



City of Bowie

15901 Excalibur Road
Bowie, Maryland 20716

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Meeting of the Bowie City Council was held on Monday, April 12, 2021 virtually. Mayor Pro Tem Boafo called the meeting to order at 8:10 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

Mayor Pro Tem Boafo led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

QUORUM:

In attendance were Mayor Adams (logged in 8:12 p.m.), Councilmembers Boafo, Esteve, Gardner, Harrison, Ndebumadu and Woolfley, City Manager Lott, Assistant City Manager Mears, City Clerk Hernandez, and Staff.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Introduction of Ordinance O-1-21 and Resolution R-18-21.

Councilmember Woolfley made a motion to Introduce Ordinance O-1-21 Adopting a Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2021 and Ending June 30, 2022 and Resolution R-18-21 Adopting a Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2022 - 2027. Councilmember Harrison seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

City Manager Lott summarized the letter of transmittal for the proposed FY 2022 budget. The proposed General Fund budget for FY 2022 equals \$64,324,200. This represents a decrease of \$2,373,800 or 3.6%. The Water and Sewer Fund has a proposed budget of \$10,429,900 representing an 11.6% decrease over FY 2021 primarily due to capital spending. The City's General Fund is declining, a proposed increase of \$0.06 is anticipated to be presented in the FY 2023 budget.

Public Hearing:

1. Robert and Mary Rapczynski – Comment attached.
2. Bob Rapczynski, President Huntington Heritage Society – Comment attached.
3. Stephen Wehrenberg – Comment attached.
4. Joshua Wooten, Wharton Turn – Comment attached.
5. Bill Lussier, Old Town Bowie – Comment attached.
6. John Teasdale, Midwood Ln – Comment attached.
7. Patty McCaughey, Chapel Forge – Comment attached.
8. Ken McCaughey, Chapel Forge – Comment attached.
9. Verna Teasdale, Midwood Ln – Comment attached.

April 12, 2021

Since there were no other comments submitted, Mayor Adams declared the public hearing to have been held.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Woolfley moved to adjourn the Special City Council meeting and move to Budget Worksession #1. Councilmember Esteve seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Awilda Hernandez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "A".

Awilda Hernandez, MMC
City Clerk

Awilda Hernandez

From: hheritagesociety@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 3:50 PM
To: cityclerk
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: Bowie City Council Budget Committee

Bowie City Council Budget Committee

3/18/2021

For over 10 years, the City has planned improvements to the Huntington Section/Old Bowie neighborhood with the 10th Street Park, walking trails and improvements to the Railroad Museum Campus. Some of those plans are now in jeopardy. Among other things, improvements to the Railroad Museum included an education plaza, viewing platforms for train watchers, small railroad vehicles and movement of the Caboose to a better location next to the station. These plans now seem to be no longer on the table.

Old Bowie needs all the assistance it can receive from the City to become a place where visitors can enjoy our railroad and early city history. Removal above items to the Railroad campus detracts from the original plan for development of the area. These assets have been considered for a very long time. Their loss creates an economic development concern for businesses, and creates a deficit in what the Railroad Museum can offer visitors to the museum. Again, the plan for these additions has been discussed for over 10 years now.

We send these requests as citizens of the Old Town living in a Prince George's County Historic Site on Maple Avenue and longtime active members of the Huntington Heritage Society of which Robert is the current president. Mary also supports this educational project as a former educator at High Bridge Elementary School, which is right down the road from the Railroad Museum. We believe this is necessary for the local people and visitors to learn more about our heritage and to be proud of it, knowing the city appreciates its history. We do appreciate the new Huntington Park about to be opened and thank you for that.

Sincerely,

Robert and Mary Rapczynski

Awilda Hernandez

From: hheritagesociety@aol.com
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:53 PM
To: cityclerk
Subject: {EXTERNAL}: The Heritage Park construction

cityclerk@cityofbowie.org

To the Bowie City Council:

Recently, the Heritage Park construction on 10th Street in Old Bowie has been completed and is awaiting county review. This park is a wonderful addition to the area, and most assuredly commemorates the places we hold dear in Huntington City.

