

Official Minutes of the City of Mount Rainier

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: December 4, 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, UPPER-LEVEL CITY HALL

Call to Order

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

Presiding Officer

Mayor Malinda Miles

Officials Present

Councilmember Celina Benitez (Vice Mayor)

Councilmember Luke Chesek

Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Councilmember Shivali Shah

Staff Present

City Manager Miranda Braatz

City Clerk Da'rrell Belton

Minutes provided by:

City Clerk

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Motion to Adopt Amended Agenda: Mayor Malinda Miles Move: Councilmember Celina Benitez Second: Councilmember Shivali Shah Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed
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Reading of Agenda into Record by Councilmember Celina Benitez

New Business

Swearing in of New Police Officers by Mayor Malinda Miles

One by one police officers and family came forward to podium to be sworn in by Mayor Malinda Miles. Chief of Police was present. Photos were taken, applause given, and family members were recognized. The new officers are Green, White, and Browski. Mayor Malinda Miles said the three officers helped her with the City's Turkey basket assembly and delivery.

Announcements

Public Comments

- Daniel Carter Recreation Committee – Committee is helping with proposed Fire Pit Event to come up with safety rules and procedure along with Cert Team. Carbon steel barrel and bricks will be paid by Recreation Committee. Announced Parade of Lights Event.
- Gregg Seton 4200 34th Street – Sent email to full Council about the Ethic Commission and he has concerns. He wants the Commission to be trained and participation of an attorney at all meetings. It cannot be run on good intention. The Commission needs clear understanding of their charges and powers. Who do they hand off issues too?
- Cindy Alexander – She asked for the status of the 2016 -18 Audits. She wants daily or weekly call for service from the Police Department. She passed out an envelope to each Councilmember to read on their own time.
- Charnette Robinson 3500 Perry Street – She thanked the Council for moving along with the Perry Street Parking Zone. She has a petition for a Stop Sign near City Hall at intersection and cross walk. She also wants bump outs. She wants advanced notice if Perry Street residents need to come in support of the petition. Councilmember Celina Benitez said crosswalks are on list for Dept. of Public Works.

Ordinance 11-2018 – Amendments Procurement Chapter

City Miranda Braatz read a summary of amendments to the Procurement Chapter to have the City look at General Services for free/low cost items for procurement and includes green/energy efficient procurement.

Motion to Adopt Ordinance 11-2018 to Amend the Procurement Chapter: Mayor Malinda Miles
 Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler
 Second: Councilmember Luke Chesek
 Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

No Public Comment

Ordinance 12-2018 – Budget Amendment FY19

This Ordinance amends the budget to move lines to cover Community Coordinator and Event Position for six months for \$35, 775. Council narrowed down the budget amendment to just this position which they feel will help with public communication and maintain the City Website. They are in support of the position. Mayor Malinda Miles is not in support of the position. Newsletter can be contracted out, she wants a better understanding of the job. She wants empty positions to be filled before more positions are funded.

Councilmember Bryan Knedler asked about audits to address resident’s public comment. City Manager Miranda Braatz said that new City Finance Officer will follow up with the new company doing audits for update this week. They are simultaneously completing 2017 and 2018.

Public Comments

Cindy Alexander – Without the completed audits, we are not clear on budget. She is concerned that money is used from unused positions to fund new ones. She is in favor of contractors vs. new employees, especially to handle the newsletter. Councilmember Bryan Knedler said this is a trial to see how it works. This is for the newsletter, website, social media, Cable Dept., and upcoming City Website.

Charnette – Website costs and there are costs for person to maintain it. Whatever can be contracted should so the City does not incur extra costs like insurance.

Motion to Approve Ordinance 12-2018 FY19 Budget Amendment: Mayor Malinda Miles
Ayes: Councilmember Celina Benitez, Councilmember Luke Cheseck, Councilmember Bryan Knedler, Councilmember Shivali Shah
Opposed: Mayor Malinda Miles
Vote Recorded: 3-1-0, Motion Passed

Closing Public Hearing for Stop Sign and 32nd and Rainier and 34th and Otis Announced by Councilmember Celina Benitez

Green Team Chair Appointment

Discussion to appoint Sarah Lifsey as Chair of the Green Team.

No public comment.

