



**REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL HELD  
MONDAY, APRIL 26, 1999**

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:16 p.m.

ROLL CALL was answered by Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, Alan Turnbull and by Judith F. Davis, Mayor.

ALSO PRESENT were Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Robert Manzi, City Solicitor; W. Bowman Ferguson, Management Analyst and David E. Moran, City Clerk.

Mayor Davis observed a moment of silence for residents: Marc Schlossberg, Patrick Hoppel, George D'Esposito and Veronica Wright, and former residents: James Loyd Fowler, Elinor J. Breen and Naomi Brooks. Then, she led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

CONSENT AGENDA: Mr. Turnbull requested that item 22 be removed. With that change, Mr. Putens moved approval of the consent agenda. Mr. Roberts seconded. The motion passed 5 to 0.

**COUNCIL THEREBY TOOK THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:**

**MINUTES:**

Work Session, March 29, 1999

Approved as presented.

**SUPPORT FOR METROPOLITAN AREA WORK GROUP - CHESAPEAKE BAY POLICY:**  
Council formally approved the letter of support.

**RESIGNATION FROM THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD:** Council accepted Mr. Chernikoff's decision with regret and directed that the appropriate letter of appreciation be drafted for the Mayor's signature.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Mr. Putens moved that the agenda be approved. Mr. Turnbull seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**RECOGNITION OF PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES:** Mayor Davis read the agenda comments. Council presented a certificate to each of the members of the crew. Mayor Davis thanked the members of the crew for their help with the project.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SERGEANT. MARR DOUG SAPPINGTON: Mayor Davis read the agenda comments. Lieutenant Kemp introduced Doug Sappington and expressed pride in being able to be present. Sgt. Sappington described the FBI program.

PETITIONS & REQUESTS: Hans Hopp, of 3-C Research Road, reported on a meeting at Prince George's Community College on a visitor from Kosovo.

PROCLAMATION "COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS": April 11 through April 17 was National Telecommunicators Week. Mayor Davis read a proclamation in honor of the city's Communications Specialists. Regina Brown, Communications Supervisor, accepted the proclamation.

#### PETITIONS AND REQUESTS:

REQUEST FROM GREENBELT NURSERY SCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN: Mayor Davis read the agenda comments. Council accepted the petition and agreed to schedule a work session.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Earth Day: Michael Clem, Senior Administrative Assistant reported on the Earth Day celebration held on April 17. He thanked Beverly Palau and Bill Phelan for their assistance with the event.

Public Works Open House: Kenny Hall, Acting Director of Public Works, reported on the Public Works Open House held on April 17. He noted that it was the most successful open house ever, with over 400 people in attendance.

Executive Training Program: Mr. McLaughlin noted that Mr. Hall had returned from an executive training program in Virginia. Mr. Hall described the program and noted that it had been a beneficial experience and that he had enjoyed it.

Film Festival: Bo Ferguson, Senior Management Analyst, reported on the Indiana Jones film festival. He noted that it was a huge success, with almost the same attendance as the Hitchcock festival. Mr. Ferguson reported that the Orson Wells festival was this week.

Rededication of Al's Bench: Mayor Davis reported that Council had attended the rededication of Al Herling's bench.

**AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE AND EMPOWER THE CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND TO CONTRACT WITH CRESTAR BANK, N. A. TO BORROW NOT MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$100,000) FOR THE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING ADDITIONAL COMPUTER SOFTWARE FOR FINANCIAL REPORTING PURPOSES DESCRIBED HEREIN, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF SECTION 59, CONTRACTS OVER ONE YEAR, OF THE CITY CHARTER**

Mayor Davis read the agenda comments. Mr. Turnbull introduced the above titled ordinance. Mr. Putens asked if the City had contacted NationsBank. Jeffrey Williams, City Treasurer, responded

that while NationsBank had offered a lower rate, the bond counsel fees would have been substantially higher.

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 11, "MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC", SECTION 39, "PROHIBITED IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS", OF THE GREENBELT CITY CODE.

