

MINUTES
College Park City Council Meeting
Tuesday, May 23, 2023

7:30 p.m. – 8:57 p.m.

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

PRESENT: Mayor Kabir; Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell; Councilmembers 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; Robert Marsili, Director of Public Works; Michael Williams, Economic Development Manager; Valerie Graham, Student Liaison; Adrian Adriessens, Deputy Student Liaison.

Mayor Kabir opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmember Esters said there are several community organizations that are looking for volunteers, such as the College Park Food Bank.

Councilmember Whitney congratulated the UMD graduates.

Councilmember Mackie thanked UMD staff and police officers who supported the graduation.

Councilmember Adams congratulated the UMD Baseball Team for their victory.

Mayor Kabir announced the Memorial Day event.

Ms. Graham congratulated the graduates, including our DSL Adrian Andriessens

Mr. Andriessens graduated today and congratulated the class of 2023, then thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve.

PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS:

- A. Mayor Kabir thanked Student Liaison Valerie Graham and Deputy Student Liaison Adrian Andriessens, whose final meeting is tonight. He presented gifts.

- B. Mayor Kabir read the Proclamations for Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week and Military Appreciation Month.

AMENDMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Motion to approve the agenda as written, Rigg/Whitney, passed 7-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Esters to adopt the Consent Agenda, which consisted of the following items:

- 23-R-09 Resolution authorizing operation of a speed monitoring system on Rhode Island Avenue between Greenbelt Road and Paducah Road, a residential highway with a speed limit of 35 mph or less, to the full extent of the hours allowed by state law.

- 23-G-84 Approval of submission of the College Park Livable Community Action Plan to AARP.

- 23-G-85 Approve the installation of two commemorative benches in the College Park Woods neighborhood (exact location to be determined) in honor of former Mayors Alvin Kushner and Anna Owens in an amount not to exceed \$6,500.

- 23-G-86 Approval of minutes of April 25, 2023, May 9, 2023 and May 16, 2023.

The motion passed 7-0.

ACTION ITEMS

23-O-03 Adoption of Ordinance 23-O-03, FY '24 Budget Ordinance – Gary Fields, Director of Finance

Mr. Fields said adoption of the budget tonight will complete the 5-month budget process. A housekeeping matter: This is not an amended budget ordinance as the title says; this is the same as the ordinance that was introduced. That mistake on the first page will be corrected.

The budget was built on a property tax rate for residential property of 30.18 cents, the same as before. A higher rate of 33.18 cents for commercial, industrial and apartment properties is new this year. He reviewed the history of the City's property tax rate for the last 5 years.

Mr. Young thanked the Council for their time and attention to the budget.

Mayor Kabir said we had a public hearing already so there will be no public comment tonight unless there is an amendment.

Councilmember Mitchell asked what would happen if we used 30.18 cents for the commercial, industrial and apartment properties, instead of increasing it to 33.18. Mr. Fields said it would result in a reduction in revenue of about \$515,000. Councilmember Mitchell is concerned that we haven't developed a program yet for the increased revenue, and asked if the money could be used for something else. Mr. Fields said yes, although it might require a budget amendment. Mr. Young clarified that the Council hasn't adopted a program or policy yet for the use of the extra revenue from the increased tax rate for commercial, industrial and apartment properties, and that Council will discuss this soon.

A motion was made by Councilmember Rigg and seconded by Councilmember Esters to adopt Ordinance 23-O-3, an Ordinance of the Mayor and Council of the City of College Park, Maryland to adopt the Fiscal Year 2024 General Fund, ARPA Allocation Fund, Debt Service Fund, and Capital Projects Fund budgets for the City of College Park.

Councilmember Rigg reflected on the positive economic impacts of recent development in the City.

Councilmember Mitchell wants to ensure that the Council will have a discussion very soon about the proposed uses (subsidy for student housing and assistance for small businesses) of the additional revenue from the 3-cent tax increase on commercial, industrial and apartment properties.

The motion passed 7-0.

23-O-06 Introduction of an Ordinance to increase the salary for the Mayor to \$15,000 per year, to increase the salary for a Councilmember to \$10,000 per year, and to establish a separate level of pay for the

Mayor Pro Tem at \$12,500 per year. Salary increases will be effective after the next General Election.

Ms. Way-Pezzuti reviewed the discussion at last week's meeting that led to this ordinance. In the future, a Compensation Review Committee will be established. Staff is proposing a new pay schedule for Councilmembers; instead of monthly, it will be bi-weekly like the rest of the staff. The ordinance will be amended prior to adoption to reflect the new pay schedule.

A motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Esters to introduce ordinance 23-O-06. Mayor Kabir announced that the Public Hearing will be June 6 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Presentation from Len Lucchi and Stephanie Anderson on the 2023 legislative session – the lobbyists reviewed highlights of the legislative session. Several individual bills were discussed.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Adams/Kennedy – Plaque on the Trolley Trail to honor Richard Wagner, Consent, passed 7-0.

Rigg/Mitchell - Rethink the role of the Mayor Pro Tem position, passed 7-0.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL, STUDENT LIAISONS:

Councilmember Mackie – COG Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee

Councilmember Adams – May is Building Safety Month

Councilmember Rigg – Concern about Typhoon Mawar bearing down on Guam.

Mayor Kabir – reported on the community meetings he has attended.

Ms. Graham – thanked Council for the opportunity.

Mr. Andriessens – thanked Council for the opportunity.

Mr. Young – food scrap collection issues.

ADJOURN: Mitchell/Rigg, passed 7-0 at 8:57 p.m.

Submitted By: Janeen S. Miller, City Clerk

