

WORKSESSION MINUTES
College Park City Council
Tuesday, March 17, 2020
7:30 P.M. – 10:41 P.M.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this was a WebEx Virtual Meeting

PRESENT: Mayor Wojahn; Councilmembers Kabir, Kennedy, Brennan, Dennis (arrived at 8:51 p.m.), Day, Rigg, Mackie and Mitchell.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Scott Somers, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Dan Alpert, Student Liaison; Julia Nikhinson, Deputy Student Liaison.

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

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT: Mr. Somers provided guidance about this WebEx meeting platform. He said we are trying to move forward with the changes necessitated by the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) outbreak. Notices have been posted on our website to explain how business can be conducted on-line and by telephone, staff have been authorized to work from home, City buildings are closed to the public, and certain services have been suspended. All events have been cancelled. He asked everyone to adhere to the Governor’s Executive Order.

AMENDMENT TO/APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: The agenda was approved without amendment (Rigg/Mitchell 7-0).

SPECIAL SESSION:

A motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Rigg to enter into a Special Session to approve a time-sensitive matter that will amend the Council rules to allow them to hold this virtual meeting tonight. The possibility of the Special Session was listed as agenda item #6 on the Worksession Agenda. The motion carried 7-0 and the Council entered Special Session at 7:40 p.m.

ACTION ITEM:

20-G-54 Amendment to Council Rules and Procedures to authorize elected officials to participate in Mayor and Council public meetings by telephone or other means that is publicly accessible during certain emergencies.

Mayor Wojahn said when this was discussed last week, we didn’t realize we would be using this provision so soon, but things are changing quickly. The draft language was reviewed.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Brennan to approve an amendment to the Council Rules and Procedures to allow for an elected official to participate by phone or other format that is generally accessible to the public during emergency events that substantially impact the ability to safely meet as a legislative body, or that require one or more elected officials to be quarantined or to self-quarantine.

Comments from the audience:

Oscar Gregory, resident: Supports the motion.

There were no comments from the Council.

The motion passed 7-0.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to adjourn from the Special Session, and with a vote of 7-0, the Special Session was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 1. Discussion about PEPCO tree-trimming work in the City:** Mr. Somers reviewed the staff report, displayed the map, and said this is similar to what Pepco did four years ago. He added that Ms. Alexander will walk the lines with Pepco staff and identify which trees will be impacted. Council discussed notification to the public. Ms. Alexander said they are in the planning phase for work in the Estates and Yarrow, but there are no specific dates yet. Ms. Alexander will provide updates and share the map once it is completed.
- 2. Approval of a revision to the Property Use Agreement for The Hall:** *(See Special Session minutes 20-G-55)*
- 3. Discussion of a Trash To Treasure pilot program:** Mr. Somers reviewed the staff report and said if we move forward with a trash to treasure program concurrent with the pilot program for bulky trash, the data we collect for bulky trash will be skewed. Mr. Marsili added that this is not the best time for the trash to treasure program because students may not return to the City due to COVID-19, so the numbers would be off.

There was discussion about not collecting data but deploying collection PODS. Mr. Marsili said we would have to staff the PODS during the day, but at night and on weekends, anyone from anywhere could use them. He said if the move-out timeline is uncertain, it will impact the project. He added the trash to treasure pilot is a heavy logistical lift, and he would prefer to deploy it at the most effective time.

Councilmember Day described it as a win-win because the purpose is to reduce what goes to the landfill. Councilmember Rigg echoed the benefit of keeping items out of the waste stream.

Mr. Somers was not in favor of creating a new program at this time when there is a lot of uncertainty.

The agreement was to delay the trash to treasure program for now, and to continue with the data collection on the bulky trash as previously determined.

- 4. Discussion of a new two-way radio communication system:** Mr. Marsili reviewed the staff report. This is to consider purchase of a new City Motorola two-way communication system to replace the 20+ year old system from the University of Maryland that is at the end of its useful life and can no longer be repaired. Mr. Marsili discussed the interoperability with the University

of Maryland, saying that Public Works can't get onto their police system but there would be a patch to allow us to communicate. He reviewed the cost comparison. Council asked additional questions that Mr. Marsili will answer next week. Mr. Ryan added this is a critical need for Code and Parking employee safety.

