



City of Glenarden  
Special Regular Meeting (Virtual)  
Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 7:30PM  
**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Council President – Robin Jones  
Council Vice President – Angela D. Ferguson  
Councilwoman – Deborah A. Eason  
Councilman – James A. Herring  
Councilwoman – Carolyn Smallwood  
Councilwoman – Celestine E. Wilson  
Mayor – Edward Estes  
City Manager – Timothy George  
Chief of Police – Phillip O'Donnell  
Treasurer – Alvin Bratton

- Call to Order at 7:30PM
- Invocation by Councilman Williams
- Roll Call

Council President – Robin Jones  
Council Vice President – Angela D. Ferguson  
Councilwoman – Deborah A. Eason  
Councilman – James A. Herring  
Councilwoman – Carolyn Smallwood - Absent  
Councilman – Donjuan Williams  
Councilwoman – Celestine E. Wilson

**We have a Quorum**

- Motion to Adopt Agenda

Councilman Williams motioned to adopt the agenda – Seconded by Councilwoman Eason

Council President – Robin Jones - Yes  
Council Vice President – Angela D. Ferguson - Yes  
Councilwoman – Deborah A. Eason - Yes  
Councilman – James A. Herring - Yes  
Councilwoman – Carolyn Smallwood - Absent



Councilman – Donjuan Williams – Yes  
Councilwoman – Celestine E. Wilson – No  
**5 Yes – 1 No Agenda APPROVED**

- Legislation (March)
  - O-06-2021 An Emergency Ordinance to Provide for Continuity of Operations in the Administration of the City's Financial Affairs, and Specifically, the issuance of Checks during the Absence of the City Treasurer.
- Motion to Accept O-06-2021 as an Emergency Ordinance.

Councilman Williams motioned to Accept O-06-2021 as an Emergency Ordinance - Seconded by Councilwoman Eason

Council President – Robin Jones – Yes  
Council Vice President – Angela D. Ferguson – Yes  
Councilwoman – Deborah A. Eason – Yes  
Councilman – James A. Herring – No  
Councilwoman – Carolyn Smallwood – Absent  
Councilman – Donjuan Williams – Yes  
Councilwoman – Celestine E. Wilson – No  
**4 Yes – 2 No – FAILED**

#### **Will come to the Floor - First Reading as a Regular Ordinance**

- *Councilman Williams* motioned to adopt - Seconded by Councilwoman Eason
- *Councilwoman Smallwood* joined the meeting.
- *Councilwoman Eason* inquired about line 39 and whether the Council is looking at a temporary treasurer to issue checks or would it be the responsibility of the staff.
- *Council President Jones*, the staff has the authority to cut checks.
- *Councilwoman Eason*, was this Ordinance reviewed by the City Attorney?
- *Council President Jones*, yes, the City Attorney drafted the Ordinance to have something in writing to avoid any conflict to protect the City and its employees.
- *Councilwoman Eason*, inquired about line 33 regarding the suspension of the currency of Treasurer and has his VPN account access been suspended?



- *City Management George* offered that all the Treasurer's access has been suspended, including his VPN access.
- *Councilwoman Smallwood*, who is verifying whether there are any funds in those accounts?
- *City Management George* will verify if there are any funds in those accounts along with Shirley who also has access to those accounts. The City has hired a temporary treasurer to handle all accounting needs and will verify the funds before any checks are cut.
- *Councilwoman Eason*, since all legislation are presented at the public hearing, does this supersede that?
- *Council President Jones*, yes, since this deals with the City finances, this is considered an emergency and it supersedes the regular public hearing.

**Vote to accept First Reading as a Regular Ordinance.**

Council President – Robin Jones – Yes

Council Vice President – Angela D. Ferguson – Yes

Councilwoman – Deborah A. Eason – Yes

Councilman – James A. Herring – No

Councilwoman – Carolyn Smallwood – No

Councilman – Donjuan Williams – Yes

Councilwoman – Celestine E. Wilson – No

**4 Yes – 3 No – PASSED**

- Citizens Comments/Questions (five minutes)
  - *Richard Arroyo-Montgomery*, why is this considered a first reading and not a vote to pass? Does this require five votes to passed and it does not pass, what happens to the Treasurer's position? Who will manage the City's money?
  - *Council President Jones* indicated that this is an emergency ordinance, and the council requires five votes to pass. If the emergency ordinance had passed it would only require four votes. Check signing process requires the Treasurer, the



Mayor, and the Council President's signatures for check and balance. Because of the temporary suspension of the Treasurer, the next person in line is Council Vice President Ferguson, who already has signature authority, can sign checks in the Treasurer's absence. The bank has received authorization to amend the signatory reflecting Council Vice President's signature, therefore, she will sign checks in the interim while the ongoing vetting process is taking place to find a Treasurer.

