

**MINUTES**  
**College Park City Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, March 14, 2023**  
**7:30 p.m. – 11:18 p.m.**

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

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

**ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kenneth Young, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Teresa Way Pezzuti, Director of Human Resources; Kayla Carter, Racial Equity Officer; Michael Williams, Economic Development Manager; Valerie Graham, Student Liaison; Adrian Andriessens, Deputy Student Liaison.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

**Announcements:**

Councilmember Kabir gave tips to prevent car theft.

Councilmember Esters announced the Berwyn District Civic Association meeting on Thursday night.

Councilmember Whitney announced a public art project being developed by a group at the University of Maryland in conjunction with the community.

Councilmember Adams announced the Calvert Hills Civic Association and said that comments on the WMATA FY '24 proposed budget are due by tomorrow.

Councilmember Mackie asked residents to stay engaged with the state legislature.

The Student Liaisons wished students a happy, safe and restful spring break. There is anti-bias training for students tomorrow at Stamp.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell attended a meeting of Prince George’s County Mayors last week.

**City Manager’s Comments:** Mr. Young announced the upcoming Special Election for Mayor; the food scrap collection program; and recent City Hall vandalism.

**Amendments To/Approval Of The Agenda:**

Whitney/Esters: Add Agenda item 23-G-54 to the Consent Agenda, To authorize the City Manager to approve up to a maximum of \$10,000 per household (\$50,000 total from FY23 funds) in emergency aid (food, shelter, rent, medical and dental expenses, transportation, utility bills) from the general fund contingency account (001-6510-510-8510) to assist current residents of the City of College Park. The motion passed 8-0.

Adams/Whitney: Motion to approve the agenda as amended, passed 8-0.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** A motion was made by Councilmember Whitney and seconded by Councilmember Mackie to adopt the Consent Agenda, which consisted of these items:

23-G-51	Approval of an Animal Control Officer request for a letter of support for the grant application by Laurel Cats, Inc., Beltsville Community Cats (BCC), Bowie Citizens for Local Animal Welfare (Bowie CLAW), and Outlaw Kitties (OK) for funding under the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Spay and Neuter program.
23-G-52	Approval of Education Advisory Committee recommendations for Public School Education Grants move that the City Council award the following FY 23 Education Grants: \$2,104.74 to University Park Elementary School for Multi-modal supplies for special education support; and \$8,000 to Hollywood Elementary School for S.T.E.A.M. Activities, Events, and Presentations.
23-G-53	Approval of Minutes from the February 21, 2023 meeting.
23-G-54 (Added To Agenda)	To authorize the City Manager to approve up to a maximum of \$10,000 per household (\$50,000 total from FY23 funds) in emergency aid (food, shelter, rent, medical and dental expenses, transportation, utility bills) from the general fund contingency account (001-6510-510-8510) to assist current residents of the City of College Park.

The motion passed 8-0.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

**23-CR-01 Introduction of a Charter Resolution to amend Article III, "Mayor and Council", §C3-5, "Election" and §C3-6, "Vacancies"; and Article IV, §C4-2, "Registration of Voters", §C4-3, "Supervisors of Elections", and §C4-4, "Other Election Officials"; to change the date that a Petition for Candidacy for a Mayor or Council vacancy must be withdrawn to two days after said petitions are due, provide that voter registration for City Elections shall close 15 days prior to an Election; provide that Supervisors of Elections will be appointed or re-appointed on or before June 30 of a non-election year with two year terms to begin on July 1 of that year, remove the requirement that City elections be conducted as nearly as practicable to Prince George's County Elections, remove unnecessary provisions, make non-substantive corrections, and clarify other provisions**

A motion was made by Councilmember Mackie and seconded by Councilmember Esters to introduce this Charter Resolution, and to set the Public Hearing for Tuesday, April 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

