

**TOWN OF RIVERDALE PARK**  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 4, 2008**  
**REGULAR LEGISLATIVE MEETING MINUTES**

**Attendance**

Vernon S. Archer            Mayor  
CM Katherine Sharpe      Ward 2  
CM David Lingua          Ward 3  
CM Timothy Kimbrough   Ward 5

Town Administrator- Patrick J Prangley  
Deputy Town Administrator- Penelope Mendoza  
Chief of Police Chief Teresa Chambers

The Legislative Meeting for the Town of Riverdale Park began at 8:18p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a moment of reflection directed by Mayor Archer.

**Approval of Agenda**

CM Kimbrough Motioned to approve the agenda.

CM Sharpe Second

Changes: Mayor Archer would like to remove items #3 and #4 from the agenda due to lack of attendance by Town Council Members.

Motion passes 3 – 0

**Mayor's Report**

1. Mayor Archer met with Potomac Development about construction of Wachovia Bank project on the corner of East West Hwy and Route 1. He will follow up on Thursday or Friday (Aug 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup>)
2. Street improvements by EYA in conjunction with Potomac Development on East West Hwy should start as early as this Friday or early next week.
3. The new Church Bldg should be completed by mid September. The permit process is expected to be finished by mid September
4. Wachovia has had layoffs
5. Surveyor Report – The attorney, Mr. Colaresi, will get the hiker/biker trail project moving again.
6. The Governor moves to stem foreclosures in PG County. If a resident is facing foreclosure you can find help at [www.MDHOPE.com](http://www.MDHOPE.com).
7. Mayor Archer met with dog federation and with Corey Slavitt on the creation of the dog park. The dog park will include a fenced in area where dogs can roam freely. The City is in the process of identifying areas. Please e-mail [coreyls@earthlink.net](mailto:coreyls@earthlink.net).
8. There has been some publicity about the Route 1 College Park Sector Plan. MNCPPC extended south to include Riverdale Park and University Park. After speaking with representatives from University Park and College Park, this project will NOT include Riverdale Park.

*This concludes the Mayor's Report*

**Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Prangley gave the Treasurer's Report:

Modified accrual report as of June 30, 2008: \$2,167,674.71 Revenues,

Budget as of July 31, 2008: Revenue = \$153,829.82, Expenses = \$463,207.19

CM Sharpe Motioned to approve Treasurer's Report subject to audit.

CM Lingua Second

Motion passes 3 - 0

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*This concludes the Treasurer's Report*

**Town Administrator's Report**

1. Cooperation Agreement – The County has extended the deadline of July 31<sup>st</sup> – August 15<sup>th</sup>. Further discussion during Action Items.
2. There has been ongoing discussion on the \$20K budget for the traffic study. There needs to be further discussion before the city moves any further to clarify what you would like to see happen with this study. The principle of that firm was originally looking at a \$60K - \$80K contract. They are working on another effort along Route 1 on the West side of town. They have agreed to engage with the town for under \$20K. The city is awaiting more input from the Traffic Committee.
3. Defined Benefit Plan – The Board of Trustees added new Board Member Colleen Ferguson and a representative from the police department. They joined the committee and both have over 10 years of experience. The attorney reviewed a planned document and the IRS submission that the Town is required to file every three years (due 1/31/09). They approved a cola of 2% for retirees for FY 08/09. PNC annual financial report is over \$2 million. It has grown like expected. The plan is headed to reach \$5 million mark by the 20<sup>th</sup> year. The Town has an adopted investment policy that defines the parameters of this investment and is designed for tough times. The PNC advisor has worked to have minimal loss in investments.
4. Planned Amendment Issues are being looked at by members participating in the Military Services.
5. Mr. Prangley is looking forward to hearing about National Night Out.

*This concludes the Town Administrator's Report*

**Police Department Report**

**Code Enforcement Issues**

Staffing – Brittany Hewison is now s fulltime Code Enforcement Officer. Although all Code Officers will be trained in all aspects of code enforcement, Brittany's primary focus will be licenses and permits.

