

**Official Minutes of the City of Mount Rainier**

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING/WORK SESSION

**DATE: May 3, 2016**

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, UPPER LEVEL CITY HALL

**Call to Order**

7:00 PM, Council Chambers, City Hall, One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier MD

**Presiding Officer**

Councilmember Bryan Knedler

**Officials Present**

Councilmember Jesse Christopherson

Councilmember Tracy Loh

**Officials Absent**

Mayor Malinda Miles

Councilmember Shivali Shah

**Staff Present**

City Manager Miranda Braatz

Interim City Manager Larry Hughes

City Treasurer Vijay Manjani

**Minutes provided by:**

Brishay Corbin

During the review of the agenda, Councilwoman Loh requested to add a Gateway CDC discussion to the agenda.

**Motion to approve the Council meeting and Work Session agendas:** Councilwoman Tracy Loh

**Second:** Councilman Jesse Christopherson

**Vote Recorded: 3-0, Motion Passed**

**Announcements**

Interim City Manager Hughes announced his plans of getting a Street Department contract. There is a "Welcome Reception" Thursday evening, May 5<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM at the Police Station to welcome the new-hire City manager, Miranda Braatz. It's Teacher Appreciation Week at Thomas Stone Elementary and the principal requested that the community bring tokens of

appreciation for the teachers. Also, Arbor Day was rescheduled for Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 PM at Spring Park.

### **Ordinance 02-2016 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading**

Councilwoman Loh conducted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading for Ordinance 02-2016, “*Amending Chapter 3, Building Code, of the Mount Rainier Code to Provide for the Issuance of Permits for Modular Homes.*” The utility of this permit is for the City to be aware of when a modular home is being transported and installed in Mount Rainier.

**Motion to approve Ordinance 02-2016:** Councilman Jesse Christopherson

**Second:** Councilwoman Tracy Loh

**Vote Recorded: 3-0, Motion Passed**

### **Bike Share Letter**

Councilwoman Loh explained the bike sharing process; borrowing bicycles for a certain amount of time and then returning them to increase mobility. Prince George’s County Department of Public Works and Transportation asked for a letter of Support from Mount Rainier expressing agreement and enthusiasm for this project. Councilwoman Loh created a draft letter.

**Motion to approve the letter expressing Mount Rainier’s support for bringing in capital bike share to Prince George’s County:** Councilwoman Tracy Loh

**Second:** Councilman Jesse Christopherson

**Vote Recorded: 3-0, Motion Passed**

### **Neighborhood Development Company Street Sense Response**

The Council discussed the proposed response that had been drafted by the staff, which grants an additional 60 days from their initial April 5<sup>th</sup> request. Councilwoman Loh felt that the current letter required corrections before being sent. The Council proceeded to make alterations to the letter.

**Motion to adopt the letter as re-written:** Councilman Jesse Christopherson

**Second:** Councilwoman Tracy Loh

**Vote Recorded: 3-0, Motion Passed**

**Motion to adjourn to Work Session:** Councilwoman Tracy Loh

**Second:** Councilman Jesse Christopherson

**Vote Recorded: 3-0, Motion Passed**

### **Gateway Community Development Corporation**

Anthony Henderson, Administrative Officer, wanted to offer a thank you to the Mayor, Council, and staff of Mount Rainier for their partnership in creating public service announcements that

featured local artists to promote their Open Studio Tour. Gateway was also creating Mount Rainier's banner that would be on display at the Maryland Municipal League convention. A draft is currently waiting to be finalized.

### **Property Tax**

Councilwoman Loh provided her research on adopting a tiered property tax structure which would be divided as regular houses, vacant properties, and blighted properties. Councilman Christopherson believes that the City cannot impose a tiered property tax but there are certain tax credits available. Councilman Knedler wanted to revisit the topic with the City Attorney for a definitive answer. Councilwoman Loh requested to add an evaluation of the City Attorney's contract to the July Work Session agenda.

### **Speed Limit on 34<sup>th</sup> Street**

Councilman Christopherson voiced the importance in fixing the broken flasher located between Arundel Road and Windom Road and reducing the speed limit on 34<sup>th</sup> Street from 25 MPH to 20 MPH. City Manager Braatz was tasked with determining which city the flasher belongs to.

### **Fiscal Year 2017 Budget**

City Treasurer Manjani consulted with the Council on their concerned budget items. The Council reviewed staff and structure changes by their consultant and also discussed the positions and duties for Director of Code Enforcement, Assistant City Manager, and full-time/part-time Administrative Assistants.

### **Mount Rainier Day**

Councilwoman Loh explained that Mount Rainier Day was moved to October 1<sup>st</sup> due to the City Clerk's retirement and assured the public that the move is not permanent; it will return to the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May in 2017. Ophelia Baxter expressed the necessity of Mount Rainier Day being in May and extended herself as a source of assistance for the future committee. Asia\* Proctor, 29<sup>th</sup> Street, was opposed to postponing Mount Rainier Day without announcement.

### **Fiscal Year 2017 Budget (continuation)**

The Council addressed the Mayor's inquisitions starting with her proposition to increase the budget from \$10,000.00 to \$25,000.00 in the Youth and Recreation line item. It was ultimately decided to add \$6,000.00 under "Professional Services" for a consultant to update the City's charter and that the \$35,000.00 "Youth, Adults, and Senior's Recreation Coordinator" position would be added to the Rolling Agenda for further discussion. The Council would also like to have a Public Works' Director on staff to take the lead in the facility plan before they made any decision.

The Council chose to revisit the “Community Service Programs” and “Community Foundation Fund” line items. It was decided that there would be a \$1,500.00 stipend for each councilmember to attend special events and \$3,000.00 distributed to each councilmember for training programs. In regards to “Funding for Senior Programs” and “Staff Time for Priorities” the Council requested more details from Mayor Miles.

City Treasurer Manjani reasoned that a full-time Mount Rainier Television Director should only be hired once there is a need for one. City Manager Braatz explained the process for raising the Call-A-Bus fees and it was decided to look into the contract before moving forward. In regards to the “Awards Recognition Program” line item, the Council did not agree on the \$10,000.00 proposal and abstained discussion on the “Public Charging Station” for electric vehicles.

Councilwoman Loh proposed to reforecast the \$65,000.00 designated for the Street Plan RFP for Fiscal Year 2016 to Fiscal Year 2017, and also to collect any money left in the budget to go towards the “Highways and Streets” line item. City Manager Braatz pointed out that a competent Director of Public Works could eliminate the \$65,000.00 contracting fee by devising an in-house plan. Councilman Christopherson proposed that \$200,000.00 be placed in the line item contingent on a plan.

Councilman Knedler was adamant about making the City’s website a priority but it was ultimately decided to continue the conversation once all of the councilmembers were present. This line item was updated to “Website Content Management System.”

**Move to adjourn:** Councilwoman Tracy Loh

**Second:** Councilman Jesse Christopherson

**Vote Recorded: 3-0, Motion Passed**