



Residential Advisory Council Meeting (RAC) March 13, 2023 | 5:30 p.m.

Attendance: Jason Mitchell, Yolanda Winkler, Richard Luna, Keita Wells, Audrey Jones-Taylor, Darnell Ingram, Shamija Jackson, Marco Merrick, Angela Cole, Carol Thomas, Edward Yelochan, Haydee Rodriquez, Dantwan Broady, Howard Hughes, John Czczulin, Lois Freeman, Crystal Parker, Rosalind Griffin, Vincent Ustach, Rocky Dunn, Charles Jackson and Terrance Brown

Notes: Carmellita Green and Jamilah Johnson

I. DPW Did You Know Updates - Dr. Jason Mitchell, Director

■ Promise Pay (Electronic Credit)

Over 3,200 people have signed up for electronic bill pay. To further advertise this form of bill-pay, we plan on giving a one-time credit on the utility bill, by saving stamps, and envelopes, and overall using less paper. Our electronic invoicing system ensures customers receive their invoices digitally instead of receiving it through the mail. If you sign up for the portal you will receive more in-depth alerts and updates. More information will be posted within the coming weeks.

■ Recycling Update

Recent meetings were held with our Budget Team, Administrator's Office, Mayor's Office and the Department of General Services. Collectively we are finalizing a decision memo on our exact recommendations regarding bi-weekly recycling. One of the largest conflicts we face is the distribution of new vehicles. Our current 25 cubic acre vehicles are harder to navigate through routes due to their size. With the recent purchase of custom-built trucks, DPW will be able to deploy 16 cubic acre trucks which are better suited for tight alleyways. A mass order of vehicles will take time, but upon deployment additional routes will be added so that we can progress back to weekly recycling as quickly as possible. We are working on getting those vehicles as fast as possible. Finalization of the decision memo is expected to be shared by next month.

■ Illegal Dumping Collaboration Update

As previously discussed, Clean Corps is now active within the assigned 15 communities. This gives us an opportunity to provide more cleaning resources throughout Baltimore

City. More importantly, it relieves some DPW resources, allowing focus on other communities and producing more proactive and reactive action toward service requests. Proactively, we can encourage cleaning and service requests within areas that are prone to illegal dumping, trash removal, dirty alleyways, etc. Reactively, we will respond promptly to customers that enter service requests individually. New cleaning equipment will be available for our programs and association by late 2023 or the beginning of 2024. Additionally, we've partnered with the Code program and MONSE, which is the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety. Documentation of neighborhood cleanings will be kept to ensure our collective effort is conducive.

■ **Mayor's Spring Clean Up - April 22nd**

In light of the Mayor's Spring Clean Up, meetings and updates are curated and shared weekly. There will be five locations in total, each having several sponsors. Cabinet members will also be assigned to each location. Mayor Scott will not be moving around to each location as he has done previously. He wants sponsors and cabinet leaders to involve themselves by taking progress pictures. The pictures will be posted on various social media platforms to spread more outreach about the cleanup. An event or location will be provided for every part of the city, especially in districts that have very prominent concerns. Terrance Brown is working with Chief Yolanda Cason on reviewing suggestions for future street sweeping, if you have any suggestions or concerns please contact him. Through this process, we can sweep these areas in very short order.

II. Connecting RAC Members to the Community

■ **Email Addresses**

The following action entails connecting RAC members to the community which is the establishment of e-mail addresses. Chief Winkler recently connected with BCIT to create Baltimore City Government email accounts. For instance, the email will consist of your first name, last name, and end with "baltimorecity.gov". Carmellita is in the process of connecting members to the emails that have been established so far. From here she will instruct our members on how the email can be used for business purposes as it relates to your role. We have been asked to monitor the conversations that are taking place. This is a mandatory protocol for BCIT to ensure the safety and appropriation of the emails exchanged every day. A "cheat-sheet" will be distributed specifically to RAC members, ensuring they have an immediate response to any questions. If you have worked in city government before, your e-mail remains in the system although it may not be active.

■ DPW Newsletter Feedback (RAC Story Leads)

Howard Hughes recently shared a taping of himself detailing his work within the Baltimore City communities and associations. To preserve time, a link to his video will be provided in the chat to view at your own leisure. It is extremely recommended that RAC members familiarize themselves and inform others about their role within the council.

A DPW newsletter was released last week, and 90-100,000 residents receive the newsletter on a monthly basis. If any of the RAC members are subscribed, Director Mitchell requests that you provide feedback, where do you think we can improve? With this information, we can brainstorm ideas and possibly create a Residential Advisory Council Newsletter, encapsulation the efforts of our specific group. As we share stories containing community work expanding throughout Baltimore City, we hope to inspire more residents to join this movement.

III. Other Questions, Comments, and Concerns - RAC Members

Angela Cole: One thing for me is the number of meetings, sometimes you feel a little bit lethargic when you attend. If we shared a main goal. It would assist me. I know there's a lot of information that we're sharing with the communities, but if we collaborate more closely I'm sure this is very possible. Second, I do typically get newsletters from DPW, and I think that is a good idea for us to be able to have a similar spotlight on RAC members, I agree with that.

Yolanda Winkler: That's duly noted, we'll revisit that with the director and see how we can incorporate your first suggestion in terms of establishing a specific goal that we can work on together. Keep this in mind, the Volunteer Network is huge. The more active communities participating in that effort to clean will help maintain an environmentally cohesive Baltimore. This is something I know the director is very passionate about and hopes that you all get involved in a volunteer network in a major way.

