

2000 Marbury Drive

District Heights, Maryland 20747

# Work Session Meeting Minutes

# Tuesday, October 24, 2023, 7pm

# HYPBRID |Limited Capacity In-Person & via YouTube

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

The Work Session City Meeting of the City of District Heights was held on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, via HYBRID fashion: Limited capacity in-person and via YouTube Livestream. Mayor Miller called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

**QUORUM**

In attendance: Mayor Miller, Commissioner Janifer, Commissioner Gomez, and Commissioner Tilghman. Staff in attendance: David Street- City Manager, Starr Jefferson -City Clerk, Ronald Tarpley – Chief of Police, Nikesha Pancho – HR Director, Jeffrey Taylor – Director of Recreation

**AGENDA ACCEPTANCE**

Commissioner Janifer moved to accept the agenda for the City Work Session of Tuesday, October 24, 2023.

Commissioner Gomez seconded the motion which carried a 3-0-1 vote (VMH absent, MM abstained).

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Gomez moved that the City Commission approve the Consent Agenda for October 24, 2023. Commissioner Tilghman seconded the motion which carried a 3-0-1 vote (VMH absent, MM abstained).

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Item 7 – Legislative Initiative Local Land Use – David Street and Tony Perez**

Mr. Street and Mr. Perez presented information to the Commission about a potential legislative initiative they believe the City Commission should consider taking an early position on.In the 2012 session, HB 892 was introduced, which would effectively authorize a governing body of a qualifying municipal corporation by resolution to exercise the powers of the Prince George's County Planning Board, the zoning hearing examiner for Prince George's County, or the County Council for Prince George's County, sitting as a district council, to make specified land use decisions; subjecting the exercise of those powers to the substantive and procedural requirements and standards established in the Prince George's County zoning ordinance. In effect, this legislation would have returned land use authority back to local governments in Prince George’s County.

Mr. Street expressed the need for the Commission to present strong and fervent support for the coming initiative.

Commissioner Gomez suggested taking our position to PGCMA and to continue garnering support amongst other municipalities. Mr. Perez shared the conversation at a municipality meeting where Laurel boasted about being the only municipality in Maryland with its own zoning authority and Mr. Perez feels they are “thriving” as a result.

Commissioner Janifer moved that the City Commission adopt Resolution 23-06 Statement in Support of Local Land Use Authority as provided in Attachment 1. Commissioner Gomez seconded the motion which carried a 4-0-0 vote (VMH absent).

**Item 4 – Revised Recreation Fee – Jeffrey Taylor**

Mr. Taylor presented to the Commission prices and fees for recreational services for review by the mayor and Commission.

Upon approval the Recreation Department will offer all services through the new website software system, RecDesk. The website’s software will allow the Parks and Recreation Department to collect fees electronically instead of cash payments, and track participants easily and more effectively.

Commissioner Gomez asked for clarity whether the prices were monthly or daily. Mr. Taylor confirmed that the pricing presented is based on monthly membership.

Mr. Taylor shared his excitement about the coming attractions about the

Commissioner Tilghman suggested that $5 membership for Staff may be excessive and instead offer an employee benefit instead. Mr. Street felt that there may be tax implications adding a benefit to the employee compensation plan.

Mayor Miller scheduled for this topic to be revisited on the next work session, no vote was taken.

**Item 5 – Economic Development – David Street**

In July, staff prepared a draft growth area to facilitate the Commission’s initial conversations on annexation and economic development. The example growth area envisions the growth boundaries of District Heights to be Pennsylvania Avenue to the south, Walker Mill Road to the west and north, and Ritchie Road to the east. The denoted boundaries are for discussion purposes; however, they do accomplish several economic goals of annexation Mr. Street cited for example, the boundaries center the City around Marlboro Pike between Silver Hill/Walk Mill Road and Ritchie Road, creating a downtown corridor that the City can improve, promote, and establish as its commercial base. A secondary commercial corridor is established to the north towards the intersection of Walker Mill and Ritchie

Commissioner Gomez inquired how the City would begin approaching larger organizations, such as the Arch Dioses.

Mr. Street expressed that the best way to approach this would be by cooperative or Opt-In process. The process you would approach a potential future resident with a value proposition for opting into the city would apply to businesses, civic organizations, etc. Mr. street referenced Commissioner Tilghman’s earlier point that the City is looking to spot fill within the Pro plan.

Commissioner Gomez expressed optimism for beginning growth with Figure 3 Inner Pike Alternative.

Figure 3 provides an alternative to Growth Area A which backs the eastern boarder of the City away from Ritchie Road and only captures the residential neighborhoods rather than the neighborhoods in addition to the North Forestville Elementary School and Community Center, Ritchie Road, and the various parcels that front Ritchie Road.

Commissioner Gomez moved that the City Commission adopt Municipal Growth Area A “Inner Pike” as shown in Figure 3 and direct staff to conduct a fiscal analysis on the cost for service delivery for that area.

Commissioner Tilghman seconded the motion which carried a Yes-4 No- 0 (VMH absent)

Commissioner Tilghman expressed reservation about the City taking on the Growth outlined in Growth Area B “Outer Pike” in Figure 5 especially with the

Commissioner Gomez reminded the Commission that these discussions are purely for long term planning. She encouraged the Commission to have a dreamer’s mindset about the potential of where they envision the City in 20 years. Commissioner Tilghman revisited his concern regarding current City staffing levels, particularly in the Police Department.

Commissioner Tilghman moved to table the discussion to adopt Municipal Growth Area B “Outer Pike” as shown in Figure 5 for a future Work Session.

Commissioner Janifer seconded the motion which carried a Yes 3 No- 0 vote (VMH absent; MM abstained).

**Item 6 – Pay Parity: Uniformed Pay Plan and Implementation Plan**

Mr. Street reminded the Commission of the outcome of the September 26, 2023 Work Session where the Commission confirmed several policy decisions regarding the pay plan for the City’s uniformed positions; the Commission approved the City’s targeted recruitment region as the Mid-Atlantic, the City’s salary comparator region as Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, DC (DMV) and the target percentage of market as 110 percent. The Commission further approved a step and grade system for the police pay plan.

Mr. Street returned to the Commission the pay bands and steps for the city’s Police Department and presented the proposed police play pan accounting for Commission direction and some adjustments for internal equity.

The pay plan creates eight grades and maintains the City’s current law enforcement ranking structure.

Commissioner Gomez moved that the City Commission adopt the Police Step and Grade system provided in Tables 1 and 2 and direct the City Manager to implement the new pay plan as described in Figure 1 and Table 3 beginning in November 2023.

Commissioner Janifer seconded the motion which carried a 4-0 vote (VMH absent).

**MAYOR & COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Tilghman congratulated Krystal Oriadah on her new baby.

Commissioner Tilghman announced the Fall Festival from 12pm -4pm and additionally, Tuesday, October 31, 2023, Annual Trunk-or-Treat at Woodland Springs.

A Sowing Garlic workshop will be held on Sunday, October 29th at 2:00 pm

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Janifer moved to adjourn the Work Session meeting and seconded by Commissioner Tilghman which carried a 3-0 vote (VMH absent; MM abstained).

The Work Session adjourned at 8:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Starr Jefferson

City Clerk