**23-O-04 Introduction of an Ordinance to amend Chapter 34, "Elections", Article I, "General Provisions" §34-3, "Definitions"; Article II, §34-6, "Absentee Balloting"; And Article III, "Fair Election Practices", §34-11, "Appointment Of Treasurer By Candidates And Political Committees"; To Redefine Ballot And Electronic Signature And To Define Mail-In Ballot, Reflect Maryland Law With Respect To Mail-In Ballots And Absentee Ballots, Accept Certain Signatures Electronically, Set A Time By Which Applications For Mail-In Ballots Must Be Made, Make Provision That Qualified Voters Who Have Opted To Receive A Mail-In Ballot For Federal Or State Of Maryland Elections Will Automatically Receive A Mail-In Ballot For City Elections Without The Necessity Of Filing An Application and Clarify Who Can Be Appointed As A Treasurer For An Political Candidate.**

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Mackie to introduce this Ordinance and set the Public Hearing for Tuesday, April 11 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

### **Discussion Items**

- A.** College Park City-University Partnership Annual Report Presentation: Richard Wagner, Chair; Susan Hartmann, Executive Director; Valerie Woodall, Associate Executive Director; Daniel Cunningham, Community Preservation Trust Executive Director

Dr. Wagner introduced Ms. Woodall, Ms. Hartmann, and Mr. Cunningham. Ms. Hartmann gave the PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Cunningham gave an overview of the Community Preservation Trust; the goal is to increase the home ownership rate in the City and at affordable pricing. Discussion: Consideration of expanding eligibility for homeowner assistance funds. Discussion about the Partnership's Public Safety and Education subcommittees; providing information about the homeowner assistance program to the general public; extension of the River Walk into Lakeland; ensuring that the Lakeland neighborhood is included in the Land Trust program; the challenge of battling investors; and the development of blighted homes.

- B.** Update on the Restorative Justice Commission – Kayla Carter, Racial Equity Officer, and Consultants.

Ms. Carter reviewed the staff report. The Consultants stated that the Commission is struggling because only 2 of the 20 members experienced the harms that were done by Urban Renewal and said it is difficult to make decisions for the Lakelanders who are no longer there. The Lakeland community is under the constant pressure of development in the community and along the corridor. It is hard for transformative work to occur with this pressure.

There is a vacancy on the Commission caused by the resignation of the former Mayor. The Commission requests that the City have a conversation with M-NCPPC to complete a new historic designation survey for Lakeland.

- C.** Discussion and possible action on legislation – Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager

Councilmember Adams discussed SB 11 – Traffic cameras near school zones – and believes we should oppose. Ms. Ferguson researched.

**Motion 23-G-65:** A motion was made by Councilmember Adams and seconded by Councilmember Esters to send letter a letter in opposition to SB 11. The motion passed 8-0.

- D.** Visioning Workshop for Economic Development – Michael Williams, Economic Development Manager; and Stan Wall, Principal; Rachel Waldman, Director; and Danno Lemu, Analyst; from HR&A Advisors.

Mr. Williams introduced the “team” (listed above) and explained that the purpose of this presentation is to obtain feedback from Council on what they think the City should look like in five years. This will enable the team to establish a vision and set goals for the future Economic Development for the City. In addition to input from the City Council, they will interview stakeholders, and will have an on-line portal for resident input. Ms. Waldman reviewed the PowerPoint. This was followed by an interactive exchange between the team and the Council. Discussion included supporting the economic viability of small local businesses; incubator space; College Park’s identity as a destination place; housing opportunities for all demographics. Mr. Williams asked Council to continue to consider this matter and provide feedback in the coming weeks.

[10:35 Adams/Rigg motion to extend the meeting, 8-0.]

[11:00 Mackie/Whitney motion to suspend the rules to continue the meeting, 8-0.]

**Comments From The Audience:**

Maxine Gross, resident: She urged the Council to take the walking tour of Lakeland to see how little is left, and the state of what is left. It will change your perspective.

**ADJOURN: A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg, seconded by Councilmember Mackie to adjourn. The motion passed 8-0 and meeting was adjourned at 11:18 p.m.**

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Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk