



## **CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSIONS AGENDA**

**Roosevelt Center Merchants Association  
Municipal Building  
Council Chambers  
25 Crescent Road  
Monday, January 06, 2020  
8:00 PM**

### **Work Session Packet - *Agenda***

- *Introductions*
- *Update from Merchants*
- *Council Discussion*
- *Questions and Answers*
- *Other Items*

Roosevelt Center Merchants Association Work Session  
Suggested Action:  
Work Session Minutes - November 9, 2016  
Work Session Minutes - January 10, 2018  
[WS161109.pdf](#)  
[WS180110.pdf](#)

## City Council Work Sessions Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: January 6, 2020

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Work Session Item

Agenda Section:

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**Subject:**

Roosevelt Center Merchants Association Work Session

**Suggested Action:**

Work Session Minutes - November 9, 2016

Work Session Minutes - January 10, 2018

**Attachments:**

[WS161109.pdf](#)

[WS180110.pdf](#)

*WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, November 9, 2016, to meet with the Roosevelt Center Merchants.*

*Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:03 p.m. The meeting was held in Room 201 of the Greenbelt Community Center.*

*PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Councilmember Konrad Herling was unable to attend.*

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

*ALSO PRESENT WERE: Dr. Caitlin McGrath, Greenbelt Theater and President of Roosevelt Center Merchants Association; Joe Timer, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative and Greenbelt Federal Credit Union; Joe Gareri and Barbara Ford, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative; Cindy Comproni, Greenbelt Federal Credit Union; Michael Hartman and Rich Greystone; New Deal Café; Diane Oberg, Greenbelt News Review; Susan Walker, Greenbelt Community Development Corporation; David Whaples, WMCRP/Architects; Leonard Wallace, Realty One; and Bill Orleans.*

*Mr. Herling wasn't able to attend tonight's work session but sent in several questions: 1) has there been a breakdown of the foot traffic for the different stores; and 2) has the Credit Union thought about providing hours on Saturday.*

*Dr. Caitlin McGrath advised that she missed the last Roosevelt Center Merchants Association (RCMA) meeting but gave a summary. She advised that the meetings are being moved from the last Thursday of the month to the last Wednesday. She also advised that most of the merchants participated in the Halloween parade.*

*Dr. McGrath also advised that the Roosevelt Center is doing well and it has room for growth. She advised that an ad highlighting Roosevelt Center with a map was placed in a travel guide, which was placed in 14 different hotels between College Park and Greenbelt. It came out last month and will get updated once a year. Council advised that the ad was a great idea and wants to work with Dr. McGrath on the ad for next year. Dr. McGrath said she would try to put them in the Welcome to Greenbelt bags. Mr. Putens requested more copies of the ad.*

*Mayor Jordan asked Dr. McGrath how many people visited Roosevelt Center. She answered by saying there are about 30,000 people that visit the Greenbelt Theater in a year but she didn't know how many people visited the Center. Michael Hartman advised there are three main destinations people come to visit at Roosevelt Center - the Greenbelt Art Center, the Greenbelt Theater and the New Deal Cafe. He advised that the New Deal Café is filled every weekend with people from Baltimore, DC, Virginia and Annapolis.*

*Dr. McGrath advised she didn't have any updates on the Bike Grant but said she would check with Ms. Hruby. Dr. McGrath also made a suggestion that a bike repair station be near the bike rack near Curves.*

*Leonard Wallace discussed a website or app for cell phone to show a map of Roosevelt Center. He advised he reserved a website "Greenbelt.City" that can be used for that purpose and can be advertised at Roosevelt Center.*

*David Whaples with WMCRP/Architects advised that the company was sold to Kathy Dixon and they are having a kickoff and launch of their new website event at Friends School.*

*Mr. Michael Hartman introduced Mr. Rich Greystone, the new Chief Manager at New Deal Café. Mr. Greystone gave the following update that they are going to start remodeling the kitchen at the end of this month and it should be fully operational by early January. Mr. Hartman also advised of another project, a coffee/espresso bar, starting either March or April of next year. Mr. Hartman did express concern about the water bill, noting that it ranged from \$1,000 to \$3,000 a month. He said each merchant should have their own meter.*

*Ms. Cindy Comproni advised that they are slowly making renovations to the Credit Union after being in the same space for 35 years. In response to Mr. Herling questions about Saturday hours, Ms. Comproni advised they will have to look into it.*

*All the merchants advised they had problems with either Comcast or Verizon. Mayor Jordan and Mr. Putens suggested that they all meet with each of the companies and invite Council to the meeting.*

*Mr. Joe Timer, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative, advised that they made a profit after two years of losses. Ms. Mach and Dr. McGrath complimented Mr. Timer on how well the produce section looked and the different programs they offer, such as the \$5.00 bag of groceries to the food pantry and the spare change program. Ms. Mach made a suggestion that the cashiers inform customers how they can become members of the Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative if they aren't already a member.*

*Mr. Timer also advised that WSSC shut off the water to the sprinkler system due to a water leak. Mr. McLaughlin advised that the City is in contact with WSSC in reference to this emergency and concern.*

*Dr. McGrath gave an update for the Greenbelt Theater, advising that they showed all the debates and the election results. Ms. Mach made a suggestion that the Greenbelt Theater should host a membership drive or have some type of notice about membership. Dr. McGrath advised they have about 900 members and that they notify members a month before expiration. Dr. McGrath advised they are about to kick off an end of the year event starting on December 3<sup>rd</sup> with the showing of "It's a Wonderful Life". It is to raise awareness of the cost of keeping the doors open to the theater for free events.*

*Dr. McGrath also advised that they are hiring a new Director Program Outreach on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Roberts suggested that the Greenbelt Theater should stop doing so many free activities. Dr. McGrath advised that the theater is booked thru December with different free programs and will rethink about transitioning in January.*

*All the merchants collectively have issues with the parking at Roosevelt Center during the Labor Day Festival and would like to be informed of the permits that are issued. Council advised they should meet with the Labor Day chair in the spring. Mr. McLaughlin advised that the RCMA will be emailed the list of permits that are issued for Roosevelt Center.*

*Mr. Timer advised that the bushes at Greenbelt Federal Credit Union are high and need to be cut down for security reasons. Ms. Davis advised that the light under the awning isn't good for the security cameras and management needs to be informed due to safety concerns.*

*Dr. McGrath said Anwar Saleh of the Greenbelt Barber and Stylist Shop would like the festivals to utilize more of the Roosevelt Center. She also made a suggestion that the holiday decorations for Roosevelt Center be up from Halloween through Valentine's Day.*

*Mayor Jordan asked about the smoking problem in the Center. Dr. McGrath advised it's getting better.*

*There was discussion about the food trucks at the festivals*

*Ms. Davis asked about the table or bench for the Step Club and the light fixture in the basement. Mr. McLaughlin advised that a picnic table was donated but a set of benches to match the ones on the other side of Curves is being worked on. Ms. Comproni advised she always suggests taking a flashlight when going into the basement.*

*Informational Items:*

*Several informational items were discussed.*

*The meeting ended at 10:30 p.m.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Shaniya Lashley-Mullen  
Administrative Assistant*

*Work Session of the Greenbelt City Council held Wednesday, January 10, 2018, to meet with the Roosevelt Center Merchants.*

*Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:04 p.m. The meeting was held in the Room 201 in the Community Center.*

*PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Leta M. Mach, Colin A. Byrd, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Ms. Davis was on travel & Ms. Pope was unable to attend.*

*STAFF PRESENT WERE: David Moran, Assistant City Manager and Bonita Anderson, City Clerk.*

*ALSO PRESENT WERE: Dr. Caitlin McGrath, Greenbelt Theater and President of Roosevelt Center Merchants Association; Joe Timer, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative and Greenbelt Federal Credit Union; Joe Gareri and Barbara Ford, Greenbelt Consumers Cooperative; Cindy Comproni, Greenbelt Federal Credit Union; Michael Hartman and Rich Greystone, New Deal Café; David Whaples, WMCRP/Architects and Gretchen Schock, Bee Yoga Fusion, LLC.*

