



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

**Date: 3-3-2015**

**Place: One Municipal Place, Mount Rainier**

**Presiding officer: Mayor Miles**

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

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

**Meeting called to order at 7:00pm**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Agenda**

**Appointment Proclamations and Certificates**

**Office of Councilmember Deni Taveras Announcements**

***New Business***

**FY2014 Audit Results**

**Board of Elections Swearing-In Ceremony**

**Council Announcements**

**Review and approval of the minutes**

**FY2016 Budget Presentation**

**Public Comment**

***Old Business***

**Resolution 7-2015 Approving the Perry Street Townhomes Project Application**

**City of Mount Rainier Road Plan**

**Charter Amendment Resolution 1-2015**

**Resolution 4-2015 Forming a Charter Review Commission**

**Closed Session**

**Review of Neighborhood Development Corporation**

**Appointment Proclamations from the General State Assembly**

**State Delegate Jimmy Tarlau**

**Micah Watson, Councilwoman Deni Taveras Chief of Staff**

Delegate Jimmy Tarlau presented proclamations from the Maryland General State Assembly in recognition of the appointments of Jacqueline Riposo and Bryan Knedler to the Mount Rainier City Council. They are signed by Senator Victor Ramirez, Delegate Diana Fennell, and Delegate Jimmy Tarlau.

The Chief of Staff of Prince George's County Councilwoman Deni Taveras presented certificates of recognition to Jacqueline Reposo and Bryan Knedler as well on behalf of the county councilwoman for becoming councilmembers to the City of Mount Rainier and for their continuing service to our greater community.

### **Office of County Councilmember Deni Taveras Announcements**

Micah Watson, Councilwoman Deni Taveras Chief of Staff

The next **Queens Chapel Road State Highway Meeting is March 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Mount Rainier Elementary School.** This meeting will focus on the ongoing safety enhancements on Hamilton Street south to the district line.

Councilmember Taveras is hosting an **Information Session for Brentwood, North Brentwood, and Mount Rainier on Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m., at the North Brentwood Community Center.** She will address county and state budget issues at this meeting.

**Caesar Chavez Elementary School Spanish-English Immersion Program is looking for more applicants, particularly native English speaking children.**

**Zoning Re-write Work Shop for District 2 residents will be on Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6:00 p.m., at the Rolling Crest Chillum Community Center, 6120 Sergeant Road.**

**Mayor Miles will be hosting the Mayor's Breakfast on Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.** with Councilmember Taveras and the mayors from District 2.

The Prince George's County Council is having a **county-wide budget discussion on Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m., at the community college.** The county deficit is currently projected at roughly \$144 Million for FY2016, starting July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **FY2014 Audit Results**

Grey Ferguson

Markee & Markee Auditing Firm

#### *Overview*

The firm has rendered an unqualified or clean opinion that the financial statements were presented in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied to local governments. The city's assets exceeded its liabilities by \$6.5 Million, with total assets a little over \$9 Million and total liabilities at \$2.5 Million. The city's net position increased by \$377,000 on a government-wide basis. Additionally, the combined fund balance for the General Fund and Special Revenue Fund at the end of the fiscal year was \$3.55 Million, an increase of \$184,000.

The General Fund had revenues of over \$4.6 Million and expenditures of \$4.7 Million. The city issued debt through a capital lease last year to purchase some equipment, which funded the city by almost \$214,000. The General Fund balance increased by \$175,243. The Special Revenue Fund increased by \$9,400. The total fund balance increased by \$184, 711.

#### *Outstanding Debt*

2008 General Obligation Bond

2010 General Obligation Bond

Three Capital Lease Obligations for vehicle purposes

**Motion to accept the auditor's review and report**  
**Councilman Christopherson**  
**Mayor Miles**  
**4-0**

### **Board of Elections Swearing- In Ceremony**

The board of elections appointees made the pledge and signed it.

### **Review and Approval of the Minutes**

**Motion to approve the minutes with a contingency that any changes should be sent to the City Clerk within the next week**  
**Councilman Christopherson**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Councilman Knedler**  
**4-0**

### **Announcements**

*Councilman Christopherson*

**The Mount Rainier Police Department is hosting a community dialogue forum Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m., at the Mount Rainier Nature Center.** This dialogue is to discuss the appropriate level of law enforcement in various circumstances.

### **FY2016 Budget Presentation**

City Manager Jeannelle Wallace and City Treasurer Vijay Manjani

The City Treasurer intends to submit this budget document to the governor's office of financial association to see if the city will receive an award for its fiscal budget. Therefore, included in the document is a directory of city officials, the Mount Rainier statistics at a glance, a city profile, departmental organizational charts for every department, audit highlights, budget development and adoption process, a budget schedule, a list of personnel by name, position and department, a personnel schedule for FY2014, FY2015, and FY2016.

The FY2016 Budget proposes that the real property tax rate (\$0.86 per \$100 of assessed valuation), business personal property tax (\$1.98 per \$100 of assessed valuation), and the railroad & utility tax rate (\$2.50 per \$100 of assessed valuation) remain the same.

Money was moved from the reserves over the last three years due to significant decreases in The Highway User Revenues and the Property Tax Revenues.

**Budget Meeting Dates:** March 17<sup>th</sup>, April 14<sup>th</sup>, April 21<sup>st</sup>, May 5<sup>th</sup>

### **General Public Comments**

**Brooke Kidd (4100 29<sup>th</sup> Street/ Director of Joe's Movement Emporium/ Treasurer of MRBA)** speaks about a new program called the **Clean and Safe Streets program** that began this week. It is a significant investment for Mount Rainier Business Association(MRBA) that will benefit business and property owners. It allows for two men to work full-time from Monday

to Saturday tending to the town center. The service is provided by a workforce development program called Career Path DC Next Opportunity and the Mount Rainier logo will be placed on the workers' vests. From 8:30am to 4:30pm, during commute hours, there will be people tending to the streets, the curb beds, the planters, and the sidewalks.

Because of limited resources, the town center was piloted as a way to work on the city's transit hubs. The seven-month program costs \$28,000. MRBA has committed \$20,000. Sponsorship commitments have been made for \$1,500. She asks the council for \$4,000 in the budget to contribute to this program. One of the benefits of this program is the ability to reallocate public works staff to do other things in the city to meet other needs.

Councilman Christopherson believes this is a great way to use the CDMA money. He would like to look into finding the necessary funds in this fiscal year to fill deficit for the program. Ms. Kidd also mentions that a MRBA board member, Neil Dicken, has donated \$3,000 for plants and mulch for the town center.

**Motion to appropriate \$4,000 from the FY2015 Budget to make up the money necessary to carry the program now until June 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Mayor Miles**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Councilman Christopherson**

**4-0**

**Resolution 7-2015 Approving the Perry Street Townhomes Project Application and receipt of financing for community legacy projects further described in the community legacy application by the department of housing and community development (1<sup>st</sup> Reading & Vote)**

\*This is a request for funding of up to \$350,000 for five homes. This is a matching grant. The Perry Street Townhomes has already been awarded \$175,000. This resolution is necessary to release the funds that have already been awarded.

**Councilman Christopherson**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Councilman Bolin**

**4-0**

### **City of Mount Rainier Road Plan**

Councilman Christopherson

Councilman Christopherson believes in a long-term, comprehensive road plan. There is a \$130,000 in the FY2015 Budget for roads. The City Manager has proposed \$65,000 more for FY2016. There is also an \$85,000 Highway User Revenue grant, which was received in 2014. He would like to use some funds to commission a professional group to create a roads plan for the city and use the remaining money for getting some of the projects underway.

Councilman Bolin, Councilman Knedler, and Councilwoman Riposo agree with Councilman Christopherson that a professional group must be hired to create a comprehensive roads and sidewalk plan. Councilman Knedler also urges the council to consider storm water issues on the streets.

*Old Business*

**Charter Amendment Resolution 1-2015 (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading and Vote)**

Resolution to amend the organization of Mayor and Council (Section 302), qualifications of mayor and council, the charter of the City of Mount Rainier, to provide that each candidate for mayor and councilmember should be a registered voter of the city and a resident of the city for at least one year rather than at least two years immediately preceding their election.

**Councilman Christopherson**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Councilwoman Riposo**

**4-1**

**Resolution 4-2015 Forming a Charter Review Commission (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading and Vote)**

Resolution to form a charter review commission and establishing the duties, mission, and other requirements of the commission. Mayor and council have the authority to appoint such boards, commissions, and committees that may be deemed necessary to further the purposes of the city.

**Councilwoman Riposo**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Councilman Christopherson**

**4-0**

**Motion to amend Resolution 4-2015 so that the council will be able to extend the deadline for the Charter Review Commission to report back in 30-day increments after the initial 90-day deadline as necessary**

**Councilman Christopherson**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Councilman Knedler**

**4-0**

**Motion for the minimum number of persons on the charter review committee to be seven**  
**Mayor Miles**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Councilman Knedler**

**5-0**

**Motion to move into closed session at 9:02pm for the purpose of discussing the negotiations between Street Sense and the City of Mount Rainier with regard to the LDA for the 3200 Rhode Island Avenue Development with the legal authority from Maryland Code General provision 3305-B7 to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice and General Provision 3305-B14 before a contractor is awarded to discuss the matter directly related to the negotiating strategy or contents of the proposal if public discussion would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the proposal process**

**Councilwoman Riposo**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Councilman Bolin**

**4-0**