Edward Yelochan: About this volunteer effort, I'm not quite sure what we are asking for if I'm going to these community meetings and pushing information about the volunteer network. Are we also tasked with calling residents from the communities we work with?

Keita Wells: It can work multiple ways, I would say that. We can actually build an e-mail with inclusive automated messages that are unified for all of the RAC members if residents decide to send an e-mail. as We have flyers ready for distribution when the meetings are happening. If there are any additional concerns that you are unsure about, I'm sure your assigned liaisons can answer them. It is a personal goal of mine to work with any member

that would like more information to feel more comfortable when presenting this information to someone else. We have various marketing strategies. We started with such small numbers of emails and phone calls, the “personal touch” of communication has really worked to build that relationship where people are to register to volunteer.

Jason Mitchell: I recognize that we have to do a better job at explaining exactly what we want our volunteers to engage with. DPW commonly hosts these big events and that is when a mass amount of communities is seen working together. We want our initiatives to motivate Baltimore residents to take over. I want help and resources to be able to complete the most critical piece of the volunteer network.

Edward Yelochan: I reckon we have 10,000 volunteers? Is there a possibility that I can have 30-50 people assist me in my assigned district?

Keita Wells: Depending on where you're located, we can actually post your event on the DPW website. I can work with you on my team. Similar to you, volunteers are assigned to different districts and Zip codes. They will be able to work with you for the community toolbox and identify volunteers in your area.

Edward Yelochan: Okay. Thank you.

Rosalind Griffin: I appreciate the information getting integrated and distributed. I received a call earlier from Mr. Nunley. From our conversation I wanted to try and connect him with a person in my area because we already have a lot of neighborhood interaction amongst the various Homeowners associations, however, what I'm finding is that the knowledge of what DPW does. A lot of the residents in these communities are already active. It's a matter of, in my opinion, having improved information and collaboration. Trying to connect him with The Neighborhood Association groups that have a collaborative effort will help elevate issues related to DPW.

Vincent Ustach: I would like to say that I anticipate working in breakout groups and doing smaller projects in the capacity of RAC.

Jason Mitchell: Right, thank you both for your feedback. We appreciate all the comments and we are taking them very seriously. Howard is next.

Howard Hughes: I know our concentration has been put towards street sweeping and I want to note that it has been improving over the past couple weeks in regards to not missing odd or even sides of the street. Just for clarification, we have the Holland Roundhouse Association in the 9th district and we have my cleaning day event on that is scheduled for the 18th. If

anyone would like to assist I would love that. As for recommendations, I suggest we test the different solutions given and decide on what works best for us.

Jason Mitchell: Thank you for sharing Mr. Hughes. John, do you have a question or concern to state?

John Czeczulin: I have two things I would like to discuss. Outside of RAC, I partner with the Clean and Green initiative which gives services to the city that are not provided by DPW. A lot of buildings either have illegal dumpsters that do not have permits for them versus what is readily available at an actual city organization. However, it is interesting to hear it from both sides. I almost wish there was a little more collaboration between these two organizations, but as previously stated, the requests they cover are all outside of what DPW does, like tree plantings and greenery. This is where I come in and inform the about what DPW takes care of and how I assist with my involvement in RAC. Also, I'm unaware of most organizations that are in my district and was wondering if you had a list that I could reach out to using the new e-mail address to introduce myself.

Yolanda Winkler: Yes, we document all partnerships and community associations by district, I will make sure to send the list for all RAC members to be informed. Dantwan, I see that you are present, and on behalf of the director, I would like to ask what your community says about DPW. Are they responsive to the work we have done within your district?

Dantwan Broady: The biggest conflict my community faces is the staging of trash. Sometimes after the trash is staged it is still not picked up. That is the only negative concern I have listed.

Yvonne Moore-Jackson: If you state which community this takes place in, I can aid you in making sure your trash issues are escalated. They are not supposed to be staging the trash.

Dantwan Broady: North Ave. and Durham St. I will send you an email with the pictures I've taken attached.

John Czeczulin: I have one more issue concerning recycling bins being taken from residents of Federal Hill. The more strenuous portion of this issue would be receiving a replacement, which takes a long time. If you all can look into this, I'd be grateful for your help.

Jason Mitchell: Thank you, it is possible that our recycling bins were out of stock when they were initially requested. Fortunately, we now have a good amount of recycling bins to give residents, it should not take long to have them delivered.

Yvonne Moore-Jackson: Please forward this information to me so I can expedite the process of getting bins into residents' yards.

John Czczulin: Alright, I will find out. Thank you.

Rocky Dunn: I just wanted to state my agreeance with creating business cards for RAC members that include the DPW logo. It helps communities understand we are a reliable source for service requests and problem-solving.

Jason Mitchell: Maybe there is an opportunity for us to develop it further. I will share the results with the RAC prior to printing them out to gain your approval.

Yolanda Winkler: Yes, I will prepare to share a sample of what it would look like using one of you as an example, okay? Are there any other concerns? We are at the end of the agenda. We have covered a lot here. We've documented a lot of recommendations that you all have given us so I just want to thank you all abundantly for your help in helping us make our systems the best in class. Director, would you like to close us out?

Jason Mitchell: I just want to reiterate, thank you all for being truthful with us and having this dialogue. That's how we all get better. I hope that you have an excellent evening and the rest of your weekend. I look forward to seeing you in April. Goodnight everyone.

The meeting adjourned 6:30 p.m. and the next meeting is April 10, 2023.