

MINUTES
College Park City Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 25, 2023

8:00 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

**This was a hybrid meeting: Online via Zoom;
In-person in the Council Chambers of City Hall.**

PRESENT: Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell; Councilmembers Kabir, Kennedy, Esters, Whitney, Adams, Rigg, and Mackie.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Kenneth Young, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk; Gary Fields, Director of Finance; Leo Thomas, Jr., Assistant Director of Finance; Teresa Way Pezzuti, Director of Human Resources; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Giorgi Gordeziani, IT Manager; Steve Halpern, City Engineer; Ryna Quinones, Communications and Events Manager; Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works; Frank Pacifico and Brenda Alexander, Deputy Directors of Public Works; Terry Schum, Director of Planning; Miriam Bader, incoming Director of Planning; Michael Williams, Economic Development Manager.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell opened the meeting at 8:00 a.m.

Mr. Young and Mr. Fields gave the opening presentation (see PowerPoint). After 2 consecutive years of reducing the tax rate to the Constant Yield, we are not recommending that this year. It is not a sustainable practice. We plan to set a base rate for the services the City provides. We are paying the 2nd year of the ARPA salary stipend in July. 8 new positions are requested. Acknowledgement of a possible recession and how the City is positioned to respond. The City's unassigned reserve balance is extremely strong.

Discussion:

General Government

- \$200K in M&C budget is for M&C to use when the RJC brings forward projects. The \$75K in the HR budget is for personnel/consultants that support Racial Equity.
- Request for quarterly economic development/business updates for residents
- Review of Credit Card Fees – pass through convenience fees
- Programming for Duvall Field and the College Park Woods Clubhouse will be included the next budget
- Discuss the CPCUP request; it came in after the budget deadline

Public Services

- Look at the fees we charge for occupancy permit applications
- An additional 2,024 apartment units (6,600 beds) coming on line in the next 18 months will require inspections.
- Share recommendations for Quality of Life Workgroup with the body
- Follow up on the north County Animal Shelter - we spent \$25K for a feasibility study in 2014

Public Works

- Switch out the larger green carts for smaller ones for those who prefer
- Identify utility boxes that could become public art opportunities
- Interest in more mosquito control in areas that have opted out of spraying

Youth, Family and Senior Services

- Conversation with CASA regarding English language instruction for our Hispanic parents.

ARPA Allocations

- Can tutoring costs be covered by ARPA?

CIP

- Consistent full funding of the Complete and Green Streets program

Lost Revenue Recovery Allocations

- We have yet to see RJC requests – inform them of statutory deadlines for ARPA funds
- When to discuss the potential additional \$100,000 for Iron Rooster?

Tax rates by class of property – Worksession discussion for FY '24 budget

- For owner occupied vs. residential rental: Would require state enabling legislation, risk of litigation, has to be a valid class, have a rational purpose, not discriminatory
- Rockville has 4 different tax classes
- No special legislation to enact different property tax rate for commercial or for apartments

Adams:

County has rent control in place for apartments, no more than a 3% increase for apartments in our community. If we had a tax differential of 2%, we could dedicate the difference to a grant program with direct benefit to residents for apartment rental subsidies or other direct benefit to residents.

Idea to keep 30.18 for residential, but raise commercial rate to 32.18 cents to create \$500,000 of new revenue and we distribute that directly.

Young: We feel base level of services requires a rate of 32 cents. There is only so far you can go by adopting the constant yield rate – its not sustainable year after year.

Fields will come back with several options for Council's consideration.

Revisit ITOC – Income Tax Offset Credit

Staff is concerned about administrative burden on City staff. ITOC could apply to 2,500 individuals that we would have to administer the program for – would require new staff to develop and implement the program if the burden is on us and not the County. Have additional conversation with County about administration (either as part of their job or as a fee to us) then have another conversation. Similar concerns with Senior Tax Credit, although the possible pool of applicants is lower. Suggest a consultant feasibility cost/benefit analysis on the ITOC.

Council Wish List:

Reviewed the list of Council requests.

Staff will total the list of priorities and provide to Council.

Wrap up:

City-wide Zoom Town Hall on budget. Update dates on website. Post something to Balancing Act on the proposed budget. No need for Council Worksession on March 28.

Next meeting is April 11.

Rigg/Kennedy to Adjourn. Passed 8-0. 4:15 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk