

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, August 29, 2016, to meet with Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:02 p.m. The meeting was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Councilmember Silke I. Pope was unable to attend due to a family matter.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Terri Hruby, Assistant Director of Planning; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Eugene Williams, Keith Tyson, Melanie Deggins, Brian Morrison, Samuel Bajomo, Jason Flores and John Mitchell, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission; Eldon Ralph and Steve Skolnik, Greenbelt Homes, Inc.; Bill Orleans and others.

Mr. Williams reported the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) had gone through some changes over the past year, including a new General Manager/CEO, new Deputy General Managers and new Prince George's and Montgomery County Commissioners. He invited Council to attend a WSSC commission meeting.

Eldon Ralph, General Manager of Greenbelt Homes, Inc.(GHI), and Steve Skolnik, President of GHI Board of Directors, spoke about WSSC's decision in 2012 to suspend the water line replacement project in GHI. They noted that GHI would not agree to the proposed work plan which held GHI responsible for the water lines from the meter to the homes. Mr. Skolnik mentioned the 1958 agreement between WSSC and GHI which held WSSC responsible for the water lines to the homes. He said WSSC responds to emergency repairs only and added that the number of broken pipes is increasing and a permanent solution needs to be found.

Mr. Bajomo said it would set a precedent for other communities if WSSC absorbed all the costs of replacement of GHI's waterlines. Mr. Roberts noted historic properties should be handled differently than other properties. After further discussion, Mr. Morrison said everyone needs to find a way to reconvene discussion and find a way to move forward. Ms. Davis stressed that Council would like to have this matter resolved.

There was discussion of the Lakeside neighborhood water line replacement. Mr. Williams said this work was part of the entire water line replacement plan for the City which has been delayed due to the GHI water line replacement suspension.

Mr. Putens mentioned that WSSC had promptly responded last week for a water line leak on Brett Place. He said during the repair, it was noted that the water line was a four inch line and it should have been a six inch line. Mr. Putens asked who initiates replacement of that water line which, apparently, was mistakenly installed during construction. Mr. Bajomo said he would check and respond to the City.

Mr. Tyson provided an update on the water tower work. He said WSSC has been unable to come to an agreement with either the City or the property owners on proposed water main replacement design plans. He said they are developing alternative plans and will get back with the City.

Mr. Flores said WSSC is ready to proceed with the Stream Channel Restoration project as soon as the City permit is received. Mr. McLaughlin said Planning staff had issued the permit late last week so WSSC should receive it soon.

In response to a question from Ms. Davis, Mr. Flores and Mr. Mitchell said planting work associated with the Stream Channel Restoration project will include a one year warranty with the landscaper. Ms. Davis mentioned that sometimes trees have problems after the one year period and suggested a two or three year warranty be considered. Ms. Williams said they would take the suggestion back to WSSC for review.

Mr. Williams said WSSC recently entered into a partnership with HomeServe, an insurance company that provides water line protection for homeowners for water/sewer line and plumbing issues on their private property. He said information on the program was sent to all WSSC customers. Mr. Williams added that interested homeowners can insure with HomeServe or any other company of their choice. He noted that WSSC went with HomeServe because they (HomeServe) agreed to cover the cost for homeowners who can't afford the insurance. Mr. Putens asked if GHI could go with HomeServe. Mr. Williams suggested GHI contact the company.

Mr. McLaughlin reported that the City had recently experienced instances where WSSC repaired water leaks in roadways and the temporary restoration work was very poor quality (not tapped down). He added that WSSC normally informs the City when repair work is done but, in these instances, the City had not been notified. Mr. Williams asked that his office be notified immediately when these problems occur and he will attempt to resolve them as quickly as possible.

Ms. Deggins, WSSC Project Outreach Manager, said a tool, "In Your Neighborhood," is available on the WSSC website that will provide status updates of all WSSC projects.

In response to a question from Mayor Jordan, Mr. Williams said WSSC had no planned projects on Greenbelt Road or Kenilworth Avenue in the immediate future.

Mr. Williams said WSSC will hold a forum with municipal representatives to discuss municipal concerns in October.

Mr. Ralph said WSSC needs to improve communications with GHI. He stressed that GHI needs to be informed of all WSSC work being done on its property. Mr. Williams said the concern will be relayed to appropriate WSSC personnel.

Informational Items

Several informational items were discussed.

Council Reports

Ms. Davis reported on the 21st Century School Facilities Commission Meeting.

The meeting ended at 9:55p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cindy Murray
City Clerk*