



*MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION/MID-SESSION LEGISLATIVE DINNER held Thursday, March 6, 2008, at Reynolds Tavern in Annapolis, for the purpose of discussing the status of the City's legislative priorities and other legislative matters.*

*Mayor Davis convened the meeting at 7:55 p.m.*

*PRESENT WERE Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Judith F. Davis..*

*STAFF PRESENT WERE Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.*

*ALSO PRESENT WERE State Senator Paul Pinsky; State Delegates Anne Healey, Tawanna Gaines, and Justin Ross; and County Councilmember Thomas E. Dernoga. County Councilmember Ingrid Turner was out of town.*

*Mayor Davis welcomed the legislators and thanked them for attending. She said that the purpose of the gathering was for the City to be updated on the status of pending legislation, including the priorities it had presented at the December dinner. She said that Councilmember Turner had a conflict this evening but had let the City know that at the county level, little with a price tag attached was likely to meet with success.*

*The following City priorities issues were reviewed and commented on.*

### ***State Issues***

***Funding for Greenbelt Lake Dredging*** : Although the status of this item was not clear, there was discussion of the fact that there did not appear to be clear funding sources for this type of work.

***Public Safety Funding County Radio Upgrade*** : Delegate Gaines said that at the moment, the state is in the process of funding and updating its own necessary upgrades for this system. She said she had conveyed this need to the Governor, however, and that she believed that as soon as the state upgrades had been accomplished he would look for funding to help municipalities.

***Prohibition of Transfer of Liquor Licenses to Gas Stations*** : This bill has passed the delegation, but Mr. Moran said it was not yet out of committee. Delegate Ross said that all liquor bills were being held at the moment, but he was confident that this one would be okay.

***Reporting for Circulation of Municipal Petitions*** : Although this issue had not been pursued, there was some discussion of the problem, which is that under state law, there is no clear ability for municipalities to require even the same level of reporting (identity, source of finances) that

*the state requires on petitions related to referendum issues. Delegate Ross asked that a copy of this material be sent to him again.*

### **County Issues**

**Reestablish the County Landlord-Tenant Commission:** *After some discussion of the need for this commission to be refunded and the gap created by its absence, Councilmember Dernoga said he would be willing to work with anyone Greenbelt would designate. The Mayor suggested that he consult with the Prince George's County Municipal Association, since this is a priority of that group and they have people who are knowledgeable about it.*

**Increase M-NCPPC Funds Provided to Greenbelt :** *This City priority was not discussed.*

**New Greenbelt Fire Station :** *Mayor Davis said that Councilmember Turner had said this item is still in the budget but had been put off for a year.*

**Enable New Site Plan Authority :** *County legislation is needed to enable state legislation adopted by the General Assembly in 2005 (HB 654). The Mayor said Ms. Turner had indicated her willingness to support this, and she asked Mr. Dernoga if he would. He replied that he would have to see it first but that he has concerns even with the existing municipal variance and departure authorities.*

### **Alert Items**

**Youth Services Bureaus :** *Appreciation was expressed to Delegate Gaines for her success in getting funding for the YSBs line-itemed.*

### **Pending Bills**

**Speed Cameras (HB 364/SB 269) :** *Delegate Healey said this was in her committee and that much of the objection to it was the perception that it is a cash cow for jurisdictions, not unlike the small-town speed traps of yore. She said that she is working on an amendment that would assure that any revenues beyond costs would not be retained by the jurisdiction but rather would be deposited in the state highway user fees. Councilmembers expressed concern about this plan since profits from the cameras in one year might be needed to offset losses in the next year.*

**Task Force on Beverage Container Deposits (SB 336/HB 509) :** *Senator Pinsky thought this was unlikely to go anywhere this year.*

**Maryland Affordable Housing Investment Fund (HB 512/SB 302) :** *This bill is in progress. Ms. Mach explained that the City had supported it with the condition that cooperatives were treated equitably with other housing forms. Delegate Healey asked that the City continue to give her information on any co-op inequity issues. The Mayor noted that Greenbelt Homes, Inc., was becoming more active on the legislative front and would probably be providing information as well.*

**Zoning Appeals (HB 927 ):** This bill, which the City opposed, died in the House.

**Roadside Advertising and Solicitation (HB 1010/SB 685 ):** Bills passed in both delegations. It has been clarified in amendments that the prohibitions would apply to all groups.

**Condo/HOA Liability for Liens (HB 682/SB 874):** Delegate Healey thought it unlikely that this would go anywhere. There was discussion of the idea that condos and HOAs might have to deal with this themselves by putting fees in escrow.

**Global Warming Solutions (SB 309/HB 712 ):** Senator Pinsky noted that he has the governor's support on his bill. Mayor Davis commented that the COG Climate Change Steering Committee is keying regional standards to Maryland's.

**Unauthorized Signs on SHA Rights-of-Way (HB 921) and Task Force to Study Towing Practices (HB 684) :** There was some discussion of these two bills, for which City support was requested. The first would authorize county and municipal governments to remove illegal signs along state highway rights-of-way and impose fines of up to \$1,000. The second would create a state task force to study towing practices.

Delegate Ross commented on the office vacancy rates in Greenbelt and suggested this might be an opportunity to start to make Greenbelt a location for green-collar business. He said perhaps the state could be helpful in establishing that environment, for example, via tax breaks.

The meeting ended at 9:15 p.m. Council thanked everyone for coming.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk