



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA
Work Session - Advisory Boards/Committees Chair

This meeting will be held in-person and virtual.

**25 Crescent Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770**

OR

Virtual Participation

Zoom Webinar Attendees:

**Please submit your request in writing via email to questions@greenbeltmd.gov
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89975816684?pwd=i8YndohTjtRgvEORgL02kxwEf6lyE1.1>**

Dial-in: 301 715 8592

Webinar ID: 899 7581 6684

Passcode: 489849

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

7:30 PM

Work Session Packet

Work Session - Advisory Board/Committee Chairs

Suggested Action:

Agenda

- Introductions - 10 minutes (7:30 - 7:40 pm)
- Council and Board/Committee Discussion - 60 minutes (7:40 - 8:40 pm)
- Questions and Answers - 15 minutes (8:40 - 8:55 pm)
- Other Items - 15 minutes (8:55 - 9:10 pm)
 - Informational Items

[WS230712.pdf](#)

[Advisory Committee on Education.pdf](#)

[Advisory Committee on Trees.pdf](#)

Arts Advisory Board.pdf
Board of Appeals.pdf
Forest Preserve Advisory Board.pdf

City Council Work Session Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: August 21, 2024

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Work Session Item

Agenda Section: Work Session Packet

Subject:

Work Session - Advisory Board/Committee Chairs

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Attachments:

[WS230712.pdf](#)

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[Arts Advisory Board.pdf](#)

[Board of Appeals.pdf](#)

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WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL was held Wednesday, July 12, 2023, to meet with the chairpersons of the City Advisory Groups.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 7:31 p.m. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 25 Crescent Road, and virtually via Zoom.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Colin A. Byrd (virtual), Judith F. Davis, Ric Gordon, Silke I. Pope, Rodney M. Roberts, Kristen L. K. Weaver, and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Tim George, Interim City Manager; and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Deputy City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Janet Mirsky, Advisory Committee on Education (ACE); Charles Jackman, Advisory Committee on Trees (ACT); Benjamin Friedman, Advisory Planning Board (APB); Kristin Stenson, Arts Advisory Board (AAB); David Whaples, Board of Appeals (BoA); Steven Gilbert, Board of Elections (BoE); Richard Ransom, Community Relations Advisory Board (CRAB); Bob Rudd, Employee Relations Board (ERB); David Shapiro, Ethics Commission (EC); Donna Hoffmeister, Forest Preserve Advisory Board (FPAB); John Lippert, Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability (Green ACES); Jacob Chesnutt, Park and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB); Peggy Higgins, Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC); Mary Wade, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee (SCAC); and others.

Mayor Jordan began the work session with introductions and asked the Chairs to provide how many members were on the Boards/Committees and if there were any vacancies.

Mr. Friedman reported one vacancy on the seven-member Advisory Planning Board.

Ms. Hoffmeister reported one vacancy on the nine-member Forest Preserve Advisory Board.

Mr. Jackman reported no vacancies on the three-member Advisory Committee on Trees.

Mr. Lippert reported three vacancies on the 11-member Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability.

Ms. Mirsky reported three vacancies on the nine-member Advisory Committee on Education.

Mr. Shapiro reported that there were no vacancies on the five-member Ethics Commission.

Mr. Rudd reported one vacancy on the five-member Employee Relations Board.

Ms. Wade reported three vacancies on the 11-member Senior Citizens Advisory Committee.

Ms. Higgins reported no vacancies on the seven-member Public Safety Advisory Committee.

Mr. Chesnutt reported three vacancies on the nine-member Park and Recreation Advisory Board.

Ms. Stenson reported three vacancies on the 11-member Arts Advisory Board.

Mr. Gilbert reported two vacancies on the seven-member Board of Elections.

Mr. Ransom reported one vacancy on the eight-member Community Relations Advisory Board.

Mayor Jordan asked the Chairs to provide an update on the boards/committees.

Mr. Rudd, ERB, noted that the Board had heard more cases this year than in previous years. Mr. Rudd explained the Board's challenges, which included scheduling, recommending action items to close loopholes, and training manuals. He advised the Board meets as needed or every three or four months. Mr. Rudd stated that the Board submits reports to Council after the Board hears a case. The Board makes recommendations, but Council is the final arbitrator.

Ms. Wade, SCAC, noted that in September the Committee had an open forum for seniors to discuss any concerns and suggest solutions. A report was submitted to Council for review. During Greenbelt Day, the Committee had a Not for Seniors Only open forum, "Don't Get Scammed." Ms. Wade advised that the Committee meets monthly.

