

MINUTES
College Park City Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 8, 2022
7:30 p.m. – 11:15 p.m.

**This was a hybrid meeting: Online via Zoom;
In-person in the Council Chambers of City Hall.**

PRESENT: Mayor Wojahn; Councilmembers Kabir, Kennedy, Esters, Whitney, Adams, Rigg, Mackie and Mitchell.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Kenneth Young, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Gary Fields, Director of Finance; Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works; Terry Schum, Director of Planning; Teresa Way-Pezzuti, Director of Human Resources; Michael Williams, Economic Development Manager; Raven Rodriguez, Racial Equity Officer; Megha Sevalia, Student Liaison and Hayden Renaghan, Deputy Student Liaison.

Mayor Wojahn opened the Worksession at 7:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmember Kabir announced the February meeting of the North College Park Community Association, and Monday's Public Safety community meeting.

Councilmember Rigg announced the quarterly Calvert Hills Civic Association meeting.

Councilmember Mackie announced an upcoming meeting about an update on the Greenbelt Road plans.

In recognition of Black History Month, Councilmember Mitchell commented on the past service of former Mayor and Councilmember Dervey Lomax who served a total of 16 years.

Mayor Wojahn announced the explore Lakeland event.

Ms. Sevalia said the SGA Committee on Affordable Housing will convene this week.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Mr. Young said the One College Park Condominium held their first meeting of the Council of Unit Owners, and announced the newly elected officers. He introduced Raven Rodriguez, the City's Racial Equity Officer.

PROCLAMATIONS: Mayor Wojahn read the proclamations for Black History Month and Women's Heart Health Month.

AMENDMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

1. Whitney/Esters: Move Item 22-G-25 from the Consent Agenda to Action, 8-0.
2. Kabir/Kennedy: Add Item 22-G-28 to the Consent Agenda, Letter in support of HB 404 – Vehicle Laws – Speed Limits - Establishment, 8-0.
3. Mitchell/Mackie: Lay-On-The-Table Item re Parking Prohibition on Duke Street: Pull from the table and delay, 8-0.
4. Mitchell/Rigg: Approve the agenda as amended, 8-0

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE ON NON-AGENDA / CONSENT ITEMS:

Bryan, homeowner and small business owner. Complained that cars with illegally modified mufflers result in loud noise that disturb the peace with no repercussions. Our police need decibel meters in their cars. Noise pollution is a serious problem that should be addressed.

PRESENTATIONS:

- A. Chuck Bean, Executive Director, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), presented on the Metropolitan Washington Planning Framework developed by the COG Board and the Transportation Planning Board.
- B. Audit Presentation, Lindsay & Associates: Bob Diss and Aleisha Scarlett. Mr. Diss reviewed the ACFR. The City received a Clean Opinion letter in the ACFR. They didn't find any deficiencies in internal control, there were no disagreements with management.
- C. Quarterly financial presentation: Mr. Fields presented the Quarterly Financials.
- D. Strategic Plan and Accela: Mr. Gardiner presented an update on the Strategic Plan and Accela.

CONSENT AGENDA: A motion was made by Councilmember Kabir and seconded by Councilmember Whitney to adopt the Consent Agenda which consisted of the following:

- 22-R-02 Resolution Of The Mayor And Council Of The City Of College Park Adopting The Recommendation Of The Advisory Planning Commission Regarding Variance Application Number CPV-2022-01, 5007 Quebec Street, College Park, Maryland, And Granting A Variance From Section 27-442(E), Table IV From The Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance, To Permit Construction Of A 344-Square-Foot Open Deck.**
- 22-G-21 Approval of Minutes from the December 7, 2021 Worksession / Special Session; the January 11, 2022 Regular meeting and the January 18, 2022 Worksession.**
- 22-G-22 Approval of a letter to the Prince George's County Board of Elections requesting reconsideration of their position not to accept mail returned to the City for voter list maintenance.**
- 22-G-23 Approval of a letter in Support of HB 656 - Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2022**

22-G-24 Approval of a letter in Support of HB 398 - Prince George's County - Land Use - Inclusionary Zoning Around Transit Stations PG 404-22

22-G-27 Award of FY '22 Fire Department Capital Equipment Grants of \$25,000 each to College Park's first due stations: Branchville Volunteer Fire Company & Rescue Squad; College Park Volunteer Fire Department; and Berwyn Heights Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad, Inc.; for a total of \$75,000.

22-G-28 Letter in support of HB 404 – Vehicle Laws – Speed Limits - Establishment

The motion passed 8-0.