Mayor Davis read the agenda comments. Mr. Putens introduced the above titled ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 11, "MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC", OF THE GREENBELT CITY CODE FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO ORDINANCE 1180

Mayor Davis read the agenda comments. Mr. Roberts introduced the above titled ordinance.

[Editorial Note: Mr. Roberts read the title on the printed ordinance which was different from the above title and incorrect.]

Mr. Moran noted that the title on the printed ordinance was incorrect and different than the title in the agenda and comments. He stated he would research the rules and determine if the ordinance needed to be introduced again for first reading.

PETITION RE: GREENBELT POLICE CRIME REPORTING: Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Fred Gasper, of 6718 Village Park Drive, stated that he originally had thought this was a minor issue, but upon further reflection he believed that it was information that should be available in all the newspapers.

Don Comis, 3-G Laurel Hill Road, stated that the city should resume faxing to the Washington Post. He believed this was a community policing issue. Mr. Comis stated that the Prince George's Extra was a local paper. He appreciated that the website was being updated on a more timely basis. Mr. Comis was opposed to deferring the issue until a work session and believed this issue was embarrassing to the city.

Mr. Roberts stated that communities that don't disclose their crimes have a much higher crime rates than the City. He believed that information armed the citizens of Greenbelt and didn't want the city to be accused of censoring information.

Mr. Turnbull thanked Mr. Comis and Mr. Gasper for bringing this issue back to Council. He asked staff if the Post had requested the crime report. Mr. McLaughlin responded not to his knowledge. Mr. Turnbull stressed that this was not a censorship issue. He stated that at worst, the city was guilty of spinning the news. Mr. Turnbull believed the Post was using this story as filler.

Mr. Comis responded that the Post editor had assured him that she had repeatedly made requests for the report. Mayor Davis responded that she and the editor had only met once and that the

editor was going to develop a new format and present it to the Mayor. Mayor Davis stressed that the editor had not requested the information and this follow-up had not occurred.

Mr. Turnbull again reiterated that this was not censorship. He stated that the Post appeared unwilling to work for the news by not even requesting the information.

Mr. Gasper suggested that the City notify the Post that the information was available on the City's web page.

Demetri Nader, 7219 Morrison Drive, stated that Council erred when it made this decision. He noticed that the city had not been reporting the crimes in the Washington Post. He also expressed concern that the report was abbreviated. Mr. McLaughlin responded that the police weekly report has always been abbreviated and was intended to be a synopsis. He stated to do otherwise would consume too much staff time.

Mr. Putens stressed that this was not censorship. He relayed a conversation he had with a Washington Post staffer, where the staffer had stated that the reports were used as "filler." He expressed concern that the Post was not treating the City fairly.

Mr. Roberts asked about the web site being updated. Mr. McLaughlin responded that the city had allowed the web site to become out-of-date, but this had been corrected and would now be updated on a regular basis. Mr. Roberts again stated that the report should be provided to the Washington Post.

Mayor Davis suggested that the city notify all the media that the information was available on the city's website.

Mr. Turnbull moved that the City send a letter to all the media, notifying them that crime report was available on the city's web site, requesting that there be a specific phone call to the Washington Post Editor and request that the Post change their statement. Mr. Putens seconded. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Mr. Comis stated that he came to use the word censorship honestly and believed that it was occurring.

**REQUEST FOR USE OF CITY LOGO - CITIZEN'S ACADEMY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION:**  
Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Kathy Reynolds, 1-A Eastway, reported that the Alumni Association wanted a letterhead and that this had been decided at their last meeting.

Mr. Putens asked if the Police Department had a different logo. Mr. McLaughlin responded that the same logo was used. Mr. Putens expressed concern about possible political use of the logo. Ms Reynolds stated that the organization was not political and this was in their bylaws.

Mr. Putens moved that the city approve the use of the logo with a waiver of the policy. Mayor Davis seconded.

Mr. Turnbull was glad that the city had a logo policy and indicated he was not inclined to approve the request at this time.

Mr. Roberts expressed concern about the ongoing nature of the request. He wasn't sure this was an appropriate use of the logo.

Ms. Reynolds stated that the organization talked about perhaps helping the police. She stated that she would be happy to take Council's feedback to her membership and consider alternatives.

Mr. Putens and Ms. Davis agreed to withdraw the motion.

**REQUEST FOR FUNDING BY BABE RUTH BASEBALL:** Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Bob Sonneveldt of 126 Lakeside Drive, and Kelly Ivy of 43 Lakeside Drive appeared regarding this item. Mr. Sonneveldt thanked Council for all their past support and explained the request.

Mr. Roberts moved that Council authorize \$5,250 to establish a Babe Ruth Prep Team. Mr. Putens seconded. Mr. Turnbull asked about the cost of the franchise fees. Mr. Sonneveldt responded that the franchise fees were about \$4,800.

The motion passed 4 to 0.

**LETTERS TO GOVERNOR SEEKING SUPPORT:** Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Mr. Putens expressed concern about naming the routes and requested that the letter ask for 3rd phase funding, instead of funding for a specific route.

Mr. Roberts hoped the city would be able to use this service to allow residents to get around Greenbelt.

Mr. Putens also suggested that the City copy the Governor's municipal liaison on the letter.

Mr. Turnbull moved that Council approve the letter on "the bus" and authorize the Mayor to sign them on behalf of the City. Mr. Roberts seconded. Mr. Turnbull reminded Council that the City had discussed buying down the cost of the service and requested that this be added to the city's unfunded list. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Mr. Putens moved that the city approve the letter on the statue and theater marquee. Mr. Turnbull seconded. The motion passed 4 to 0.

**LETTER TO WMATA REGARDING JOINT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:** Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Mr. Putens moved that Council approve the letter and authorize the Mayor to sign it. Mr. Turnbull seconded. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Mayor Davis moved to add "Letter to Congressional Representatives re: Environmental Concerns" to the agenda. Mr. Roberts seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

UPGRADE ACCOUNTING SUPERVISOR (GC-16) TO ACCOUNTANT (GC-20): Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Mr. Putens moved that Council upgrade the Accounting Supervisor (GC-16) position to an Accountant (GC-20) position. Mr. Roberts seconded.

Mr. Turnbull asked about the salary difference between a GC-16 and a GC-20. Mr. McLaughlin responded that the starting salary for a GC-16 was \$32,000 and this meant about a \$6,000 difference in starting salaries. Mr. Turnbull was not convinced about the need for a second CPA. Mr. McLaughlin noted the very successful audit as an example.

Mayor Davis stated that she was supportive of the staff recommendation.

Mr. Roberts asked if the individual would perform higher levels of work. Mr. McLaughlin responded that Ms. Nichols had taken on additional duties over her predecessor and this incumbent would be expected to perform at the same level

The motion passed 3 to 1 (Turnbull).

APPOINTMENT OF ADVISORY BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPLICANTS: Mr. Turnbull moved the following appointments:

Tammy Lowery Youth Advisory Committee  
Mary Clark Arts Advisory Board  
Marsha Voigt Community Relations Advisory Board

Mr. Putens seconded. The motion passed 4 to 0.

LETTER TO CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES RE: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Mr. Putens moved that the City send a letter to Congressional, State and County representatives regarding environmental concerns at the WMATA/A.H. Smith properties and expressing support for the initial reactions from the Corps of Engineers and Maryland Department of the Environment. Mr. Roberts seconded. The motion passed 4 to 0.

MEETINGS: Council changed the starting time of the FOP work session to 9:00 p.m. Council scheduled a work session with Media representatives for June 2 and a work session with

Greenbelt Nursery School and Kindergarten for June 10. Council held June 22 for a future work session.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Putens moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Turnbull seconded. The motion carried 5 to 0. Mayor Davis adjourned the regular meeting of Monday, April 26, 1999, at 11:12 p.m

Respectfully Submitted,

David E. Moran, CMC  
City Clerk

"I hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct report of the regular meeting of the City Council of Greenbelt, Maryland, held Monday, April 26, 1999."

Judith F. Davis  
Mayor