



WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council held Wednesday, July 25, 2001, for the purpose of meeting with the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee (SCAC) to discuss the Open Forum.

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:03 p.m. It was held in the Senior Classroom of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, Thomas X. White, and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: David Moran, Assistant to the City Manager; Karen Haseley, Therapeutic Supervisor, Recreation Department; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Bunny Fitzgerald (chair), Phyllis Budin, Betty Timer, Roger Brown, Leah Warner, and Pearl Siegel, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee; and Marianne Olah.

Following introductions, Mayor Davis said there were several topics she had identified as needing discussion, but she invited others.

Role of the Council Liaison: It was noted that SCAC had changed its meeting night to Tuesday in order to make it easier for Mr. White to attend their meetings. Mr. Putens asked that staff formulate clearer definitions of the roles of the Council and staff liaisons to assure that there would not be misunderstanding. He said the Council liaison should not be expected to attend advisory group meetings on a regular basis.

Forum Reporting Procedures: Ms. Fitzgerald noted that SCAC had moved up the date of the Open Forum in order to allow more time for turn-around on the staff response and the holding of a work session prior to the start of budget work sessions. Mr. White said a problem had been created this year because Council was under the impression no further follow-up was needed, whereas SCAC wanted to hold a work session. The Mayor asked for clarification on what SCAC's internal process is. Ms. Warner said they hold one, sometimes two, meetings after the Forum to prioritize issues; then Ms. Haseley drafts the report; then the committee reviews the draft at a meeting. It is thus often December before the report is ready. Ms. Warner also clarified that the problem with "staff" SCAC has mentioned does not refer to the preparation of the report but to what happens to it after it leaves the committee's hand to go to Council. It was agreed that the setting of the work session date was the most important thing, that this should be done immediately after Council receives the report, and that, if possible, the meeting should be held in February.

It was also discussed that there is no need for the report to be held either on the SCAC end or the staff end until all responses have been received from all department heads or other parties. If there are matters that require quick attention, these can also be separated out. If Ms. Haseley

does not receive response from department heads or from other staff as needed, she should refer these matters to the City Manager.

Noting that this is an election year, Mayor Davis suggested that SCAC make a point of inviting all candidates for City Council, since most, if not all, candidates will have declared themselves by the Forum date of September 22.

Consultation on Issues Involving Seniors: The Mayor said she believed there had also been incidences where SCAC felt it had not been consulted or included appropriately, and she asked for elaboration on what had been handled improperly from the committee's point of view. The primary occasion had been the grant application to NORC. Briefly reviewing the history, Ms. Timer said SCAC had refused to function as a task force to investigate possibilities for assisted living, with the result that a separate task force, with some overlap of membership, had been appointed by Council. She said she did not believe the City was under any obligation to notify SCAC about the NORC project, but notifying the task force would have served to inform the process of the proposal. In addition to the tight time frame for submitting the proposal that had already been mentioned, the Mayor said Council had not been totally aware of the status of the task force as a group. The question of whether the task force had developed the draft job description for the community resource advocate was clarified by Ms. Haseley, who said it was developed by a sub-committee of the task force but was never formally reviewed or approved by the full task force.

Mayor Davis said the new community resource advocate has been made aware that there are volunteers interested in working with her and sharing information. Ms. Haseley suggested, and others agreed, that a good approach would be to invite the full task force to meet with the community resource advocate, since although there had been a sub-group working on assistance in living, others may well be interested now.

Ms. Fitzgerald commented that these were mostly problems of poor communication rather than substantive problems. Ms. Timer added that sometimes the committee simply does not hear back from staff or Council and does not know why; it would be helpful to receive an interim status report or indication of when a response could be expected.

SCAC Report: The Mayor then turned to specific items in the committee report on the Open Forum. It was noted that no response had been received regarding elimination of handicapped-parking spaces near the Municipal Building (p.3). Staff will check with Officer Mathews to find out if he pursued writing the articles on vehicle laws and safety for submission to the News Review. It was agreed that the crosswalk issue on p. 2 had been satisfied. There was extensive discussion of problems with trash and overflowing trash cans in park, field, and playground areas. Ms. Siegel also said it appeared that large trash bags from the apartment buildings were placed in the public trash cans. Mr. Roberts commented that this went beyond problems of littering to problems of enforcement. Mr. Moran encouraged committee members and others to call Public Works and report problems, since City staff will otherwise not be aware of problems occurring between scheduled pick-ups. Staff will look into this matter, and the trash can at the end of 19 Court Ridge was noted as a particular problem. Regarding the road stripes on Cherrywood Lane, it was commented that although a response had been received from Celia

Craze regarding the road markings, there was still an open question about promulgating this information so that drivers would not be confused. With regard to the question of scooters and helmets, the Mayor said it is now law that helmets be worn, just as with bikes. With regard to cars not stopping completely at four-way stops, there was discussion of attempting to focus police and safety attention on the problem, but it was also recognized that this is a very difficult enforcement matter.

Ms. Fitzgerald thanked the City for increasing the signage at Roosevelt Center regarding riding wheeled recreational vehicles. This is an ongoing problem, but at least now a citizen can point to the signs as justification for a request to stop the behavior. The committee also thanked Council for the work session.

Other Business

Mayor Davis commented on newspaper coverage about protests by Oxon Hill residents of the proposed Harbor Place project.

Mr. Putens raised the question of the removal of the temporary buildings from the high school. Council members agreed that a meeting should be scheduled with the individual in charge of pupil accounting for the county, as well as the school board representative, ACE, and Principal Conyers as soon as possible to discuss the matter.

Mr. Moran said Congressman Hoyer had proposed holding a meeting in Greenbelt on Tuesday, August 28, with the parties interested in the Jaeger Tract "friends" agreement. Council agreed to holding the meeting then.

Council briefly reviewed pending applications for advisory groups.

The meeting ended at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Gallagher

City Clerk