



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

6611 Kenilworth Avenue • Riverdale, Maryland 20737

Commission Meeting
Open Session Minutes
April 17, 2021

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission met via videoconference with the Chair initiating the meeting at the County Administration Building in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. The meeting was broadcast by the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County.

PRESENT

Prince George's County Commissioners

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

Montgomery County Commissioners

Casey Anderson, Vice-Chair
Gerald Cichy
Natali Fani-Gonzalez
Tina Patterson

NOT PRESENT

Partap Verma

Chair Hewlett called meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

ITEM 1

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION AGENDA

No modifications

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Washington to approve the agenda
Seconded by Commissioner Fani-Gonzalez
9 approved the motion

ITEM 2

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Open Session – March 17, 2021

Closed Session – March 17, 2021

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Washington to approve the minutes
Seconded by Commissioner Geraldo
9 approved the motion
Commissioner Patterson abstained from approving Closed Session minutes.
Commissioner Verma absent.

ITEM 3

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Chair Hewlett spoke on the recent verdict on the murder of George Floyd and the semblance of justice. She acknowledged the problem of police violence against black men in the nation. She recognized police often need to make split second decisions, but this was not the case. They jury did the right thing. She added that during Celebrate Diversity Month the Commission needs to embrace and hold fast to Diversity and continue to work. Everyone has the ability to step up and do something when you see something wrong. She recognized and praised the agency's Park Police, who do step up, are committed, and believe in community policing.

- b) Condolences went out to the family, friends and colleagues of two employees of the agency who died from complications from COVID-19. Those present at the meeting took a moment of silence for them and for the loved ones of staff who have passed.
- c) Stress Awareness Month
- d) Autism Acceptance Month
- e) Alcohol Awareness Month
- f) Arab American Heritage Month
- g) April birthdays – Chair Hewlett wished happy birthday to Commissioner Cichy. Commissioner Patterson wished Chair Hewlett best regards for her birthday.
- h) Chair Hewlett congratulated Commissioner Patterson for being selected to participate in the America Indivisible 2021 Public Leaders for Inclusion Council.
- i) Chair Hewlett recognized Administrative Professionals Day and thanked administrative staff who have been keeping the agency organized and running so well during this pandemic.
- j) Upcoming Asian-American & Pacific Islander month
- k) Upcoming National Prevention Week (Mental and/or Substance Use Disorders) May 9-15
- l) Commissioner Fani-Gonzalez asked, especially while the agency was applying for another One-Commission Gold Medal, if employees from each county could hear more from the other county. She asked in the next few months, for a presentation from both Parks departments to see what will be highlighted in the award application. Chair Hewlett suggested the Parks Directors work with the Executive Director to determine a good time to do that. She also requested if informal tours could be arranged for people to visit select parks in the opposite county. Prince George’s Parks and Recreation Director Tyler said he would be happy to work with Montgomery Parks Director Riley to arrange that, and looked forward to seeing them in his parks this summer.

ITEM 4 COMMITTEE MINUTES/BOARD REPORTS (For Information Only)

- a) Executive Committee Meeting – Open Session, April 7, 2021
- b) Employees’ Retirement System Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, March 2, 2021

ITEM 5 ACTION AND PRESENTATION ITEMS

- a) Resolution 21-06 Temporary Extension of Annual Leave Carryover for Merit Employees (Chiang-Smith/Zimmerman)

No discussion.

ACTION: Motion of Vice Chair Anderson to adopt Resolution 21-06
 Seconded by Commissioner Washington
 9 approved the motion

- b) Personnel Management Review (Spencer/King)

Corporate Human Resources Director Spencer introduced Classification and Compensation Manager Boni King, who provided highlights and statistics from the Personnel Management Review from 2020, included in the packet (please note a late delivery reflected the latest version of the report). Ms. King stated the agency continues to diversify its workforce, hiring more qualified professionals who are minorities, better reflecting the population in our counties.

Commissioner Doerner asked if the report differentiated between the counties’ population and the counties’ workforce demographics, noting the two may be different; and asked what the agency is doing to target the Latino workforce to encourage them to join our career workforce. Mr. Spencer replied a staff of 3-4 recruiters reach out on our websites and making contacts with various organizations to let them know we have vacancies. He agreed

the agency could more closely examine the difference between those who are in the workforce versus the entire population. Commissioner Washington also encouraged they examine the difference.

Commissioner Doerner asked about the demographics of our police force, to determine if they look like the people they are protecting. Mr. Spencer said the Parks Directors indicated they could lend resources toward the hiring of a more diverse work force. Executive Director Chiang-Smith said the agency is connected through the Society of Human Resources Managers (SHRM), and we are looking at strategies in connecting locally with different organizations. She added the agency has worked with the police Chiefs and FOP to ensure there are incentives for attracting diversity including bonuses for people who speak multiple languages. They are open to other suggestions.

Commissioner Washington suggested hosting a recruitment fair at our facilities, noting it would be a good way to meet the population we're trying to reach. Commissioner Geraldo agreed that the agency needs to expand its reach to the Latino community. Commissioner Doerner suggested contacting the Association of Latino Professionals for America.

Chair Hewlett thanked Ms. King and Mr. Spencer. Commissioner Washington congratulated the agency for its progress in increasing diversity.

c) Commission's Response to I-495 / I-270 Managed Lanes Study – Selection of Alternative 9 as the Recommended Preferred Alternative (Rubin/Borden)

Deputy General Counsel Borden and Managed Lanes Project Coordinator Rubin discussed a draft letter sent recently to Commissioners about the State Highway Administration's Preferred Alternative. While the team has been meeting regularly with the State Highway Administration (SHA) since January to help resolve issues and comments received from several agencies about the Draft Environmental Impact Study and stormwater management issues with SHA team. The team has been very busy and engaged and has made progress resolving several minor issues and one major one. Other major issues have not been addressed.

Deputy General Counsel Borden said many of these issues could be largely resolved with a segmented or phased examination of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study, which contains the entire 40-mile study area, whereas the only segmented part of the project is the procurement process. We want the NEPA study to match. They have only approved procurement for phase one, around the American Legion bridge. These NEPA issues are here and they are not going away. It is also unclear when the inter-agency IWAG team will next meet to discuss issues and solutions. The last scheduled meeting in April was cancelled, and has not been rescheduled.

The letter, if approved, will state the Commission's position of non-concurrence with the SHA's Recommended Preferred Alternative. Deputy Director Borden said the Commission should respond as if the whole NEPA study is still at play. If the preferred alternative is selected, the Commission will no longer be able to press environmental and parkland concerns. She said segmenting the plan provides SHA with an opportunity to proceed with phase one and then revisit others. This is the way forward.

Ms. Rubin noted, even with phasing, two critical issues remain with Phase one – first, whether the Preferred Alternative provides meaningful multi-modal plan. Second, the American Legion bridge must be designed and planned to accommodate rail. If MDOT and SHA address those two issues, she believes phase one should be able to move forward.

Chair Hewlett thanked Ms. Borden and Ms. Rubin for all their work and congratulated them on their perseverance and success. There was no other discussion.

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Fani-Gonzalez to approve the letter
Seconded by Commissioner Geraldo
9 approved the motion

ITEM 6 OFFICERS' REPORTS

Executive Director's Report

a) Late Evaluation Report (March 2021) (For information only)

Secretary Treasurer Report

b) 3rd Quarter Investment Report (For information only)

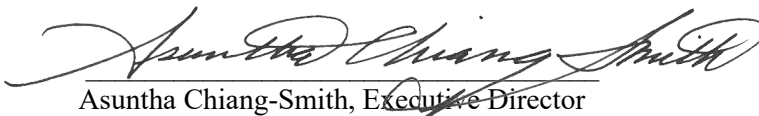
General Counsel Report

c) Litigation Report (For information only)

Pursuant to Maryland General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 3-305(b) (7) & (9), a closed session is proposed to consult with counsel for legal advice, discuss public security issues related to the agency's information systems and consider matters that relate to negotiation.

Chair Hewlett asked for a motion to move to closed session. Commissioner Washington moved, Commissioner Fani-Gonzalez seconded. All Commissioners in attendance voted for the measure and the meeting moved to closed session at 10:56 a.m. There being no further business in open session Chair Hewlett adjourned the meeting from closed session at 12:00 noon.


James F. Adams, Senior Technical Writer


Asuntha Chiang-Smith, Executive Director