WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL
Held Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Discussion: The City Employees Retirement Plan

Mayor Jordan started meeting at 7:30 p.m., held in Council Chambers and virtually via Zoom.

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

City Staff: Josué Salmerón, City Manager; Dawane Martinez, Human Resources Director and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Deputy City Clerk.

Others present: Ray Reeves, Senior Advisor, and Andrew Prevost, Managing Director; NFP Retirement Plan Service Team; and others.

Mr. Salmerón explained that tonight's work session aims to receive information from the city's healthcare services broker about switching the city's retirement plan from Mission Square to Nationwide. He mentioned that current staff has already received a presentation and tonight they will present information to Council and retirees. Mr. Martinez added that this process began two and a half years ago and formally entered RFP process. Three finalists were interviewed and ultimately Nationwide was selected. Mr. Martinez also stated that retirees can maintain their funding accounts with Mission Square while current staff can transition to Nationwide.

Mr. Reeves and Mr. Prevost presented a PowerPoint outlining the proposed changes for switching the City's retirement plan from Mission Square to Nationwide. The new strategy aims to enhance participant services and outcomes, provide better retirement educational services, offer improved investment solutions at lower costs, upgrade technology platforms, and enhance customer service. Mr. Prevost mentioned that the target date for implementing and transitioning to the new retirement plan is mid-2025. Participants will have the opportunity to attend educational workshops with Nationwide.

Mr. Prevost explained the impact of the transition to Nationwide on current staff, while retirees will maintain their plan with Mission Square, which includes a dedicated plan coordinator. This coordinator will facilitate regular communications, group meetings, and webinars. The transition is expected to take three months and will involve minimal disruptions. Mr. Martinez noted that the city had discussions with the City Manager and the Human Resources Director of Leesburg, Virginia, which made this transition feasible. Mr. Prevost also mentioned that he will follow up with the Council regarding other local municipalities that have successfully made this transition.

There was a discussion about communication throughout this process. Ms. Pope emphasized that information needs to be shared with current staff and retirees as soon as possible.

Ms. Weaver raised a question regarding budget constraints and Mr. Prevost responded that the city does not face any budgetary limitations. He explained that current employees and retirees

cover record-keeping costs and other fees. Additionally, Mr. Reeves noted that the average fee for the proposed investment options is less than 0.25%. In contrast, the fees for the existing investment line are over 1% higher.

There was a brief discussion about managed accounts. Mr. Prevost explained that Mission Square charges an additional fee for managing participants' accounts. Ms. McKinney suggested providing documentation outlining the specific fees participants must pay. Mr. Prevost noted that he would present a comparison of the costs to give a current overview of the situation.

David Moran, a retiree, expressed his concerns about the city's transition from Mission Square as its retirement plan. He noted that Mission Square had proposed lowering their fees to match or be more competitive than Nationwide's. Mr. Moran pointed out that the city has been with Mission Square for over 40 years, benefiting from their educational and financial services. He also mentioned that there had been no communication with him regarding this change and encouraged the city to survey current staff and retirees about the potential switch from Mission Square to Nationwide for the retirement plan.

Mr. Prevost responded to a question read by Ms. Weaver from Dominick during the Zoom meeting. He noted that transferring funds and making any changes are handled electronically. Mayor Jordan proposed organizing a group session to help some employees with these changes. Mr. Prevost also mentioned that communication regarding the traditions will be shared through all available formats for all participants. Mr. Prevost answered a question from Scott Yankowy that Ms. Weaver read on Zoom, stating that most recordkeepers have a one-time withdrawal fee and will follow up with the exact cost.

Di Quynn Reno, a retiree, expressed concern about the lack of communication with retirees regarding this change. She emphasized that retirees should have been informed about the change before tonight's work session. Reno urged the city to take responsibility and engage with Mission Square. In response, Mr. Martinez explained that the city had made several attempts to reach Mission Square, including connecting with current staff and during open enrollment periods.

Cecile Craze, a retiree, expressed her satisfaction with Mission Square. She asked if there had been any outreach to involve Mission Square in the RFP (Request for Proposal) process. Mr. Prevost explained that Mission Square was included in the rebid process involving six vendors. Three vendors were interviewed, and ultimately, Nationwide was selected. In response to a question from Ms. Craze, Mr. Prevost mentioned a reduction in Mission Square fees due to the RFP process. Ms. Craze also requested that the original RFP be made public and that previous documentation be added to the City's website.

Bill Orleans, a resident of Greenbelt, requested that Mission Square be allowed to speak at tonight's work session. In response to a question posed by Mr. Orleans, Mr. Prevost clarified that NFP has no relationship with record keepers and is entirely independent of both parties. He emphasized that NFP offers the best investment solutions at the lowest cost for participants and retirees. Mary Johnson, a retiree, expressed no issues with Mission Square but raised concerns about the lack of communication with the city. She mentioned that she had not been notified about the open enrollment period. Following a request from Mayor Jordan, Mr. Salmerón

indicated that he would speak to Mr. Reeves about reintroducing three analyses on the city's website. This will include RFP, NFP fee and the original report.

Mr. Prevost responded to Ms. Weaver's (Beverly Palau read on Zoom) stating that the investment menu can be utilized on any record-keeping platform without restrictions. There was further discussion about communication with the retirees. Ms. Pope requested a review of the communication process. William Smith, a retiree, expressed that he has not received any notification from the City regarding his health insurance or information about the changes to the retirement plan. He emphasized that communication between the city and retirees needs to improve. Ms. Knesel requested that Mission Square reduce fees to be included in the updated packet of peer group fees for the Council's review.

Steve Taylor from Mission Square mentioned that he has worked with numerous retirees and has maintained a strong relationship with the city for over forty years. Frank Cossack, Relationship Manager at Mission Square, added that serving the City of Greenbelt has been a privilege for more than four decades. He expressed a desire for Mission Square to engage with the city regarding tonight's discussion about costs and a comparable lineup to the one presented earlier. The aim is to find a solution to preserve this longstanding relationship.

Ms. Quynn Reno asked who would provide the educational workshops and financial planning services. She also said that she and other retirees would require direct communication from the city concerning any changes. Mr. Prevost responded that as investment consultants for the city, NFP will coordinate and facilitate the workshops and one-on-one meetings with Nationwide representatives. Ms. Weaver shared a Zoom comment from Debbie Coulter, indicating she had not communicated with the city regarding tonight's meeting or the proposed change of retirement companies. The Council pledges to work with staff to ensure that communication is sent to current and retired employees.

Informational Items

Mr. Salmerón provided the Council with an update on the recent fire at Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station Apartments. The meeting ended at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

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Deputy City Clerk