

WORKSESSION MINUTES

College Park City Council

Tuesday, July 13, 2021

7:00 p.m. – 10:33 p.m.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this was a Virtual Meeting.

PRESENT: Mayor Wojahn; Councilmembers Kabir, Kennedy, Dennis, Esters, Day, Mitchell, and Mackie.

ABSENT: Councilmember Rigg

ALSO PRESENT: Bill Gardiner, Interim City Manager; Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Brenda Alexander, Assistant Director of Public Works; Terry Schum, Director of Planning; Kiaisha Barber, Director of Youth, Family and Senior Services; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Gary Fields, Director of Finance; David Thornton, Racial Equity Officer; Megha Sevalia, Student Liaison.

Mayor Wojahn opened the Virtual Worksession at 7:00 p.m.

City Manager's Report: Mr. Gardiner announced the ribbon cutting for the Hollywood Dog Park on Friday; movie night on July 30 at Duvall Field; College Park Day is Saturday, October 9 at the Aviation Museum; changes to bulk trash collections; subscribe to the monthly Municipal Scene. Mr. Gardiner introduced David Thornton, the City's new Race Equity Officer. Bob Ryan discussed National Night Out events.

Amendments to /Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Councilmember Mackie and seconded by Councilmember Kabir to add a Special Session item to tonight's agenda that is time sensitive: sending a letter to the County Executive, County Council, Transportation Planning Board, and Gov. Hogan, restating our opposition to the beltway widening. The motion passed 7-0.

A motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Kabir to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed 7-0.

Discussion items:

1. Discussion of City options to reduce noise from cars – Bob Ryan, Major Keleti, Capt.

Bowling:

- Code Enforcement Officer has to measure noise with a noise meter.
- Can't disturb a police officer's peace.
- A resident can file an affidavit but they have to come to court.
- Noise Control Board also works.
- Post information on our website; bilingual messaging.

- County may run a task force targeting street racing.
- Question about repeat offenders – the citations do not escalate.
- Can we do research about other options beside enforcement?
- Contract officers work on prevention through visibility at common car gathering locations.
- Maryland doesn't have vehicle inspections to catch cars with modified mufflers.
- COPS officers, including bilingual, help with public education.
- Engage with MML on state legislation.

2. Presentation from the Literacy Lab – Jax Chaudhry:

Mission is to provide early literacy instruction to close the literacy gap. Early literacy is a predictor of future school success. Evidence-based model. 2 programs - Pre-K and K-3. Certified tutors are embedded full time in a school for high-dosage tutoring, 5 days a week, 1:1 for 20-30 minutes during the school day. Cost of \$40,000 for each tutor; subsidized to \$20,000 by support from AmeriCorps and private foundations. There are also economies of scale.

The City has set aside \$40,000 for literacy. The EAC will discuss the program next week and make a recommendation to Council.

Request for a copy of their annual report. Tutors could begin in a Hollywood Elementary School pilot program on September 10 – decision needed by mid-August. Evaluation at end of pilot. Board of Education, school and City partnerships needed. They have already talked to HES leadership and Joshua Thomas at PG BOE.

Placeholder on next week's agenda if the EAC is ready to make a recommendation.

3. Presentation of conceptual design options for Duvall Field – Terry Schum, Stephen Jerrick, Richard Hoehn, and Wisa Kompayac, KCI:

Visioning study and existing conditions plan have been completed; now we are at the conceptual design phase. Consensus for option #3 with certain questions to be discussed. Interest in a small water feature, but they are expensive. Fence around cricket pitch is 10-12 feet tall – can it have multiple uses? Council recommendation and direction to consultant was for natural turf with modified soil. Field will be regraded with an underdrain system. The County raised a preliminary concern that this could be a flood prone area and suggested a flood plain study. We will submit a stormwater management plan to DPIE and then they will provide formal comments. Concern about noise spillover from amphitheater programming. Getting more use out of the concession stand is an operational matter and a separate conversation not related to this consultant. ADA accessible features are a requirement. Direction:

- Hard surface Volleyball Court to support pickleball which is popular now.
- Basketball Court painted for multi-purpose.
- Amphitheater – less seating in favor of more greenspace; wood structure to direct sound away from houses.
- Small splash pad could go close to playground as an add-alternate.
- Bocce ball favored over corn hole

- Keep in mind the maintenance cost and staff time and resources that will be needed.
- Safety issues vis-à-vis lighting at night.

This will return to community and Council at the 60% design stage in approximately 4 months.

4. Discussion of the Urban Tree Canopy Protection Ordinance – Brenda Alexander and members of the Tree and Landscape Board:

Ms. Alexander reviewed the staff report. Ms. Alfred reviewed the phasing plan and said the TLB has begun to develop a marketing plan. In response to concern about the cost to maintain mature trees, establish a tree maintenance fund. Draft ordinance includes parts of phases 1 and 2 that should be in an ordinance and does not include any budgetary matters. Phase 3 will happen concurrently and will not be in the ordinance. A change will be made about removing a tree when a permit would otherwise be granted for a house expansion.

- Question about tree maintenance fund - to be used for tree assessments and help with cost of tree work. Hard to determine the amount to budget. Phase 2.
- Can we use Program Open Space funding to acquire land to plant trees so we don't put the whole burden for our tree canopy on our residents?
- Timing for phase 2 needs to be determined: draft as six months from effective date of the ordinance.

Introduce Ordinance next week (Kennedy).

5. Discussion on use of ARPA Funds – Bill Gardiner and Gary Fields:

The City's approved FY'22 budget includes an estimated \$16M in ARPA funding. ARPA funding is more flexible than CARES Act funding was. Discussion of general categories outlined in staff report. There may be an opportunity to partner with local agencies by providing them with grant funds (for instance, libraries). Council input requested so we can draft guidelines. Request more information on broadband. Ms. Ferguson commented on the possible need in the future to provide additional fiber. Interest in a permanent home for Meals on Wheels in College Park. It may be more efficient to work through established organizations to help our families instead of providing the direct grants as we did with CARES Act funding. Can we set aside funds for IT security?

6. ADD letter to the County Executive, County Council, Transportation Planning Board, and Gov. Hogan, restating our opposition to the beltway widening: *See Special Session Minutes for Agenda item 21-G-127*

7. Agenda items for the July 28 Four Cities Meeting:

- Loud noise from moving vehicles
- How neighboring cities are using their ARPA funds
- Status of beltway expansion.
- Discussion of Greenbelt Road project.

8. Request/Status of Future Agenda items:

- Request for proclamation to recognize August 31 as sexual assault awareness day, Mitchell/Kennedy, 7-0.
- Councilmember Kabir will submit a form to find a way to permanently incorporate the messages in the BLM banners (at Duvall Field, City Hall, etc.) so the banners can be removed.

9. Comments: Congratulations to Councilmember Mitchell, the incoming President-elect of the Maryland Municipal League, and to Mayor Wojahn for appointment to the Board of Directors.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Councilmember Dennis and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to adjourn the regular meeting and enter into a Closed Session. Mayor Wojahn read the closing statement:

Pursuant to the statutory authority of the Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b), the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park are providing notice that they will meet in a closed session after the Worksession to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals. The Mayor and Council will discuss the City Attorney's evaluation. The Mayor and Council will not return to public session after the closed session ends.

The motion passed 7-0 and the Worksession ended at 10:33 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller
City Clerk

Date
Approved