

**PROCEEDINGS OF HARFORD COUNTY COUNCIL, GOVERNMENT, AND MUNICIPAL
WORK SESSION- TOWN OF BEL AIR OF HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND**

May 11, 2021

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER – Municipal Work Session was called to order at 6:00 PM by Council President Patrick Vincenti. All Councilmembers were present with the exception of Councilman Beulah (Councilman Chad Shrodes joined at 6:07PM and Councilman Joe Woods joined at 6:22PM). Other attendees were William Martin, Mayor, David Glenn, Council President, Jason Robertson, Councilmember, Casi Boyer, Councilmember, Jim Ringsaker, Councilmember, Carolyn Zinner, Councilmember, Stephen Gamatoria, Chief of Staff, George DeHority, Director, Tim Whittie, Director, Shane Grimm, Director, Billy Boniface, Chief Advisor to County Executive, Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent, and Cornell Brown, HCPS.

OPENING REMARKS – Council President Vincenti welcomed the other attendees and discussed the history of the Municipal Meetings. Councilman Wagner followed with similar remarks. Brief introductions were made by all who were present. Council President Vincenti invited Mayor Martin, Council President Glenn, and Chief of Staff Stephen Gamatoria to the presentation table to start the discussion items.

CITY OF HAVRE DE GRACE –

HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Mayor Martin requested to start with Harford County Public Schools as Redistricting is their top priority. He requested an update on the redistricting process. Cornell Brown replied that the redistricting group is meeting the following day (May 12th) as well as web maps being used will be updated on the HCPS website to reflect beginning of secondary enrollment processes. Mr. Brown elaborated on the redistricting process and discussed the proposed plans for students who reside in the Greenway Farms and Bulle Rock developments. The redistricting advisory board will meet with Superintendent Bulson on June 2nd to discuss their most recent findings from there, the advisory board will gather more information from the public feedback to incorporate into their final proposal to present to Superintendent Bulson. Brown restated that this process will not be completed until February 2022 which is when the final redistricting plans will be presented to the Board of Education (BOE) for a vote. Two public input sessions will be held. Mr. Brown stated that the advisory board is still working on the project and has received a lot of feedback on the public proposals from the community.

Council President Glenn asked how counts of students would be considered for enrollment numbers as the past year has been virtual learning. He also asked about boundary exception students. Superintendent Bulson replied that virtual student counts will be taken into consideration by using multiple data points to get enrollment numbers. Council President Glenn also mentioned the bus routes and asked how those will be affected with the redistricting process. Councilmember Robertson commented on the redistricting of Havre de Grace students going to Roy Williams Elementary School with hopes that the students can return to Havre de Grace for middle and high school. Mr. Brown replied that he will take those thoughts to the redistricting advisory board for consideration and that the transportation department would be reviewing the bus routes. Councilman Robertson then asked a question regarding restricted bus routes preventing them from crossing train tracks. Mr. Brown answered that this was a safety measure.

Councilmember Zinner proposed moving all pre-kindergarten students through second grade to Roy Williams Elementary School and then back to Havre de Grace Elementary for third through fifth grade. Superintendent Bulson replied that this model would cause potential issues in the future. The group had some discussion on the pros and cons of this method.

Councilmember Boyer commented on the conditions of Roy Williams Elementary School and the participation in the Patriot Program by students in Havre de Grace schools. She stated that she is concerned that students would not get the same experience being Havre de Grace Residents and going to school at Roy Williams Elementary. Mr. Brown replied to Councilmember Boyer by providing an update on the recent upgrades Roy Williams Elementary has received to its plumbing and HVAC systems. Council President Vincenti echoed these remarks and stated he recently toured the school and can confirm the updates to the facilities. Mr. Brown commented that the BOE is working with the State for more funding for facility updates. Council President Vincenti made a comment about Roy Williams Elementary School being a split articular school. Mr. Brown said that the school does have some students attend that will move on to Havre de Grace for secondary schools, but the majority is Aberdeen at this time, and this is something that they could look at as a possibility in the future.

Mayor Martin asked for an update on the status of the former Havre de Grace High School auditorium. Mr. Brown informed the group that they are still awaiting an official approval letter from the State of Maryland and that once this have been received, they can work with the County to surplus the building to the City.

DISCUSSION OF MUNICIPAL MEETINGS – Chief of Staff Gamatoria reviewed his experience and history of the municipal and county meetings in the past and offered to have the City of Havre de Grace host one in the future. Asked for a longer timeframe of the meeting in the future to enter into more depths of discussion.

TARC FUNDING – The City of Havre de Grace is seeking some assistance/support from the Harford County on the TARC Funds and would like to continue to keep a stable relationship. Mr. Gamatoria stated the benefits of having a closer relationship between the City and County. Mr. Gamatoria stated that the City would like to have support on TARC funding with city organizations such as the Opera House. He stated this funding will continue to increase the quality of performances that this organization is able to bring to the area.

POTENTIAL COUNTY LEGISLATION – Mr. Gamatoria discussed working with the County on the City's Route 40 clean-up efforts. The City hopes to get the Route 40 Gateways cleaned up and Mr. Gamatoria stated that the city is working closely with non-profits and small business to aide in this process. He requested that the county help with providing some type of leverage to get this process done at a timely manner such as requiring properties within a certain square footage of City limits to comply. Council President Vincenti commented that he received a letter from the City (as well as the Executive side confirmed by Billy Boniface) on this process and will follow up.

ELECTION REDISTRICTING – Mr. Gamatoria commented on the need for good representation in the Councilmanic redistricting process. Mr. Gamatoria hopes that the group confirmed by the County Council will represent the citizens accordingly. Council Attorney Charles Kearney informed the group that the Redistricting Commission's first meeting is on May 19th.

HARFORD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL REPURPOSING – Mr. Gamatoria stated that the City has received documentation from the Cushman and Wakefield study but has not yet had a recent update on the plans. Director Shane Grimm confirmed that he met with representative of Cushman and Wakefield, David Baird within the last two weeks and there has been some interest on the project. Mr. Gamatoria commented that the City is working with the State of Maryland on incentivizing the project and would like to know if the County would be able to help with something similar.

FUTURE WATER NEEDS – Mr. Gamatoria mentioned the great relationship that the County DPW and the City have related to stormwater management. He also commented on the credits that have been achieved with various projects. Mr. Gamatoria discussed the living shoreline project that the City has upcoming.

Mr. Gamatoria stated that there is not a great relationship between the City and County on the water production side. He, along with Director Tim Whittie, provided an update to the group on the status of their project with the City of Aberdeen to build a 12-inch line and stated that a contractor, Allen Myers, has been selected. Mr. Gamatoria commented that the Rock Glenn community would be the first development serviced by this new project. Mr. Gamatoria informed the group that the County has asked that the City hold a supply reserve for their use in emergency situations. The City would like to pursue this with a formal contract with monetary compensation rather than a handshake agreement.

COUNTY COUNCIL SUPPORT –

Route 40 and Otsego Street Intersection- Mr. Gamatoria mentioned the current challenges with this intersection. Council President Vincenti replied that the County is aware of this project and has asked for State support for two years in a row in a presentation to the Harford County Delegation. Mr. Gamatoria asked for the County's continued support on this issue.

Admissions & Amusement Tax – Mr. Gamatoria expressed that the City is upset with the State for propositioning this funding be taken away. He furthered explained that this tax is important to Havre de Grace and explained the history of the Bulle Rock Golf Course at it related to the A&A Tax. Mr. Gamatoria informed the group that members of the Harford County Delegation have tried to place a moratorium on this tax two times.

Emergency Response Crossing for CSX Railroad at Bleheim Farm Lane – Mr. Gamatoria discussed the history of the railroad crossing bridge that existed on the property and stated how residents, the City and fire and EMS personnel would benefit greatly from having access. He also asked that the County provide assistance and support on this matter when the time comes.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ITEMS – Mr. Gamatoria again offered to host a future meeting of this nature.

Council President Vincenti asked a question about the address of Roye Williams Elementary School and its assigned Student Resource Officer (SRO). Mr. Gamatoria replied that the school was not within the City limits of Havre de Grace.

Councilman Giangiordano asked for clarification on the CSX entrance into Blehiem Farm Lane. Mr. Gamatoria confirmed that no fire or EMS apparatus can get through there at this time.

Mr. Boniface discussed the County's excitement for the living shoreline project in Havre de Grace and provided the group with an update on the acquisition of Bell Vue Farms. Mr. Gamatoria stated that this project would offer some great opportunities to work with Eagle Scout projects.

CLOSING COMMENTS--- Council President Vincenti, Councilman Wagner, Mr. Gamatoria and Council President Glenn made closing comments. Council President Vincenti stated that the next meeting will be with the City of Aberdeen on June 8th.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.