

**Greenbelt City Council
Work Session**

**Beltsville Agricultural Research Center
(BARC)**

**August 29, 2018
8:00 p.m.**

**Greenbriar Community Building
7600 Hanover Parkway
Terrace Room**

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Update on BARC Activities
- Update on Bureau of Engraving and Printing Proposed Relocation to the BARC Campus
- Other Items

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Monday, July 18, 2016, with the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:10 p.m. The meeting was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

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

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Administrative Assistant; and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Dr. Ellen Harris, BARC; Diane Oberg, News Review; Bill Orleans and others.

Dr. Harris reported that she had been the Director of the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) for two years but had worked at BARC for 22 years, primarily in the Human Nutrition Research Center. She said that since the last work session in 2014, the Agricultural Research Services (ARS) had consolidated from eight regions throughout the country to five regions with BARC being part of the North Atlantic Area Region. Dr. Harris noted that BARC remains the largest research center within ARS and employs approximately 157 scientists and 500 support staff.

Dr. Harris said that the Log Lodge, which had been leased out for approximately two years, was currently vacant. She said it is available for rentals.

Ms. Davis noted that at the last work session with BARC, Dr. Spence advised there were approximately 500 unoccupied buildings at BARC with approximately 200 of these building on the demolition list. She asked if there were any updates on these buildings. Dr. Harris said she didn't have an exact number of buildings on the list, but mentioned BARC works closely with the National Historical Trust regarding building demolition. She said that BARC did secure \$37 million in funding for renovation of Building 307, the old Human Nutrition Building.

Mayor Jordan asked about BARC's work with the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) Research Farm. Dr. Harris said BARC has a cooperative agreement in place with UDC and BARC scientists work jointly with UDC on research related to sustainable agriculture. She mentioned BARC and UDC's work on the UDC urban rooftop farm on top of a UDC building on the Van Ness campus.

In response to a question from Mayor Jordan, Dr. Harris explained that BARC is a working agricultural farm and compost is used to fertilize its fields. She said that corn, barley and rye crops grown on BARC are used for creating feed for its animals.

Mr. Putens asked about BARC's relationship with the University of Maryland (UM). Dr. Harris said BARC has a broad and diverse relationship with UM, involving joint research projects, use of UM students to staff BARC labs, BARC researchers teaching at UM and serving as advisors to UM graduate students, etc.

Mr. Roberts expressed concern about the long term viability of BARC, noting that the number of BARC employees has been decreasing for many years. He asked if Dr. Harris had any concern about the relocation of the Research Center. Dr. Harris said no, she does not see BARC going away. She stressed that BARC is considered a flagship center within the ARS. She mentioned that she considers the current funding levels for BARC adequate.

Ms. Davis asked about the Friends of Agricultural Research-Beltsville (FAR-B). Dr. Harris said FAR-B remains an active organization that meets monthly. Ms. Davis said some Greenbelt residents may be interested in joining.

Mayor Jordan asked if BARC's "agricultural zoning" restricts its fields from use as a solar farm. Dr. Harris said BARC will not become a solar farm but added that they are exploring the use of solar energy, including solar panel roofing on some buildings.

Dr. Harris reported that BARC does not have a tick control program on the property but said research is done on tick control. She said she had reviewed the tick control program proposal submitted to the City by Joe Murray with BARC researchers. Dr. Harris said Dr. Andrew Li is doing research on tick control and has offered to serve as a technical advisory to the City for tick related matters. She added that Dr. Li is currently working with Friends Community School, as well as other Prince George's County schools, on tick control programs.

Ms. Davis asked if BARC was doing any work on the Zika virus. Dr. Harris said no, not at this time. She said BARC is hoping funding for Zika virus research will be appropriated for BARC in the future.

Dr. Harris advised that BARC was currently working on repairs of a sinkhole on Powder Mill Road under the Baltimore Washington Parkway that occurred this past weekend. She noted that BARC was responsible for many miles of roadways.

Council asked what the City can do for BARC. Dr. Harris thanked the City for advocating for BARC with State and Federal Legislators. She added that the City working with FAR-B may be beneficial.

Ms. Davis suggested FAR-B be invited to future Council work sessions with BARC. She also suggested Adam Ortiz, Prince George's County, and representatives of Chesapeake Bay Trust be invited, noting there may be projects at BARC they could assist with.

Mayor Jordan and Council thanked Dr. Harris for attending and stressed the importance of BARC to the City.

Ms. Pope thanked Dr. Harris for serving as a presenter at the National League of Cities Small Cities Council meeting.

Informational items

Ms. Davis reported that she, along with Mayor Jordan and Mr. Herling, had attended the Prince George's County Council Town Hall on the Zoning Rewrite. She mentioned the Bowie Upper-Marlboro Beekeepers Association (BUMBA) concern about restriction of bee keeping.

Mayor Jordan complimented Ms. Pope for hosting the National League of Cities Small Cities Council last week. Ms. Pope thanked City staff for their work towards the success of the event.

Several other informational items were discussed.

The meeting ended at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Cindy Murray
City Clerk*