

WORKSESSION MINUTES
College Park City Council
Tuesday, April 2, 2019
Council Chambers
7:30 P.M. – 10:17 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Wojahn; Councilmembers Kabir, Kennedy, Brennan, Dennis, Day, Rigg, Kujawa, and Mitchell.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Scott Somers, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Jill Clements, Director of Human Resources; Gary Fields, Director of Finance; Peggy Higgins, Director of Youth, Family and Senior Services; Alex Tobin, Student Liaison.

Mayor Wojahn opened the Worksession at 7:30 p.m.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT: Mr. Somers reported on the Food Scrap Composting program; the Good Neighbor Day Food Drive; the sale of Smart Leaf compost; 1st Thirsty Thursday; Brunch with the Bunny; and the Spring Egg Hunt.

AMENDMENT TO/APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Agenda approved without amendment (Rigg/Day 8-0).

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1 Discussion with College Park Housing Authority on HUD Repositioning proposal - James Simpson, Executive Director, CPHA, and the Housing Authority Commissioners:

Mr. Simpson reported on an initiative by HUD called “Repositioning.” HUD officials visited Attick Towers (AT) and said they will give housing vouchers if the agency converts from Public Housing and pressured the Housing Authority (HA) to make a decision quickly. The HA doesn’t fully understand the proposal or how it will impact the tenants and the HA. HUD is pushing this program on the smaller properties of less than 300 units. He said HUD markets this as a windfall but doesn’t tell you the downside. If the voucher system goes in, the HUD funding goes away. The HA is still evaluating the proposal. They will be involved in training on April 8. One option is to privatize and seek other funding sources.

AT has 108 units with a mix of elderly and disabled residents. Average rent is \$300/month. They are funded by rental income, a HUD operating subsidy, and have a capital fund for repairs. The building is 50 years old and they struggle to fund needed repairs. If HUD pulls out of the building they will be on their own.

Council asked if the Housing Authority received anything in writing from HUD about this proposal. The reply was that it was a presentation with a lot of charts. HUD wants a decision by September. Council asked if the HA has legal counsel to advise them? Yes, they do. Council encouraged the HA to let them know if they can do anything to assist and asked to be kept informed.

2 Comments on the M-NCPPC Budget – Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager: Mr. Gardiner reviewed the staff report. The following items were discussed: the underpasses in Lakeland and at Baltimore Avenue; a refresh to the Lakeland signage that is faded; a pedestrian bridge over the NE Branch to the new playground off Campus Drive; a water fountain and pavilion in north College Park. How does the County's Strategic Trails Plan impact the M-NCPPC budget? What is included in the Trail Development Fund and the Playground Replacement Fund? We should prioritize our requests. Should we focus on maintenance of existing facilities before adding new projects? Request input from staff on what can be achieved – do we pursue the low hanging fruit or go for the high-ticket items? Schedule a meeting at staff level to see what can be funded out of their budget and what we need to push. Return Future W/S.

3 Continuation of FY 2020 Budget Worksession: Council discussed adding parking lot items to the FY 20 budget. The additional funding would come from the Facilities Capital Reserve Transfer.

- Add \$20K placeholder for language access (8-0). Future W/S to be held.
- Add \$30K for possible monthly newspaper mailed to households (Hyattsville Life and Times proposal) (8-0)
- EAC requests to 1) increase 4 education grants from \$7,500 to \$8,000 ($\$500 \times 4 = +\2000); 2) increase \$2,500 grants to \$2,750 ($\$250 \times 6 = +\$1,500$), 3) Increase educational incentives to be developed by EAC by \$1,000 – TOTAL of \$4,500 (8-0)
- \$2,250 new grant for College Park Academy to provide assistance to neighborhood schools (4-2-2 (Mitchell and Day recused themselves)).
- \$15K for electricity at 3 locations – Jack Perry Plaza, College Park Woods entrance/sign and Calvert Hills Christmas Tree. (8-0)
- \$25K for bus shelter on Metzert Road – do a comprehensive analysis. How many are needed. Are there economies of scale? Research grant funding, Metro, UMD funding options. (8-0)
- Add \$40K to complete the safety fence on US 1 up to Hartwick Road (6-2)
- Total \$136,750 taken from the \$454,800 capital transfer to the Facilities Capital Reserve.
- Councilmember Kabir requested funding for community space in north College Park: proposes a flexible model and requests \$30,00 funding as a placeholder to provide space to the community. We might not use it all – it depends on the needs of the community. We could rent additional time/space at the Methodist Church if there is space available (2-6)
- Cistern at WMATA property for Community Garden? Wait until future W/S on community garden.
- Bus service to take seniors to the library 3 times/week? Policy decision.

4 Discussion of legislation: The School Exemption Surcharge bill has been amended and will be discussed on Thursday; the security camera legislation is likely to pass; status of bikeways funding; request for information on billing property taxes on an installment plan in the future.

5. Boards and Committees: Janet Wagner to TLB; Todd Reitzel to TLB; Rashawna Alfred to TLB; Bram Turner to AWC.

6. Future Agendas:

- Find options to reduce traffic on our major roadways, including Complete Streets (Day/Kabir 8-0)
- Expand bus service for Seniors to go to the library three times/week (Mitchell). This should be included in the needs assessment study.

7. Comments: Managed lanes workshop; County FY '20 budget hearing; Community Police meeting at MOM's café; Town Hall meeting on City budget; Scholars in Action technology seminar; Student Liaison application; Branchville Volunteer Fire Department banquet; Coffeehouse Debate Club.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Day to adjourn the Worksession and enter into a Closed Session to consider matters related to collective bargaining negotiations, pursuant to the Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Article § 3-305. With a vote of 8-0, Mayor Wojahn adjourned the Worksession at 10:17 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller
City Clerk

Date
Approved