Locations:

- 5413 Riverdale Rd – House has been demolished; lot is clear and clean.
- 5414 Riverdale Rd – Investigation regarding a multi-family dwelling is ongoing. This began as a trash violation.
- 5409 Riverdale Rd – Fence at rear of apartment complex had been torn down by pedestrians. It was repaired by the apartment building manager.
- 6300 block 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Unregistered vehicles – many have been removed; Code is working with property owners on others and is tracking progress. A resident cut down a Town-owned tree and was issued a municipal infraction. The resident is working with Public Works regarding tree replacement.
- 6411 Baltimore Avenue – This is the church in the basement of the post office building. A County Zoning Inspector with whom we have been working has told Code Enforcement Manager Ferguson that the church has applied for a Use and Occupancy (U & O) permit and that violations and citations will go inactive unless the U & O application is declined.
- 4900 block of Ravenswood – An investigation is ongoing regarding a possible vehicle repair shop in a residential area.
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- Various locations – Code officers submitted five “Special Clean-up Work Orders” to the Department of Public Works requesting property compliance (most of these properties are foreclosures or vacant homes).

The July 2008 “Code Enforcement Log” has been made available to the Mayor and Council Members with this report for your review.

### **National Night Out**

**Partnerships.** The Laurel TARGET store has accepted our invitation to partner with us and will provide free giveaways, including two bicycles, gift cards and more.

Corporal Alexander, Corporal Hayes, and Ms. Ferguson have been “walking and talking” everywhere in the Town of Riverdale Park to secure food, items, equipment, and donations for our National Night Out Celebration. The list is too long to include in this memo and is growing hourly. We will keep careful notes of who has partnered with us for proper formal acknowledgements at a later time.

**Public School Involvement.** Thanks to Mayor Archer, who met with Riverdale Elementary School Principal Cantu last week to develop a phone message in both English and Spanish that was sent via an auto-dial system to each student’s home inviting family members to National Night Out.

**Media/Publicity.** Press releases in both English and Spanish were distributed to dozens of media outlets. Additionally, elected officials, public officials, and neighboring organizations and associations have been invited to attend our event.

Mayor Archer and a number of Council Members have been leafleting the community with flyers announcing National Night Out. Undoubtedly, their efforts will result in a large turnout.

### **Quarterly Crime Data**

The Prince George’s County Police Department has just released its crime data for the first six months of 2008. Violent crime across the County is down 7.7 % at this point in 2008 compared to the same point in 2007. In Riverdale Park, our year-to-date violent crime is 27% lower than it was at this point in 2007 and 11.5% lower than at this point in 2006.

In Prince George’s County as a whole, Part I property crime is down 1.4%. In Riverdale Park, Part 1 property crime is 23% lower than it was at this point in 2007 and 10.5% lower than at this point in 2006.

Combined, the overall Part I crime across Prince George’s County is down 2.4% at this point in 2008 compared to the same point in 2007. Overall Part I crime in the Town of Riverdale Park is down 24% at this point in 2008 compared to the same point in 2007 and down 11% compared to this point in 2006. (In real numbers, that means 60 fewer victims of Part I crimes this year than at this point last year.)

### **Recent Murder**

On July 29, 2008, at 9:51pm, Riverdale Park Police officers responded to 5609 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue for a call of shots fired. Once on the scene, officers found Luis Miguel Chavez-Ponce, H/M, 07/08/86, suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. He was pronounced dead on the scene.

The investigation to date has revealed the following:

- Four shots were heard by several citizens.

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- A heavy set, dark-skinned Hispanic male, wearing a red and white striped shirt was seen running from the area of the shooting.
- The suspect was seen placing a handgun into his waistband while getting into a vehicle through the rear passenger door.
- The vehicle has been described by witnesses as a burgundy/maroon Mazda or Honda, four-door, with a spoiler on the back and unknown Maryland tags.
- In addition to the shooter, the vehicle was occupied by at least two additional people.
- The vehicle was last seen leaving the parking lot and turning right onto 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue toward Riverdale Road.

The Prince George's County Police Department detective handling this case will supply us with flyers regarding this case and the suspect description for distribution at National Night Out.

