2000 Marbury Drive

District Heights, Maryland 20747



# City Meeting Minutes

# Thursday, November 2, 2023, 7pm

# In-Person & YouTube Audio/Visual Conference

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The City Meeting of the City of District Heights was held on Thursday, October 5, 2023, In-person and YouTube Live broadcast. Mayor Miller called the meeting to order at 7:01p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Vice Mayor Harcourt

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Gomez

**QUORUM**

In attendance were Mayor Miller, Vice Mayor Harcourt, Comr. Janifer, Comr. Gomez, and Comr. Tilghman. Also in attendance were David Street – City Manager, Ralph Bazilio - Treasurer, Starr Jefferson –City Clerk, Ronald Tarpley – Chief of Police, Nikeisha Pancho- HR Manager, Lakeesha Washington-Deputy Director Public Works, Katrina Polk- Senior Services

**AGENDA ACCEPTANCE**

Commissioner Janifer moved to approve the agenda for the October 5, 2023, City Meeting and was seconded by Comr. Tilghman. The motion passed a 4-0-1 vote (MM abstained).

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Approval of Work Session Meeting Minutes from September 26, 2023**

Budget Adjustments

Commissioner Harcourt moved to estimate and appropriate $90,000 in state grant funds for Body Worn Cameras to line item #70801 – Equipment and Machinery for fiscal year 2024 which was seconded by Commissioner Janifer which carried a 4-0-0 vote (MM abstained)

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Human Resources – Nikesha Pancho**

Human Resource Manager, Nikki Pancho introduced to the residents the City’s new Deputy Director of Public Works. She was warmly welcomed and her extensive career in sixteen years of experience in supporting the Army DOD Mission, seven years of public works leadership and completing a $7 million project was also highlighted.

Ms. Pancho reviewed the vacancies within the city highlighting that the city was seeking a Public Works laborer with landscaping experience.

Vice Mayor suggested to post positions on the Maryland Municipal League and expressed his desire to see a woman join the city’s police force.

Open Enrollment began on November 1, 2023.

Report Submitted.

**Treasury- Ralph Bazilio, Treasurer**

Ralph Bazilio presented the financial report for the first quarter to the City Commission and residents.

Mr. Bazilio cautioned that negative number reflected on the Budget vs Actual document was not a cause for alarm.

Fixed assets were listed at 0, to which Mr. Bazilio explained was practically impossible.

He also noted that the city has almost 9 million dollars of underappreciated assets, which needs to be addressed.

Updated the Commission of the audit which was primarily focused on the managing the determination of fixed assets and depreciation of assets.

Vice Mayor inquired on the if there is an extension on the state audit and if we need to request one. City manager David Street confirmed we have an extension through December 31, 2023 and have received our extension letter.

Commissioner Tilghman inquired about the “Ask My Accountant” line on the report. Mr. Bazillio answered that the phrasing is being changed since it shouldn’t be used, the credit cards have a limit and when you’re approaching that limit and you don’t have enough spending power you make a payment and later it’s charged to a specific account. It should be considered a prepaid expense which the phrasing will be changed to reflect that.

Report submitted

**Recreation – Ms. Jeanette Williams, Asst. Director of Recreation**

Ms. Williams shared the highlights of the Trunk or Treat and the Fall Festival hosted by the Recreation Dept over the weekend.

Ms. Williams thanked Public Works and the Police Department for their continued support of the Recreation Dept events.

Thanksgiving Dinner is almost out – approximately 60 tickets left

Mr. Street included some additional details for the holiday season including targeting meal support for the Senior Services, Police Department and YSB to assist with ‘shut in’ residents

December 8th and December 16th are coming dates for Christmas tree lighting.

Report Submitted

**Department of Public Works – Lakeesha Washington, Deputy Director**

Leaf collection ends on December 22nd.

The city collected over $3,000 from the City’s first Yard Sale

In the midst of submitting a grant on the 30th of this month for the PG Stormwater Stewardship Grant with the Chesapeake Bay Trust, Dr. Austin is assisting with this submission.

Ms. Washington addressed Halleck Street residents with concerns about streetlights not functioning. Ms. Washington confirmed that she has contacted Pepco to see if some of those lights can be replaced and has worked with Chief Tarpley and the police department circling the block until we can get the lights replaced. Ms. Washington stated that if residents do have any concerns to please email publicworks@districtheights.org

Commissioner Tilghman suggested a deer crossing sign for certain areas within the city.

Vice Mayor Harcourt thanked Ms. Washington for attending the MML and attending the various sessions.

Vice Mayor Harcourt also requested Ms. Washington for an inventory of the signage throughout the city.

Ms. Washington restated Leaf Collection end date of December 22nd.

Report Submitted

**Code Enforcement Report- Michelle Watkins**

Reminded residents that limb collection is over – citations will be issued

Ms. Watkins responded with the code office’s information: 301-336-1400 x150 codeenforcement@districheights.org if you have received any fines or notices and need additional time.

Commissioner Gomez inquired about the business that had a liquid run off in an alleyway. Ms. Williams shared that the owner had obtained permitting documents to allow WSSC to repair a pipe contributing to the run off.

The website for Code Enforcement is in a Beta testing stage which will allow residents to submit Code Enforcement complaints.

Vice Mayor Harcourt inquired about dog complaints and whether that fell under the Code Enforcement helm. Ms. Watkins confirmed that indeed the complaint does get verified from the department, if they get to the site and there is no dog and they still receive a complaint the department refers residents to contact animal control. If the animal is then located the department sends a letter to the resident.

Report submitted

**Police Department Report – Chief Ronald Tarpley**

November 13th the District Heights Speed Camera will go Live

Commissioner Gomez suggested moving the speed warning unit that provides the speed of a vehicle to a location that does not have speed deterrent devices.

Offering repeat offender support services.

**Youth Services Bureau “YSB Report”- Ms. Katrina Emerson, Director of YSB**

YSB is still looking for Licensed Clinicians to hire.

Report submitted

**Senior Services – Katrina Polk, Director of Senior Services**

Dr. Polk shared the results of the Senior Services Survey and the forming of the Senior Advisory Committee.

Upcoming events to look forward to include tours of the Senior Building on Friday, December 8th in conjunction with the Senior Christmas luncheon and holiday decorating of the Senior Building –dates and time to be announced.

Report submitted

**City Manager – David Street, City Manager**

Mr. Street apologized for the delayed delivery of the recent Herald newsletter.

General Government will begin its rolling closures on Friday’s beginning, tomorrow, Friday, November 3rd.

Announced occupancy for the Senior Center should be received in the next 2 weeks.

RFP for Fiesta Place has been extended through November 17th.

Mr. Street announced that the Feasibility Study for the renovations has provided an estimate that exceeds the original estimate and budget by approximately $250,000 due to architect highlighting code related concerns and permitting related review concerns.

Mr. Street stated he is working with Public Works and have released an RFQ for a facility condition assessment for building engineer and architect and other professionals to look at maintenance needs, code deficiencies or code related updates that need to occur.

Mayor Miller questioned if we are going to try to do the best upgrades we can, Mr. Street answered that we are going to pose that question to the architect and any upgrades we do end up pursuing don’t trigger a code or maintenance issue.

Announced site planning for 6114 Marlboro Pike has begun. Vice Mayor Harcourt commented on the 56 parking spaces and there being a need for more green space. What was calculated as a maximum based on the formulas for the specifics of the district and the type of use.

Announced a new design is underway for Kipling Parkway to include a shared use path, benches for sitting and gardens.

Commissioner Tilghman inquired about the Workforce Development progress. Mr. Street shared that furniture would be shipped in about 2 weeks.

Commissioner Gomez inquired about Veterans Park phase two, which Mr. Street responded it is a planned update to Veterans Park which include signage to further enhance the park and adding another branch of armed forces.

Commissioner Gomez inquired on how the Advisory Body updates, the anticipated completion says June 2023 and would there be an update. Mr. Street clarified that this is a running series of items and is taking each committee one by one per month based on the needs of each committee. Commissioner Gomez also inquired if the policy updates would reflect how committee members should be working with General Government staff. Mr. Street stated that the final establishment of the committee’s administrative structure is that departments will be formally assigned to support the work of the committees.

Commissioner Tilghman inquired about the expired job applications and if they can be taken down so people can’t apply for those expired positions. Mr. Street stated he would get the expired jobs on the website updated.

Report submitted

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Terry Speight – Fiesta Place Community Garden

Thanked the Commission for the use of the city space.

November 12, 2023 2-330pm will be an indoor grow tutorial for residents.

**MAYOR AND COMMISSION COMMENTS/REPORTS**

Commissioner Gomez announced that the Marlboro Pike Partnership Community November 22nd at McNamara at 6pm

Commissioner Janifer announced the city will be celebrating our Veterans Day event Saturday November 11th, with a ceremony 10am -11am at the Veteran’s Park Memorial.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Vice Mayor Harcourt moved to adjourn the City Meeting. Commissioner Tilghman seconded the motion which carried a 4-0-1 vote (MM abstained).

The City Meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Starr Jefferson

City Clerk