WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, January 6, 2016, to discuss the Volunteerism Report.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:04p.m. The meeting was held in Room 201 of the Greenbelt Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager: David Moran, Assistant City Manager; Liz Park, Director of Greenbelt CARES and Alana Cole Faber, Volunteer Coordinator

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Dave Lange, Eric (last name not provided) and Jim Giese, News Review.

Mayor Jordan welcomed everyone and indicated his desire to determine if the City could become more efficient in its use of volunteers.

Dr. Park summarized the process Ms. Faber had used to complete her report.

Ms. Faber reported in 2014 there were 699 volunteers who contributed $396,000 of services to the City. She indicated that 98% of volunteers reported being satisfied. Ms. Faber discussed what other cities and counties do and noted that efforts fell into three general categories:

- *Gatekeeper – existing staffer assigned to manage volunteers*
- *Volunteer Center – separate non-profit organization to manage volunteers*
- *City Staff Member to serve as volunteer coordinator*

Going forward, Ms. Faber believed some type of dedicated City staff member/volunteer coordinator was the best way to proceed and suggested beginning with a part-time position. She noted Hyattsville began with a part-time contractual position.

Ms. Faber discussed potential volunteer coordinator roles. She indicated they could: manage a central volunteer database, provide training for Departmental managers, apply for grant funds/sponsorships and coordinate high school service hours.

Mayor Jordan asked for a profile of a typical volunteer. Ms. Faber did not believe there was a typical volunteer profile. She indicated there was a broad age range and that City volunteers were a diverse group.

Mr. Putens discussed how his Federal agency utilized volunteers. He indicated that his Department provides a list of topic experts that are made available on a volunteer basis.

Ms. Davis stated the report was really well done. She identified record keeping, training, volunteer appreciation and policies & procedures as key tasks for a volunteer coordinator. She wanted to have a Coordinator position in the upcoming budget.

Mr. Herling was impressed by the return the City receives from its volunteers. He asked which Department had the greatest need. Ms. Faber noted the Museum has very little support staff. Mr. Herling asked how a volunteer coordinator position could support volunteers with non-City organizations. Dr. Park responded that it depends on how the position is structured. She noted the City could serve as a clearinghouse for these volunteers.

Ms. Mach was impressed with the report. She asked what might be saved if there was a coordinator. Ms. Faber responded it was hard to estimate. Ms. Mach believed some of the costs of hiring a coordinator might be offset by savings since Departmental staff would no longer have to perform certain tasks.

Mayor Jordan referenced he Prince George's Volunteer Center which was now defunct.

Ms. Pope believed the report was eye opening. She favored having the position work on City needs first.

Ms. Faber stated that many of the volunteers participate because they care about Greenbelt and this is how they connect with their City.

Mayor Jordan asked about liability issues with volunteers. Ms. Faber mentioned several examples where there were liability concerns and indicated that these could be addressed through policies and training.

Mr. Putens stated the report verified what Council already knew. He didn't want the report to be the end. Mr. Putens wanted to hire someone to build the position description and lay the groundwork for policies and procedures.

Ms. Davis believed those duties could be the first task of the volunteer coordinator. She believed that in the upcoming budget process determinations could be made about position, salary, office location, etc.

Ms. Pope did not agree that the City needed to hire somebody to create policies and create the job description. She thought this could be the responsibility of the new position.

Mayor Jordan wanted to focus on the common needs across Departments. He liked a central point of contact for volunteers.

Mr. Lange cited an AARP Article about volunteers. He believed a volunteer coordinator should have information about non-City volunteer opportunities such as the schools, Greenbelt Labor Day Festival, etc.

Ms. Davis believed the City needed to start small. Mr. Herling wanted the coordinator to play a broader role. Mr. Putens wanted the recruitment process to be fair and based on who is the best qualified for the job.

Ms. Faber stressed that if it was a part-time position, the City needed to write a part-time job description and limit the goals to a manageable list.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that the report was well done. He believed that this position could provide support to outside organizations through help with standardization, recruitment and referral.

Mayor Jordan thanked Ms. Faber for her work.

Information Items

Mr. Putens asked about moving CARES from the Council Room and how it would impact them. Dr. Park responded that moving the night would be an impact and that CARES was seeking another space.

Ms. Mach announced she had been appointed to the Council of Governments (COG) Policy Board advising COG on greenhouse gases.

Ms. Pope reported a tree branch down on Prince James Way.

Ms. Davis asked if the Work Session with the County Executive had been confirmed. She noted the December, 2013 letter to Bea Tignor which followed up on the prior work session with the County Executive.

Mayor Jordan reported on a Maryland Municipal League Legislative Committee conference call

The meeting ended at 9:50 p.m.