- *Richard Arroyo-Montgomery*, so with the ordinance not passing, does the City's finances come to a halt?
- *Council President Jones*, no, it just slows the process.
- *Richard Arroyo-Montgomery*, I guess we are at the beck and call of the three councilmembers who voted no or wait for one to change their minds on the position of the ordinance. Meanwhile, the City's finances are stagnant.
- *Erika Fareed*, could you explain what then happens if you do not have the three signatures, does that mean, if there is an attempt to spend over a certain amount, that cannot happen?
- *City Manager George*, well it means that we cannot sign any checks or process any payments in any amount without the three signatures. We will have to hold off until it comes back to council for a second reading, and we can have another vote on this issue.
- *Erika Fareed* is it possible for the councilmembers who voted against it to explain what they need to move it forward. What is the rationale for not supporting it? I am sure it is not intended to stop the business of the city. I am interested to hear the reason why, especially why this is new news to us that the Treasurer was suspended.
- *Council President Jones*, any more comments citizen comments?
- *Derek Curtis II*, I am a little disappointed that we did get an answer to the last question. I feel we should receive an answer from our council regarding the business of the City. What next? It looks like you are holding up the business of the City



because you want to. As a concerned citizen, I do think it is too much to ask since everyone is at large. What next? There must be a second reading and when will it take place to untangle this bottleneck so that the City can move forward?

- *Councilman Williams*, Madam President, and Mr. Curtis, the second reading can take place in six days.
- *Derek Curtis II*, so after the six days, you will vote on that day.
- *Councilman Williams*, yes!
- *Council President Jones*, any more comments citizen comments?
- *Mr. Bec*, I have a major concern, this embarking upon an election and this may seriously impact our ability to carry that through if the City is unable to process payments to vendors. What contingency plan is in place versus waiting another six days to vote?
- *City Manager George*, I do not know if there is a contingency plan, the Charter is very clear on how checks are to be processed and paid. There is no way around it, I can check with the lawyers to review the Charter one more time to see if there is another way. If the payment needs to be paid by check, we cannot do it. I guess the earliest is March 22, 2021, when there is another meeting on this issue. So, for the next week, we will not be able to process anything.
- *Mr. Bec*, can we pay it by credit card? Does the City run credit card transactions?
- *City Manager George*, I need to double-check because the Charter does specify who has the authority to approve credit card payments. The process is like the check-writing process. I will have to run it by the Attorney to see if we can do it by credit card. Let me double-check it before I give you a definitive answer.
- *Mr. Bec*, can you also check with the Attorney as to what provisions we may have to enact? If this caused a delay in the Election, it would have a serious impact on carrying out the day-to-day duties.
- *City Manager George*, yes sir, I talk to Kevin tomorrow.



- *Derek Curtis II*, does this also impact the city employees getting paid?
- *Council President Jones*, no, there is a separate ADP system in place for payroll.
- *Ms. Scholtz*, if I am not mistaken, we have one employee who receives a paper check, but I will have to check with Finance tomorrow. The City payday is next Friday, so if this issue is resolved, no one will be affected.
- *Derek Curtis II*, there is no malicious intent, but I want to hear from one of three nos. Help us to understand why this is not a good idea. I am open to hearing why I am at a loss.
- *Council President Jones*, Councilwoman Smallwood, Councilwoman Wilson, or Councilman Herring, would you like to respond to the question?
- *Cricketts*
- *Council President Jones*, any more comments citizen comments?
- *Richard Arroyo-Montgomery*, once again, I am just piggybacking off Mr. Curtis. So, the silence of the three councilmembers, who voted no, with no explanation from them whatsoever, knowing that the no votes would hold up the City's business for seven days and not even provide any explanation to the citizens. It just makes me feel that there is some scheme to sabotage the ongoing business of the city and even perhaps the election. I think as citizens we are due an explanation, I see no reason why we are going through this. We are in a situation and I think the three councilmembers know that, to me, it sounds like it is being done purposely. That should not be the way we conduct business in the city. I am demanding a response from three of you because you are holding up the business of the city. Mr. Herring, would you like to be the first to respond? Ms. Wilson, second? Ms. Smallwood, would you like to take a turn in answering?  
You are elected officials and you are being rude. Citizens, note, that these are your elected officials ignoring our requests. Please take note because we have an election coming up on May 3, 2021.



- *Derek Curtis II*, in the second reading, will you need five votes or just four.
- *Council President Jones*, four.
- *Richard Arroyo-Montgomery*, but their actions hold up our progress by seven days.
- Adjourned at 7:36 PM

Submitted by:

*Robin Jones,*  
*Council President*