We strongly recommend that the continuation of the project, behind the Railroad Museum, go forward.

Old Bowie - Huntington City - has a long history. That history needs to be shared. The project behind the Museum - an educational plaza, viewing stands, and further small railroad cars - needs to continue in the City's budget. These objects, the design of which is paid for, will constitute a space where the public can gather to enjoy both railroad history, school tours and concerts. These are items necessary for further economic development in the area. Their inclusion will also increase visitation to the Railroad Museum and the Welcome Center.

The Huntington Heritage Society urges you to support this construction through the City Budget. Huntington City deserves no less.

Bob Rapczynski
President, Huntington Heritage Society

Awilda Hernandez

From: Stephen Wehrenberg <stephen.wehrenberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 2:25 PM
To: Awilda Hernandez
Cc: Joe Meinert; john.teasdale2
Subject: (EXTERNAL): City Budget for FY 22

Awilda, my input for the public hearing tonight.

Mayor, Council members, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you regarding the City's proposed budget. I have a few concerns and some environmental issues for which I will advocate. Though I chair your Environmental Advisory Committee, I am speaking tonight as a private citizen who has enjoyed living Bowie for over 30 years.

First, a major concern regarding transparency and citizen engagement. Last year the Budget was available to citizens on a Friday before the first public hearing on Monday. This year the Budget was not available until last night, though Councilman Woolfley contacted Mr. Lott who sent a copy yesterday. Given the scope of the budget, over \$10 million dollars and 328 pages, this does not seem sufficient to allow citizens to read it and develop well-constructed comments before the Council's first Worksession. I strongly urge changes to the budget development process that would give Bowie's citizens more time to review the document and provide the input the Council needs, and (I hope) wants.

One other high-level concern: The Climate Action Plan is a reference for many of the initiatives in the Business Operations budget. As the EAC has noted many times, the City will quickly reach a point where it cannot further the goal of reducing greenhouse gasses 50 % from 2015 levels by 2030 if it limits action to City facilities and properties. Bowie must engage its 60,000 residents to achieve the stated vision of "becoming a regional model for environmental sustainability" and "growing and thriving as a great, multigenerational place to live, work, do business, and play."

The Climate Action Plan describes an ambitious effort to create awareness, educate, and motivate residents to change behaviors in support of a sustainable environment. The Environmental Advisory Committee listed as its highest priority for the City to create a new staff position within the planning department to promote climate action and sustainability in the residential and commercial sectors. A social media outreach, change management, and community engagement specialist to lead this effort is the bare minimum required to align all of the City's environmental efforts and engage citizens, much needed to achieve resolved goals.

The EAC also advised: electrifying transportation, including developing a Green Fleet policy using life-cycle cost criteria in addition to capital-cost; reducing solid waste via education and expanding food scrap and composting programs; and promoting citizen interaction with nature by creating a natural exploration area for children and a Nature Center using the opportunity provided in the Racetrack development process.

The CIP calls for substantial improvements to the Railroad Museum site in FY 2026. With the potential to create the natural exploration area noted above, I recommend moving up this investment with an increase in the FY 22 budget, and completing the project by FY 24. Similarly, the Trails Master Plan calls for construction beginning in FY 26. I recommend moving the Design phase to the FY 22 budget in order to begin construction in FY 24.

Though all this seems somewhat critical, I feel that the City has created ambitious and admirable environmental goals worthy of applause, and is poised to become a leader among cities in creating a city where its residents can survive and

thrive -- and a city that contributes to County, State, National, and global sustainability. It is now just a matter of investing in those goals.

Thank you for listening.

Stephen Wehrenberg, Ph.D.

