



MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION/LEGISLATIVE DINNER held Monday, December 19, 2005, at the Greenbelt Marriott, for the purpose of discussing the City's legislative priorities for 2006.

Mayor Davis convened the meeting at 8:05 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; Robert A. Manzi, City Solicitor and David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager.

ALSO PRESENT WERE State Senator Paul Pinsky; State Delegates Anne Healey, Tawanna Gaines, and Justin Ross; and Judy Thacher, Legislative Aide to County Councilmember Thomas Dernoga.

Mayor Davis welcomed the legislators and thanked them for attending. She noted that County Councilmember Peters was ill and would not be attending. She also noted Councilmember Dernoga was with his mother, who was very ill.

The following legislative priorities were identified and discussed.

State Issues

Reallocation of Springhill Lake Recreation Center Bond Funding: Mayor Davis stated that a new Springhill Lake Recreation Center was still very important to the City. She noted that details regarding the Springhill Lake redevelopment project had not been worked out. Since this bond money must be spent by 2008 and the City needed funds to finish the Community Center window project, the City wanted to reallocate these funds. Delegate Gaines recalled an instance last session where something similar had been done. Mayor Davis noted that the City may need to return to the State in the future for funds to construct a new Recreation Center. Senator Pinsky asked if it was possible that a new Springhill Lake Recreation Center would be privately funded.

Council responded yes.

Public Safety Funding: Mayor Davis noted that new public safety surcharge legislation, adopted last year, provide Laurel with a 50% share instead of the 12% that other municipalities with police departments receive. Delegate Ross responded that this had been a last-minute amendment made by Laurel's delegation. He also stated that PGMCA had provided the 12% figure but would look for an opportunity to amend the difference. With regard to a proposed "signing bonus," for county police officers, Delegate Ross reported he had heard from many municipalities and that he expected to amend the legislation to include municipalities.

Funding for Joint Communications Center: Senator Pinsky suggested that the City try to use the same source of funding (State Homeland Security) again this year.

Prohibition of Transfer of Liquor Licenses: Council indicated there were four or five gas stations with beer/wine licenses that were "grandfathered" and that the City wanted to prohibit the transfer of these licenses to new owners. One of the stations was in Greenbelt and one was just outside of Greenbelt near Brittany Place. This station has had a history of crime problems.

County Issues

There was only limited discussion of the county priorities since Councilmembers Peters and Dernoga were not able to attend the dinner meeting. Mayor Davis reported the four priorities were: institutionalize School Resource Officer funding, increase MNCPPC funding, acquire new Greenbelt fire station funding, and enable the new planning and zoning authority.

Alert Items

The following were described: the FY 2006 Highway User Revenue Capital Grant Renege and an update on Greenbelt West development and redevelopment. There was considerable discussion regarding proposed density at Springhill Lake and its impact on the schools. Delegate Ross stressed that he still favored a minimum 50% home ownership component. Senator Pinsky requested that the City keep the delegation informed about the Greenbelt West proposals.

Other Issues of City Interest

The following were mentioned: override Governor's veto of SB 468/Hb 405; support purple line/oppose intercounty connector; panhandling; homicide by aggressive driving; full funding of the Bridge to Excellence (Thornton); speed cameras; increased penalties for red light camera violations (assess points, revoke license); limitation of judicial sentence reconsideration; additional funding for noise barriers, and TheBus service issues.

The legislative priorities of the Maryland Municipal League and the Prince George's County Municipal Association were also mentioned.

Mayor Davis asked if there were any items the delegation wanted to discuss. Senator Pinsky stated that MML and MACO would be in severe conflict over proposed legislation on annexation.

The legislators thanked the City for its hospitality, and Council thanked them for coming.

The meeting ended at about 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*David E. Moran
Assistant City Manager*