



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA

NASA Goddard Facility Update

COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE ONLINE ONLY

Due to the COVID-19 precautions, the Council Meeting will be held online and is planned to be cablecast on Verizon 21, Comcast 71 and 996 and streamed to www.greenbeltmd.gov/municipaltv.

Resident participation:

The broadcast link <https://ustream.tv/channel/nasa-gsfc>

**Wednesday, December 9, 2020
8:00 PM**

Work Session Packet

Agenda

- *Introductions*
- *Presentation: NASA Goddard Facility Update*
- *Council Discussion*
- *Questions and Answers*
- *Other Items*

NASA Goddard Facility Update
[WS190904.pdf](#)

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, September 4, 2019, with NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC).

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 7:33 p.m. The meeting was held in room 201 of the Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Road.

Present were: Councilmembers Colin A. Byrd, Judith F. Davis, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

Staff present were: Nicole Ard, City Manager; Charise Liggins, Economic Development Coordinator; and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Administrative Assistant.

Also present were: George Morrow, Acting Center Director; Ray Rubilotta, Associate Center Director; Phillina Tookes, Legislative Affairs Specialist, NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center.

Mr. Morrow provided an update on the James Webb Telescope. He indicated the launch date would be in March 2021. Mr. Morrow answered Mr. Roberts's question stating the telescope weighs 7,000 pounds. Mr. Morrow stated that this coming April, the Hubble Space Telescope would have been in orbit for 30 years. He noted the astrophysics and astronomy textbooks have been rewritten based on the information that was received from the Hubble Space Telescope.

Mr. Morrow provided an update of operations at NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC), including its science missions in development. He noted that he has been the Acting Center Director since July and Mr. Rubilotta has been the Associate Center Director since May.

Mr. Morrow stated Vice President Pence charged NASA to land the next American woman and man on the south pole of the moon by 2024. Mr. Morrow advised that the Artemis program would be NASA's path back to the lunar surface. Mr. Morrow answered Ms. Davis's question stating that NASA is developing a space launch system which will be the most powerful rocket ever built. He indicated the rocket's first test unmanned flight would be late in the year 2020 or early 2021.

Mr. Morrow provided an update on in-house missions that are being developed in Greenbelt. He indicated that PACE has been in development for about 4 years and it's in full-scale development. The main instrument, the Ocean Color, is also being designed in Greenbelt. It would launch in the year 2022. Ms. Mach asked what NASA is hoping to learn. Mr. Morrow advised, from an oceanography point of view, the health of the ocean. The ocean color is very important, and PACE would measure several thousands of feet down in the ocean.

Mr. Morrow explained the impact of the government shut down on all the projects at NASA/GSFC. He noted the contractors that were funded were able to keep working up until the point they had exhausted their funds. Mayor Jordan stated that during the government shut down, some of the NASA employees took on volunteer projects throughout the City.

Mr. Morrow answered Ms. Davis's question stating the budget is healthy from a Goddard perspective, but NASA would need additional funding to achieve the landing in 2024. He stated the rest of NASA's missions wouldn't be impacted by going to the moon.

Mr. Morrow answered Mayor Jordan's question stating Goddard had maintained a civil servant

population of just over 3,000 employees. Mr. Rubilotta stated the current civil number of servant employees at Goddard now is 3,236. Mr. Morrow noted when there is additional work, Goddard would use support contactors. He stated when the workflow grows, the contactors workflow grows.

Mr. Morrow provided information that the next in-house telescope is W First, a wide field infrared survey telescope. Similar to PACE, the spacecraft will be designed and built at Goddard. W First is a 2.41-meter telescope; it would be a wide field lens looking at the universe and would launch in the year 2025. Mr. Morrow stated Goddard operates about 50 satellites and there are 23 projects in various different stages.

There was discussion on GSFC's community educational outreach. Mr. Morrow stated that Goddard hosted 455 summer interns, a combination of high school and college students, and 355 of the interns spent their time in Greenbelt. Local school administrators contact Goddard to meet the County and State Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) related needs.

In response to a question from Ms. Davis, Mr. Morrow stated the main 60th Anniversary Celebration was in May and the budget overhead is limited.

Mr. Rubilotta shared that Goddard is separated into six different campuses and that this week, each campus will be starting to have its own individual master plan workshop. It's the beginning stages of the master plan process. Mr. Roberts suggested if Goddard was going to divest land, would that land go into the Patuxent Preserve instead of giving it to another agency.

Mr. Rubilotta provided an update to the relocation of the main gate to Goddard. He stated that the current main gate would only be closed between the hours of 10:30 am to 3:00 pm. Mr. Rubilotta stated Goddard is going to install card readers. The gate will still be open to pedestrian traffic, but not vehicular traffic. Mr. Rubilotta answered Mayor Jordan's question stating it would be accessible as it can with the technology that is with us. Mr. Rubilotta stated Goddard would still have to maintain its secured perimeter.

There was discussion about the intersection of Powder Mill Road at Soil Conservation Road. Mr. Rubilotta stated that land belongs to BARC. He stated that BARC would have to petition the Park Service to get a traffic light.

In response to a question from Ms. Davis, Mr. Rubilotta stated Goddard had provided their comments in regards to the Maglev and Hyperloop.

Council Reports –

Ms. Davis – Legislative Committee Report

Several informational items were discussed.

The meeting ended at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Administrative Assistant