Organizational Consulting
stephen.wehrenberg@gmail.com
301-259-1144

First, I would like to thank the City on making tremendous efforts and progress to make transportation within and around Bowie more accessible and inclusive to multiple forms of travel, especially pedestrian and bicycling. Second, I realize that the budget is tight this fiscal year, but I hope the Council will keep in mind future consideration for a new Multi-Modal Transportation Specialist position in the City.

In order to effectively implement the Trail Master Plan and the Complete Streets Policy, this position is a necessity as without a dedicated staff position it will be difficult for current staff to make time to properly implement the items in the plan and policy. In addition, this dedicated position would provide transportation expertise and ensure that multi-modal transportation modes within the City are effectively integrated and cohesive, including within new development sites in the City. This position would also assure compliance with local and regional engineering and safety requirements and has the potential to reduce City spending through research and obtaining grants for transportation projects. I ask that serious consideration be given to this position in the next budget year.

Lastly, I ask the Council to make the following actions in this year's budget cycle:

1. Approve Bowie Heritage Trail funding and move up funding for the improvements to the Bowie Railroad Museum complex, including 10th St Park, to the soonest practical budget year
2. Include the Mt. Oak Rd trail segment in the CIP CR-51 project plans
3. Provide funding for the Kenhill Drive/MD 197 Intersection Complete Streets policy action items that the city staff is developing
4. Create a dedicated section/page for the Bowie Complete Streets Policy in the Bowie CIP

Thank you for your consideration.

Joshua Wooten, Chair MAPS Committee

Wharton Turn

From: Bill Lussier of Old Town Bowie

Subj: Old Town Bowie Improvements

I have four brief items to bring to your attention:

First, I would like to commend and thank the city staff for completing the lovely new children's "explore ground" in old town Bowie. It is a wonderful new addition to the cityscape and will be enjoyed for many years to come. Well Done!

Second, I wish to remind the council that the additional sections of the Bowie Heritage trail still need to be funded and built. Building a path to connect old town and the Bowie State MARC station is much needed and long overdue. Please support funding the City of Bowie's small portion of it and pressing the county to complete the rest.

Third, the city needs to repair the street lights on the bridge in old town. Several have been broken for some time now, and make things appear rundown. They should also be connected to a light sensor because the functioning lights are often lit up well into daylight hours.

Lastly, even though the budget is tight this fiscal year, I hope the council has not forgotten about the proposed heritage park to be created behind the railroad museum. This project not only should remain in the Capital Improvement Plan, but funding should be moved up to the soonest practical budget year.

To Council at the Public Budget Hearing, April 12, 2021

The City adopted an ambitious Trails Master Plan in 2019 to increase the connectivity of trails throughout Bowie and increase multi-modal options for Bowie residents. I commend the City for having the foresight to establish this plan and to devote a project page, CR-51, in the Capital Improvement Plan to fund this plan. Currently a trail segment from Pin Oak Parkway to Mt. Oak Road is planned for design in 2024 and completion in 2026. This will be an important step toward completing the overall Bowie ByWay, which is a north-south spine at the heart of the Trails Master Plan.

However, this portion of the ByWay will not be complete until an additional step is taken to connect the terminus of this new trail along Mt. Oak Road to Nottingham Drive. This would provide an important connection between trails south of Mt. Oak Road to trails and destinations north of Mt. Oak Road. Senior staff from the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation have already endorsed this concept, but expect the City to take the lead. With establishment of this trail segment, the County will follow through with improvement of the existing side path from Nottingham Drive to Mitchellville Road. We encourage the Council to include this Mt. Oak Road Trail segment in the CR-51 project plans.

Thank you for considering this request.

John Teasdale, Member, Bowie Multi-model Access and Public Spaces Committee

From: Patty McCaughey, Chapel Forge

This past year has taught us how vitally important our outdoor recreation and gathering spaces are to our health and wellbeing. Having safe trails and parks to engage our mind, body and spirit is a critical part of any well-planned city infrastructure. I support all of the efforts championed by my fellow MAPS members to advance these goals. In particular, I want to voice my support for improvements to Kenhill Drive.

