

**HAVANA TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
August 25, 2020 6 pm**

**Member(s) Present:** Decorkus Allen, Eddie Bass, Nick Bert, Janice Hart, Warkeen Jordan, and Dwight Vickers

**Member(s) Absent:** Cathy Johnson

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Allen.

Invocation was led by Rev. Jimmy Salters followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion to approve the minutes from the July 28, 2020 Regular Council meeting was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bert and seconded by Councilman Bass. Motion carried.

**VISITORS:**

N/A

**OLD BUSINESS:**

N/A

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The proposed playground for an area south of town was discussed. Mr. L. Bradford Johnson, Town Manager, stated a resident voiced concern and advised a playground in the neighborhood is not wanted by the community. This item has been before the council for some time. At this point, there is a need for comments from the Council and citizens. Mayor Allen advised before allowing the council's comments, the floor is opened to any citizen to speak on this matter. Mr. Jerome Harris, Showtime Custom Auto Detail, stated many residents in the area wants the playground installed. Research was performed and this has been an ongoing discussion during multiple meetings and workshops. Ms. Stacy Henderson stated a letter was submitted to the Council objecting to the installation of a playground in her neighborhood. Due to COVID-19, it is unethical and there should not be any gatherings due to the virus. After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Bert made a suggestion to postpone the request and revisit this item in October. Mayor Allen stated parks are now closed due

to the virus and the Council should not encourage gatherings at this time. Councilman Bass stated a bathroom should be installed at the Town's existing park. Councilwoman Hart mentioned there is a need to hear from the citizens in the community. Delaying this item will also be beneficial to allow Ms. Henderson and Mr. Harris time to gather information from the community. Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bert and seconded by Councilwoman Hart to revisit the playground request in October. Motion carried.

Mrs. Karen Kent, Downtown Improvements Committee, gave a brief overview to the Council. The first item of discussion was the replacement of committee members, Mr. Tony Lombardo and Mr. Bill Freeman. There are also additional members recommended for replacement due to attendance, Mrs. Sandi Beare and Mayor Allen. The committee recommended Mr. Lombardo be replaced by the new Havana Main Street Director, Mrs. Ann Kozeliski and the replacement for Mr. Freeman is Mrs. Pat Gregory Dudley. The council appointed Councilwoman Janice Hart to replace Mayor Allen. Motion to accept the new members for the Downtown Improvement Committee was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bert and seconded by Councilman Bass. Motion carried.

Mrs. Kent also made a request to fund the Façade Grant program with 80% of the grant funds. After discussing, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bert and seconded by Councilman Bass to table the Façade Grant request until the next council meeting in October. Motion carried.

An agreement was received from Capital Regional Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) for execution. Mr. Johnson advised the agreement was sent to all participating municipalities. The agreement allows the Town to be a part of the body as a member and all members received the same contract. Motion made by Councilman Bass and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bert to execute the agreement with CRTPA. Motion carried.

Municipal Gas Authority (MGAG) Board of Directors consist of twelve members who set the policies for the organization. MGAG supplies natural gas to the Town's gas system. The original term of the board member's term is expiring and it is now time for a nomination. The request is to allow Mr. Howard McKinnon, former Town Manager, to continue to represent the Town and also appoint Mr. L. Bradford Johnson, Town Manager, as the alternate voting delegate. Councilwoman Hart requested a correction be made in the memo from Mr. McKinnon. The memo states MAGA instead of MGAG. Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Bert and seconded by Councilman Bass to approve the nominations, Mr. Howard McKinnon and Mr. L. Bradford Johnson. Motion carried.

Mr. Johnson mentioned the Town engaged in ways to improve the analytical process of meter readings. There was a test run performed with the new system and the

process worked well. The request is to approve the Smart Phone Meter Reading agreement. The cost will be \$2,820.00 annually. Motion to approve the meter reading subscription was made by Councilwoman Jordan and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bert. Motion carried.

### **REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER:**

Mr. Johnson advised he spoke with Councilwoman Johnson regarding her status on the council. She is seeking another office and came out of the primary. This information is being presented to make sure the Council knows the future steps for her replacement.

Councilwoman Hart is interested in hosting a Town Beautification Day. The goal is to improve the visibility of the Town. An ad will be placed in the newspaper. Plans are to get homeowners to clean up their lawns and properties. It is important to start at home and citizens are encouraged to post before and after photos on social media. Customers that need bulk items picked up must call City Hall.

The budget workshop was addressed. The workshop will be held on August 26, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cecil G. Trippe Municipal Building.

Mr. Johnson mentioned he spoke with the County regarding the EMS building and the request to move EMS services from the Havana area. The County budgeted a dollar amount for this project. As of now, a location has not been identified for the move. At this time, Chief Smith is assisting with searching for an alternative location to house EMS in the Havana area. Mr. Johnson stated he spoke with Mr. Henry Grant and advised the County to allow us the opportunity to present a short-term solution to keep EMS in Havana. Mr. Johnson recommends seeking a Memorandum of Understanding from the County.

The wastewater treatment project is near completion. The original completion date was June or July. Mr. Johnson stated he was proud to announce the goal for completion has been set to September 15, 2020. Once completed, Mr. Johnson stated he will recommend a ribbon cutting.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

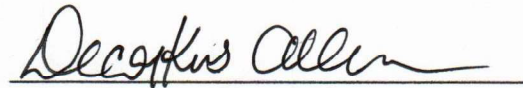
Councilwoman Hart stated August 29, 2020 is planned for the community clean-up day. There are also plans to meet and extend this project into the Spring. An ad was placed in the newspaper and everyone is encouraged to post before and after pictures on Facebook. Councilwoman Hart also mentioned plans to create an Instagram account and investing in a billboard.

Councilman Vickers made comments in regards to the shrubbery at the Library.

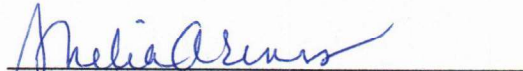
Councilwoman Jordan mentioned one of her relatives is in great danger because of pit bull dogs roaming the neighborhood. Chief Smith explained Animal Control was called and they are working to resolve this as quickly as possible.

Motion to pay bills was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bert and seconded by Councilman Bass. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn.

  
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Decorkus Allen, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Shelia A. Evans, Town Clerk