



VILLAGE OF NORTH BALTIMORE Special Council Meeting - 1/6/26

January 06, 2026
4:45 PM

Minutes

I. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Roll Call

Mayor Aaron Patterson - HERE, Mr. Cook - HERE, Ms. Hefner - HERE, Mr. Engard - HERE, Mr. Sweat - HERE, Ms. Beaupry - HERE

III. Swearing in of Council Members

Council members Cook, Hefner, and Beaupry were sworn in.

IV. Nomination and Appointment of Council Member to Fill One Vacancy

Ms. Hefner made a motion to appoint Mr. David Richmond as a council member. Seconded by Mr. Cook. All five approved.

V. Swearing in of Council Member

Mr. Richmond will be sworn in at the regular council meeting on January 13th, 2026 (1/13/2026) at 5:30 PM.

VI. Nomination and Election of Council President and Seating of Members

Mr. Engard made a motion to nominate Mr. Richmond as President of Council. Seconded by Mr. Cook.

Ms. Hefner – NO, Mr. Engard – YES, Mr. Sweat – NO, Ms. Beaupry – NO, Mr. Cook – YES. Motion failed.

Ms. Beaupry made a motion to nominate Ms. Hefner as President of Council. Seconded by Mr. Sweat.

Mr. Engard – NO, Mr. Sweat – YES, Ms. Beaupry – YES, Mr. Cook – YES, Ms. Hefner – YES. Motion passed.

Council completed the seating process by randomly drawing seat numbers from a container. The new seating arrangement is as follows: Ms. Beaupry, Ms. Hefner, Mr. Richmond, Mr. Engard, Mr. Cook, Mr. Sweat.

VII. Public Discussion on Dispatch

Numerous members of the public shared their opinions and asked questions during the public discussion portion of the meeting.

Mr. John Harden raised concerns about the proposed contract between the Village and the Wood County Sheriff's Department. He questioned sections regarding the length of the initial contract, insurance and benefits, and start-up fees.

When asked about the estimated cost for start-up fees, Administrator Bender said that it would be nominal.

Mr. Harden stated that the residents of North Baltimore should be presented with an updated and complete contract prior to a decision being made.

Ms. Becky Walter stated that moving dispatch services to the Wood County Sheriff's Office would be detrimental to North Baltimore. As an EMS employee of the Village, she had observed cases of walk-in medical emergencies at the police station. She felt that having a dispatch employee stationed at the front desk was helpful in these situations.

Phoenix Parsons asked when the discussion regarding dispatch services began, and if the current dispatch employees would be terminated. She also asked if this decision would potentially cause the transfer of other services, such as fire, EMS, and police, in the future.

Mayor Patterson responded that the discussion about transferring services to the county level had taken place several times throughout his tenure as a council member and in his current position. He stated that this particular instance began about three to four months prior and that this was the first public discussion regarding it. He added that decisions regarding employment would be determined by the council. He stated that he could not comment on future decisions that might be made regarding other village services, as it would be too speculative.

Wood County Sheriff Mark Waslyshyn responded to Ms. Parsons, stating that North Baltimore dispatchers will receive preferred hiring status if they choose to apply.

Mr. Brandon Burks asked if residents can obtain access to current expenditures for North Baltimore dispatch. He also asked Sheriff Waslyshyn to confirm that the "fact-finding" stage of negotiations was still occurring for county dispatcher wage increases, and that the hourly rate of \$29.35 cited in the documents might be higher in 2026.

Mayor Patterson responded that the 2025 actual budget was available, as well as the anticipated budget for 2026, which is \$243,000.00.

Sheriff Waslyshyn confirmed Mr. Burks' statement and speculated that a minimum of 3% wage increase would occur pending negotiations.

Paige Cotterman asked who would be stationed at the front desk of the police department should an emergency occur, such as an "after hours" water break or a concern with streets. She also inquired about when the dispatchers had been informed about the potential transfer of services to the county. She felt that the notification process was inadequate and that in-person meetings with dispatchers should have been conducted. She stated that dispatchers had found out through social media.

Administrator Bender stated that dispatchers did not find out through social media.

Mayor Patterson responded to Ms. Cotterman, stating that a system will be put in place for walk-in emergencies and after-hour non-emergency calls if the resolution is passed. He added that Denise Shupe, the dispatch supervisor, had been informed on Friday about the public discussion and was instructed to send a text message to all current dispatch employees. He stated that no decision had been made regarding the resolution yet and that affected employees had been informed so they could share their thoughts at the meeting.

Ms. Hefner responded to Ms. Cotterman, stating that council had discussed holding an in-person meeting with the dispatchers. She added that she had requested to be present at this meeting. She was unsure why the meeting was

not held rather than the text message that had been sent. She apologized to the dispatchers.

Mr. Terrance Clark, a North Baltimore dispatch employee, asked what the benefits of transferring dispatch services to the county would be.

Mayor Patterson responded that benefits included more comprehensive training for county dispatchers, a “ping” system that helps emergency responders locate callers, and options to text 911. He stated that the cost for North Baltimore dispatch to update their technology would be high, and that it would not be on par with the services offered through the Sheriff’s Office. He acknowledged that the training for North Baltimore dispatchers needs improvement and stated that this was not the fault of any dispatch employees.

Sheriff Waslyshyn provided additional information. He shared that employees in his office were the only emergency medical dispatchers in the county, which certifies them to provide medical guidance over the phone in emergency situations such as choking or giving birth. He added that the Sheriff’s Office has handled EMS and fire dispatching for the Village for over 15 years. He felt that emergency response times could be faster if police dispatch were transferred to his office. Currently, police emergency calls are routed to his office and then transferred to North Baltimore’s dispatch, resulting in additional time on the phone.

Ms. Lisa Kruse, a North Baltimore Dispatch employee, stated that several of her prepared statements had been shared by other residents. She shared a list of responsibilities that the dispatch employees carry out, other than emergency calls. This included: water bills, streetlights, downed power lines, public records requests, traffic citation filing, emergency text updates for residents, document notarization, and update address records. Ms. Kruse recounted an incident in which she had a walk-in emergency from a resident who had been cut by glass on Main Street. She asked for clarification on what the procedure for emergency walk-ins, such as children and women running from an abductor will be.

Mayor Patterson said that an emergency lobby phone would likely be installed for cases such as this, but an official procedure was not yet determined.

Sheriff Waslyshyn stated that several municipalities, such as Rossford, have installed red emergency phones that immediately connect walk-ins to emergency services. The phone is paired with a video camera and door buzzers.

Ms. Kruse stated that this system would delay responses from EMS or police officers in emergency walk-in situations.

Administrator Bender asked Ms. Kruse if a walk-in situation where someone was being chased had occurred before.

Louann Swayne, a North Baltimore Dispatch employee, confirmed that this had occurred before by shaking her head “yes”.

Ms. Kruse stated that she had been told that the dispatchers were “incompetent” and refuted this, adding that they were all trainable. When asked by Mayor Patterson if this was said to her by a Village employee, she said it was not.

She stated that the dispatch employees had been instructed to obtain their LEADS certification by December 20, 2025, to be employed. She stated that this had been a stressor for the team and was disappointed to be told after this process that Resolution No. 01-2026 was being considered. She did not approve of the emergency clause being added to Resolution No. 01-2026. She closed her remarks by stating that she loved her job, had been in her position for five years, and did not want to leave.

Mayor Patterson thanked her for her remarks and stated that he did not agree with the emergency clause.

Mr. Cook stated that a lot of rumors had circulated regarding Resolution No. 01-2026 and thanked Administrator Bender and Mayor Patterson for obtaining as much information as possible regarding the proposal. He added that he didn't approve of the remark Ms. Kruse had received and did not think that North Baltimore Dispatch employees were untrainable or incompetent.

Mr. Alan Jordan questioned why a meeting had been held privately [regarding Resolution 01-2026]. He inquired if council members' votes were public.

Mayor Patterson stated that a meeting had not been held privately, and that conducting official votes privately would be illegal. He provided information on the requirements for public meetings and executive sessions. He stated that voting records were public records and could be viewed by attending meetings or reading official meeting minutes.

Administrator Bender stated that the meeting minutes are supplied by the Clerk of Council, Mr. Mason Davis.

Ms. Denise Shupe, the supervisor for the North Baltimore Dispatch employees, stated that the employees had not been informed of the public meeting until 3:30 PM on Friday, January 2nd (01/02/2026), after a Facebook post had been made on the official Village account.

Administrator Bender refuted this statement, sharing screenshots of a text thread between the dispatch employees. The thread displayed that the initial notification was sent to employees at 2:53 PM that day. This preceded the Facebook post, which was published at 3:36 PM.

Ms. Shupe shared her experience as a Village dispatcher for over 25 years. She recounted that dispatch services used to be handled through an external answering service but were taken over by the Village. She stated that training was often rushed for dispatchers due to concerns about overtime accumulation. She stated that this had occurred recently when training Mr. Clark, and that she had been instructed to end his training after two weeks. When asked by Mayor Patterson for an estimate of a proper training period, she responded that six months was the expectation.

Mayor Patterson responded that he had not given a directive to end training prematurely, and that this was not an adequate length of time for employee training. He stated that if dispatch services remain in the Village that training would be prioritized. He reiterated that previous training issues were not the fault of any dispatch employees.

Ms. Shupe closed her remarks by stating that dispatchers were helpful to residents of North Baltimore. She added that their presence in the police station allows residents to voice their opinions and allow for deescalation. She stated that residents would not have the ability to speak with them during walk-in emergencies if services were transferred.

Mr. Larry Bateson, a former North Baltimore Police Officer, stated that the Village dispatch services were vital to their work. He stated that the dispatcher training had been two weeks in length since he was an officer. He stated that the Village would not be able to match what the Sheriff's Department could offer for dispatch services, and that this would be a decision for council. He added that it would be ideal to see an arrangement that would allow dispatchers to stay within the Village while also receiving resources from the Sheriff's Office.

Mayor Patterson made final remarks, stating that regardless of how Council decides to proceed with Resolution No. 01-2026, changes needed to be made. If dispatch services remain in the Village, he stated that improved training and

equipment would be necessary. He did not want to lose any employees at the Village.

Ms. Becky Walter stated that the emergency clause on Resolution No. 01-2026, as well as its being published before a public discussion took place, had contributed to members of the public feeling upset. She encouraged members of Council to hear the concerns that were raised during the meeting and consider the desires of the residents.

VIII. New Legislation

1. Resolution No. 01-2026: A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into and Execute a Dispatch Services Agreement with the Wood County Sheriff and Declaring an Emergency (1st Reading)

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Cook made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Hefner. All five approved.

Approved:

Mason Davis, Clerk of Council

Aaron Patterson, Mayor

Paul Skaff, Attorney

Dee Hefner, Pres of Council