Anyone with information about this case is asked to call the Prince George's County Police Department's Homicide Unit at (301) 772-4925. Callers wishing to remain anonymous may call Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS (8477). The Prince George's County Police Department is offering a cash reward of up to \$25,000 for information that leads to the arrest and indictment of the suspect.

#### **"Adam Sector" Leafleting**

In the spirit of problem-oriented policing, we recently tried a new tactic in "A" Sector (part of Ward 1 – north of East West Highway and west of the railroad track). After attending a community meeting about folks who run stop signs, speed through the neighborhood, and drive illegal motorized vehicles on the street and in the park, I prepared a letter to the community asking for their voluntary compliance. The letter (both in English and Spanish) was distributed by a police officer, a code enforcement officer, and residents to all 100 homes in the neighborhood on July 26, 2008. This will be an interesting "experiment" in community policing and, if successful, will be a wiser use of resources than having a patrol officer sit in a marked police car to occasionally catch a violator. I have also promised the community that, if they provide me with a full description of repeat violator vehicles, we will visit the home of those vehicle owners, discuss their responsibilities, and ask for their compliance.

The squad assigned primary responsibility for that neighborhood has been alerted to the concerns and the letter. They will monitor the situation and take enforcement action as needed and appropriate.

#### **Graffiti Abatement**

The Graffiti Abatement Unit is up and running. The equipment trailer has been marked with the Riverdale Park Police Department seal and appropriate lettering. The trailer will be on display during the National Night Out event

Lieutenant Adams and Ms. Ferguson are developing a procedure to standardize our deployment of the unit and to cut down on any confusion in the community and among staff and elected officials about how and when we will employ the equipment.

*This concludes the Police Department Report*

#### **Public Works Report**

1. National Night Out – The Department of Public Works is willing to work with different groups at the National Night Out to help with clean-up before and after the event, blocking off the street, set up VIP parking and other set-ups.

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2. Supporting Traffic Committee and Council to get signs necessary for diversion of traffic once school starts. Signs should be available in one week.
3. Street Improvements – Talked to contractor about resurfacing Riverdale Road (from Kenilworth Avenue to Taylor Ave) starting on Wednesday after National Night Out. After the completion of the resurfacing project the marking will begin on Kenilworth to Lafayette Avenue. They will finish Oglethorpe, Nickelson and a portion of Riverside Park.
4. Trash Collection – Collection started today. Areas of concern are whether or not residents had to change their recycling day in which they did NOT. Mr. Addison was pleased to see the Tuesday/Thursday group had their trash out today (Monday). Please call (301) 864-1803 with any questions.
5. Department of Public Works completed its report but not able to provide it in its entirety. The full report will be submitted soon.

*This concludes the Public Works Report*

#### **Fire Department Report**

1. There were NO significant incidents in July.
2. The Fire Department will participate in National Night Out.
3. The Department is working with CM Walker and Mr. Addison to exchange the 24/7 Do Not Enter signs while paving contractors are working.
4. The Chief of the Fire Department, Chief Harrison, stepped down. Assistant Chief Carpio is now Acting Chief.

Discussion: Mayor Archer asked the City Council Members if they have received resumes for the new Fire Chief position. The City Council Members will be provided with resumes. Mayor Archer asked if Acting Chief Carpio lived in Riverdale Park. He does not. This may be a requirement that needs to be changed.

*This concludes the Fire Department Report*

#### **Ward and Committee Reports**

##### Ward 1, CM Walker, Economic Development

Mayor Archer rendered report in CM Walkers absence.

- There will be a block party on Sun, Sept 7<sup>th</sup> on Sheridan between 45<sup>th</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Permission needed to block off streets.
- CM Walker will meet with Jan Townsend in August. One of the matters of concern is that there is no outlet sign along Route 1.
- Thanks to Police Chief Chambers for all her help.
- CM Walker has met with representatives from the Fire Dept. regarding the situation in front of the firehouse and they are about 80% complete towards a satisfactory change for all.
- Staff is writing MNCPPC to gain funds (letter of support).
- Next Economic Development Committee meeting will be held on Aug 27<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at Town Hall.
- Two churches have been running without a use and occupancy permit. The town is in the process of crafting a letter to make certain the County look at this situation carefully. Mr. Thompson from the MUTC committee explained that the church may operate in an educational capacity without a permit.

*This concludes Ward 1, CM Walker's Report*

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Ward 2, CM Sharpe, Finance Chairman

- Thanked Public Works for installing the speed bumps on Ravenswood. The color is very loud and will be looked at in order of compliance.
- CM Sharpe noticed 3 homes with electrical wiring hanging outside of them.
- CM Sharpe announced that yard waste go out on Wednesdays now.
- Encourages everyone to come out to National Night Out.

*This concludes Ward 2, CM Sharpe's Report*

Ward 3, CM Lingua, Public Works

- CM Lingua held up a trash collection flyer that was distributed to residents. The flyer will be posted on the Town's website and Town wiki.
- Public works held a meeting on July 21<sup>st</sup>. An update on the Native Plant RFP status was given. Town Hall renovation, trash contract and streetscape (Phase II) were discussed as well. Tree pruning/removal and the upcoming Gorgeous Prince George's Day to take place in October (trees will be planted). No longer engaged in a landscaping contract. Landscaping will be handled by the Town. Riverdale Park Day – people submitted a list of things they would like to see.
- No Public Works meeting in Aug, next meeting Sept 8<sup>th</sup> @ 7:15pm.
- CM Lingua distributed flyers for the National Night Out. He encouraged residents to come out.
- Block Party on 4700 block of Nickelson Street. A portion of the street will be blocked off on this Saturday.
- Traffic Study Committee – A safer pick up and drop off of students at Riverdale Elementary School. CM Lingua thanked all that had input.

*This concludes Ward 3, CM Lingua's Report*

In CM Henry's absence, the mayor made an announcement pertaining to Ward 4.

- There will be a meeting at Parkdale HS this Thursday @7pm about traffic on Good Luck Rd. Discussions will be about improving the traffic situation there.

Ward 5, CM Timothy Kimbrough, Legislative

- Expressed concern about shooting on 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue. If residents have witnessed anything concerning this shooting please contact authorities. CM Kimbrough encouraged residents to send a message to criminals by coming out to National Night Out. We do not have to tolerate criminal activity. If you have any concerns please contact the police or CM Kimbrough at (301) 864-1997.

*This concludes Ward 5, CM Kimbrough's Report*

**Legislative Action**

Mayor Archer asked that action items #8, 9, and 10 be moved to the top of Legislative Action

CM Lingua Motioned

CM Sharpe Second

Motion passes 3-0

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**#8 Introduction of Resolution 2008-R-07 regarding Pick Up and Drop Off Zone Designation for Riverdale Elementary School.**

CM Lingua Motioned to approve resolution

CM Sharpe Second

Motion passes 3-0

Discussion: CM Lingua read the resolution to residents.

**#10 Approval for 6ft fence at 4912 Somerset Rd. for Mr. William Martinez Ward 2.**

CM Sharpe Motioned to approve the 6ft fence

CM Lingua Second

Motion passes 3-0

Discussion: CM Sharpe is pleased that the neighbors are aware of Mr. Martinez' plans and there are no concerns.

**#9 Recommendation for County Zoning regarding driveway located at 5005 Somerset Road. Ward 2**

CM Sharpe recommended that the Town does not support variance.

CM Lingua Second

Motion passes 3-0

Discussion: CM Sharpe recommends that the County deny the variance. The owners gave Council Members a few letters signed by neighbors with their approval of the driveway placed on their property. CM Sharpe explained that a portion of the driveway may have to be removed because the resident did not obtain a permit before constructing the driveway.

Mayor Archer called a recess at 9:36pm

**Public Comments**

Mary Donaldson

- The trash cans are huge and hard to maneuver by the elderly.
- Many widows in the town that don't have a large amount of trash. Do residents have to use the toters? Mayor Archer stated that while he recommends using the toters, trash can and will be picked up no matter what container it is in.
- Traffic Study – I couldn't be more delighted that this Traffic Study is being done. Thanked all involved.

Rob Oppenheim (Cleveland Ave.)

- The toters are too big. The trash collectors did a wonderful job in collection. If there were a smaller toter available he would be delighted.

Riverdale Model Railroaders (Chris Benjamin, Founder & CEO and Corey Kesler, VP & COO)

- Riverdale Model Railroaders brought a DVD to show the public displaying a recent train display.

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- They announced that membership has more than doubled just in the last few events held.
- Riverdale Model Railroaders will be represented at National Day Out and Riverdale Park Day.
- Riverdale Railroad Heritage Weekend. Planning is ongoing.
- Wisconsin and Southern Trail Show is another planned event coming soon to help raise funds for the National Cancer Society.
- Christmas time Holly Rail Show on Dec 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Plans for next year: Charity Show for Walter Reid

Mayor Archer recalled the meeting at 10:08pm.

**#1 Approval of Minutes for July 7, 2008 regular legislative meeting**

CM Lingua Motioned to approve minutes

CM Kimbrough Second

Motion passes 3-0

**#2 Approval of minutes for July 28, 2008 Special Legislative meeting**

CM Kimbrough Motioned to approve the 6ft fence

CM Sharpe Second

Motion passes 3-0

**#5 Action on certification of cooperation agreement between Prince George's County and the town of Riverdale Park for Community Development Block Grant funds for fiscal years 2009-2011.**

CM Sharpe Motioned to approve

CM Kimbrough Second

Motion passes 3-0

Discussion: This is a cooperation agreement that comes up every three years. Our low and moderate income areas should be eligible to receive funds. This program covers housing, infrastructure and social issues. With the success that the town has endured over the years we should be approved. Upcoming census report should help the Town qualify for this program and other like programs. Mr. Prangley strongly recommends that Riverdale Park submit an application.

CM Lingua asked how item #6 (pertaining to civil rights demonstrations) would fit into this agreement. Mr. Prangley responded that the County, with the Housing Urban Development, drew this agreement up using specific federal guidelines and is confident the Town will be eligible.

**#6 Action on the traffic group proposal to conduct town wide traffic calming study.**

CM Sharpe Motioned to approve for purposes of discussion.

CM Lingua Second

CM Sharpe Motioned to delay this proposal.

CM Lingua Second

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Motion passes 3-0

Discussion: The Council Members were not clear about the eight intersections included in the proposal or what studies would be performed (speed studies, intersection turning movements and collection of physical information). CM Sharpe stated that the current contract charges a fair amount if there are indeed eight intersections that will be studied. Mr. Prangle stated that they originally proposed \$60K but because they have already done so much work in the area they were able to come down to \$20K for this contract. Mr. Prangle and Council Members will need to gain a better understanding of the proposal and the specifics of what it includes.

**#7 Sponsorship of Riversdale event marking Plummer Family contribution to Riverdale History.**

CM Sharpe Motioned to sponsor with a \$200 contribution

CM Kimbrough Second

Motion passes 3-0

Discussion: There will be a commemorative plaque placed in Edmonston in September.

**#11 Request for Street Closure for Sheridan Street between 45<sup>th</sup> Place and 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue on Sunday, September 7, 2008 from 10:00am until 6:00pm for a Block Party**

CM Sharpe Motioned to block streets for the Block Party.

CM Lingua Second

Motion passes 3-0

**Unfinished Business**

CM Lingua asked how to want to proceed on the development of the 5700 Block of Riverside Drive. Do we want to build a County Standard Road there or continue to lay down bluestone? Mayor Archer stated that the Council be provided a map and pictures of what is going on there so that Council can be better informed of the area's issues. CM Kimbrough inquired of past problems at this location. CM Lingua explained that previously the majority of this street was a paper street up until six years ago. With the building of 5808 the road had to be extended which included the use of bluestone. Now the resident of 5808 (Mr. Jeter) has asked that the road be extended again to accommodate the renovation and expansion of his home as well as his camper/RV.

CM Lingua will present options for this area of Ward 3.

Jim Coleman – 6500 Taylor Road is a vacant property that is for sale. Jim asked if the Town would consider acquiring so that the Town would be in control of how it is developed

**Adjournment**

CM Sharpe Moved for adjournment at 10:48 pm

CM Lingua Second

Approved 3 - 0

Typed from live meeting and video tape 08-04-08

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