

BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL
Held Wednesday, May 7, 2024

Discussion: Recognition Groups – Group 2, FY 2025 Proposed Budget

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 7:05 pm., held in Council Chambers and virtually via Zoom.

In attendance: Councilmembers Amy E. Knesel, Danielle P. McKinney, Jenni A. Pompei, Silke I. Pope, Rodney M. Roberts, Kristen L.K. Weaver and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.

City Staff: Josué Salmerón, City Manager; Bertha Gaymon, City Treasurer; Greg Varda, Director of Recreations; Nicole DeWald, Arts Supervisor and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Deputy City Clerk.

Others present: Robert Candey, Greenbelt Makerspace; Bill Jones, Steve Skolnik, and Frank Gervasi, Greenbelt Refugee Aid Committee; Meghan Haney, Friends of New Deal Café Arts; Ian Gleason, Greenbelt Babe Ruth; Carolyn Lambright-Davis and Maggie Callahan, CHEARS; Orin Howard and Kevin Lockhart, Boys and Girls Club; Julie Ann Hawk, Bob Kleinberg, Carol Shaw, Greenbelt Arts Center; Shaymar Higgs and Bob Rand, The Space; Greg Rusk, Greenbelt Farmer's Market; and others.

Technical Issues

Ms. Gaymon informed attendees about technical issues with Council Chambers as staff were addressing. Attendees were asked to remain patient during this process.

Greenbelt Makerspace

The City Council reviewed a budget request from the Greenbelt Makerspace for a tool-lending library to provide community equipment. Mr. Robert Candey noted that a successful grant will support the organization's operations next year.

Greenbelt Refugee Aid Committee Budget Requests and Projects Update

Frank Gervasi, Steve Skolnik, Bill Jones and Joyce Campbell explained that the Greenbelt Refugee Aid Committee (GRACE) supports refugees fleeing Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Fully volunteer-run, GRACE has assisted four refugees through the Federal Humanitarian Parole Program and plans to welcome more. They currently provide housing for refugees and partner with organizations to promote self-sufficiency. Funding comes from personal contributions and a City grant.

Friends of New Deal Café Arts Planning Upcoming Music Festivals and Art Shows

Meghan Haney, Friends of New Deal Café Arts (FONDCA) and Council discussed upcoming festivals and art shows at the Roosevelt Center. Concerned about rising sound costs, they requested a \$3,000 budget for three music festivals. Mayor Jordan proposed waiving fees for non-profits such as the Blues Society in exchange for sales percentages and suggested uniform fees for all groups. The "Crazy Quilt Festival" was rescheduled to the fall 2024.

Greenbelt Babe Ruth Organization Grant Request Review

Council considered a \$3,500 grant request from Ian Gleason of the Greenbelt Babe Ruth Organization for field maintenance, equipment, and uniforms. They praised the organization's management. Bill Orleans inquired need for athletic groups to fund field upkeep to which Mr. Varda noted their responsibility for the mound with other maintenance handled by Public Works. Mr. Gleason also shared plans for a state tournament and schedule in the local newsletter.

Chesapeake Education Arts Research Society Bay Projects Community Engagement

The Chesapeake Education Arts Research Society (CHEARS) updated on its mission to support the Chesapeake Bay watershed through projects like three (3) Sisters Gardens and Earth Squad. They highlighted community initiatives including Green Man Festival and a citizen science project in Guatemala. Council expressed satisfaction and considered expanding the Earth Squad.

Greenbelt Arts Center's Impact and Future Plans

Council welcomed Bob Kleinberg and Carol Shaw from Greenbelt Arts Center to discuss their Mission as an entertainment hub, their audience engagement efforts and plans for the next season highlighting accessibility and grants for sustainability.

The SPACE: Free Art for All

Shaymar Higgs shared the SPACE: Free Art for All journey since opening as a pop-up art space in 2018, their various community programs, including yoga classes, ukulele and keyboard classes, capoeira, drum circle, and a new mental health program. Council recognized the organization's successful efforts to diversify funding streams and collaborate with other groups.

Greenbelt Farmer's Market Vendor Updates

Council welcomed Greg Rusk and Scott Fifield from Greenbelt Farmer's Market which will add six new vendors and keep 25 from last year. It will still accept SNAP payments and provide educational resources. Schlegel, a long-time vendor will focus on community food needs. Mayor Jordan is interested in supporting with approximately 12 volunteers.

Boys and Girls Club Budget and Sports Programs

Council discussed Boys and Girls Club's Operating Grant application and their sports programs, including the addition of flag football, ongoing status of basketball and soccer with Orin Howard via Kevin Lockhart's cell phone. Mr. Howard noted a decline in volunteerism and expressed need for new sponsors to support the programs with a desire to bring back the Cheerleading Program and increase collaboration between different sports in Greenbelt.

The meeting ended at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen,
Deputy City Clerk