



City of District Heights

City Commission

2000 Marbury Drive District Heights, Maryland 20747

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Minutes

Tuesday November 12, 2024

Work Session

Present: Cynthia Miller, Mayor
Gyasi Gomez, Vice Mayor
Xander Harcourt, Commissioner
Pamela Janifer, Commissioner
Anthony Tilghman, Commissioner

Call to Order

Mayor Miller called the Work Session to order at 7:01 PM on Tuesday, November 12, 2024.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Harcourt moved for the approval of the agenda. Commissioner Janifer seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-1.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Vice Mayor Gomez moved for the approval of the consent agenda. Commissioner Harcourt seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-1.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Action Item

Item 5: Strategic Partnership Policy

David Street, City Manager provided an update to the Commission on a proposed Strategic Partnership Policy. The policy outlines the selection process for potential partners, whereas in, potential partners can be identified, vetted, and presented to, and approved by the Commission. The policy also includes a standardized strategic partnership agreement, intended to clearly articulate the commitments and benefits of all parties, and to underscore the public's benefit to the agreement.

Commissioner Janifer moved that the City Commission direct staff to develop a strategic partnership policy with elements as provided in the November 12, 2024, staff report and as discussed at the November 12, 2024, Work Session and return to the Commission's December 5, 2024, City Meeting with a draft policy for consideration. Commissioner Tilghman seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0-1.

Item 6: Organizational Matters

David Street, City Manager and Vice Mayor Gomez provided an update to the Commission on Organizational Matters and a restructuring of liaisons in effort to allow departments to work together cohesively. At the October 8 Work Session, Vice Mayor Gomez introduced a concept wherein departments, advisory boards, and strategic initiatives are combined into functional areas and two Commissioners are selected to oversee that functional area of government.

Commissioner Harcourt agreed to work with Commissioner Janifer to oversee Government Administration. Vice Mayor Gomez moved that the City Commission confirm the department and advisory Board liaisons as provided for in the November 12, 2024, staff report and as amended during the November 12, 2024, Work Session. Commissioner Janifer seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-1.

Information Items

Item 1: Stop Sign Enforcement Program

Chief Tarpley provided an update to the Commission on data collected from stop sign cameras installed in the incorporated City. Chief Tarpley introduced Mr. Dro, co-founder of AIO, the company behind the stop sign cameras.

Item 2: New Business Introduction

Mr. Dro presented a presentation to the Commission, showcasing the need and benefit of traffic safety, and how data reflects that stop sign cameras has decreased vehicular accidents.

Mayor Miller asked how data is measured for vehicle owners that don't live in the incorporated city. Mr. Dro explained data for vehicles are collected through the owner's license plates. Commissioner Janifer asked if Mr. Dro has experienced any occurring violations with the cameras, themselves being vandalized. Mr. Dro answered that percentage of cameras that have been vandalized is low, however, the company does have an on the ground maintenance team in Prince George's County in case of any outages.

Commissioner Janifer asked if there is a backup for the solar powered cameras. Mr. Dro explained that the cameras are solar powered and includes a battery pack. Mr. Dro continued explaining that if the cameras receive sunlight every six days, they will continue to work, uninterrupted. Commissioner Janifer asked if tickets can be issued to non-registered Maryland drivers. Mr. Dro answered, yes, D.C., and Virginia violators will be ticketed as well.

Commissioner Harcourt raised concerns about the calibration of the camera units, and who is responsible for reviewing camera footage. Mr. Dro explained that AIO cameras provide video evidence in addition to calibration. Commissioner Harcourt asked the price of an average ticket. Mr. Dro answered, \$40.00. Commissioner Harcourt asked if violations can be turned over to collections. Mr. Dro answered that collections can also be established.

Vice Mayor Gomez raised concerns about the data collection and privacy process outlined, asking who has access to the server that collections traffic violations. Mr. Dro explained that the Chief of Police has access to the server, but that additional access to Commissioners can be granted. Commissioner Tilghman expressed the need for the stop sign camera program. Commissioner Janifer asked if violation recordings are uploaded to the cloud server. Mr. Dro explained that violations are saved in the cloud.

Commissioner Harcourt asked if AIO, the company providing the stop sign cameras can assist in drafting the Ordinance introducing the cameras. Mr. Dro answered, yes, AIO can assist in drafting the Ordinance. Chief Tarpley provided an overview of the data collected and plans to have an ordinance to the Commission by the December 5, 2024, meeting.

Closed Session

Vice Mayor Gomez moved that the City Commission enter closed session to discuss contractual matters pursuant to Maryland Code General Provisions Section 3-30515. Commissioner Harcourt seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0-1 with Mayor Miller abstaining.

The Commission entered closed session at 8:04 PM.

The Commission returned from closed session at 8:23 PM.

Action Item

Item 7: Contract Award for Senior Center Food Distribution

Commissioner Harcourt moved that the City Commissioner award a contract to Food 4 Thought in an amount not to exceed \$59,800.00 to provide food/meal distribution services in the District Heights Senior Center and direct staff to finalize the contract and begin implementation of the program. Commissioner Janifer seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-1-1 with Commissioner Tilghman abstaining.

Item 8: Contract Award for Senior Center Salon Service

Vice Mayor Gomez moved that the City Commission award a contract to N'Style to provide salon services in the District Heights Senior Center and direct staff to finalize the contract and begin implementation of the program. Commissioner Janifer seconded the motion. The motion passed, 3-1-1 with Commissioner Tilghman abstaining.

Mayor and Commissioner Comments

The City Commission has two remaining meetings this year. A work session scheduled on November 26, 2024, and a City Meeting on December 5, 2024.

On the December 5, 2024, meeting, City Manager, David Street will present the Commission a road map to the city's economic development and annexation report to provide to residents.

Commissioner Tilghman highlighted Veterans Day. Commissioner Janifer highlighted the Veterans Day ceremony. Mayor Miller highlighted the Veterans Day program as well. Vice Mayor Gomez thanked the Veterans Day planning committee. Commissioner Janifer recognized Leonard Marshall, recipient of the Veterans award and longtime District Heights resident.

Adjournment

Commissioner Harcourt moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Tilghman seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0-2. Mayor Miller called the meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.