



**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
held Wednesday, September 23, 1998, for the purpose of meeting with Dr. Phyllis Johnson,
Director of the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC).**

The meeting began at 8:10 p.m. It was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Greenbelt Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Pro-Tem, Thomas X. White. Mayor Davis arrived later in the meeting.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager and David E. Moran, City Clerk

Mayor Pro-Tem White welcomed Dr. Johnson and explained the city's stakeholder work session process. He then turned the meeting over to Dr. Johnson for her presentation.

Dr. Johnson provided an overview of the Center with particular emphasis on BARC's economic impact on both the local area and the nation at large. She invited Council to tour any aspect of BARC. She noted that BARC had a budget of over \$154 million and 2091 employees. Salaries are almost \$98 million a year, with an economic impact on the area of 4 times that amount dollars. She noted that the scientific work force (PHD's) has decreased by almost 100 over the last 10 years and reported that the same trend applies for other staff.

Dr. Johnson reported that BARC has 28% of the Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) dairy research funds; 23% of ARS swine research funds; 18% of ARS poultry research funds; 29% of ARS potato research funds; 16% of ARS soybean research funds; 31% of bee and honey research funds; 65% of floral and nursery research funds and 26% of human nutrition research funds. In summary she noted that BARC has a tremendous impact on farm research throughout the United States.

Dr. Johnson stressed that most buildings on BARC were built in the 30's and 40's and most had never been renovated. She reported on current modernization efforts, but noted that overall the pace of modernization has been slow. She estimated the total cost to totally modernize the rest of BARC over the next ten years at \$399 million.

Mr. Putens asked about the possible relocation of BARC. Dr. Johnson responded that BARC has had good support from Steny Hoyer, but that they had not received much attention from the Senators. Mr. White believed the city could help communicate BARC's message and referenced the city's Federal legislative dinner. He believed Senator Mikulski would be a good advocate of BARC. Dr. Johnson reported that BARC was having trouble making contact with Mikulski's office.

Mr. White stressed that the city, while opposing piecemeal development of other Federal facilities on BARC, would strongly support modernization efforts connected to research. Dr. Johnson stressed that BARC needs their land to farm. Mr. Putens echoed the city's position.

Mr. Roberts asked other ways the city could help BARC. Dr. Johnson responded that the city can help BARC spread the word about BARC's economic value to both the local area and the country. Mr. White noted that Goddard had formed alliances with local businesses. He also mentioned NASA's breakdown of where their employees lived. Dr. Johnson responded that historically BARC had not done either of these things.

Mr. Putens asked if BARC had a video. Dr. Johnson responded that BARC was producing videos in cooperation with Ft. Meade. Mr. White suggested that Council send a communication to Senators and Hoyer that supported BARC's ongoing mission. Mr. Roberts and Mr. Putens suggested that Council lobby for additional funds at budget time.

Mr. McLaughlin suggested that Dr. Johnson contact Joe James with Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation. He also suggested that BARC open the visitor center on the weekends. Dr. Johnson responded that the visitor center does not report to her it reports to headquarters and that she had tried to get it open on weekends. Council asked staff to send a letter of support to the appropriate administrator.

Mr. McLaughlin asked about the status of the USDA Headquarters Facility. Dr. Johnson responded that ARS staff had moved from Ivy Lane to Sunnyside. In response to a question from Mr. White, Dr. Johnson indicated that the Sunnyside facility was over half occupied.

Mr. White asked about the hazardous waste situation at BARC. Dr. Johnson responded that BARC has determined that 100 sites are no longer areas of concern. She stated that all of the contamination on the WMATA site have been removed and the site is now suitable for its use. She indicated that BARC is working to clean up the other problem sites.

Mr. Moran suggested that BARC form an alliance similar to the Goddard alliance. Dr. Johnson responded that BARC was prohibited from starting such a group, but would be happy if that group formed and happy to provide information to such a group. Mr. McLaughlin agreed to invite BARC to the next Goddard alliance meeting. Council suggested that this be added to next 4-Cities meeting.

Mr. Roberts reported that a swath of trees had been removed on Research Road. Dr. Johnson stated she would find out why this was done.

Miscellaneous Items

Mayor Davis reported on the Sector Plan meeting on Saturday and indicated that people from College Park and Berwyn had come forward to express concerns about the plan. Mayor Davis suggested referring the plan to the APB for their comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
David E. Moran, CMC
City Clerk