

# **City Council Work Session**

**Voting Age  
and  
Mandan Road  
Basketball Courts**

**8:00 p.m.  
Wednesday  
November 2, 2016**

**Room 201  
Greenbelt Community Center**

**Greenbelt Youth Advisory Committee  
Report to City Council**

**Subject:** Municipal voting age change

**Discussion:** After neighboring cities in Maryland lowered city voting ages, the committee evaluated how lowering the city voting age might work in Greenbelt. The committee outlined reasons why 16 years of age is ideal for beginning the voting process. In Maryland and specifically in Greenbelt at 16 years, youth are able to attain a driving permit, work with few restrictions, pay taxes, and are most likely taking the course "Local State and National Government."

The committee also believes that 16 is an ideal age for beginning the voting process because typically when one turns 18 there are big changes in lifestyle; whether that is moving out, working, and/or going to college. With dramatic changes, it can be difficult to tackle something new like voting, for all levels of government. The committee believes that voting before 18 is a stepping stone for future voting, which continues to have an absent youth influence. By lowering the city voting age, youth are more likely to get involved with government and politics.

In response to lowering the voting age, the committee hopes that the youth of Greenbelt are inspired to have a voice in local politics. The committee also believes that beginning this civic engagement is important for the future of Greenbelt. Finally, since many youth live in New Greenbelt, reducing the voting age will help increase voter participation in areas of Greenbelt currently underrepresented in local politics.

**Recommendation:** The Youth Advisory Committee recommends lowering the City of Greenbelt's voting age to 16.

Respectfully submitted,

Katia Cavigelli, Chair  
Youth Advisory Committee

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS:

Lore Rosenthal, Greenbelt Climate Action Network, requested Council urge the District Delegation to support a statewide ban on hydraulic fracking. Ms. Davis moved that “Letter of Support for Statewide Ban on Hydraulic Fracking” be added to the agenda of this meeting as Item #24. Mr. Herling seconded. The motion passed 6-0.



Emma Smith and other members of the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) inquired about the status of YAC Report #2015-1 (Lowering the voting age) submitted last year. Ms. Murray advised that a work session on this report was on Council’s “to be scheduled” list. Council also noted a question regarding lowering the voting age had been included on the City’s last Community Questionnaire.



John Drago, Greenbelt, spoke about the high cost of medical care and the need for affordable housing in the City.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Statement for the Record – Executive Session of June 21, 2016: Ms. Davis moved that in accordance with the General Provisions Article, Section 3-306(c)(2) of the *Annotated Code of Public General Laws of Maryland*, the minutes of tonight’s meeting reflect that Council met in executive session on Tuesday, June 21, 2016, at 7:35 p.m. in the Council Room of the Municipal Building. Council held this closed meeting in accordance with the General Provisions Article, §3-305(b)(1) of the *Annotated Code of Public General Laws of Maryland*, to discuss a personnel matter.

Vote to close session:

	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Ms. Davis	X			
Mr. Herling	X			
Ms. Mach	X			
Ms. Pope	X			
Mr. Putens	X			
Mr. Roberts		X		
Mayor Jordan	X			

The following staff members were in attendance: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager.

Other individuals in attendance: None

Council took no actions during this session.

Mr. Herling seconded.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Davis - yes

## Current Questions

<b>1. Would an economic development strategy benefit the City?</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	771	81%
No	73	8%
No response	110	12%
Total	954	100%

<b>2. Should the City lower its voting age to 16?</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	186	19%
No	731	77%
No response	37	4%
Total	954	100%

<b>3. Should the City continue offering Animal Control Services?</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	867	91%
No	52	5%
No response	35	4%
Total	954	100%

## Michael McLaughlin

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**From:** Michael McLaughlin  
**Sent:** Friday, October 28, 2016 11:56 AM  
**To:** Michael McLaughlin  
**Subject:** FW: Youth voting

**From:** Tracey Nicholson [<mailto:tnicholson@hyattsville.org>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 25, 2016 4:09 PM  
**To:** Suzanne Ludlow; Michael McLaughlin  
**Cc:** Cindy Murray; David Moran  
**Subject:** Re: Youth voting

Mike

The decision by Council last year sparked a lot of conversation and some controversy. Many 16 and 17 year old's attended last years public hearing and spoke in favor of the right to vote. We had residents strongly opposed and others that felt it was an opportunity to encourage civic engagement at an earlier age.