Councilmember Rigg said he wouldn't want the issue of a sunk cost into a communication system to get in the way of any future consideration of a police department.

Councilmember Day asked if this is a multi-band system and asked how we would communicate with the UMD. Mr. Marsili said communication with the University was one of our priorities and that a patch can be created to communicate with the University.

Ms. Ferguson said the City would adopt the pricing from the state contract, but we would use our own contract. Mr. Marsili said the expense is budgeted in the FY 21 budget.

Award of contract to agenda – Rigg.

5. Discussion of live-monitoring of certain security cameras in the City – MOU with UMPD:

Mr. Ryan said we need to decide about whether to continue the MOU with the University of Maryland Police for live monitoring of certain security cameras in the City. He reviewed the staff report, the updated proposal, the options and costs for each.

Council discussed the advantages of live monitoring; the lack of data from UMD to help determine how effective live monitoring is in preventing crimes; what any cost savings could be used toward; what is our overarching strategy for public safety; do we want more cameras or more contract police; the needed migration toward better technology; how would we know if any cameras are down if we don't have live monitoring; there is no back-up on record-only cameras; PTZ cameras only make sense if we have live monitoring.

Return next month for continued discussion. Address some of the larger questions during the Strategic Plan discussion. Staff to do more research on other uses of a \$140,000 savings and options for the PODSS program.

6. (Handled in Special Session at the beginning of the meeting).
7. **Award of Contract for RFP-CP-20-06, "Material Testing and Inspection Services and Third-Party Inspection Services for City Hall Redevelopment"** – *See Special Session minutes for 20-G-44.*
8. **Consider support for County Legislation CB-9-2020, CB-10-2020, and CB-12-2020, for the Western Gateway Project** – *See Special Session minutes for 20-G-46.*
9. **Review of Legislation** – *See Special Session minutes for 20-G-56, support for Transportation for America Congressional Relief Package.*
10. **Appointments to Boards and Committees:** Adrea Benedetti to VMC. This will be the last round of appointments before the June 30 term expiration date.

11. Future Agendas: Discussion of impacts of Coronavirus on our small businesses and vulnerable populations (Kennedy/Day 8-0).

Ask staff and/or Complete Count Committee to explain the impact it will have on our census count if a majority of UMD students are at home on April 1, and what we can do about it.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Day to adjourn the Worksession, and with a vote of 8-0, the Worksession was adjourned at 10:41 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller
City Clerk

Date
Approved

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ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Scott Somers, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Dan Alpert, Student Liaison; Julia Nihinson, Deputy Student Liaison.

SPECIAL SESSION #1:

During the regularly scheduled Worksession of the Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Rigg to enter into a Special Session to approve a time-sensitive matter that will amend the Council's adopted Rules and Procedures to allow them to hold this virtual meeting tonight. The possibility of the Special Session was listed on the Worksession Agenda. The motion carried 7-0 and the Council entered Special Session at 7:40 p.m.

20-G-54 Amendment to Council Rules and Procedures to authorize elected officials to participate in Mayor and Council public meetings by telephone or other means that is publicly accessible during certain emergencies.

Mayor Wojahn said when this was discussed last week, we didn't realize we would be using it so soon, but things are changing quickly. The proposed language was reviewed.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Brennan to approve an amendment to the Council Rules and Procedures to allow for an elected official to participate by phone or other format that is generally accessible to the public during emergency events that substantially impact the ability to safely meet as a legislative body, or that require one or more elected officials to be quarantined or to self-quarantine.

Comments from the audience:

Oscar Gregory, resident: Supports the motion.

There were no comments from the Council.

