



**Minutes of the City of Mount Rainier Maryland
City Council Meeting**

Date: 6-2-2015

Place: One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier

Presiding officer: Mayor Miles

Councilmember's present: Jesse Christopherson, Bryan Knedler, Tracy Loh, Shivali Shah

City Hall Staff: City Manager Jeannelle Wallace, Assistant City Manager Veronica Owens, Director of Economic Development Samantha Olatunji

Call to Order at 7:00pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Hearing

Traffic Calming Devices on 28th Street

Agenda

Review and Approval of the Minutes

Announcements

General Public Comments

Official Reports

Old Business

Ethics, MUTC, and Council Assignments

New Business

3725 Wells Avenue Variance Request

Council Vote on 28th Street Traffic Calming Petition

City Manager Hiring Process and Contract

Departmental Evaluation

Ad Hoc Committee

Council Rules and Procedures

Arundel Road and Residential Parking Petition

Mount Rainier Police Department Repair Budget

Resolution requiring the Board of Elections to submit a closed elections ballot report

Resolution requiring the City to provide enhanced student safety support at the elementary schools

Motion to approve the agenda

Councilman Christopherson

2nd Councilman Knedler

4-0

Public Hearing- Traffic Calming Devices on 28th Street

Chief Scott explains that the area needs at a minimum, at least three traffic calming devices.

Proposed Device Locations: In front of 4103 28th Street, between 4113 and 4115 on Taylor Street, and at the corner of Shepherd and 28th Street.

Councilwoman Shah is concerned about whether or not the temporary calming devices are more cost effective than the permanent ones when the City must replace the device repeatedly over its life span.

Councilman Knedler likes the idea of using the temporary traffic calming devices to ensure that the devices are in the right location before permanent ones are put in their place. Ultimately, he believes that asphalt humps should be the end goal, but they have to be budgeted and phased-in fairly.

Mayor Miles reminds the Council that the temporary calming devices were never intentioned to be permanent. They were a test to see where the permanent devices were to be placed.

A comprehensive street survey will be administered to move forward on this issue.

Public Comment

Ms. Kenslow (2800 Shepherd Street- the side of her house faces 4100 28th Street) thanks the Police Department for doing the survey. She mentions that she lives right at the corner and sees everything. She details a few of the catalysts and resulting problems for 28th Street, including the weather, current device usage, visibility, and speeding. The winter, for example, poses an issue with the barriers. People stop driving down the hill and they slide all the way out to Eastern. Poor visibility at night is also exacerbated when it is raining. As a result, people drive by at all times of night and blow their horns to let people know they are coming because they are nervous. And other times, there are issues of racing due to the street calming devices on the other street. People drive up the hill at a high rate of speed.

The speeding makes it hard for people to commute. Many residents commute to Washington D.C. and Virginia via the G8 bus to the metro rail. Residents know there is a problem on Eastern with D.C. not enforcing the paths for people to cross over but when they get to 28th, they must cross over to Shepherd hoping not to get hit. This is especially hard for disabled and elderly residents like her neighbor Ms. Vanessa who walks with a cane.

As a result of all these circumstances, 87% of the residents on 28th, have agreed that this is a good idea. She suggests hosting a party, block party or other function within the city guidelines to help raise funding for a permanent street calming device. The temporary devices are great but they are not going to last.

Ms. Annie Womack (28th Street close to Taylor Street). She is in favor of the traffic calming devices to slow down traffic, in particular, the asphalt speed bumps because she thinks they are more effective. She believes it is easier to speed through a little bump. She has witnessed drivers drive through the gap and only go over the bump with two tires. On 29th Street she has heard of people riding up on the curb to avoid the speed bump. She supports temporary devices to see if placement is good and is glad that the police surveyed and suggest three devices so that people cannot speed in between the intersections. She has two small children and they can play outside without worry, as she intends to live in Mount Rainier for a long time.