During our last election, although the City Clerk and Election Board did significant outreach in the high school, the turn out was very small with 24 registered and under 10 who voted. The community had been silent on it until recently. It has been raised again as part of the non-citizen voting feedback. As you may know the Council is considering non-citizen voting --the public hearing is tomorrow night.

The City Clerk and Election Board are working with our teen advisory committee to host more registration drives at the high school and a teen hosted candidate forum next year. We expect that to drive higher numbers of participation.

Suzie, we apparently get the same email from elsewhere in the United States that you get. The same gentlemen making his rounds.

Have a good day all

Tracey

*Tracey E. Nicholson*  
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**From:** Suzanne Ludlow <[SuzanneL@takomaparkmd.gov](mailto:SuzanneL@takomaparkmd.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 25, 2016 3:54:18 PM  
**To:** [mmclaughlin@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:mmclaughlin@greenbeltmd.gov); Tracey Nicholson  
**Cc:** [cmurray@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:cmurray@greenbeltmd.gov); David Moran  
**Subject:** Re: Youth voting

Hi Mike,

There was a good amount of community division before it was adopted in Takoma Park. I don't know what the results of a community survey would have been on that question.

Once the Council adopted it, it's been no big deal and now I think almost everyone think it's fine. It's great for getting high schoolers to help volunteer for voter registration and similar events. It may help get some adults to register and vote since their kids are better informed and can explain the process to them (especially for folks originally from other countries).

It's not been hard to manage for our Clerk's office.

The hardest thing now is explaining why they can't vote in other elections. :)

Apparently, our City Clerk does get some emails from elsewhere in the United States objecting to our letting 16 and 17 year olds to vote, but we haven't heard anything more from residents.

Suzie

>>> Michael McLaughlin <[mmclaughlin@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:mmclaughlin@greenbeltmd.gov)> 10/25/2016 3:31 PM >>>  
Suzie & Tracy

Greenbelt's Youth Advisory Committee has recommended to the City Council that the voting age for municipal elections be lowered from 18 to 16.

What has been the impact of lowering the age in your communities?

Thanks  
Mike

Michael McLaughlin  
City Manager  
City of Greenbelt  
301-474-8000

**Cindy Murray**

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**From:** Cindy Murray  
**Sent:** Friday, October 28, 2016 12:15 PM  
**To:** Cindy Murray  
**Subject:** FW: Council Work Session - Mandan Road Basketball Courts

Pat from the Windsor Green Office advised me this morning that Robin Burts will be attending representing Windsor Green.

Cindy Murray

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**From:** Cindy Murray  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 13, 2016 11:47 AM  
**To:** 'windsorgreen@verizon.net'  
**Subject:** Council Work Session - Mandan Road Basketball Courts

Good Morning,

Greenbelt City Council has a work session scheduled for Wednesday, November 2, on: 1) the Mandan Road Basketball Courts; and 2) the Voting Age. The meeting will be held in the Multipurpose Room of the Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Road.

Please let me know if representatives from the Windsor Green Board will be available to attend.

Thanks,

*Cindy*

Cindy Murray, CMC -City Clerk  
City of Greenbelt  
25 Crescent Road  
Greenbelt, MD 20770  
Phone: 301-474-3870

**YAC Report # 14-1**  
**May 12, 2014**

**YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL**

**SUBJECT: Re-Installation of the Basketball Rims at Mandan Field**

**DISCUSSION:** After an incident involving a gun in Greenbelt East at the Mandan Fields outdoor basketball court in the fall of 2012, the rims at the court were removed.

The Youth Advisory Committee recommended that the courts be reinstalled subsequently and again inquired about the status of the courts at its February 2013 meeting when it received confirmation that the courts would be reinstalled at a future date. While the Windsor Green Homeowner's Association planned to discuss the matter at a meeting in recent months, they have failed to report to the city and the courts remain unavailable to the city's youth.

The basketball courts are an outlet for the youth to engage in physical activity and an isolated incident should not deter the majority from engaging in a popular pastime. If the Windsor Green Homeowner's Association maintains safety concerns we suggest increased police patrol of the area but children should not be barred from resuming activity at the court. By closing the court, youth in the area are only forced to travel to another part of the city—already an issue since Greenbelt East does not possess a centralized recreation facility like the other regions of the city.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Youth Advisory Committee recommends that the courts be reinstalled as soon as possible in order to better serve the city's youth in Greenbelt East.

**Vote 5-0**

Respectfully submitted by:



Patrick Gleason, Chair  
Youth Advisory Committee