Motion to Appointment Sarah Lifsey as Chair for Green Team: Mayor Malinda Miles
Move: Councilmember Luke Cheseck
Second: Councilmember Shivali Shah
Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Mayor Malinda Miles said they will do a resolution with Sara Lifsey name on it for next Council Meeting.

Building Permit 4404 30th Street

Omar Decker, Son of Builder, said they are extending 4404 30th Street House to left 10 ft, back 38ft, and right 10ft. The project will cost 54K. Council reviewed rules for water and dirt, noise, and trees. It is a flip property and they have spoken to neighbors. Councilmember Bryan Knedler asked code enforcement to check if it is over 150 square feet. If so, the Builder should be charged an impervious concrete fee by the City.

No public comments.

Stop Signs on 32nd and Rainier and 34th and Otis

City Manager Miranda Braatz said she has not received any further comments on these issues. Councilmember Luke Cheseck said he would want a notice of where the Stop Sign would go. He wants it just North of the storm drain. Councilmember Shivali Shah asked if the City Manager Miranda Braatz has

had a discussion with the Police re. enforcement and wants a grace period before full enforcement. City Manager Miranda Braatz is talking with the Police on this issue. Mayor Malinda Miles said the Chief of Police should decide where the Stop Signs go.

Motion to Approve Stop Signs on 32nd and Rainier and 34th and Otis: Mayor Malinda Miles

Ayes: All

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Councilmember Luke Chesek said that Metro must be notified of the busstop move. City Manager Miranda Braatz said that will happen.

Electric Charging Stations in Mount Rainier

Councilmember Bryan Knedler said that the MOU between City and EVI will be to install a Level 2 Parking Charging Station by City. EVI will install them and maintain it for five years. Councilmember Luke Chesek said if this goes well, the City can look at Level 3 Charging Station in the future which is more akin to a regular gas station in presentation.

Public Comment

- Gregg Seton – He was in favor, but he was concerned that the charging stations will take away parking spots or lots. Mayor Malinda Miles heard his concern and will have future conversations of where we can put future Level 2s.
- Scott Cecil 3200 28 Street – He was in support of it. He asked if EVI stations will be used for free by nonresidents. Council said that the electricity is not free and will require a credit card.

Motion to Approve MOU between EVI and The City of Mount Rainier for Level 2 Electric Car Charger:

Mayor Malinda Miles

Ayes: All

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

3800 Block 35th Street Parking Zone Discussion

Mayor Malinda Miles said they have more than enough signatures on the petition to implement it. City Manager Miranda Braatz said that the 35th Street Zone will work exactly like Perry Street Zone in terms of enforcement and permit issuance and costs. She has discussed enforcement with the Police Department. She will pick a date to implement in January and a grace period for residents before full enforcement. Councilmember Bryan Knedler said signs need to be put up with the correct date/times/fines listed. Councilmember Celina Benitez wants flyers to notify residents of the Zone and it should also be in The Message. Councilmember Shivali Shah wants guidelines how resident complaints will be handled and that email addresses are added to future petitions so residents can be notified of progress.

Motion to Establish Parking Zone for 3800 Block of 35th Street Parking: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Second: Councilmember Celina Benitez

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Mayor Malinda Miles said she had suggestions from resident to consider Parking Zones through out the City. Also, resident would like Mayor and Council to look at speed bumps in the City as the current one are not adequate.

Fire Pit Event Jan. 1

City Manager Miranda Braatz spoke to the Director of Code Enforcement about the Fire Event, and he spoke with the Recreation Committee. Insurance will cover the Fire Event if its City sponsored. Code Enforcement and Recreation Committee and plan that will cover fires safety. Mayor Malinda Miles asked Council if they want it to be a City sponsored? Recreation Committee will pay for the fire pit equipment so they can use it in the future. Council agreed to support the event.

Motion to Support the January 1, 2019 Fire Pit Event: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Second: Councilmember Shivali Shah

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Letter on Poor Service by Mount Rainier Post Office re. Delivery of The Message Newsletter

City Manager Miranda Braatz summarized the letter from the City of Mount Rainier to Congressman Anthony Brown which expresses displeasure in the service provided by Mount Rainier Post Office re. Delivery of the City's "The Message" Newsletter. Mayor Malinda Miles said residents have complained about late delivery, misplaced mail, missing mail, etc. We need to address these issues too.

