



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of February 10, 2016

Follow-Up from Meeting of January 27, 2016

Takoma Junction Legal Fees – A resident inquired about the amount spent on legal fees for the Takoma Junction Project and wondered if the budget had been inappropriately exceeded. The contract with Bregman, Berbert, Schwartz & Gilday, LLC was for up to \$30,000, with the understanding that it may need to be adjusted by Council as we got into the project.

When early billing exceeded \$18,000, the Council was alerted and communications took place between staff and the lead attorney regarding charges. Some adjustments were made and staff continues to monitor the costs closely. Staff believes the amount being billed is appropriate for the work being done. The amount that has been billed so far is \$35,372 with some additional charges pending.

Per the City Code, the City Manager has the authority to exceed a contracted amount by 25%. If it looks like an amount will exceed the contracted amount, it is our practice to have the City Manager alert the City Council. If funds greater than the 25% are required, action to authorize amendment of the contract should be taken by Council.

The Council has been advised that if it wishes to continue to work with the firm, an ordinance to authorize a contract amendment will be needed.

Other Matters

Newsletter Printing Delayed – The Takoma Park *Newsletter* was not printed when it was scheduled to be printed because there was a transmission problem between the design firm and the printer. When no hard copies of the *Newsletter* could be found, we discovered that the printer had never received the copy. Once alerted, the problem was corrected and the printing and mailing took place the same day. The *Newsletter* had been posted on the website on schedule.

Carroll Avenue Bridge Renovation – Recent communications from State Highway indicate that closure of the Carroll Avenue Bridge over Sligo Creek may occur in late summer or early fall. Public Works Director Daryl Braithwaite will be offering to meet

with a representative of the Safe Roadways Committee to review requested measures to reduce possible negative impacts of traffic rerouting.

Presidents Day Holiday Schedule – The City offices and facilities will be closed Sunday, February 14 and Monday, February 15 for Presidents Day. The Police Department is always open for emergency services.

Upcoming Events

Stump the Chump: Neighborhood Energy Challenge Edition – Not sure which energy-efficiency improvements are worth the investment? Bring your energy audit reports, contractor proposals, and toughest energy efficiency questions for a second opinion without the sales pressure. Our “chump” is Sustainability Manager Gina Mathias, who will be at Historic Takoma, 7328 Carroll Avenue, Thursday, February 18, at 7:00 pm to answer your questions.

Neighbor to Neighbor Discussion about the MCPS Budget – Tuesday, February 23 from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Community Center Auditorium. Co-sponsored by the Takoma Foundation and the City of Takoma Park, there will be a discussion on the proposed FY 2017 Operating Budget for the Montgomery County Public Schools, facilitated by Denise Bracalilly Stultz from the MCPS Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships.

2016 Safe Grow Lawn Care Event: Switching to Organic Lawn Care Methods – Tuesday, March 1 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in the Community Center Auditorium. Homeowners attending the event will receive a free soil test and ten homeowners will be selected for a free lawn care consultation.

My Schedule

No time away is planned until late May.

Suzanne R. Ludlow, AICP CPM
City Manager, City of Takoma Park
SuzanneL@takomaparkmd.gov
301-891-7229