



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

6611 Kenilworth Avenue • Riverdale, Maryland 20737

Commission Meeting
Open Session Minutes
January 16, 2019

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission met at the Prince George's Parks and Recreation Administration Office Auditorium in Riverdale, Maryland.

PRESENT

Prince George's County Commissioners

Elizabeth M. Hewlett, Vice-Chair
Dorothy Bailey
William Doerner
Manuel Geraldo
A. Shuanise Washington

Montgomery County Commissioners

Casey Anderson, Chair
Gerald Cichy
Natali Fani-Gonzalez

NOT PRESENT

Tina Patterson
Norman Dreyfuss

Chair Anderson convened the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

ITEM 1 APPROVAL OF COMMISSION AGENDA

ACTION: Motion of Geraldo to approve the Commission agenda
Seconded by Bailey
8 approved the motion

ITEM 2-1 Rotation of the Commission Chair and Vice Chair

- a) ACTION: Motion of Bailey to appoint Elizabeth Hewlett as Commission Chair
Seconded by Geraldo
8 approved the motion
- b) ACTION: Motion of Geraldo to appoint Casey Anderson as Commission Vice-Chair
Seconded by Bailey
8 approved the motion

ITEM 2 APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Open Session – December 19, 2018
ACTION: Motion of Geraldo to approve the Commission minutes
Seconded by Bailey
8 approved the motion

ITEM 3 GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Upcoming M-NCPPC Black History Month Events.
b) Chair Hewlett congratulated former M-NCPPC attorney Jared McCarthy, who was recently appointed Circuit Court judge for Prince George's County.

- c) Chair Hewlett thanked everyone who participated in the presentation to the new Prince George's County Executive Alsobrooks. She noted what a tremendous task it was to synthesize the scope and breadth of the agency into a short yet comprehensive presentation.
- d) Chair Hewlett recognized Founders' days for a number of important organizations.

ITEM 4

COMMITTEE MINUTES/BOARD REPORTS (For Information Only)

- a) Executive Committee – Open Session – January 2, 2019
- b) 115 Trust (OPEB) Meeting Minutes – September 26, 2018
- c) Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees Meeting – November 2018

ITEM 5

ACTION AND PRESENTATION ITEMS (taken out of order)

c) Actuarial Valuation OPEB (Zimmerman/Binder)

Secretary Treasurer Zimmerman briefed the Commission on the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust, which the agency is required to maintain to fund retiree health benefits. This fund requires periodic actuarial valuation to determine annual funding contributions. Secretary-Treasurer Zimmerman introduced Actuary Kevin Binder of Bolton Partners who reviewed the actuarial valuation with Commissioners. Mr. Binder described recommended changes in funding and summarized the actuarial data from the past fiscal year and forecasts through Fiscal Year 2024. Mr. Binder described employer estimates for contributions and other sources of funding, total assets, estimated liabilities, and other factors.

Commissioner Doerner asked if the federal government shutdown would impact the reimbursement in any way. Mr. Binder said he was not aware of any federal government plan to reduce Social Security or Medicare payments. Secretary Treasurer Zimmerman added that federal reimbursement does not flow to the Trust itself, but to the Group Insurance Fund. It may affect the cash flow to the Fund, but would likely re-adjust during a future quarterly, annual, or 3-year true-up.

ACTION: Motion of Bailey to approve the report
 Secoded by Doerner
 8 approved the motion

d) Planned Legislative Event

General Counsel Gardner asked Commissioners to hold Wednesday, February 13, from 3-6 p.m. for an event in Annapolis. Based on discussions with Department Heads, the event will provide a proactive opportunity to showcase to lawmakers and constituents, the value of the M-NCPPC in the community. The event will be structured around the "parklet" concept. Planning and parks staff will erect display stations and provide activities inside one of the Miller Senate Office buildings. A video demonstrating how the agency's communities would look in the absence of the M-NCPPC will be shared. He noted tremendous staff support from all four operating departments.

Commissioner Washington inquired how Commissioners could assist in outreach. General Counsel Gardner asked the Commissioners to promote the event once the invitations were issued. Commissioner Cichy noted the Maryland Department of Planning and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources have given the agency a lot of support and funding and suggested representatives were invited. General Counsel Gardener noted he would make

certain representatives were sent invitations.

e) Proposed Reductions to meet FY19 Montgomery County Savings Plan.

Acting Executive Director Bennett introduced Corporate Budget Manager John Kroll to present a list of proposed reductions to meet Montgomery County Council's non-recommended savings plan. Acting Executive Director Bennett explained the team was sorry this item was added as a late presentation, however, the agency was only recently advised of the need to respond to the Council by Friday, January 18, 2019. The team wanted to ensure Commissioners had the opportunity to review the proposed cuts before submission to the County Council. Corporate Budget Manager Kroll described the prepared memo, reviewing the county's savings request. He explained that the savings affected the Administration and Park Funds including the CAS Administration Funds, for a combined savings of \$1,803,868. Departments had identified areas to achieve these savings and the impact on their program delivery.

Commissioner Washington noted part of the proposed cuts by M-NCPPC included some funding for archives services and asked if that would present a compliance problem with the state. Acting Executive Director Bennett explained that the funding cuts would slow down the progress to improve record protections through the digitizing of records. However, the agency will maintain state compliance. On a separate matter, Commissioner Geraldo shared concern over a reduction of safety equipment indicated by Montgomery Parks and asked if employees would be at risk due to not having the proper equipment. Parks Deputy Director Pedoeem indicated that she would look into the matter and get back to them. Acting Executive Director Bennett assured Commissioners that the Safety Office identifies all mandatory personal protective equipment for employees and those would not be affected by the cut.

Budget Manager Kroll remarked if Commissioners support the proposed cuts, he would prepare a memo to the Montgomery County Council from Vice-Chair Anderson. Commissioner Doerner suggested when the agency submits the proposed cuts, a mechanism be put in place to notify the public of the impact and why services might not be up to the agency's usual standard, including impact from reduced funding to address non-native invasive plant species. Vice-Chair Anderson noted since it is close to the time the M-NCPPC is advocating for its budget, the agency should highlight areas not funded because of budget reductions along with the effect on services. Vice-Chair Anderson added volunteers and supporters would be helpful in advocating for the budget process. Commissioner Cichy agreed and suggested using communication platforms to let people know why this is happening.

ACTION: Motion of Geraldo to approve the memo
Seconded by Cichy
8 approved the motion

a) Recognition of 2018 Diversity Council and introduction of 2019 Diversity Council

Acting Executive Director Bennett introduced this item by providing history on the Diversity

Council, which is entering its 19th year. She acknowledged some of the trailblazers who helped envision the Diversity Council, including Chair Elizabeth Hewlett, former Executive Director Trudye Morgan Johnson, and former Commissioners Zola Boone and Allison Bryant. The Diversity Council, which is comprised of a cross-section of employees, was formed to enhance diversity and inclusion, recommend policies to support this mission, and develop initiatives through strategic plans and programs.

Acting Executive Director Bennett introduced the 2019 Diversity Council members, noting the departments each represents and their individual interests in supporting the mission. She followed with recognizing the outgoing the 2018 members and thanked them for their service and hard work on the Council. She thanked Commissioner Patterson, who volunteers as special advisor to the Council and offers invaluable support. She also recognized former Executive Director Barney for her tireless support of the Council during her tenure and Department Directors for supporting employees who volunteer on the Council.

Chair Hewlett noted her appreciation for the new format of the packet item, saying it is difficult to get to know the different people on each Diversity Council, particularly those who work in different departments, and it was helpful to see the names, faces, biography and other details of the members presented so well. Mr. Dunn thanked Acting Executive Director Bennett for her support and direction on how to introduce the Council to the Commission.

b) Diversity Council 2018 Annual Report

Acting Executive Director Bennett introduced former Council Chair Robert Feeley and incoming Council Chair William Dunn, who presented the 2018 Annual Report.

Commissioner Washington extended congratulations and asked what metrics the Council uses to measure its success. Mr. Dunn replied that participation at their programs is measured and a Commission-wide Diversity and Inclusion survey was last conducted in 2017. Commissioner Washington suggested establishing goals to determine where the agency wants to be, gather data as a starting point and measuring progress over time. She suggested engaging not only staff, but senior management as well. Acting Executive Director Bennett referenced the M-NCPPC's annual Personnel Management Review report and said some of those statistics might provide a baseline.

Chair Hewlett noted how much of a change she has seen in the agency since the Diversity Council was formed and praised their efforts in changing the agency's culture, citing inclusion of LGBTQ programs, women's programs, multi-generational programs, literacy programs, programs for people with different levels of ability, and said the M-NCPPC is more welcoming and inclusive than it was in 1999. She noted the change in culture has affected policy. She provided the example that the M-NPCC has been a pioneer in providing benefits for domestic partners well before it became commonplace and while the level of diversity support in this agency is far stronger than in many others, there are always ways to improve.

Commissioner Cichy asked if there were any issues with discrimination or grievances during

exit interviews as a reason for why employees leave the agency. Chair Hewlett replied that the agency gets terrific feedback from exit interviews, but they are conducted inconsistently throughout the agency. Human Resources Director Spencer agreed and added discrimination complaints are very low compared with other jurisdictions and organizations. He said the Diversity Council sets the climate and environment for things to change for the better and makes the organization more attractive to current and potential employees and to its communities.

Commissioner Washington said M-NCPPC leadership needs to understand and appreciate that the agency is a community internally. She added that Commissioners and Department Heads drive the agency's culture, and leadership should show that it cares about the agency, that it is focused on the agency's culture, and examine it. The Diversity Council should be the vehicle through which certain programs are implemented and populations are engaged. Commissioner Bailey noted her involvement with the diversity movement for decades and commended the Diversity Councils' efforts and said as much as we have done as an agency, there is so much more we can do for each other if we are willing to converse.

Mr. Dunn added he would like the Diversity Council to focus on creating a platform for veterans employed by the M-NCPPC. He said veterans bring another range of diversity to the organization, and the agency could benefit in a greater participation in hiring them. Commissioner Washington noted how the view of diversity can be very limited if it is just thought of as ethnicity, because people need to appreciate and understand someone else's experience. Chair Hewlett agreed that the agency should incorporate more veterans in its workforce.

ITEM 7 OFFICERS' REPORTS

- a) Executive Director's Report (For information only)
Employee Evaluations Not Completed by Due Date (December 2018)
- b) Secretary Treasurer (For information only)
- c) General Counsel (For information only)
Litigation Report

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 11:30 a.m.


James F. Adams, Senior Administrative Specialist


Anju A. Bennett, Acting Executive Director