Councilmember Shivali Shah agreed and asked City Manager Miranda Braatz to include the resident issues in the letter and to copy the letter to the heads of the Post Office and City's Post Master.

Motion to Approve the Letter on Poor Service by the Mount Rainier Post Office re. The Message with inclusion of Language on General Poor Service and cc to Heads of Post Office and The City's Post Master: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Second: Councilmember Shivali Shah

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Public Comment

- Danielle Carter 3200 Sheppard Street – She spoke with local carrier and they said that they are told to mark undelivered packages as delivered. Mayor Malinda Miles said that she knows of this problem and its been told to her before. Danielle said carriers are quitting and mail is mishandled.
- Gregg Seton – He thought is was alone in his problems with the mail. Mail Carrier comes at 9pm. Mayor Malinda Miles said they are short staffed. He wants the City Letter to go to higher ups in the Post Office and does not want local carriers to be blamed.

Peace Park Grant and Letter

Councilmember Shivali Shah wants a partnership with Little Friends for Peace to create a Peace Park. Edgemont Park was rejected as the site as the neighbor's opposed it due to noise and loitering concerns. Roger's Park and Spring Park are owned by the City and have adequate space. This last meeting before Dec. 16 grant application. She proposed Mayor and Council vote on the partnership pending more talks with neighbors near these two parks. Councilmember Luke Chesek is in favor Spring Park being the Peace Park. He also would like to fix the spring too. Councilmember Celina Benitez is happy to help with outreach to neighbors near the parks. Mayor Malinda Miles said there is a bench, a well with water, and shady trees in Spring Park that would make it work. There are many other grants to go after for this purpose. Councilmember Bryan Knedler said to add a historic sign for Spring Park in the grant. Mayor Malinda Miles said for Pocket Park Grant there cannot be a nonprofit partnership. Those grants must be done by the City.

Motion to Move Forward with Partnership Agreement between City of Mount Rainier and Little Friend for Peace to Apply for Grant from the Redevelopment Authority for Spring Park pending Majority Buy-in for Nearby Park Resident:

Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Second: Councilmember Shivali Shah

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Public Comments

Scott Cecil – He wanted to complain about people complaining about loitering in the Parks. People loitering could be homeless, have substance abuse issues, or just be people of color that are being unfairly judged. He was disappointed in previous complaints by residents in the past meeting.

Library Update

Mayor Malinda Miles said Mount Rainier needs to send the Letter. She has requested a meeting with the CEO and Board of the County Library. She has spoken to Delegate Diana M. Fennell, who will help the City to move forward with keeping the Library open. She met with Bryan at CSX Railroad to help with the cost of repair as a corporate sponsor. City Manager Miranda Braatz will follow up with CSX. Councilmember Celina Benitez read the proposed City Letter to the Library about asbestos removal based on assurance from County that the City of Mount Rainier Library will be reopened. Several Councilmembers said the County feel the City does not support Library with City funding. Council and Mayor said Dept of Public Works does support the Library. Mayor Malinda Miles would like to repair the building no matter what. Prince George's County Council Member Deni L. Taveras is willing to ask for funding for the City of Mount Rainier Library. Mayor and Council will come together to discuss Library and Potts Hall funding and then go to Council Member Deni L. Taveras.

Motion to Send Letter to CEO and Board of Prince George's County Library:
Mayor Malinda Miles
Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler
Second: Councilmember Shivali Shah
Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Ethics Committee

Councilmembers questione if all name submitted before the deadline were included in the nominee list. It was clarified that councilmembers will get a full list and rank nominee and give their list to City Manager. She will give tally for review at Work Session.

Motion that by COB Friday, City Manager will Complete and Confirm List of Nominees Submitted Prior to Nov. 1, Deadline and Council Ranked Nominees will be Reviewed at Work Session and Vote Held:
Mayor Malinda Miles
Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler
Second: Councilmember Luke Chesek
Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Mayor Malinda Miles charged Councilmember Shivali Shah with the rules for running and training the Committee.

Motion to Adjourn Meeting: Mayor Malinda Miles
Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler
Second: Councilmember Luke Chesek
Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed