



**Minutes of the City of Mount Rainier Maryland
City Council Work Session & Special Meeting**

Date: 02-17-2015

Place: One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier

Presiding officer: Mayor Malinda Miles

Councilmember's present: Jesse Christopherson, Brent Bolin, Bryan Knedler Jacquelyn W. Riposo

Councilmember's absent: None

City Hall Staff: Assistant City Manager Veronica Owens, City Treasurer Vijay Manjani, Director of Development Samantha Olatunji, City Clerk Janis Lomax

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda

Resolution 6-2015 Appointing of the Mount Rainier Board of Elections

Approval of letter to the Governor opposing the Governor's proposed educational cuts

Resolution 4-2015 Discussion around establishing a charter review commission

Charter Amendment resolution 1-2015 revising the residency requirements for Mayor and Council.

Motion to approve the agenda

Councilman Christopherson

2nd Councilman Knedler

4-0

Motion to approve Resolution 6-2015 Appointing of the Mount Rainier Board of Elections

A resolution appointing the following persons to a two-year term commencing March 2, 2015:

Supervisor of Election- Maxine Drakeford

Election Judges- Carl Jones Jr. Ophelia Baxter, Abby Greenwell, Nichole Logan, Matthew Webber,

Election Clerk/ Election Judge- Dina Williams

*February 23rd, the board will meet at City Hall for training

Councilman Bolin

2nd Councilman Knedler

4-0

Motion to approve letter to the State Delegation in support of the governor's Highway User Revenue (HUR) Funds remaining in the budget

The letter supports the governor keeping the \$19 Million in the budget for municipalities as opposed to cutting it and using it for something else. The amount of funding given to the city from highway user revenues is based on vehicle registrations and total road mileage.

Mayor Miles

2nd Councilman Knedler

4-0

Motion to send a letter to the Governor requesting him to add money back into his budget for education. (A copy will be sent to the Prince George's County and Montgomery County Delegations).

Councilman Christopherson

2nd Councilman Knedler

4-0

Motion to recess into Work Session

Councilman Knedler

2nd Councilman Bolin

4-0

Street Sense Development Update- 3200 Block Rhode Island Avenue

The City Manager Jeannelle Wallace contacted Jim Gato who formerly worked with the Maryland Department of Planning. He worked extensively on the city's urban renewal plan. He has reviewed the documents and advises the council to stay as far away from a TIF as possible. He says, based on the tax code, it would be better if the City leased to Street sense because Street Sense can write that off. Also, Park and Planning may be still interested in paying for the garage. If so, that would cut a lot of the cost. As far as aesthetics, he suggests that the podium piece be six to seven stories since it is the signature piece and the parking garage should have vegetation on the side. The building should be LEED Gold.

Councilman Bolin states that this project needs to be revisited with the county and would like to speak with Jim Gato as soon as possible. The council will hear recommendations on the Pro forma for financing of the project from three real estate development experts in two weeks.

Resolution 4-2015 Establishing a Charter Review Commission (2nd Reading)

Councilman Bolin has a problem with the coincidence of establishing a charter review commission and issuing a charter amendment resolution at the same time. He believes in a holistic approach to policy instead of a piecemeal one.

Councilman Christopherson is concerned that the language of the Charter Review Commission's scope of work is limiting. It simply states that the primary duty of the commission is to make sure the charter is in agreement with state law. He desires the commission's scope of work to include making city government more efficient and transparent.

Charter Amendment resolution 1-2015 revising the residency requirements for Mayor and Council

Councilman Christopherson is proposing an amendment to move the residential requirement from two years to one year. This is the average residential requirement throughout the state.

Mayor Miles supports the amendment. Councilwoman Riposo sees how this amendment can open up the pool of candidates for the upcoming election. Councilman Knedler agrees on that point but also believes that the resident should at least have lived in Mount Rainier for a year prior so they know what the issues are before they run for an election. He recollects Councilwoman Ivy Thompson being prevented from running the first time she wanted to because she did not fulfill the two-year requirement.

The Newsletter

Mayor Miles proposes that the newsletter go out March, April, May, and June so that the public is aware of all the new policies. The council unanimously supports additional newsletters because of the new policies and all of the activities in the spring.

Election Cost

The Election Committee is planning to secure new voting machines, send mailers to voters, and post notices around the city to inform residents. As a result, the proposed election cost will be higher than it has been in the past. There are 4,300 registered voters in the city. To send a mailer to all registered voters will cost the city a little over \$2,000.

Councilman Knedler is comfortable with keeping the voting boxes and would like to know how much the county voting machines would cost if the city were to get them.

Motion to come out of the Work Session and move into the special meeting

Councilman Bolin

2nd Councilman Christopherson

4-0

Motion to extend the number of newsletters produced for March, April, May and June

Mayor Miles

2nd Councilman Knedler

4-0

Motion to authorize the City Manager to expend up to \$50,000 for attorney review and real estate consulting from three consultants. Any exceeding amount would require Mayor and Council input.

Mayor Miles

2nd Councilman Bolin

4-0

Motion to adjourn at 8:45 pm

Councilman Bolin

2nd Councilman Knedler

4-0