



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – May 24, 2017 Agenda Item 6

Work Session

Discussion of Police Officers at City Council Meetings

Recommended Council Action

Discuss and provide staff direction.

Context with Key Issues

Beginning in late 2015, the City Manager requested the regular presence of a police officer at weekly Council meetings. The request was made in the interest of ensuring the safety of Councilmembers, staff, residents, and others in attendance at Council meetings. While there are almost always officers in the building, police staff at the time suggested that being at the meetings would enable the officer present to assess a potential situation and assist in de-escalation if necessary, rather than reacting to a call for assistance. Since the request was made, an officer has been present at most meetings, although they are not always in attendance for the entire meeting depending on whether there are more urgent matters requiring their attention.

At a recent administrative session held on March 22, 2017, the Council briefly discussed their preferences regarding the presence of a police officer at Council meetings as part of a larger discussion focused on emergency preparedness. At that meeting, Council agreed to consider the topic further at a regular business meeting.

Council Priority

A Livable Community for All

Environmental Impact of Action

None

Fiscal Impact of Action

The presence of a police officer at meetings does not have an impact on the budget since those in attendance are already on duty.

Racial Equity Impact of Action

We do not believe this Council action will adversely affect or disproportionately impact any particular group.