*Update from Merchants*

*Dr. McGrath mentioned the recent snow day event that was held at the Theatre for the children. Mr. Timer stated that the COOP was open during the ice storm. Dr. McGrath discussed the development of a website and other marketing initiatives. She stated there is a need for signage improvement to attract customer to patronize the Roosevelt Center. There was discussion about obtaining an electric sign with paid advertisement. The active businesses who participate in the meetings pay \$100 in dues.*

*There was discussion about the homeless issue and the safety of the people. Ms. Comproni expressed her concern about the homeless individuals hanging out during business hours. She had to reach out to parking enforcement about overnight vehicles parked in the short term parking and families sleeping in their vehicle overnight. Dr. Caitlin mentioned the people hanging out, smoking behind the movie theater and yelling at each other.*

*Mayor Jordan stated that the Center is about 90% occupied, business wise. Dr. Caitlin mentioned that the future of the center depends on what type of businesses the landlord is seeking. Mr. Roberts inquired about the landlord not receiving rent from a business owner.*

*Ms. Comproni stated that the signage outside of the Credit Union had been replaced, and the security system had been updated. She also stated that they are experiencing issues with their phone lines. The Credit Union had recently added an online banking app and mobility service to their website. She also mentioned that the Credit Union changed the format of their quarterly newsletter and that they are educating their members on the Equifax breach and their credit. Ms. Comproni mentioned the upcoming annual community events they were hosting.*

*Ms. Natoli spoke on behalf of Generous Joe's. She stated that they recently painted the inside of the shop. They have concerns of police cameras not functioning properly outside of the store.*

*Ms. Comproni mentioned that she had informed the merchants about the recommendations on the security and cameras at Roosevelt Center that Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) presented to the City Council.*

*Mr. Whaples of WMCRP Architects mentioned that his firm is under new management. He also mentioned that most of their workload comes from Montgomery County, Baltimore, Virginia and Washington, DC. Mr. Whaples stated that his firm specializes in architectural designs for educational institutions and religious organizations.*

*Ms. Schock mentioned that her business Bee Yoga Fusion, LLC has been located at the Center for two years and that all her classes are sold out. She has hired two instructors and she is in the process of hiring a third. Ms. Schock stated that her customers have concerns as to where they can park their bicycles. She inquired on behalf of her customers if a bicycle rack can be installed at the Center.*

*New Deal representative stated the bar was doing well, but they are experiencing issues with the pipes and wiring in their establishment. It was mentioned that the building needs some attention. Dr. McGrath mentioned grant funding for Roosevelt Center façade improvements and that the windows are unified with historical pictures of the City.*

*Mr. Timer stated that the Public Works Department did a great job decorating Roosevelt Center during the holidays. He also stated that they are in the process of replacing the roof in phases. Mr. Timer mentioned that WSSC had to turn off the sprinkler system in order to pinpoint the leak at Roosevelt Center, which is a major issue. The City will be having a stakeholders meeting with WSSC in January and will discuss the issue.*

*Dr. McGrath gave an update to the Council about the status of the Theatre. She stated that the box office is not doing well. They are still receiving grant funding from the Community Foundation Grant which has to be spent by the end of June 2018. Dr. McGrath mentioned that the door hangers are still very successful; they have issued approximately 2,500. She also mentioned that the seats in the Theatre need to be replaced and the cost is approximately \$90K. The Theatre has \$30K in the bank, and they were able to raise \$3,600 through Facebook. The anniversary of the Theatre will be celebrated in May 2018. She is working on marketing strategies for the Theatre.*

#### Council Discussion

*Mr. Putens inquired about the merchant lease if it states the merchant will incur the repair cost of the space occupied by the merchant. He also inquired if the owner is within standards of the code.*

*Mr. Roberts mentioned the need for the business center along with changes and attractions. Mr. Byrd asked the determination of how they pick a film to show. Dr. McGrath replied that they have a weekly Monday meeting to discuss what film to show.*

*Adjournment 10:12 pm*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Bonita Anderson, CMC  
City Clerk*