

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, November 10, 2010.

Mayor Davis started the meeting to order at 8:00p.m.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Emmett V. Jordan, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager and David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager

Shooting near Springhill Lake Recreation Center

Mr. McLaughlin briefed the City Council on the shooting that occurred outside the facility on Friday. This incident occurred after normal operating hours, but while the Center was being rented. He indicated there was no evidence that the victim or the shooter was connected with the group that rents space at the Center. Mr. McLaughlin reported that the rental group that utilizes the facility had been a tenant for years. He stated that the crime was still being investigated. He summarized actions being taken including: relocation of the rental group to the Youth Center, removal of benches on front of the building, more frequent visits by police officers, enforcement of pass requirements and potential changes to the new security cameras being installed there.

There was considerable discussion about the removal of the benches. Council expressed opposition to removing the benches. They believed there was a real need for these benches and felt removing them would be giving in to crime. Mr. McLaughlin responded that the benches would remain.

Tax Differential

Mr. McLaughlin explained the City's tax differential request and the County's process. He indicated that the program benefited City residents and that Greenbelt and other Prince George's municipalities were fortunate to have a tax differential compared as compared to other municipalities statewide that lack it.

Council Reports

Mr. Putens questioned the definitions of "Administrative Reports" and "Council Reports." He stated that Administrative Reports historically came from the City Manager or were constituent requests that Council wanted to relay to City staff.

Mayor Davis described the difference between Administrative and Council Reports. She stated that constituents needed to know about Council's activities.

Ms. Mach and Mr. Herling believed the reports from various committees Council served on were valuable.

Mr. Roberts stated there were way too many reports. He believed that the current practice was excessive.

Ms. Pope stated that the meetings needed to be shortened. She stated that reports at a late hour could be distributed in written form.

Ms. Mach did not believe the current or recent City Council's had long meetings. She noted that many years ago the meetings ran much longer.

Mr. Jordan suggested that action items be placed earlier in the meeting to encourage citizen participation. He did believe the Council reports were valuable.

Mr. Herling asked how these reports were handled by previous City Councils. Mayor Davis stated that more Council members were involved in, and attending more, Committees at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), National League of Cities (NLC), Maryland Municipal League (MML), etc. than in previous Councils.

Review of First Year as a Council

Mayor Davis noted that Mr. Jordan had requested that Council discuss their first full year together and review how things were going.

Ms. Mach stated that it takes a year or two for new Council Members to understand all the issues and the Budget. Mr. Herling believed it was an immense undertaking.

Mayor Davis asked Mr. McLaughlin if he felt workload had increased. Mr. McLaughlin responded that about six months ago something had changed and now staff was scrambling to keep up with Council's requests, priorities, etc.

Ms. Pope believed that she and Mr. Jordan might bring a different perspective to Council discussions than the longer serving members.

Mr. Putens stated that sometimes the history, especially related to development issues, was important and newer Council members might need to be aware of this history.

Mr. Jordan believed Council's job was constituent service and policy making. He suggested different areas of responsibilities for Council. Mayor Davis responded that this was more like a Commissioner form of government.

Mr. Jordan discussed external relationships and advocacy. He asked that he be able to participate more with COG.

Appointment of Council Members to Boards and Committees

Council discussed their requests for NLC Committees.

Council discussed their appointments to City Advisory Groups and agreed to the following arrangement which will be formalized at a future Regular Meeting.

<i>Ms. Pope</i>	<i>– Senior Citizen Advisory Committee</i>
<i>Mr. Roberts</i>	<i>– Youth Advisory Committee</i>
<i>Mr. Jordan</i>	<i>– Community Relations Advisory Board & Greenbelt Access Television</i>
<i>Mayor Davis</i>	<i>– Forest Preserve Advisory Board & Friends of the Greenbelt Museum</i>
<i>Mr. Putens</i>	<i>– Public Safety Advisory Committee</i>
<i>Mr. Herling</i>	<i>– Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability & Arts Advisory Board</i>
<i>Ms. Mach</i>	<i>– Advisory Committee on Education + Park & Recreation Advisory Board</i>

Council discussed appointments to various COG boards and committees.

Mr. Jordan expressed an interest in serving on the Transportation Planning Board (TPB). Mr. Roberts stated he enjoyed TPB and preferred to continue this role. Mayor Davis asked Mr. Roberts to provide minutes from TPB meetings and make brief reports at the Council meetings. Mr. Roberts responded that the minutes were available online and indicated he would provide the minutes, but did not feel it was necessary to report on everything going on in the TPB. This matter will also come to a future Council meeting for action.

Mr. Herling agreed to be the alternate on the Metropolitan Policy Development Committee (MDPC) and the Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee (CBPC) so that Mr. Jordan could become the primary appointee. Ms. Mach agreed to withdraw as the MDPC alternate. Mr. Putens agreed to withdraw as the alternate to the CBPC.

The COG board and committee appointments will appear on a future Regular Meeting agenda for Council action.

Mr. Putens asked about practices regarding Proclamations. Mayor Davis responded that she had reviewed ten years of Proclamations and they had followed a certain pattern. She indicated she would be presenting this report to Council in the near future.

Other Reports

Ms. Mach reported on a Kaboom “farm” program that she did not think would work for the City. Mr. Putens asked about the MML survey.

The meeting ended at 10:13pm.

Respectfully Submitted

*David E. Moran
Assistant City Manager*