

REGULAR MEETING OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, March 28, 2011.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL was answered by Councilmembers Emmett V. Jordan, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Judith F. Davis. Councilmember Konrad E. Herling arrived at 8:05 pm.

ALSO PRESENT were Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager; Robert Manzi, City Solicitor; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

Mayor Davis asked for a moment of silence in memory of Greenbelt resident Lilly Mason and former residents Della Domchick and Patrick John O'Shay. She then led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

CONSENT AGENDA: It was moved by Mr. Putens and seconded by Ms. Mach that the consent agenda be approved. The motion passed 7-0.

Council thereby took the following action:

REAPPOINTMENT TO ADVISORY GROUP: Council appointed Donald Martin to a new term on the Board of Appeals.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: It was moved by Mr. Putens and seconded by Mr. Jordan that the agenda be approved. The motion passed 7-0.

PRESENTATIONS:

Introduction of Anacostia Trails Heritage Area Director and Board President: Aaron Marcavitch, Director of the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (ATHA), provided an update on the recent restructuring of the organization and discussed ATHA initiatives. He explained that ATHA seeks to advocate for, organize, and promote heritage tourism in a way that fosters economic development in each community within the Heritage Area.

Mr. Marcavitch reported on the planning work underway to commemorate the Battle of Bladensburg/War of 1812 and the hope that all communities in the Heritage Area will experience an increase in local visitation and restaurant, hotel and retail use, associated with this event.

Mr. Jordan mentioned the lack of signage directing users of the pedestrian trails and bicycle lanes from Lake Artemesia into surrounding communities, and the need to eventually link these trails and lanes. Mr. Marcavitch indicated he was aware of this problem.

Ms. Mach suggested information on ATHA could be included in the local geocache programs. Mayor Davis suggested Mr. Marcavitch notify the Maryland Municipal League of upcoming ATHA events, and also encouraged ATHA participation in the 75th Anniversary Planning Committee and Greenbelt Middle School Task Force.

Proposed FY 2012 City Budget: Mr. McLaughlin presented his proposed FY 2012 budget for the City. In his overview, he noted the key issue that influenced the budget this year was continuing to deal with the difficult economic climate and added that he expected this issue to continue through FY 2013. Mr. McLaughlin explained the four key points of the Proposed Budget: proposal to refinance the existing debt, anticipated increase in revenues, supports existing services and makes progress on Visioning Goals, and restores the fund balance to 10%. He summarized key revenues, proposed savings/cuts, and the need for additional capital funding and recommended consideration of a bond referendum.

The Mayor and other Councilmembers thanked him and the staff for all the work that went into the preparation of the budget. Mayor Davis mentioned the nine upcoming budget work sessions and encouraged residents to attend.

FY 2011 Award for Distinguished Budget Presentation: The City received the Government Finance Officers Association Award for Distinguished Budget Presentation for its Fiscal Year 2011 budget. This award recognizes Greenbelt's budget document as one that satisfies national guidelines as a policy document, an operations guide, a financial plan, and communications device. The City Manager accepted the award on behalf of the City.

PETITIONS AND REQUESTS: None

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS: None

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Mr. McLaughlin reported the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission began street resurfacing work in the Lakewood and Boxwood neighborhoods this week. He also advised that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority had agreed to provide upgrades to both bus stops on Crescent Road at Gardenway which would result in the loss of one to two on street parking spaces.

Mr. Jordan requested an inventory of all the bus stop locations be prepared in the future. He added that many bus stops are no longer in use and additional parking spaces may be available in these locations.

Mr. Moran provided an update on the County Community Development Block Grant Action Plan which recommends full funding of \$87,840 for the City's application for street work in Franklin Park and partial funding of \$12,000 for the CARES Youth and Family Empowerment Program.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Ms. Mach commented on the Washington Metropolitan Area Council of Government (COG) Clean Air Partners Board Meeting, the Maryland Municipal League (MML) Communications Committee meeting, the COG We Can Campaign conference call, and the Springhill Lake Elementary School Annual Women's Day Program, which was also attended by Ms. Pope. She also noted she had served as a judge for the Prince George's County Science Fair.

Mr. Herling and Mr. Jordan reported on their attendance at the Prince George's County Municipal Association meeting. Mr. Jordan also noted his attendance at the Greenbriar Community Association annual meeting, the Greenbelt Access Television annual meeting, and the Greenbelt Elementary School Spring Fair.

Mr. Putens commented on Berwyn Heights Mayor Cheye Calvo's birthday celebration, which was also attended by Mr. Jordan and Ms. Pope.

Mayor Davis reported on the MML Legislative Committee meeting, the COG Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee meeting and the COG Street Light Working Plan Committee meeting. She also noted she had met with the fourth grade classes at Springhill Lake Elementary School to discuss the MML "If I Were Mayor" contest.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

LEGISLATION:

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 2, "Administration," Article IV, "Ethics," of the Greenbelt City Code for the Purpose of Updating the Section on Financial Disclosure

Mr. Herling introduced the resolution for first reading.

A Resolution to Negotiate the Purchase of Pool White Coat Services and Transition Line Installation from Wilcoxon Construction of Rockville, Maryland, at a Cost not to Exceed \$38,000

Ms. Mach introduced the resolution for first reading.

ACTION WITH REGARD TO NOTICE OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY FORECLOSURE: Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Mr. Manzi recommended that Council enact legislation requiring notification to the City of residential property foreclosures, similar to the legislation enacted by the City of College Park in 2009. He said legislation would provide two benefits to the City: notice of which houses are being foreclosed upon and, since the City will have the name of the mortgage company, the new property owners and mortgage holders can be located regarding outstanding violations.

Mr. Putens suggested the City legislation incorporate the recommended requirements of HB 1337 regarding required maintenance on bank owned residential property. He also recommended a work session be held with homeowner associations and other interested parties once the ordinance is prepared.

Ms. Pope noted the College Park legislation requires the person authorized to make the sale to provide written notice to the City within five calendar days after the filing of an Order to Docket or a Complaint to Foreclose a Mortgage or a Deed of Trust on a residential property, and questioned whether this was enough advanced notice. Mr. Manzi said, based on the way the State law is written, the time period could not be increased. Ms. Mach suggested a proposed change in the State legislation on this issue be included as a legislative request for next year.

Mr. Putens moved that Council proceed with legislation requiring notification to the City of residential property foreclosures. Mr. Jordan seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

LETTER TO NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES REGARDING 2011 CONFERENCE DATES:

Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Mayor Davis moved that Council send a letter to the National League of Cities (NLC) indicating their concern that NLC neglected to take into consideration that November 8, opening day of the Conference, was election day in many areas of the country. Mr. Putens seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

Ms. Mach requested the letter also include mention that six councilmembers currently serve on NLC steering and policy committees and requested this be noted in the letter.

AWARD OF PURCHASE – HYBRID SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES: Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

Mr. Herling moved that Council approve the purchase of a 2011 Ford Escape Hybrid Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV) from Apple Ford of Columbia, Maryland in accord with State of Maryland BPO# 001B1400372 at a cost of \$28,698. Ms. Pope seconded. The motion passed 5-2. (Roberts, Jordan)

Mr. Roberts and Mr. Jordan expressed their concerns that an SUV is not an economical vehicle to operate, and the purchase cost was too high.

Ms. McHale, Director of Recreation, commented that the SUV was the only hybrid vehicle available through the State of Maryland bid that met the passenger and cargo needs of the Recreation Department.

STATE LEGISLATION: Mayor Davis read the agenda comments.

SB 822/HB 1188 – Maryland Communities for a Lifetime

Ms. Mach questioned whether funds would be available in the bill to include programs as well as buildings. Mr. Moran said the bill is unclear at this time and no funding amount had even been assigned.

Ms. Mach moved that Council support SB 822/HB 1188 with an amendment that the funds be available for programs. Mr. Jordan seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

HB 1234 – Task Force on Undergrounding Utility Lines

Mr. Putens moved that Council support HB 1234. Mr. Jordan seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

HB 1337 – Bank Owned Residential Property – Required Maintenance

Mr. Jordan moved that Council support HB 1337. Ms. Pope seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

HB 1055 – Prohibition of Cell Phone Towers on School Property

Mr. Putens moved that Council support HB 1055. Ms. Pope seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

OTHER REPORTS: Council provided information from the following meetings they had recently attended.

Ms. Mach – COG Climate, Energy and Policy Committee meeting

Mr. Jordan – NLC Community and Economic Development Steering Committee meeting

Mr. Putens – NLC Small Cities Committee meeting

Mr. Roberts – COG Transportation Planning Board meeting

Ms. Pope – NLC Small Cities Steering Committee meeting

Mayor Davis – Sustainable Maryland Certified Executive Committee meeting
COG Street Lights Working Group meeting

MEETINGS: Council reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn the regular meeting was made by Ms. Mach and seconded by Mr. Putens. The motion passed 7-0.

Mayor Davis adjourned the regular meeting of Monday, March 28, 2011, at 11:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Murray
City Clerk

"I hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct report of the regular meeting of the City Council of Greenbelt, Maryland, held March 28, 2011."

Judith F. Davis
Mayor