Motion to close the public hearing of the 28th Street Speed Calming Devices

Councilman Knedler

2nd Councilman Christopherson

4-0

Review and Approval of the Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes with any corrections to be sent to the City Clerk no later than close of business on Friday

Councilman Christopherson

2nd Councilwoman Loh

4-0

Announcements

No announcements from the Mayor, Council, and City Hall Staff

General Public Comment

Former Councilman Devin Brown (4500 Block of 32nd Street): Let me comment very briefly on the City Manager hiring process, which I was involved in fourteen years ago. One word or few words of advice, hire local. The best kind of City Manager you can get is to steal one from a local community who is known to be very good. We went through the process extensively and thoroughly and we looked far and wide. Maryland politics, Maryland ins-and-outs, Annapolis, you need someone who really knows this stuff. You would be well-served by stealing a City Manager who doesn't have to come from Takoma Park, we can't afford them anyway, or Hyattsville. Go to a small city. Jeannelle came to us from a small city. And I do not think we have gone wrong. So I would suggest that you look locally, you'd do better doing that.

Then in terms of the Arundel Road Residential Parking Petition, yes we have been having trouble on Arundel Road and 32nd Street, I see the cars there. Look at the residency of some of these persons in terms of parking permits. The reason I go that route is because every year we say to people in our announcements, register your taxes in Mount Rainier so we can get the tax revenue. Most people don't do it, especially apartment dwellers, which are temporary. But if they are parking on our streets, the parking permits and the residency has to be tied so that we can get the tax revenue.

But I am really here to thank Jeannelle for fourteen years of service and also Janis. It wasn't always pretty. We fought like families do. We really did fight but throughout all of that, Jeannelle was professional. She was thorough. She was understanding. She taught me a lot. And I kept learning from her even after I was not on the council. I just learned through observation and her example. She has had a rough time but I can tell you from being observant of what she has done over the fourteen years, she has done a phenomenal job. I am truly appreciative and appreciative of your time here and all the effort that you have put in. I thank you very much for that. That is why I am really here... to thank you. If we can get someone half as good as you, we will be in a good place.

And Janis isn't up here, but I would like to thank her as well for always being so warm and welcoming to everyone that comes in. Thank you both. Thank you very much and we will miss you for sure.

Marylee Howard (4000 Block 31st Street & Green Team Chair) states that Mount Rainier is a Sustainable Maryland Certified Community and is up for recertification this year. Recertification occurs every three years and the deadline to complete certification is June 30th. Last week, she attended a webinar that Sustainable Maryland put on and has been working with the Green Team to put together all of the activities over the last three years that the City can take credit for. She needs assistance from the council and staff to make this a good showing for the City. Ultimately, the city will be compared to other municipalities and then there will be an award ceremony at the next MML conference. The Sustainable Maryland Certification has many different categories and subcategories that the city has to show they have either done or are showing progress towards. Mount Rainier received some of the highest points of all the Sustainable Maryland communities because of its innovative projects.

The Sustainable Maryland Certification will be discussed in detail at the next **Green Team Meeting**, which will be held next **Monday, June 8th at 7:00pm.**

Ms. Intisar Hamid would like to thank Ms. Wallace and Ms. Lomax for all their hard work.

Michael Watson (County Councilwoman Deni Taveras' staff member) Announcements:

- Councilwoman Taveras will be hosting a district-wide town hall meeting on **Thursday, June 11th at 6:30pm, Northwestern High School** for all District 2 and Gateway Arts residents
- The county budget was passed last week.

- Councilwoman Taveras will be attending the Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) Breakfast in Ocean City, MD.

Office Contact: 301-952-4436

Old Business

Ethics Committee

Motion to adopt Resolution 10-2015 to reappoint the members of the City of Mount Rainier Ethics Commission, including Adrian Charles, Arthur Fuller, Aaron Lovell, and John Saunders

Councilman Knedler

2nd Councilwoman Loh

3-1

Mixed-Use Towncenter Committee

There are three vacancies on the committee. Three people have indicated a desire to be on this committee, former councilmember Brent Bolin, Anne Laceur and Jack Priestly. Invitations will be sent out to them.

In the committee, there must be two residents, two government officials, a staff representative and a planner. Everyone votes with the exception of the planner and the staff liaison. Samantha Olatunji is the non-voting staff representative.