Mr. Gilbert, BoE, provided an update on this year's election, which will include no voting machines; all voters will receive paper ballots. The Board will also encourage mail-in voting as well as early voting the weekend before Tuesday, November 7th, Election Day. He stated that the Board will be meeting regularly from now until December. Ms. Davis commended the Board for all its hard work getting new vendors and revising the procedures while being short members. She stated that voters can vote at any precinct this year. Mr. Gilbert informed Council that the Board worked to address and resolve any issues that occurred during the 2021 Election.

Mr. Friedman, APB, provided an update which included reviewing the 7010 Greenbelt Road Project, the Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan, and the Neighborhood Design Center plans for Greenbelt Station. He noted turnover of the staff liaison. Mr. Friedman asked Council if Boards/Committees could discuss issues that come to their attention via the public or a Board/Committee member.

There was a discussion regarding the autonomy of the Boards/Committees. Ms. Davis requested that the staff liaisons be made aware that the Boards/Committees can bring their own ideas before Council for discussion and possible approval.

Ms. Hoffmeister, FPAB, stated that the Board completed the Greenbelt Forest Preserve Master Trail Plan. She asked Council about the status of the Stream Naming Report submitted in 2021. Ms. Davis replied staff is working on the process of naming the stream. Ms. Hoffmeister informed Council of one of the Board's challenges: teenagers riding bikes and cutting down things within the Forest Preserve. Based on a question asked by Ms. Davis, Ms. Hoffmeister answered that signage needed to be installed at the entrances to the Preserve tracts. Ms. Davis suggested that the Board follow up on this signage.

Mr. Jackman, ACT, provided an update which included assisting City staff with reviewing eleven Tree Canopy Grant applications and working on a Tree Species List.

Mr. Lippert, Green ACES, provided an update which included encouraging Council to pass the Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance and educating the public until the ordinance goes into effect on January 1st, 2024. On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Lippert thanked Council for the \$1,000 to purchase 300 organic cotton bags. The bags will be distributed to low-income Greenbelters. He advised that another Green Team mission was to get the City of Greenbelt re-certified as a Sustainable Maryland Certified Municipality which was just done on June 30th. A city needs to be re-certified every three years. There was a discussion regarding the certification process.

Mr. Lippert stated that the Committee is working on the next Electric Vehicle (EV) Event in Greenbelt West or Central Greenbelt.

Abigail Taylor, a Greenbelt resident, asked whether there were any plans to distribute the canvas bags. Mr. Lippert responded that the Committee is working on logistics.

Ms. Higgins, PSAC, provided an update which included submitting a report to Council regarding the residents' responses to its online survey and five community forums; meeting with Chief Ray, Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department and the Hyattsville Public Safety Committee; and reviewing the Greenbelt Police Department's General Orders. PSAC is in the process of reviewing and updating its 2017 Security Camera Report. She suggested that there should be a police officer as a staff liaison to PSAC.

Ms. Mirsky, ACE, provided an update which included the Student and Teachers Awards events, meeting annually with principals and PTA presidents, and completing grants issued before the pandemic. She advised that in the future, ACE would be giving Block Grants, which the principals prefer. Ms. Mirsky informed Council that the Committee is assisting City staff in reviewing the Education Scholarship Grants.

Mayor Jordan suggested that ACE host a meet and greet for the new Superintendent of the Prince George's County Public Schools, Mr. House. Ms. Mirsky said she would follow up with the Committee.

Mr. Ransom, CRAB, provided an update which included completing referrals from Council, such as its City Employees Union Report and Non-Citizen Voting Report. There have been many turnovers within the Board. He stated that the Board has been working on firearm safety. Mayor Jordan suggested that firearm safety could be discussed during a Four Cities Meeting.

Mr. Shapiro, EC, provided an update which included reviewing Financial Disclosure reports. He explained that the Commission has been waiting for a response from the City Solicitor, Mr. DeLoach, regarding changes to the Financial Disclosure Forms. Mr. Shapiro asked Council if the Commission could make the suggested changes to the Financial Disclosure Forms and submit the changes to Mr. DeLoach. Ms. Davis suggested that the Commission hold off on the changes to the form before the election. She stated that she had asked, at a previous meeting, should a retiring Councilmember submit a final Financial Disclosure Form.

Ms. Weaver suggested that, before the election, a training session be offered to new candidates about how to fill out required forms. Mr. Shapiro stated that he would follow up with the Commission.

Mr. Whaples, BoA, said the Board meets as needed and had reviewed an appeal. Mr. Whaples explained that the Board was looking for an additional member.

Mr. Chesnutt, PRAB, stated that the Board meets monthly virtually and takes a recess during July and August. Mr. Chesnutt advised that the Board had participated in and provided recommendations on the Neighborhood Design Center Community Engagement for Greenbelt Station. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Chesnutt thanked Council for funding ballfield improvements, an addition to the Springhill Lake Recreation Center, Greenbelt Station Central Park improvements, and the Buddy Attick Park Master Plan.

Ms. Stenson, AAB, summarized the reports the Board had submitted, including those about the Arts Mixer and Arts Crawl. Ms. Stenson stated that the next Arts Crawl would be on October 1st. She advised that the Board would develop an outreach to arts programs on grant writing. Ms. Stenson informed Council that the Board requested space be made for Arts activities in the East Wing of the Community Center.

Based on a question by Mayor Jordan, Ms. Stenson answered that there was a discussion at the Arts Mixer regarding having the Roosevelt Center designated as an Arts District. She explained that the City would have to pay to become an Arts District and that Historic District was a better designation for the City.

Ms. Stenson advised that the Board was working on a Signage Report and would provide recommendations to Council on public art.

There was a discussion regarding Board/Committee Reports, referrals, and follow-ups. Mayor Jordan suggested that the Chairs and staff liaisons of the Boards/Committees keep the referral and report spreadsheet current. Mr. Shapiro suggested that if Council makes a referral to a Board/Committee, Council should explain in detail what it wanted. Ms. Weaver suggested that the Board/Committee reports have actions listed with a clear, detailed timeframe.

Mayor Jordan inquired whether the Chairs saw a great value in training.

Mr. Rudd stated there had been an issue communicating with Council that the ERB had been asking departments and the administration to update procedural manuals promptly.

There was a discussion regarding recruitment. Mayor Jordan suggested having an open house or a meet and greet. Ms. Davis suggested having the Boards/Committees write articles for the Greenbelt News Review. Ms. Stenson and Ms. Pope suggested having tables at the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival during Information Day. Ms. Mirsky suggested that the Boards/Committees hand out brochures. Ms. Davis suggested that staff liaisons assist the Boards/Committees with designing their own brochures. Mr. Gordon suggested that the Boards/Committees partner with GATe.

Mayor Jordan stated that if there are issues regarding attendance at meetings, the Chairs should inform the City Clerk, Ms. Anderson. Ms. Davis added that Council will be removing eight Board/Committee members due to attendance issues.

There was a discussion regarding the Board/Committee budgets and funding.

Ms. Stenson informed Council that the Board/Committee reports posted online haven't been updated since 2021. Mayor Jordan requested that reports be updated.

Council thanked the Advisory Board/Committee Chairs for all their service.

The meeting ended at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen
Deputy City Clerk

Advisory Committee on Education

The Advisory Committee on Education's Report:

Membership- ACE currently has 3 members. We lost a member in the City Council election and she has not yet been replaced. We have advertised twice in the News Review, to no avail.

Vacancies- We need 6 more members.

Goals-

1. We march every year in the Greenbelt Labor Day Parade, and will do so again this year.
2. We give Educator of the Year Awards and Student of the Year Awards, with the High School students receiving scholarships.
3. We offer grants to the schools to subsidize items or activities not covered in the School Board budgets. Only one school applied by the deadline last year, so we financed trips to the Greenbelt Cinema instead. We hope to enable all of the schools to participate for grants this year.

Needs- We need more members!

Advisory Committee on Trees

**From: Advisory Committee on Trees (ACT)
Charles Jackman**

To: Greenbelt City Council

Date: August 15, 2024

**The Council requests that the Advisory Board/Committee Chairs to provide the following information before the work session:
*Membership details, current vacancies, three goals/priorities the Board/Committee is working on, and the Board/Committee's needs.***

ACT Membership details – Two of three positions are filled (Robert Trumbule and Charles Jackman).

Current vacancies - ACT is in need of one more member.

Three goals/priorities ACT is working on:

- 1) Support and implement measures to continue the high tree canopy (62%) coverage and the “Tree City USA” recognition for the City of Greenbelt through recommendations related to replacement trees and new plantings.*
- 2) Continue the yearly celebration of Arbor Day with tree plantings in different areas of the City of Greenbelt.*
- 3) Further analysis of the Buddy Attick Park Master Plan is needed to determine the impact on trees and tree canopy coverage in the City of Greenbelt.*

ACT's needs – Help with registration and parking costs for interested ACT members to attend relevant meetings such as the Annual Community Forestry Workshop in Westminster, MD, at \$125/attendee on Dec. 9, 2024, and the Mid-Atlantic Nursery Trade Show (MANTS) in Baltimore, MD, at \$30/attendee from Jan. 7-10, 2025. This would be a total of about \$500. Also, one more member is needed for the Committee.

Arts Advisory Board

AAB Response:

Arts Advisory Board (AAB)

Members:

- Tom LeaMond (Chair)
- Barbara Stevens (secretary)
- Kristin Stenson
- Oliver Gayken
- Vijay Parameshwaran
- Tatiana Ausema
- Adriene Lim
- John Drago (Council should contact Mr. Drago to see if he is still interested in being on the AAB.)

Vacancies:

I believe that we have 1 or 2 vacancies.

Goals and Priorities:

- Review arts related questions and questions and issues in Greenbelt and provide feedback to City Council. Recent projects have involved public art, art programs space allocation, community signage, community lighting.
- Bring together Greenbelt arts organizations to share ideas through annual Arts Happy Hour.
- Increase recognition of the AAB and what we do among arts organizations in Greenbelt. Encourage those who are interested to attend AAB meetings and consider membership.

Needs:

We receive an annual budget that we use for the annual happy hour and for signage and informational materials at events that we sponsor and attend

Board of Appeals

1. Membership details

The Board of Appeals consists of three (3) members:

Steve Skolnik (chair)

David Whaples

Donald Martin

2. Current vacancies (none)

3. Goals/Priorities

The Board of Appeals is chartered to provide a single function, which is to hear appeals to zoning decisions issued by the City of Greenbelt Director of Planning, then to recommend findings to City Council. This function is germane, of course, only for the very limited zoning authority granted to the City by Prince George's County Council. That is the Board of Appeals' sole priority.

4. Needs of the Board of Appeals

This Board has benefitted from its inception by effective support of City staff; on the rare occasion that an appeal is filed, staff drafts a detailed report for Board members' review. A staff member schedules the appeal meeting, attends and records the meeting, and prepares the Board's finding and recommendation in writing for submission to Council.

The single outstanding need of the Board of Appeals at present is training on aspects of the revised/renewed Prince George's County Zoning Code, which may affect future appeals if and as the code changes come into effect.

Forest Preserve Advisory Board

A. Membership details: 8 current members

- Co-chairs: Bryan Bruns and Thomas Doggett.
- Members; Susan Gregersen, John Paul Schmit, Damien Ossi, Donna Hoffmeister, Owen Kelley, Beth Novick
- Council Liaison: Amy Knesel
- Staff Liaison: Kevin Driscoll

Current vacancies: **One vacancy**

B. Three goals/priorities the Board/Committee is working on:

1. **Trails:** Based on Council approval of the Master Trails Plan, FPAB has supported activities by Public Works and volunteers to reroute several trails. FPAB is preparing recommendations for a new trail in the Sunrise Tract in East Greenbelt, near the Dog Park.
2. **Invasive species:** Council approval of recommended activities for invasive species management has supported activities to control Tree of Heaven, stiltgrass, and a recent workday to remove bush honeysuckle in the Hamilton Woods near the Wolfe athletic fields. FPAB may make further recommendations regarding invasive species management, in accordance with the Stewardship Guidelines for the Forest Preserve approved by City Council.
3. **Signage:** FPAB is currently developing recommendations for signage at the Northway Road entrance to the North Woods Tract of the Forest Preserve

C. Board/Committee's needs:

1. **Garden Shading.** FPAB recommended and City Council approved a plan for remediating shading, managing invasive plants and creating forest gardens in the Greenbelt Community Garden Borders. There seemed to have been limited follow-up. We are encouraged to hear that the City and Garden Club have recently been discussing further implementation of the plan and hope City Council can support this in terms of budget, staff, and other resources.
2. **Resources for signage and trail:** If recommendations about signage are approved, these would require budget and staff support, as would establishment of a new trail in the Sunrise Tract.
3. **Additions to the Forest Preserve:** As with the addition of the Greenbriar Tract in East Greenbelt, FPAB would support appropriate additions to the Preserve, such as in West Greenbelt and the possible addition of the outlot next to Motiva, near the courthouse.