The motion passed 7-0.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to adjourn from the Special Session, and with a vote of 7-0, the Special Session was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

SPECIAL SESSION #2:

During the regularly scheduled Worksession of the Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Brennan to enter into a Special Session to consider several Special Session items that were listed on the agenda. The motion passed 7-0 and Council entered the second Special Session of the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

20-G-55 Approval of a revision to the Property Use Agreement for The Hall

Ms. Ferguson reviewed the staff report. She said the Council has already approved a Property Use Agreement for The Hall, but the actual operation of the establishment doesn't fit the previously approved PUA. They are requesting an amendment in Paragraph 5, Operations, to allow them to serve alcohol in the flex space inside and fenced-in area outside the establishment. They will be serving alcohol in these two spaces, but not necessarily food. Their attorney said their BOLC license does allow them to serve alcohol in these areas, and the PUA amendment would conform.

Councilmember Kennedy asked for and received confirmation that they would still be serving food elsewhere in the establishment.

A motion was made by Councilmember Day and seconded by Councilmember Rigg to approve an amendment to the Property Use Agreement with The Hall in essentially the form attached to include the interior flex space and the exterior fenced space in those areas that are allowed to sell alcoholic beverages and to reduce food service during entertainment events and to authorize the City Manager to sign the amended PUA.

There were no comments from the audience or the Council.

The motion passed 7-0.

20-G-44 Award of Contract for RFP-CP-20-06, "Materials Testing and Inspection Services and Third-Party Inspection Services for City Hall Redevelopment"

Mr. Gardiner reviewed the staff report. The RFP was issued in February and three proposals were received. Redgate followed up with the bidders for certain clarifications. The proposals have been reviewed by the City Attorney and the Construction Team. The recommendation is to award the contract to Dulles Geotechnical and Materials Testing Services, Inc. who is the lowest bidder.

A motion was made by Councilmember Brennan and seconded by Councilmember Rigg to award the contract for RFP-CP-20-06, "Materials Testing and Inspection Services and Third-Party Inspection Services for City Hall Redevelopment" to Dulles Geotechnical and Materials Testing Services, Inc. and to authorize the City Manager to execute the contract upon review by the City Attorney.

There were no comments from the audience or from the Council.

The motion passed 7-0.

20-G-46 Support for County Legislation CB-9-2020, CB-10-2020, and CB-12-2020, for the Western Gateway Project

Mr. Somers reviewed the staff report. The Council has received information on the Western Gateway project. Because the project will cross multiple zoning categories, this County legislation has been drafted to allow the project to move forward. A draft letter to support the County legislation was prepared for consideration.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Day to approve sending a letter to County Councilmember Glaros requesting approval of CB-9-2020, CB-10-2020, and CB-12-2020.

Councilmember Rigg said although this project involves a loss of trees, it checks a lot of our boxes for desired development. It is mixed-use, high-density residential right next to a high capacity transit system and the University of Maryland.

Comments from the Audience:

Stuart Adams, resident, President of Calvert Hills Citizens Association: Agreed that this is smart growth and supports the vision for the western gateway. He thanked the Council and developer for listening to their concerns about the loss of tree canopy. Adding density next to the future Purple Line station and adding affordable graduate student housing are both important, and so is protecting our natural resources, so we should look to preserve as much of this publicly owned green space as possible. He supports the legislation.

Oscar Gregory, resident: This area used to be the Buddington Farm and is an undeveloped beautiful area with lots of trees, and they are going to chop it down for townhomes and apartments. Are we a Tree City or not? Supporting this legislation sends the wrong message.

Councilmember Day thanked the developer for hearing the resident concerns. They took the comments to heart and went back and redesigned the project.

Councilmember Rigg reminded the developer about the importance of stormwater management.

Mayor Wojahn echoed the appreciation to the developer for working with the community and for their commitment to protecting the public green space.

The motion passed 7-0.

20-G-56 Support for Transportation for America Congressional Relief Package.

Mayor Wojahn requested Council support for a federal relief package that is being considered with respect to the coronavirus. Transportation is taking a serious hit and will face a challenge

due to low ridership. This stimulus package will provide resources to support our transit systems.

A motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to send a letter in support of the Transportation for America Stimulus Package.

Comment from the audience:

Oscar Gregory, resident: Teleworking can diminish the footprint of transit so we wouldn't need to devote so many resources to growing the transit system.

The motion passed 7-0.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to adjourn the Special Session, and with a vote of 7-0, the Special Session was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Janeen S. Miller
City Clerk

Date
Approved