

Official Minutes of the City of Mount Rainier
MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE SESSION
DATE: October 01, 2019
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
Councilmember Scott Cecil
Councilmember Luke Chesek
Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Staff Present

City Clerk John Hoatson

Minutes provided by:

City Clerk

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Announcements

City Management

Friday, September 13, City Manager Miranada Braatz resigned. Mayor Malinda Miles, Councilmember Celina Benitez, and Councilmember Scott Cecil theb took over management of the City. The Mayor and the full Council nominated Chief of Police Morgan to step into the role of Interim City Manager role for few weeks starting October 3, while the Mayor and Council recruits someone for this and interim position. He will also continue to run the Police Department. Councilmember Scott Cecil emphasized that all current staff has been encouraged to apply for the job for either the interim or permanent City Manager. All City Departments are still running as usual and report to the Mayor and Council. Please contact City Department Heads to discuss concerns related to any Department. For Emergencies or other issues, call or email Chief Morgan. Councilmember Luke Chesek and Councilmember Bryan Knedler thanked the Mayor and the other Councilmembers, Chief, and City staff for their work

Public Comment

Owners -They own two townhouses at 3201 or 3204 Bunkerhill Road. Has a rental license for many homes. They are paying about \$900 a year. Why is the fee so high? Mayor Malinda Miles will investigate and come back with the answer at another time.

US Postal Service

Officials from the US Post Office did not come to the meeting.

Maryland Milestone/Anacostia Trails

Aaron from Maryland Milestone/Anacostia Trails discussed his organization's work. They fund art, history, economic development, tourism, and public art. They have a Heritage Center in Pyramid Art Atlantic across from Franklin's in the City of Hyattsville. They have a second staff person who will work on goals from 1812 celebration. They are looking at creating a Civil Rights trail in Prince George's County and then an Indigenous and Women trails. They have 25K grants to give out. He works with City's Green Team and Bike and Ped with trails and bike events. If there are signs and exhibits on the history of the area for the new City Hall, his organization has grants for that. There is Tourism funding that the City may be eligible. Compass has been giving 50K to fix the roof of their location in the City. Councilmembers expressed interests in the grants and stated that they look forward to continuing working with Maryland Milestones.

Resolution 10-2019 Establishment of City Mount Rainier Census Committee

Councilmember Celina Benitez read a fair summary. It is campaign to help City of Mount Rainier be fully counted in 2020 Census focusing on marginalized residents. Every 8 years the Committee will be reactivated, two years prior to the next 10-year Census. 3k is allocated in the City Budget for the Committee's activities and the Committee will work with other City groups and departments as needed. There will be 11 members but any resident can volunteer to support the Committee efforts. The Council thanked Councilmember Celina Benitez for her work on this issue and will support her. Councilmember Scott Cecil is open to a higher budget for this work. Councilmember Luke Cheseck stressed that the Committee is very important as the City was undercounted. Mayor Malinda Miles would like a lot of residents to volunteer to support the Committee's work, especially when it will be time to knock on doors.

Motion to Approve Resolution: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Celina Benitez

Second: Mayor Malinda Miles

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Resolution 11-2019 Changing Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day

Councilmember Scott Cecil thanked Councilmember Celina Benitez for her previous work on this issues. He said the resolution does not mention Columbus Day, but focuses on the establishment of a day that recognizes Indigenous of this country on the second Monday of October each year. He explained why this recognition is important and historic because of the continued dispossession of land and resources experienced by Indigeious Peoples and the negation of culture. Councilmember Luke Chesek supports Resolution 11-2019 and would like the Pistcaway Tribe to come to recognize it. Councilmember Celina Benitez is of Indigenous heritage of the Americas and she is also in touch with the Council of Indigenous Leaders. She says the City can plan to have celebration next year. She also in touch with the school system to encouraging the teaching of Indigenous culture.

Public Comments

Jimmy Tarlau - There is mistake with Anthony Brown title in the Resolution. Should be Congressman Anthony Brown. City Clerk went to change the document.

Motion to Approve Resolution: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Second: Councilmember Luke Chesek

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Resolution 12-2019 - Declaring 32906SqFt City Property at NW Eastern/Rhode Island is No Longer Needed for Public Use in City of Mount Rainier

Councilmember Bryan Knedler gave fair summary of the resolution. By law, the City has to declare to City residents when they will dispossess City property and sell it. Councilmember Luke Chesek wants mixed-use development on the property. Mayor and Council want the property sold ASAP!

Public Comment

Jimmy Tarlau Rep. of Mount Rainier Business Association- Why is this happening now? Why a resolution? Mayor Malinda Miles said that they think they have a buyer for the land. Yes, they are moving fast and what to get it done in 6 months. Resolution should have been made last year, so they are doing it now.

Motion to Approve Resolution: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Second: Councilmember Luke Chesek

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Resolution 11-2019 Changing Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day Continued

City Clerk went to change the document to add Congressman Anthonty Brown, but the Internet was down. Action Taken:

Motion to Approve Resolution 11-2019 Changing Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day with Amendment to Add Congressman Anthonty Brown to Resolution and Have the

Resolutions Signed by Concilmembers Celina Benitez and Scott Cecil and Mayor Miles Tomorrow and the Signatures Other Two Councilmembers at a Later Date: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Second: Councilmember Scott Cecil

Vote Recorded: 3-1-0, Motion Passed (Councilmember Celina Benitez was not present, stepped away)

Motion to Amend Resolution 11-2019 Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day to State it was Introduced by Councilmember Celina Benitez Only: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Luke Chesek

Second: Councilmember Scott Cecil

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Action: Two changes to Resolution: Addition of Congressman Brown and listing Councilmember Celina Benitez as introducing this legislation.

Work Session

Move Into Work Session to Discuss Process for Search for New City Manager

Motion to Move to Work Session: Mayor Malinda Miles

Move: Councilmember Bryan Knedler

Second: Councilmember Celina Benitez

Vote Recorded: 4-0-0, Motion Passed

Search for City Manager

Mayor Malinda Miles said 2016 search and resumes has been resent to Mayor and Council. It also suggested we reach to other municipalities for candidates. Councilmember Bryan Knedler said, Louisa, City's HR Manager, sent guidelines on how to do a City Manager search the wants to use. It will be in-house search and the City will not engage a Search Firm. Councilmember Scott Cecil said that Lousia has reached out to other local city's for guidance and information. That is good. He wants an Interim City Manager in place, so Council and Mayor can get to the business of the search for the fulltime City Manager. Councilmember Luke Chesek is confident that the City can do the search internally. He needs time to ingest the previous search info and feedback from other cities. He wants Louisa to be at the October Work Session. His focus in on the Interim City Manager.