

MINUTES
Public Hearing of the College Park City Council
Tuesday, February 11, 2014
7:00 p.m. – 8:08 p.m.

13-CR-03

**Charter Resolution Of The Mayor And Council Of The City Of College Park, Maryland,
Amending Article III “Mayor And Council”, §C3-1, “Elected Officers Of The City” To Change
The Minimum Age At The Time Of Taking Office After Election Or Appointment As The
Mayor, Or As A Council Member, To Eighteen Years.**

PRESENT: Mayor Fellows; Councilmembers Kabir, Wojahn, Brennan, Dennis, Stulich, Day, Hew and Mitchell.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Joe Nagro, City Manager; Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Steve Groh, Director of Finance; Catherine McGrath, Student Liaison.

Mayor Fellows opened the public hearing on Ordinance 13-CR-03 at 7:00 p.m. and invited public comment.

Ryan McCulley, 4904 Osage Street: He is in favor of the proposal. This would allow more people to participate in the democratic process. Let the voters decide whether someone is qualified.

Eric Grims, 4804 Iroquois Street: He is in favor of the proposal. This will make government more inclusive. A voter can oppose any candidate they wish. His wife also supports the proposal.

Carlo Colella, University of Maryland Vice President for Administrative Affairs and Finance: UMD President Wallace Loh regrets that he could not attend; together, they urge the Council’s support. There are many dedicated, talented and insightful students.

Matthew Popkin, 6801 Preinkert Drive, Apt., 6113: He is in favor of this proposal. All vital stakeholders should be treated equally.

Marcia Duryea Booth, 5203 Huron Street: She does not support this proposal. It is commendable to try to get students more involved but most do not have the life experience that is needed. Perhaps a 5th Council district on campus with an age requirement of 18 years.

Mihaela Drasovean, 9606 52nd Avenue: She does not support this proposal. Most 18 – 24 year olds are unprepared to serve; this is not in the best interests of the community. A decision such as this should go on the ballot.

Jack Robson, 4710 Harvard: He does not support this proposal. This has to do with maturity and responsibility. The age of majority is trending back up.

John Krouse, 9709 53rd Avenue: Many people are not able to vote at any age because they have a green card or are here illegally. The corporate body of College Park needs to represent these people who are paying taxes but are not able to participate in the government.

Mary Cook, 4705 Kiernan Road: She does not support this proposal. How many of the current student population will be here after they graduate? She encourages collaboration and participation on a City committee.

Stasia Hutchison, 4710 Kiernan Road: She does not support this proposal. It is not in the City's best interest; a person running for Mayor should have the necessary life experience and be vested in the community.

Kathy Bryant, 7406 Columbia: She is opposed to this proposal. Someone who lives here temporarily from another state cannot have the necessary perspective. There are many jurisdictions that need attention, not just those around the University of Maryland. This question should be put to the voters.

David Dorsch, 4607 Calvert Road: He is opposed to this proposal. Maturity and life experience comes with time. He would like to increase the residency requirement so candidates will know the true issues.

Cindy Lollar, 4607 Fordham Road: She is opposed to this proposal. A minimum age requirement is one of the legal ways to temper the undue influence of college students in this town. 60% of our population is between the ages of 18 – 24; that is a disproportionate number of teenagers. This is not a civil rights issue.

Ed Lynch, 3530 Marlborough Way: He is opposed to this proposal. This City has big-ticket issues. He respects students but they don't have the wherewithal to handle these issues. It's dangerous when people don't know what they don't know.

Arthur Eaton, 9012 51st Avenue: He is opposed to this proposal. He believes many young people may have the good judgment needed, but what is lacking is the long term commitment and experience.

Peter King, 3413 Duke Street: He is opposed to this proposal. This job takes commitment and experience gained by serving the community in other ways before stepping up to run for Council. It takes wisdom, life experience and maturity to decide the legal and fiscal consequences of municipal affairs. Federal and state offices have minimum age requirements for these reasons.

Tim Miller, 5119 Niagara Place: He is opposed to this proposal. How can an 18 year old coming out of high school lead a corporation with a \$14M budget? It takes leadership experience.

Samantha Zwerling, SGA President, 4230 Knox Road: Supports this proposal. She took office as SGA President at age 20, is accountable to 26,000 constituents and oversees a \$1.3M budget. She has supported things many of her constituents would not like – restrictions on partying, increased penalties on destructive behavior – because it was important to the long-term success of this City. She has spent many hours working with the Neighborhood Stabilization Committee. She gave several examples of student commitment and collaboration: College Park Academy, on-campus tailgating.

Josh Ratner, 4230 Knox Road: Supports this proposal. Former Student Liaison. He is a volunteer firefighter and EMT so to imply that because of his age he doesn't have the life experience is insulting. He testified against the Book Exchange project, a position that was unpopular with students but was in the best interest of the community. Students spend thousands of hours a year on community service in the City. The voters can decide who is most qualified.

Joseph Ehrenkrantz, 4619 Fordham Road: If an unqualified 18 year old runs for City Council, don't vote for them. Extending the age expands the democratic process.

Joan Almon, 7303 Dartmouth: She is opposed to the proposal. Can't imagine having an elected official who is so new to College Park without the long term perspective on how the decisions that are made will affect us down the road.

Clopper Almon, 7303 Dartmouth: He is opposed to this proposal. He values students but is reluctant to entrust the City and its finances to someone whose commitment is not long-term. There is a remarkable change in maturity from age 19 to age 21.

There being no further comment, Mayor Fellows closed the public hearing at 8:08 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller, CMC
City Clerk

Date Approved