Council Assignments for Committees

Motion to appoint Jacqueline Riposo to the Gateway Community Development Corporation Board

Councilwoman Loh

2nd Councilman Christopherson

4-0

New Business

3725 Wells Avenue Variance Request

Owner, Keith Winston, has owned this property since 2008. He currently lives in Hyattsville. It was in rough shape when he bought it. He was hoping to fix it up and move into it quickly. To re-permit, he needs a variance for the front yard set-back, the side yard, and the lot coverage. He is looking to remove a lot of concrete from the driveway, and with that, he still does not get below the 33% lot coverage that is required for the R55. He will be 7.7% over the required 33%. He is building the house to be a Net-Zero House and has already incorporated some of the Design Review Board stipulations to deal with the water issues from the property. He is also considering a green roof, which Councilman Knedler says there could be funding for.

The Design Review Board agreed to the variance with the following stipulations:

- 1) Any part of the driveway that would be replaced would need to be replaced with pervious surface.
- 2) Rain barrels should be used
- 3) Rain garden

Through the Prince George's County rain check rebate program, each property in the county can get up to \$4,000 for improvements from removing pavement to installing permeable pavers, pavement, cisterns, rain barrels, green roofs, tree plantings, and rain gardens. The projects just have to be pre-approved.

Motion to approve the variance and accept the recommendations of the Design Review Board regarding the variance

Councilman Christopherson

2nd Councilwoman Loh

4-0

28th Street Traffic Calming Petition

Motion to implement Chief's Scotts recommendation for three speed bumps on 28th Street
Councilwoman Loh
2nd Councilman Knedler
4-0

Councilman Christopherson supports the recommendation and traffic monitoring to make sure the devices have the right placement. Councilwoman Loh supports the development of a comprehensive traffic calming plan for Mount Rainier.

Ms. Kenslow offers for her and her neighbors to do a 24-hour survey of the speed bumps.

City Manager Hiring Process and City Manager Contract

Councilwoman Loh and Councilwoman Shah are proposing to do an organizational assessment and hire a new City Manager simultaneously. They have drafted an RFP for consulting services that can do the organizational assessment. They believe the consulting service can be covered through payroll savings and reserves.

Motion to create an organizational assessment and executive search committee to procure an expert consulting firm to provide these services to the City of Mount Rainier under a single combined scope by July 15, 2015, not to exceed \$30,000, to be paid for with a combination of savings from the payroll line item and reserves. Composition: One city council member from each ward, one resident from each ward, selected by the non-serving city council member by June 9, 2015, and the current city manager. Action items for the committee: 1) Finalize and distribute a scope of work/ request for proposals including input from the Mayor and Council; Solicit input from Mayor on Scope 2) Review proposals 3) Select the best and lowest bidder.
Councilwoman Loh
2nd Councilwoman Shah
4-0

Councilwoman Loh and Councilwoman Shah are on the committee. Councilman Christopherson and Councilman Knedler will find one ward resident each to participate.

Council Rules and Procedures

Councilman Knedler introduces the following rule changes:

- *Teleconference Participation*- The Council is not allowed to vote through teleconference. However, the council may be allowed to attend and participate through teleconference. Participation in teleconference would not count towards a quorum and would count as an absence. Three consecutive absences are not permitted.
- *Three-Minute Rule*- Each councilmember gets three minutes. Minutes could be donated to another councilmember or reserved. Councilman Knedler does not think it should be in the rules. He believes that there should be a motion on what the limit should be.
- *Vice-Mayor Rotation*- Councilman Knedler feels that the rotations should be done by resolution so that the community knows who is going to be vice-mayor.
- *Listserv*- Councilman Knedler believes the policy regarding responses to the listserv should be formalized. Councilwoman Shah is in favor for keeping the Listserv policy as it is.
- *Emails*- Emails between councilmembers are permitted by the Open Meetings Act. However, councilmember private emails can be received through the Public Information Act.
- *Order of Business*- Councilman Knedler believes that Old Business and New Business should be moved up in the agenda.
- *Types of Motions* - Councilman Knedler suggests some new types of motions such as the protocol for calling and questioning.

Arundel Road Residential Parking Petition- Councilman Christopherson

Non-residents of Arundel Road are parking on Arundel Road from 34st Street to 31th Street and there is a petition to restrict the south side of the road to residents only. A **public hearing** will be held on **June 16th**.

Mount Rainier Repair Budget- Councilman Christopherson

Councilman Christopherson would like the repairs at the Police Department to happen soon. The Police Department repairs are being managed by Public Works. Some of the repairs have already been addressed. The Director of Public Works is getting quotes on the remaining repairs. Two contractors have come to look at some of the major repairs and submitted quotes so far. He is waiting on a 3rd quote. Also, progress has slowed due to short-staffing in Public Works.

The following repairs need to be done to the Police Department:

- 1) Painting in the recreation room
- 2) Dry wall in front of the men's restroom
- 3) Ceiling in the women's restroom
- 4) Men's locker room

Chief Scott will submit a status on the repairs in his next report.

Introduction of New Police Department Employees

Ms. Mildred Tavarez graduated from Anne Arundel Community College Police Academy and has been with the department for six months. She is currently in field training. In the next couple of weeks she will be out by herself. She is bilingual, very talented and good with people.

Ms. Maria Hernandez is the evening shift records clerk.

Elementary School Safety

Thomas Stone Elementary is unsafe for students that walk, get picked up, and ride buses. The changes that the school board made to the parking lot exacerbated the problem. According to Chief Scott, this problem will not be solved by people directing traffic. A traffic engineering solution is required to bring a permanent solution. The temporary solution to use police officers to direct traffic was proposed. However, the Chief cannot guarantee that he can have a police officer there because police officers have to respond to service calls in a reasonable amount of time. He can ensure police officers there if he uses officers on overtime. Currently, the Town of Brentwood provides a Code Enforcement Officer in the mornings at Thomas Stone Elementary.

Councilwoman Loh does not support the use of overtime and is against the resolution.

Councilman Christopherson: The P.E. coaches who direct traffic every day because there is no one else to do it have told me over and over that it makes a very big difference when the police officers are there. I see cars passing each other in oncoming lanes. I see students spilling out from the narrow side walk into the streets. It's a chronic problem. It is a longstanding problem. And this resolution does not fix it but it is the only tool we have to make an incremental difference right now. And the resolution specifies that we will have a law enforcement officer there unless all of our law enforcement officers are at emergency calls. If we need to make that more specific then we can do that.

I do not see why it would require overtime to have someone who is already working be there at the school unless he is on a call. And to give a bit of background on how this particular proposal has progressed, I requested many times that we have someone there. Eventually, I talked to Ms. Wallace about it and a police officer did come to Thomas Stone Elementary School when school let out for two or three months. He was there pretty regularly, but he has hasn't been there in at least six weeks. He just stopped coming and I know that it is not because he is on an emergency call. I think it is important as council that we make it clear that this is how we want to use our resources.

Councilwoman Shah: Before the traffic study, Chief Scott, what are your recommendations for improving the situation (in the short term)?

Chief Scott: You need two people controlling the intersections. You need a person whether it would be a parking enforcement person or law enforcement officer, to control the traffic in and out of the parking lot off of 34th Street closest to Arundel Road. You then need a police officer at the intersection or somebody to direct traffic at the intersection of Arundel Road, Allison Street, and 34th Street. And you need that because the crossing guard there only stops traffic to allow children to cross the street. When there is nobody there to cross, the crossing guard does nothing. And she relies on the traffic control signal which is only green for 34th Street for about seven seconds. And it is red for twice that long to allow the cross-traffic to come out because traffic has to come out of Allison Street from Brentwood and they got to come in. So that makes traffic back up. So you need somebody or you need to instruct the crossing-guard to make sure they are directing the traffic to go through the intersection even though the light may be red in order to clear the traffic that is coming both ways to try to get into the parking lot. This is not an all-day problem. This problem exists for about twenty-five minutes in the afternoon after school lets out. After that it goes away because all the kids are gone, all the buses are gone, all the parents picked their children up, and everybody goes away.

Anyone who is authorized to direct traffic can do this job according to Chief Scott.

Chief Scott and City Manager Wallace inform the council that this is the responsibility of the School Board. The council as a body needs to put some pressure on the board and get the help of delegates. Mayor Miles explains that the urgency for a new study is because a new road is being considered by the school and the back of the school is being fenced. A traffic study must be done before school lets out. Also, currently the P.E. teachers are directing traffic, but no one respects them because they do not have the authority to tell people to move. An officer is needed for the last twenty days of school to get the traffic moving and a petition must be made to the county for an additional crossing guard.

Motion to approve Resolution 11-2015

Resolution that requires the City to provide safety support to each elementary school equally when law enforcement officers are not responding to an emergency

Councilman Christopherson

2nd Councilwoman Shah

Vote 2-3 (Motion Defeated)

Board of Elections Post-Election Report

Motion to require the Board of Elections to submit a post-election report to the City Council by close of business June 30, 2015. The City Council shall amend all applicable city policies to conform to the requirements and recommendations of the board.

Councilwoman Shah

2nd Councilman Christopherson

4-0

Pilot Parking Program on Perry Street

Motion to abolish the pilot parking program on Perry Street

Councilwoman Loh

2nd Councilwoman Shah

4-0

Summer Recess

Motion to recess for the months of July and August with the proviso that a special meeting can be called
Councilman Knedler

2nd Mayor Miles

4-0

Executive Session

The Council will be meeting for an Executive Session on **Wednesday, June 3, 2015 at 7:00pm** for the purpose of discussing personnel.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Miles visited Thomas Stone Elementary School and invited the 3rd graders from Thomas Stone Elementary to City Hall. Councilman Christopherson, the City Manager, the Assistant City Manager, the Chief of Police, and many other staff showed up. Ms. Jessie Ellis' 3rd grade class, wrote letters thanking the City Staff for their adventure at City Hall, for the work that everyone is doing, and for the wonderful treatment they received at City Hall while they were there.

City Manager Jeannelle Wallace's Last Report

The City Manager provided the council with a report of the fourteen years she has worked at Mount Rainier City Hall.

New Announcements

- The City received the grant agreements with the State Department of Housing and Community Development for the City's Business Improvement Program, which includes \$475,000 for demolition of the Singer Building.
- The City will have a meeting and press release with Street Sense, the development group, then walk to the building for the demolition so that the public will know that revitalization is starting.

City Manager's Summary of her 14-Year Tenure at City Hall :

- The City Manager came in 2002 when the City was reliant on a \$400K credit line. The interest of the loan and payroll were paid off every year with property taxes. Since then, the City Manager, along with the help of Vijay Manjani, the City Treasurer, has worked with the departments to stay within budget whenever possible and to eliminate the City's reliance on the line of credit. In the most recent fiscal years, the City has been able to capitalize on speed camera revenue, which has helped to offset the expenditures exceeding revenue. Some councilmembers have indicated that there is a structural deficit, which will have to be rectified. Despite this, the City currently has a healthy reserve. In order to maintain that reserve, the City will have to exercise one or more of its options to reduce its dependency on the reserve, which is intended to be used as a rainy day fund.

City Hall Then

13.2 years ago in May 2002, when she began the situation was as follows: There was no policy handbook for personnel. The City Manager worked an average of fifteen hours per week, which made it virtually impossible to manage the finances for a full-service municipality. Department managers were not required to provide report summaries of progress and activities. Department managers had unlimited spending authority. There was no prior approval regardless of those expenditures. An entire strip mall was not on the City's tax records. There was no accountability for commercial establishments to report inventory to Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation. Businesses were not required to file annual business occupancy license applications. Those files were inaccurate. There was improper coding of accounts, vendor payables including utilities were in arrears as well as employee benefits payments. The City's vehicle fleet averaged over five years for both the Public Works Department and the Police Department. One Public Works refuse truck was over ten years old. Policies for using city issued cell phones and equipment were non-existent The City was paying for cell phones used by police officers no longer employed by the City. The City's annual budget for FY2003 was somewhere in the neighborhood of \$2 Million. Property tax liens for offenders of the city code of ordinances were non-existent. The Singer building had stood vacant for more than a decade. The City had unsuccessfully tried to close Bass Liquor Restaurant since 1989. The Police Union was in total opposition of the then Police Chief. Litigation suits filed against the City were at an all-time high. The Public Works Department employees were also members of an employee union partially due to a lack of trust of management. As far as personnel, the City's former, permanent, full-time manager had left the City to accept a prominent position with the

District of Columbia followed by a number of Interim City Managers. The Municipal Clerk had resigned the week before she began her career and the administrative assistant in Public Works was newly hired.

