. The current mile long dirt oval at the racetrack is inappropriate for most track events, and the University currently has a regulation track.

If there is a hypothetical track in the plans, I believe that should be stated in the list of proposed active recreational activities, as that is a facility that is completely different from the less intensive use of the area that would be provided by recreational fields.

Monday, December 7, 2020
From Sue Livera

Re. Bowie Towne Center

Greetings Mayor, Council, staff and representatives connected with Bowie Towne Center,

I've shared my ideas before with all sorts of residents as well as the Council. The response is very supportive; that Bowie Towne Center be converted in to a pedestrian mall; that the Sears building be reconfigured to include a wide range of opportunities for every citizen to use; to use creative thinking to repurpose what's there and what's not. As well, to build single story apartments for Senior citizens to adjoin this area. One friend said she'd need two adjoining with a break through so she could be on one side and her husband in the other! With the Senior Center, the health center, the gym and City Hall literally across the street, what an ideal spot.

All the seniors in Bowie currently living either singly or as a couple in Bowie can stay because they'd now have easy living completely convenient to all their needs. Their homes - now too large - would attract younger families. Those young families' schools would already be where those homes are. Thus, no impact on the existing number of schools nor the need to build another.

Shops would be renewed in concept to attract every age. This center could benefit from an ice cream store, a bakery, another coffee shop, a place to purchase supplies and create every sort of craft as well as clothing (remember when people made their things??). The center would be reconfigured to eliminate all car, etc traffic. Consider - A bowling alley. Basketball courts outside that could be flooded for an ice skating venue in the cold weather. A gazebo for smaller sized performances. The ideas are endless! The center of this center would have all sorts of outdoor seating. The center of the walk ways can be re-purposed to plant trees and native plants with natural drainage providing cleaner air and welcome shade. Pathways can be included in the master trails plan and connected with those being considered and those that exist for walking, jogging, biking.

I suggest forming a group representing all areas in Bowie to work with the owners about this concept. It needs to be OUR idea, not someone else's! Too much development these days is ho hum. We are surrounded by same 'ole, same 'ole mall stuff. This citizens' group can review and thus further identify more specifics, using a format such as this: what would we want to have stopped in Bowie; what would we want to have continued in Bowie and what would we want to see started? Once a plan is devised, it can be priced.

This is the ideal time to think way outside that bloody box, to do some blue sky thinking and come up with something that has a lasting result. If you've traveled in Europe, you'll understand how marvelous and appealing those pedestrian malls are. Let's design and make happen something different and innovative to further the appeal of Bowie.

Thanks for listening.

Awilda Hernandez

From: Stephen Wehrenberg <stephen.wehrenberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 3:50 PM
To: Awilda Hernandez
Cc: john.teasdale2; Joe Meinert; Michael Esteve; Dufour Woolfley
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Joint Use Agreement on the Racetrack Property

Awilda,

Regarding tonight's meeting, the consent agenda includes

D.

Adoption of Resolution R-87-20
Approving a Joint Use Agreement with Bowie State University Regarding the Bowie Racetrack Property
Documents:

1. [20201207 - RESOLUTION R-87-20.PDF](#)

Councilmember Esteve assured me that it would be removed from the consent agenda (which I assume would enable citizen comment).

However it plays out, if the opportunity to comment regarding the resolution is presented (perhaps with V. Citizen Participation) I would like to enter the statement below my sig block as that comment.

Stephen Wehrenberg

stephen.wehrenberg@gmail.com
301-580-9684

Mayor and Council, I am Stephen Wehrenberg, Chair of your Environmental Advisory Committee. However, this comment is as a citizen, not representing that Committee.

On first reading, I was concerned that the City was about to take action that would foreclose any opportunity for the creation of a Nature Center on the Race Track property.

But on my third reading, I realized that the agreement between the City and Bowie State only spells out who can do what, and who is responsible for what. This agreement does not seem to have any bearing on the development of a Nature Center.

What does have bearing on that idea is the law itself. Chapter 590 requires that:

(1) The portion of the Property transferred to the City that is within 100 feet of the top of the Patuxent River bank shall be used only for passive recreational activities, including hiking, wildlife viewing, picnicking, and walking;

and

(2) The remainder of the Property shall be used only for active recreational activities including, but not limited to, baseball, football, soccer, and cricket, and that the Property may contain only one future structure that is no greater than 50,000 square feet in floor area; and

I'm not a lawyer or legislator, but it seems that without an amendment to this law any structure would have to be for the purpose of active recreational activities. But that's the way the law is written, not a function of this Joint Use Agreement.

The agreement will not impede any City commissioned review from determining what—in the eyes of the City and its residents—would be the best use of the property. If residents and the City feel that a Nature Center is in the best interests of all, it might mean working toward an amendment to the law that would allow this.

So it is the State that must be convinced if we want to use part of the property for a Nature Center. That's not impossible, it just requires a bit more effort for residents and the City.

Stephen Wehrenberg

Kittery Lane, Bowie

Awilda Hernandez

From: R. LaMont Johnson <punchdj@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 4:07 PM
To: Awilda Hernandez
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Bowie Race Track Resolution R-87-20

To Whom It May Concern:

I live in Saddlebrook East and very concerns about the joint agreement between Bowie State University and the City of Bowie and its impact on our community. My concerns are as follows.

1. During a MINIMUM of 4 times per year, we will have to deal with very high volume noise from "large group events" that will be approved tonight at 7:00PM). As we all know, the noise can be very loud already from the campus ½ mile away during summer game and homecoming-like events. Imagine how loud it will be with the events in your backyard? Will this affect prospective buyers looking in our neighborhood, and thus market prices? Sure it could.
2. Since there certainly will not be enough parking for large events, what can we do to ensure students and visitors do not park in our neighborhood? I'm not sure, other than insist BSU shuttle people during large events, and ensure they do NOT build a parking lot behind the SB West houses, as that will be a serious eyesore and noise and air pollution, as well as lights on at night!
3. Controlling the growth of large group events in the future. This must be capped!
4. More traffic on Race Track Rd! Very likely, traffic back-ups that extend past our neighborhood entrances! Can you imagine waiting in traffic just to get home, or to leave for work, hospital, etc!!
5. Increased traffic accidents on Race Track Rd
6. Increased dangerous conditions for anyone, including elderly and children walking or biking on Race Track, or crossing the street between our neighborhoods. I do this often, and the blind curve and speeding cars is already very dangerous for me, and I am pretty agile.

Please consider these concerns before your vote tonight. Thank you.

R. LaMont Johnson

Bowie City Clerk,

7 December 2020

I learned yesterday about a City Council Meeting today where a vote on a resolution about the future of the race track parcels would occur.

I am writing to express my concerns.

I live in Saddlebrook East. I walk out my front door, look right and in the winter can see the racetrack. I hear the Bowie State University (BSU) Band practice with all my windows and doors closed. I have been tracking the future of the racetrack for years.

Here are some of my concerns:

1. I first found out about the city council resolution by accident last week when another concerned neighbor from Saddlebrook West brought it to my attention. How is the city reaching out to the neighborhoods that immediately sit astride (North and South) of the race track parcels and asking for input?
2. The resolution appears to mirror very closely with the wants that BSU had that were shared in a Zoom call two months ago. Even though the community provided input not one piece of that input appears to be included in the resolution.
3. I don't see any input from the horse community or the green space crew in the resolution. Why not?
4. Finally, several years ago, there was a BSU event that was held at the athletic fields in Saddlebrook East Park. The fallout was horrible.
 - Cars parked in our neighborhood. Note that they were in front of my house and in several streets deep into the neighborhood.
 - Trash on the curbs.
 - Noise.
 - People walking on Racetrack Road which is already a dangerous throughfare.

If we roll with the resolution as stated what's to prevent BSU from scheduling events that result in similar outcomes?

Is the City conceding control of the racetrack parcels to BSU?

Why does it appear that the city is favoring BSU and not engaging the immediate local communities?

What will be done to limit the noise and traffic associated with future BSU events at the proposed new complex?

What will be done to control traffic on racetrack road and to keep BSU students out of our neighborhoods?

I've volunteered before to be a part of a community team that's inclusive that could work to find solutions that might work for all parties concerned. I'm volunteering again!

Don A. Phillips

8103 Oat Farm Court
DPhill1024@verizon.net
301.789.4023

Awilda Hernandez

From: Michael Uzzo <muzzo@echoesofnature.org>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 5:19 PM
To: cityclerk
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Re: Dec 7th meeting citizen comments

We would like to propose a partnership with the City of Bowie and Echoes Of Nature, which is a non-profit environmental education organization, to establish a Nature Center that would showcase Maryland wildlife and habitats. Echoes Of Nature has been providing nature-oriented programs with live animal ambassadors throughout several Maryland counties, including Bowie. Since 2002 this organization has brought people of all ages and backgrounds back in touch with the wonders of the natural world. The center would complement the Racetrack site, or another property, and provide a valuable resource to all. We have recently started a dialogue with the Natural Resources Group of the Green Team to discuss a nature center collaboration.

Thanks!

On Mon, Dec 7, 2020 at 5:13 PM Michael Uzzo <muzzo@echoesofnature.org> wrote:

We would like to propose a partnership with the City of Bowie and Echoes Of Nature, which is a non-profit environmental education organization, to establish a Nature Center that would showcase Maryland wildlife and habitats. Echoes Of Nature has been providing nature-oriented programs with live animal ambassadors throughout several Maryland counties, including Bowie. Since 2002 this organization has brought people of all ages and backgrounds back in touch with the wonders of the natural world. The center would complement the Racetrack site, or another property, and provide a valuable resource to all.

Thanks!

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We bring people back in touch with the wonders of the natural world!

Use Smile when shopping on Amazon and support our mission.

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-4361114>

Michael Uzzo PhD

Executive Director

Echoes Of Nature

muzzo@EchoesOfNature.org

www.EchoesOfNature.org

301-860-1306

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<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-4361114>

Michael Uzzo PhD

Executive Director

Echoes Of Nature

muzzo@EchoesOfNature.org

Awilda Hernandez

From: Mike Lange <mlangehoa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 6:23 PM
To: cityclerk; Mike Lange
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Racetrack Resolution R-87-20

I recommend Bowie City Council's approval of resolution R-87-20, with the amendment that the 100 feet of land from the top of the Patuxent River bank and which must be used for passive recreational activities, including hiking, wildlife viewing, picnicking, and walking, be expanded to 200 feet from the top of the Patuxent River bank. Currently, not enough space has been dedicated to green space.

In addition, I ask that the City of Bowie Council pass an ordinance to allow the Saddlebrook West and Saddlebrook East HOAs to tow vehicles illegally parked on our subdivision streets. This ordinance would help solve some of the parking issues resulting from BSU events at the race track property.

Sincerely,

Mike Lange
15022 Running Park Court
Saddlebrook West
Bowie, MD 20715