22-R-03 Resolution Of The Mayor And Council Of The City Of College Park, Maryland, To Amend The Homeownership Grant Program To Provide For A Grant For Use At Closing Toward The Purchase Of The Property Of Up To \$5,000 To Any Buyer Of A Single Family Residence In The City And A Grant Of Up To \$10,000 To A Buyer Of A Single Family Residence That Was Also Previously A Rental Property, Under Certain Conditions

Ms. Schum presented the overview and said the overall goal is to increase homeownership. Two options were discussed. Option 1 is the staff recommendation in packet and option 2 is an alternative proposed by a Councilmember in red folder. She gave a description of Option 1:

- Remove any restriction that the home being purchased had to be a rental property for 2 years prior.
- No change to the amount of the grant – still \$5K.
- But, if the house WERE formerly a rental, then the grant would increase from \$5K to \$10K.
- Open up the program to allow the purchase of any home on the market.
- Still has to remain owner occupied for 5 years, otherwise loan would have to be repaid on a pro-rated basis.
- The resolution does not specify the budget amount for the program – that is done at the time of budget – the number of grants is limited by the amount allocated in the budget.
- A person could get the CPCUP grant and the City's grant, but the City's would be limited to the \$5K.
- No changes to staff administration or how it would be paid back.
- Program open to everyone

Councilmember Adams reviewed Option 2:

- \$10K for rental property, newly reconstructed, foreclosure, short sale or owner occupied rented to 2 or more
- Has to be a rental for 2 years immediately prior
- Vesting period changes – increases the vesting period from 5 years to 10 years same as CPCUP – concerns about staff administration of new terms

- For 5K grant for any property based on occupation or where you work. Keeps the current eligible employers and occupations and opens it up to any current resident of college park. Extends to anyone employed outside the City in the Discovery District.
- Option 2 is more narrow on the \$5K grant
- Eligibility related to employment/occupation. Narrows the qualifications - enables every current resident to qualify. Also employers in the Discovery District.

[Rigg/Whitney motion to extend the meeting at 10:30 p.m., passed 8-0.]

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to support Option 1, the staff recommendation in the packet (Option 1):

Councilmember Rigg said it is easier to market the program when we keep it simple.

There were no comments from the audience.

Councilmember Mitchell wants to move forward with the staff option tonight. The program has been around a long time and we have talked about ways to give more grants. We can have further discussion later.

Councilmember Kabir wants to see if the program will be more attractive if we make these changes.

Councilmember Adams said both options move the program forward in a different way on a different scale. Adding eligibility constraints does add complexity.

A motion was made by Councilmember Adams and seconded by Councilmember Esters to amend the motion to provide for a 5K grant for City employees, full-time certified police officers employed by the state of Maryland, the University of Maryland, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, Prince George's County and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, or career Fire Fighters and full-time Emergency Medical Technicians who are employed in Prince George's County and bona fide members of Volunteer Fire Departments in Prince George's County who can provide certification for their department, as well as any current resident of the City of College Park, or anyone employed in the City of College Park or the portions of the Discovery District in Riverdale Park, for the purchase of any single-family home or condominium within the City of College Park regardless of whether it has been a rental, a newly constructed home, a home in foreclosure, or a home in a short sale.

There were no audience comments on the amendment.

Councilmember Kennedy said it is a good sign if we run out of money because that means the program worked. We could always reassess and allocate more money through a budget amendment to increase funding, or to amend the program guidelines.

Ms. Schum said anyone can apply for the program; the type of property was the restriction.

Councilmember Esters thinks the amendment is helpful. She took advantage of a similar program in the past. This can help with affordability.

Councilmember Mitchell did not think this is what we were going to discuss tonight; this is too different from the original discussion. Wants to delay to a future Worksession.

A motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Mackie to postpone to a time certain - first WS in March - March 1.

[Mackie/Kennedy – 11:03 p.m., motion to suspend rules to extend the meeting, passed 8-0.]

Motion passed 7-1 (Rigg opposed).

22-O-01 Introduction of Ordinance 22-O-01, An Ordinance Of The Mayor And Council Of The City Of College Park, To Adopt A Corrective Amendment To City Code Chapter 119, “Refuse, Solid Waste And Special Trash” By Repealing And Re-Enacting §119-6, “Collection Of Bulky Trash, Special Trash, And Overweight, Oversized Or Improperly Sorted Items,” To Clarify That Bulky Trash Collections Are Counted Based On Fiscal Year, Not Calendar Year, For Any One Property.

Mr. Marsili said the purpose of this ordinance is to amend the Code to show that the time period for the count and collection of fees for bulk trash collections should align with the fiscal year.

A motion was made by Councilmember Kennedy and seconded by Councilmember Mackie to introduce Ordinance 22-O-01. The Public Hearing is February 22, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.

22-G-25 Approval of a letter in Support of HB 551 - Real Property - Residential Leases - Rent Increase Restrictions (Removed from Consent)

Mayor Wojahn said there is no hearing set for this bill and it might not be moving forward. Rather than take a position, we can just monitor the bill.

ADJOURN: Rigg/Whitney, 11:15 p.m., passed 8-0.

Janeen S. Miller
City Clerk

Date
Approved