

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CLOSED SESSION, VOTING SESSION AND WORK SESSION
Wednesday, July 6, 2022**

MINUTES

Present: Mayor Stewart, Councilmember Kovar, Councilmember Dyballa, Councilmember Kostiuk, Councilmember Seamens, Councilmember Smith, Councilmember Searcy

Also present: City Manager Fox, Deputy City Manager Clarke, and City Clerk Carpenter

The City Council convened at 6:00 PM in the Auditorium.

VOTE TO CONVENE INTO CLOSED SESSION

The Council reconvened in open session at 7:30 p.m. in the Auditorium.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA / AGENDA SCHEDULING UPDATE

Ms. Stewart provided an update on future agendas.

FOR THE RECORD

Ms. Stewart read the proclamation Recognizing the 25th Anniversary of Unification (July 1)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jim Douglas, Maple Avenue, thanked the Ms. Stewart for recognizing the 25th anniversary of unification. He stated that there was a visual presentation at Historic Takoma Inc. (HTI). He said that on September 18 HTI hoped to have a panel of two or three Takoma residents, City staff, and elected officials to reflect and discuss the unification process.

Colleen Cordes, Ward 1, said that there was irregular proposal for a small cell tower at the intersection of Boston and Philadelphia Avenues and Piney Branch Road. She stated that there was a new taller pole that was never approved by the County and City. Ms. Cordes said that after speaking to Public Works Director Braithwaite a survey needs to be conducted to determine right-of-way ownership.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Smith thanked the residents for their comments. He thanked the Takoma Park Independence Day Committee and staff for the parade.

Mr. Kostiuk thanked the commenters and the Takoma Park Independence Day Committee. She announced that the National League of Cities conference for board and committees was at the end of July.

Ms. Dyballa announced the Long-Branch Sligo neighborhood association meeting with the police on Tuesday, the July 12th. She shared information about the County property tax credits for veterans and long-term resident seniors.

Ms. Searcy thanked the commenters. She announced that resident comments regarding the sidewalk project design on Larch, Kentland and Hopewell Avenues were due on Monday, July 18. She said that the Hillwood Manor playground stormwater work was complete. She acknowledged the passing of Reggie Chavez.

Mr. Seamens commented on a new City resident that arrived from El Salvador.

Mr. Kovar thanked the Police for attending a community meeting about recent criminal activity in Ward 1. He stated that County staff went out to Ed Wilhelm area to address some tree issues. He asked the City staff to address the overgrowth at Armstrong park. He thanked Ms. Cordes for her efforts on the cell towers. He said that he would like to see the City work with the County to do a survey.

Ms. Stewart thank everyone for parade and block party. She acknowledged the Public Work staff and Police for all their hard work at the parade. She read a thank you note from a member of the tenant association from 112 Lee Avenue thanking Council for the grant applications resolution. Ms. Stewart acknowledged the passing of Reggie Chavez.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Fox thanked City staff for their work at the July 4 celebration. He recognized Park and Recreation month.

VOTING SESSION

1. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Resolution Supporting National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund Grant Application – Multifamily Property Improvements

B. Resolution Supporting National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund Grant Application – Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Support

C. Resolution Supporting National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund Grant Application – 112 Lee Avenue

Mr. Smith moved the ordinance. Mr. Seamens seconded the motion. (VOTING FOR: Stewart, Kovar, Dyballa, Kostiuk, Searcy, Seamens, Smith)

Resolution 2022- (attached)

Resolution 2022 – (attached)

Resolution 2022- (attached)

WORK SESSION

2. Discussion of Proposed Election Code Amendments

Ms. Carpenter explained that the Board of Election made changes to the language in the code in the campaign finance section and additional language regarding a political committee registration. She said that the authority line section of the code was revised to exclude small items like buttons or pins. Ms. Carpenter stated that the Board reduced the number of campaign finance reports from three to two and added language to clarify that no person may use a ballot that was issued by the City for someone else. Ms. Carpenter introduced Matt Ling a member of the Board of Elections.

Mr. Ling added that there was also a change to the code that exempted apparel for the authority line.

Mr. Kovar commented on the additional language regarding political committees. He said that he was concerned that people will not understand what constitutes the formation of a political committee. He said that he was also concerned about reducing the campaign finance reports to two. He said that the timeframe between the first report and the second was too long and that it would not allow for time for someone to become aware and point out of an issue before the election.

Ms. Stewart said that she would like to see the report reduced to two but that she shared the same concerns Mr. Kovar had with the timeline. She said that she sent Ms. Carpenter some suggestions addressing the concern.

Ms. Kostiuk commented on political committees and asked for clarification on the language regarding political committees. She suggested adding language regarding contribution restriction on the political committee section of the code.

Ms. Dyballa agreed with Ms. Kostiuk's comments about political committees. She asked for clarification on the political committee section of the code.

Ms. Kostiuk requested clarification on the code section on special election. She also asked about the authority line and suggested language exempting items that fall under a certain size. Ms. Kostiuk asked Mr. Ling about the apparel exemption.

Mr. Ling replied that the Board's thoughts were that an authority line on apparel made them less attractive.

Ms. Stewart agreed with Ms. Kostiuk's language suggestion about exempting items that fall under a certain size. She said that it can be really hard to remember what was or was not exempt.

Mr. Kovar made some general recommendation about the City election process.

Mr. Ling said that the Board's top priority was to have both a website displaying all the information for candidates and schedule seminars to address candidate questions.

Ms. Dyballa suggested a revision to the language regarding political committee registration.

Ms. Kostiuk requested clarification on the code section regarding foreign national contributions.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned for the evening at 8:38 p.m.