WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, September 3, 2014, for the purpose of a City Manager Update.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:01 p.m. The meeting was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: 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 P. McLaughlin, City Manager and David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Laura Kressler, Molly Lester, Bill Orleans and Thomas X. White, News Review.

Preliminary End of the Year Financial Report

Mr. McLaughlin reviewed the FY 2014 report. He stated that revenues were expected to be $600,000 higher than estimated in the FY 15 Budget. He stated expenditures were $170,000 higher than estimated, resulting in a more than $400,000 increase in fund balance.

He stated revenues were higher due to a conservative abatement number. Permit fees were also higher than expected. He suggested Council apply $200,000 of this increase towards the theater renovation shortfall. Council Members Davis, Herling, Mach and Pope favored applying $200,000 to the theater project.

Ms. Davis asked for a list of abatements with rationale for the abatements.

Under Expenditures, Mayor Jordan asked about expenditures in Public Works. Mr. McLaughlin explained this was mostly overtime due to inclement weather closures.

Belle Point Playground Update

Council spoke about the history of this playground noting it was originally envisioned in 1987 when the land was dedicated to the City. Mr. Putens, Ms. Mach and Ms. Davis stated that proposals to locate the playground elsewhere were not on City land and were also near a busy intersection.

Mr. Roberts believed it was unfortunate that playgrounds were not built when Belle Point was developed. He favored a more central location for the playground.

Ms. Davis stated it would have been nice if playgrounds were built, but they weren't. Ms. Mach indicated this was the best location.

Mr. Herling noted that neighborhood playgrounds were part of the City's history.

Ms. Pope reiterated this was a small tot lot and not a large park.

Laura Kressler stated that she had looked at the location and indicated it was not that far from residences, and was a safe location.

Mr. Orleans asked if there had been a survey of Belle Point residents. Ms. Pope responded yes. Mr. Orleans suggested a referral to PRAB.

Use of Old Greenbelt Middle School Classrooms

Mr. McLaughlin indicated his understanding that based on conversations at the August 4 Work Session, the school system may have a use for this space and the City may need to consider next steps.

Council responded that they didn't get a sense of urgency from Ms. Higgins and others at the August 4 meeting. Council believed the space was reserved for the City.

Ms. Davis wanted assurances that the Board of Education would maintain the space.

Mr. Putens believed there was room for negotiations regarding renovation costs and rental rates. Ms. Mach thought it was an opportunity the City needed to stay on top of.

Mr. Roberts did not want to take funds away from the Springhill Lake Recreation Center addition to renovate these classrooms. If there was a renovation cost, he favored free rent for 20 years.

Top Ten List

There was discussion of the Economic Development Study. Council wanted to make sure that they had an opportunity to react to Sage's preliminary report.

Mr. McLaughlin provided an update on the theater renovation noting that it was behind schedule due to a Pepco delay.

Mr. McLaughlin gave updates on the other work items on the list.

Under South Core, Mr. Putens believed the Council needed to meet with new residents there this Fall and that waiting for 100 residents was too high a threshold. Mayor Jordan suggested a work session with South Core developers.

CAR Report

Council reviewed the Council Action Request (CAR) report. There was discussion of the status of each item.

Information Items

Ms. Pope reported that striping where southbound Kenilworth intersects with eastbound MD 193 had changed and was confusing. Ms. Mach distributed an email re: the cookies at the bridge project and relayed a request for Council to staff an afternoon at the overpass. Mayor Jordan

wanted to send a thank you letter to the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival Committee and also one to Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (ATHA) for the War of 1812 celebration, "The Undaunted." He announced a Hall of Fame induction event at Beltway Plaza on September 11.

Ms. Davis announced that Janet Parker's daughter had passed away. She also noted that Elaine Jones fell and broke her pelvis on Labor Day. Ms. Davis requested basic maintenance at the Animal Shelter. She indicated that NLC's Energy, Environment and Natural Resources (EENR) Committee would be discussing oil shipments by train. She wanted to add AirBnB rentals to the September 8 agenda.

The meeting ended at 11:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David E. Moran
Assistant City Manager