

MINUTES
College Park City Council Meeting
Tuesday, April 18, 2023
7:30 p.m. – 9:40 p.m.

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

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

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Kenneth Young, City Manager; Bill Gardiner, Assistant City Manager; Yvette Allen, Assistant City Clerk; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney Gary Fields, Director of Finance; Bob Ryan, Director of Public Services; Valerie Graham, Student Liaison and Adrian Andriessens, Deputy Student Liaison.

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

Announcements:

Councilmember Kabir announced the parade to be held on Saturday, May 6, 2023. Visit our website for more information.

Councilmember Esters announced the Berwyn Civic Association to be held on Thursday, April 20th at 7:30 p.m.

Councilmember Whitney announced that she and Councilmember Esters will be knocking on doors this Saturday from noon to 5:00 p.m. in District 2 to visit with neighbors. They will also be attending the historical marker ceremony in Lakeland at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday at Lakeland Road and U.S. 1.

Councilmember Adams announced the Yarrow Civic Association will be meeting on Saturday, April 22 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Calvert Hills Citizen Association and Old Town Civic Association will hold a virtual meeting on Monday, April 24th at 7:00 pm to discuss upcoming renovations of the local playgrounds. Thanks were given to the Here and Now newspaper for hosting the Mayoral Debate.

Councilmember Mackie gave a shoutout to the Branchville and College Park Volunteer Fire Departments. Encouraged the residents to view the Municipal Scene and Weekly Bulletin to read up on the upcoming events.

Valerie Graham, Student Liaison announced that the Student Government Association has received several applications for next year's Student Liaison position.

City Manager's Report:

Mr. Young reported that he attended the College Park Volunteer Fire Department Banquet along with Councilmembers Kennedy and Esters.

Proclamations and Awards:

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell proclaimed Arbor Day to be observed on April 28, 2023 and Children's Mental Health Week May 1 – 7.

Amendments To/Approval Of The Agenda:

The agenda was approved without amendment, Rigg/Whitney, 8-0.

Public Comment: None.

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

23-G-62 Approve a motion to reappoint James McFadden to the College Park Housing Authority for a five-year term to begin on May 1.

23-G-63 Approval of FY '23 Community Service Grants totaling \$13,773 for the following applicants: Helpers to Good (\$2,500); College Park United Methodist Church (\$2,500); College Park Woods Neighborhood Watch (\$2,000); Neighbors Helping Neighbors (\$543); Berwyn District Civic Association (\$2,230); Calvert Hills Citizens Association (\$2,000); and Lakeland Civic Association (\$2,000)

23-G-64 Approval of minutes from the March 14, 2023 meeting and the March 25, 2023 Budget Worksession.

The motion passed 8-0.

Presentations And Worksession Discussions:

A. Regulations of short-term rentals such as AirBNBs

Bob Ryan reviewed the staff report. A request has been made to receive the list of registered short-term rentals with Prince George's County and will compare their list with ours. The City cannot enforce the county law until we adopt by reference or our own code.

Suellen Ferguson stated that council can adopt the county law by reference, but suggested that if we would like to proceed to adopt our own code, we don't have to reference county law and our code could be more stringent.

Council's questions and concerns:

Several homes in the community are being used as hotels where the home is not owner occupied and the host is not the permanent resident. The laws that the County has in place are not working and it's affecting the quality of life for neighboring residents.

There is a need to enforce what the County has in place for short term rentals.

Suggested to adopt the County law word for word and if they don't have a permanent residency and/or the homestead tax exemption, the license should be revoked.

Council requested to know how many AirBNBs are registered in the City.

Adopt a more stringent law than the County's.

Homestead Property Tax Credit Violations: - If someone is in violation of the Homestead Property Tax Credit, SDAT could be notified.

Consider preventing any single-family home owned by an LLC, from getting an Airbnb license. The City Attorney will look into this further.

Ordinance should have a clear definition of: host, resident host and owner of the property.

Staff will come back at a later date with adopting Airbnb regulations.

B. Discussion: Development and implementation of strategies to engage UMD students living in College Park

David Smith, Lead Community Engagement Coordinator and Antonya Da Silva Digital Media and Communications Specialist from the Office of Community Engagement joined the meeting.

Councilmember Esters stated previous discussions included: voter engagement, ongoing student engagement outside of an election year, identifying and framing big ticket items, outreach to student organizations, distributing information about City issues, voting, opportunities on how students can get involved in small business, consideration of speaking about the students in a positive manner, inviting M&C to attend SGA meetings/events for the sole purpose of engaging with students and inviting students to city meetings and events.

Additional discussion included student voting in College Park Elections, engagement between the City and students, actively seek student input, hosting student events on City Plaza, socializing with students at community organizations, how to attract students as long-term residents, more communication given to students, Councilmembers talking to UMD clubs, and a neighborhood guide specifically geared towards students.

C. Agenda items for April 27 Four Cities meeting

1. Beltway Expansion
2. Best Practices involving Investors Purchasing Homes

3. WMATA Better Bus Network Redesign
4. County Legislation on two-year moratorium on townhome development
5. Discussion of Loud Vehicles

Future Agenda Items:

Adams – Consider an increase in the amount of the New Neighbors Homeownership Program for qualified law enforcement personnel from \$5K to \$15K.

Adams/Kabir, motion passed 7-0-0.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Councilmember Esters and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to adjourn the meeting

The motion passed 8-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.