

WORKSESSION MINUTES
College Park City Council
Tuesday, February 15, 2022
Council Chambers
7:30 p.m. – 9:20 p.m.

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; Teresa Way-Pezzuti, Director of Human Resources; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Steve Halpern, City Engineer; Michael Williams, Economic Development Manager; Megha Sevalia, Student Liaison and Hayden Renaghan, Deputy Student Liaison.

Mayor Wojahn opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. This is the City Council's first in-person meeting since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the first Council meeting in the new City Hall.

City Manager's Report: Mr. Young announced details of the book giveaway in honor of Black History Month.

Amendments to / Approval of the Agenda: The agenda was approved without amendment, Mitchell/Rigg, carried 8-0.

1. Consideration of a request by Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation for City support for 2021 RISE Zone Renewal Application.

Mr. Williams reviewed the staff report. This is a request to reauthorize the City's continued participation in the RISE Zone. No one has taken advantage of the tax incentives provided by the program since this was initiated in 2016. A business rental assistance component has been added in this iteration because many new businesses don't own their buildings. The amount of funding for the rental assistance component will be determined during the budget process. The Stone Straw property is included. Follow up question about zoning for that property.

The RISE Zone is different from the Opportunity Zone and other tax incentive programs. Interest in learning more about the other economic development/tax incentive zones that exist here. Discussion of the 75% vs. 50% tax credit levels. The company has to stay in the City for 7 years. The incentive is offered over five years: 50%, 10%, 10%, 10% and 10% per year.

Proceed with support for Option 1; advertise Public Hearing on March 8.

A motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to suspend the rules and add the following four additional items to the closed session being held after the meeting:

Original reason listed: Appt of officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction: Applications to the RJC committee

- **Added topics:**
 - **Discuss Collective Bargaining Negotiations**
 - **Discuss Possible acquisition of real property for a public purpose**
 - **Consult with Counsel on a legal matter and discuss pending or potential litigation**
 - **To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand or remain in the state**

The motion passed 8-0.

- 2. Discussion of a budget amendment ordinance (FY 2022 Budget Amendment #2) for introduction next week to transfer the recovery of lost revenue of \$10M from the ARPA allocation.**

Mr. Fields discussed the “recovery of lost revenue” provision in the ARPA program and how it was calculated annually under the interim rules. Treasury just came out with new rules for how those funds can be calculated. The final rule allows for a standard allowance of \$10 Million which we can get in a lump sum which allows more flexibility and options for use.

Introduce budget amendment ordinance next week and set public hearing for March 8.

- 3. Discussion of proposed grants from ARPA funding for College Park’s first due fire stations: Branchville Volunteer Fire Company & Rescue Squad; College Park Volunteer Fire Department; and Berwyn Heights Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad, Inc.**

Mr. Fields reviewed the staff report and the requests from each of the 3 first due fire stations for additional \$50K grants. Funding would come out of the FY’22 budget. To Consent next week.

- 4. Review of draft resolution to establish the 2022 College Park Redistricting Commission.**

- Qualified Voters or residents? Residents, not qualified voters.
- Amount of budget authorization? Initial authorization for \$50K for software or support.
- Consultant? Let the Commission decide if they want a consultant.

Council Discussion:

Councilmember Kennedy supports a 3rd party consultant. Can the commission talk to other college towns or ITGA to learn best practices about how other towns deal with students when they redistrict? You can add that to the charge if you want them to do that.

Councilmember Adams wants a future discussion of at-large Council seats. City Clerk will add a tickler for a future discussion in 2025.

Councilmember Mitchell asked about having a graduate student on the commission. The Charter currently designates an appointment by the SGA. In the future you could consider a charter change to add a graduate student.

Mayor Wojahn stressed the importance of diverse representation.

Resolution to Agenda next week – Mitchell.

5. Review of legislation

Discussion of:

- HB 1083 – Municipal Street Lighting
- HB 1057 – PG County – Recreation Authority – Authorization: Get more information before taking a position.
- HB 708 – Comprehensive Climate Solutions
- SB 528 – Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022
- HB 594 – Maryland Reparations Commission
- HB 275 – Labor and Employment – Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program
- Additional information pros/cons on property tax credits for disabled veterans – consider supporting of MML’s position (they offered an amendment)
- Additional information pros/cons on Accessory Dwelling Unit HB1259/SB 871
- HB 537 Homeowners Extreme Weather and Mitigation Grant

Support for HB 1083 – *See Special Session minutes for Item 22-G-29.*

6. Requests for/Status of Future Agenda Items

Councilmember Mitchell asked about a discussion of the use of the City seal and City flag.

7. Mayor and Councilmember Comments

Councilmember Adams: Thanked resident who testified last week about modified vehicles and noise impacts. Calvert Hills Civic Association meeting next week.

Councilmember Mackie announced the last Saturday of February: Lakeland Route 1 Corridor Conversations.

Mayor Wojahn: PGCMA meeting

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Councilmember Esters and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to adjourn into a Closed Session. Mayor Wojahn read the Closing Statement:

Pursuant to the statutory authority of the Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b), the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park are providing notice that they will meet in a Closed Session after the Worksession for the following purposes:

- 1. To discuss the appointment of officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction. Specifically, the Mayor and Council will review applications for the Restorative Justice Commission.**
- 2. To discuss matters related to collective bargaining negotiations.**
- 3. To discuss the possible acquisition of real property for a public purpose.**
- 4. To consult with Counsel on a legal matter and to discuss pending litigation.**
- 5. To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State.**

The Mayor and Council will not return to open session after the Closed Session ends.

The motion passed 8-0 and the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller
City Clerk

Date
Approved