Recently the city completed a very good plan for improving the safety and trail accessibility for the intersection of Kenhill Drive with MD 197. This intersection has long been a huge concern of mine. As an avid bicyclist and frequent pedestrian this intersection scares me, especially the blind interface between northbound trail users and cars speeding around the right turn from northbound 197 onto Kenhill Drive. The plan, as presented, has many improvements including:

1. Slowing northbound 197 right turners and extending the visibility of the crosswalk before the turn.
2. Increasing the number of crosswalks on Kenhill Drive allowing more opportunities for school children to cross from the adjoining neighborhoods.
3. Improving bicycle safety and the interface with the trail by introducing dedicated bike lanes on each side of the road between Kembridge Drive and 197.

These improvements mesh nicely with Bowie's recent adoption of Complete Streets and would offer a first and positive example of a complete streets implementation. Additionally, Kenhill Drive is an important segment of the Bowie Byway as laid out by the new Trails Master Plan. This intersection is the ONLY connection between north and south for non-vehicular traffic. As a critical interface and given the proximity to Benjamin Tasker Middle School these improvements must be a priority and be included in the FY 2022 budget.

From: Ken McCaughey, Chapel Forge
MAPS Testimony - Complete Streets Funding

The City Council passed Bowie's first Complete Streets Policy in 2019. This was a great first step in the journey to create safer streets and more equitable transportation options within Bowie. The next step is to fund improvements for the implementation phase. The city staff has done a great job preparing a project to improve Kenhill Drive at MD197. I am pleased to see this in the budget in the Street Resurfacing section. I feel strongly that Complete Streets projects should have their own section in the city budget, as this policy encompasses more than repaving. Complete streets implementation could also include sidewalks and trail interfaces to roads, for example. It is further justified, since it's anticipated that there will be a series of Complete Streets projects that may take time to complete spanning future budget cycles. A dedicated section for this in the budget would show the city is serious about the implementation phase of this policy and provide a means to measure progress.

I am in support of the complete streets project at Kenhill Drive and MD197 that city staff is developing. This would be a great safety improvement for a key link in the Bowie Byway. Likewise I am in support of the proposed Mount Oak trail segment that will help improve connectivity of the Bowie Byway. I am also in support of the 10th Street Park on Old Bowie. This will be a fantastic outdoor gather space once completed. Lastly, I know there are no plans to add a multi-modal transportation specialist this year. I think this is an important position that the city should consider in the next budget year. A person in this position could help secure outside funding for city infrastructure projects that improve the quality of life within the city.

Good evening Mr. Mayor and Members of the Bowie City Council,

As the chair of the Old Bowie Arts & Heritage Steering Committee, I am writing to request your approval of funds for the rescheduled Old Bowie festival. You graciously included funding in the City's 2021 budget for the May 16th festival which COVID-19 postponed. You recognized the practicality of rescheduling the festival for September 18th which falls into the City's 2022 budget. On behalf of the Steering Committee, please approve the \$50,000 festival budget for inclusion in the City's 2022 budget. The Steering Committee is ready to let contracts to vendors and entertainers, but it cannot unless you approve festival funding in the 2022 budget.

The Steering Committee is a dedicated group of volunteers representing Old Bowie residents and organizations who have met every two weeks for nearly two years to bring the festival back to Old Bowie as a first step in revitalization and establishing Old Bowie as an Arts and Entertainment District.

The Steering Committee is using City staff expertise to keep the budget accurate so the money you appropriate for this event is properly and effectively used. You are doubly assured by the Steering Committee and City staff that the funds will be handled judicially.

Only with your help will the Old Bowie Festival become a reality and the process of Old Bowie becoming an Arts and Entertainment District progress.

With gratitude for your help in the past and hope for your help now.

Verna Teasdale
12757 Midwood Ln.
Bowie, MD 20715