

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, January 24, 2018, for the purpose of meeting with the National Park Service.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis started the meeting at 8:02 p.m. It was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Colin A. Byrd, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V.J. Putens and Mayor Pro Tem Judith F. Davis. Mayor Emmett V. Jordan was away on business travel.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Nicole Ard, City Manager and David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Matthew Carroll, National Park Service; Bill Orleans and Lester Whitmer.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis welcomed everyone and there were introductions.

Mr. Carroll gave a Powerpoint presentation. He reported on the reorganization of National Capital Parks East. Mr. Carroll outlined the Superintendent's priorities.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis asked about National Park Service (NPS) funding levels. Mr. Carroll responded that their budget was stagnant.

Ms. Mach asked about the campground use. Mr. Carroll responded that campground reservations are now online and campground usage was increasing.

Mr. Carroll discussed visitors, programs, park projects (campsite improvements) and fire safety mitigation. He noted this was the Year of the Anacostia and indicated that Greenbelt Park would likely participate with the Friends of Still Creek on a clean up project.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis asked about long-term campers. Mr. Carroll responded you can stay up to 14 days.

Mr. Putens asked about sports activities on Greenbelt Park fields. Mr. Carroll responded that they don't permit organized sports. Mr. Putens asked about security cameras. Mr. Carroll responded that only the Park Police station has cameras.

Mr. Carroll discussed the proposed B-W Parkway transfer and widening. He noted the Parkway has some unique architectural elements. Mr. Carroll stated that Governor Hogan had met with NPS Secretary Zienke and discussed the transfer. NPS received an official request from the State and NPS is evaluating their response. Mr. Carroll believed that congressional legislation would be necessary for the transfer to move forward.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis asked if anyone at NPS was advocating to retain the Parkway. Mr. Carroll responded they were waiting for guidance.

Mr. Carroll stated that NPS staff were not aware of a transfer like this taking place previously. He discussed three prior efforts (50's, late 70's/early 80's and mid 90's) to transfer the Parkway.

Mr. Putens suggested the City may want to send comments to the National Park Service and Department of the Interior.

Mr. Roberts indicated that an impairment study might be needed.

Next, Mr. Carroll discussed Maglev. He noted the two alignments would parallel the Parkway, but be off the Federal land. He stated that any further proposal would go through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis asked about survey work taking place at Eleanor Roosevelt High School (ERHS). Ms. Ard indicated she would ask Principal McNeill.

Mr. Carroll explained the Hyperloop would be an underground transportation project connecting Baltimore to DC. He indicated NPS was still trying to assess the request.

Mr. Carroll reported on maintenance and repair projects including resurfacing, striping and vegetation removal projects.

Mr. Carroll discussed partnership opportunities. He noted programs with Greenbelt Recreation and Greenbelt Theatre. He also discussed the Every Kid in a Park, junior ranger and guest lecture programs. Mr. Carroll commented on the possible enabling of a Friends of Greenbelt Park group to help support the Park. Mayor Pro Tem Davis suggested including information about Greenbelt Park in the City's welcome packet.

Mr. Byrd asked for updates on Park Police issues. Mr. Carroll reported that commercial vehicles were an ongoing problem. He also indicated that emergency response had improved by coordinating with other agencies and expected this to continue.

Mr. Byrd asked about the impact of the government shutdown. Mr. Carroll responded that this shutdown was different than 2013 and noted that campers were allowed to remain and the park stayed open; however bathrooms were locked.

Mr. Byrd asked where NPS was leaning on the Maglev proposal. Mr. Carroll stated that NPS had provided comments indicating there would be a negative impact on the Parkway. Council discussed the possibility of obtaining the NPS comments via a FOIA request.

Information Items

Ms. Pope reported on a student that fell through an apartment window at Franklin Park. Ms. Mach requested a report from Franklin Park on this incident as well as the number of units with window guards installed.

Mayor Pro Tem Davis provided information on an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report presented at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee meeting. She also reported on the Maryland Municipal League (MML) Legislative Committee meeting.

The meeting ended at 10:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*David E. Moran
Assistant City Manager*