City Hall Now

When the City Council hired her in 2002, she was the 3rd choice. Previous offers for the position had been declined by the applicants. With much assistance from then councilmember Malinda Miles following her initial draft, a Personnel Policy Manual was adopted by the Mayor and Council, after several prior attempts. After nine months of tracking down accounts and records of the commercial establishments on the strip malls, the businesses were finally on the tax rolls. Former Mayor Bryan Knedler informed her that previous managers had never attempted to impose property tax liens on violators of the City Code thinking that so-called relationships would be destroyed. Since imposing these liens, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been generated in addition to forcing offenders to realize that the City means business. With the support and guidance from the Police Chief, the turnover rate of employees in the Mount Rainier Police Department has been significantly reduced. The turnover rate for the entire City's workforce has been non-existent. This translated into stability and a compliment of staff within institutional memory.

As a result of her efforts, the department managers and code enforcement are now required to provide monthly reports to the Mayor and Council summarizing activities, progress, and challenges. The City's annual fiscal budget has more than doubled with minimal tax increases. Following years of teleconference calls with the owner of the Singer Building, who is half-way around the world in Indonesia, she finally got the owner to the table to negotiate a selling price to the Redevelopment Authority to enable the development that is about to take shape. Mike Scott, current Chief of the Mount Rainier Police Department, almost single-handedly brought down Bass Liquors with his testimony concerning illegal drug activity and prostitution. This in conjunction with the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, serving along with the City Attorney and Public Works Department Manager as the City Appeals Hearing Board for the Bass Family objection to the Citations issued for Code Enforcement Violations, all culminated in a successful effort to finally close the business. The Councils' commitment to purchase the Bass Property and the former Dudley Funeral Home has been instrumental along with the support of management staff and recommendations to bring the city to where it is today. And finally, department managers have \$499 to spend within a line item without prior approval from the City Manager. \$500 and above requires prior authorization from the City Manager even with the fiscal year budget allocation to promote financial accountability.

She recounts the following as her "Five Greatest Accomplishments":

1. The God-Given ability to write and successfully submit grants on behalf of the City, totally over \$1.6 Million, which averages approximately \$151,000 per year in grant revenue.
2. Successfully submitting Maryland Municipal League Applications resulting in three MML Awards for Excellence for accomplishments of the City's Toolshed, Bike Co-op, and efforts conducted by the City's Green Team. These awards were received for 2005, 2006 and 2014. Mount Rainier is tied for most awards in the small town category.
3. Helping to establish a reputation for the City that is beyond what she could have ever imagined
4. Successfully gaining the City's sustainability designation, which ultimately enabled the Sustainable Maryland Certified Designation
5. Receiving the highest award among Prince George's County Cities of \$242,500 from Chesapeake Bay Trust for the Green Streets, Green Jobs Grant, and the Buchanan Green Street Project

The Most Challenging Events

1. The snow storm of 2003 when the majority of the public works older fleet broke down.
2. The historical snow storm of 2010

City Manager Jeannealle Wallace's Closing Remarks

"I have been fortunate to have a tremendous staff of hard working and dedicated employees that I would match against any employees anywhere, anytime. The council should look for someone who not only has experience in municipal government but just as important, a competent manager, who can gain the support and loyalty of the staff because without that support they are doomed in a distressful, fast-paced, and multi-

tasking environment. The person needs to be committed to working long hours on the weekends, holidays, and they truly must have the support and understanding of family members and significant others when they arrive home well after midnight, which I have done for many years. Getting to know the community is also a must. I have supported at least 80% of the business community shopping small. I wonder how many residents can say that ? I especially want to thank my staff: Janis Lomax for her tireless dedication, Vijay Manjani and Kimberly Simpson for their accurate financial records and for the new staff. Good luck in continuing the tradition of Mount Rainier, a great city on the move. Once again, I thank the current and former mayors and councilmembers for their support, mentorship, and frankness. It has been a great journey.”

Mayor and Council Comments:

Mayor Miles: What an honor to have worked with you for most of those years and to actually have seen how our city has turned around. I am definitely looking forward to seeing where we go from here. And I think we have the council to do it. We need your help and guidance... As you have said to me, you will always be available to help things move forward. So I appreciate that.

Councilman Knedler (helped hire Ms. Wallace): Thank you very much. It made me smile as she read all of that because it brought back a lot of not-so-nice memories. Literally we were looking on the credit card to pay payroll and we were being threatened a lawsuit because we were not properly paying benefits. That is how bad it was. You did mention that you were the third candidate and yes I do think it makes you wonder because what happened was at least number one walked out because he was too frightened by what he saw he was going to have to deal with. And so we have to be thankful that Jeannelle had the courage, fortitude, or craziness to take it on. She had been working nearby so she knew our reputation. She knew it wasn't good. It was a challenge. She managed to meet that challenge over and over again. And here we are. I can't say how much we owe you. Hopefully, we can find someone, well its big shoes... so I don't think so but we'll give it a try.

Councilwoman Shah: I first interacted with Ms. Wallace a couple of years after I moved here ten years ago. I first came in contact with Ms. Wallace I want to say in 2007 or so when I was having one of my first of many battles with Pepco. And I was having a street issue with the light...not important to get into. But after numerous back and forth with Pepco, it sort of hadn't occurred to me that the City would have a City Manager that was approachable enough, whose door was open enough that I as a regular resident could just come in and say this is what I tried so far. I have really been trying to solve this problem on my own. I have gotten some advice from neighbors but this is not working. And one phone call from her and people were lining up to help me from Pepco. They were scared of you. For me, it was one of my first points of contact with the City in those first few years here that made me appreciate what a special community we have... that we have a city government that is so accessible. That we have staff that will help you, after you have done enough to help yourself, with your problems; And that cares. That is one of the special things about Mount Rainier and Ms. Wallace has been doing a great job in holding up that reputation.

Councilwoman Loh: Jeannelle I have already said a lot of what I am thinking in writing to you. You know how highly I think of you. I haven't lived in Mount Rainier very long, but I am a City Planner by trade. I work with communities of all sizes in my day job and I am very, very impressed with the lot that you do with the little that you have to work with here in Mount Rainier. This city has been so fortunate to have you and your record shows that so clearly. You are going to be missed. But they are big shoes to fill, but you are going to help us fill them. That is why I drafted you onto this committee. I am not going to let you just fade out. You can't just do the fade out. We need your help one more time.

Councilman Christopherson: Everybody I have talked to about you leaving says 'Whatever you do, keep Jeannelle. Don't let her go.' Then I say it is not really up to me. I think she deserves a little Bermuda or whatever you are going to do. So anyhow that is consistent across the board... to everyone I have talked to. I think that speaks very highly of your legacy, the legacy you are leaving here in Mount Rainier.

Jeannelle Wallace's Retirement Party will be held Friday, June 26, 2015 at 5:00pm at the Mount Rainier Fire Station.

Public Works Employee Retires - Mike Barnes

On May 29th, 11- year Veteran and CDL Driver, Charles Stewart, retired from Public Works.

Veronica Owens Report

The Green Festival – Assistant City Manager Veronica Owens

Code: XDC15LTJT

Booth: 606

Location: Washington Convention Center

Art Lives Here, The City of Mount Rainier Green Team, V & V Development, Urban Green, Redevelopment Authority of Prince George's, Fly Wheel, Gateway CDC, and Mount Rainier Business Association all stepped in to fund the booth and items for the booth. At the booth, t-shirts and lunchboxes will be handed out filled with coupons from businesses in the City

Electric Car

Maryland Energy Administration awarded the City an electric car.

Motion to adjourn

Councilman Knedler

2nd Councilman Christopherson

4-0