



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

6611 Kenilworth Avenue • Riverdale, Maryland 20737

Commission Meeting
Open Session Minutes
March 19, 2025

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission met in a hybrid format, from the Prince George's Parks and Recreation Administration Building Auditorium in Riverdale, Maryland and virtually via videoconference. The meeting was broadcast by the Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County.

PRESENT

Montgomery County Commissioners

Artie Harris, Chair
Shawn Bartley
James Hedrick (arrived 10:52 am)
Mitra Pedoeem

Prince George's County Commissioners

Peter A. Shapiro, Vice Chair
Dorothy Bailey
Manuel Geraldo
A. Shuanise Washington

NOT PRESENT

Josh Linden

Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.

ITEM 1 CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Approval of the March 19, 2025 Commission meeting Agenda
- b) Resolution 25-03 Rose Creek Connector Trail Park Easements (Sun)
- c) Resolution 25-04 Andrews Manor Park Easements (Sun)

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Geraldo to approve the Consent Agenda
Seconded by Commissioner Washington
6 approved the items
1 abstention (Bailey)
1 not present (Hedrick)

ITEM 2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) Approval of Commission Minutes – Open Session
Regular Meeting: 2/19/25

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Geraldo to approve the 2/19/25 minutes
Seconded by Commissioner Washington
7 approved the item
1 not present (Hedrick)

- b) Approval of Commission Minutes – Open Session
Special Meeting: 3/6/25

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Geraldo to approve the 3/6/25 minutes
Seconded by Commissioner Washington
7 approved the item
1 not present (Hedrick)

ITEM 3 GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) Women's History Month
- b) National Nutrition Month
- c) Upcoming Stress Awareness Month
- d) Upcoming Alcohol Awareness Month
- e) Financial Disclosure Filing Requirement April 30 (State and M-NCPPC Deadline)

ITEM 4 COMMITTEE/BOARD REPORTS

- a) Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes from February 4, 2025 (for Information Only)

ITEM 5 ACTION/PRESENTATION ITEMS

- a) Amendments to Administrative Practice 1-31 Organization and Functions of the Audit Committee and Office of the Inspector General (Harvin/Beckham)

Mr. Beckham requested Commissioners' approval on minor amendments made to Administrative Practice 1-31. He summarized the amendments as laid out in the packet and opened the presentation for questions and discussion.

Commissioner Bartley asked if the Inspector General (IG) was an employee of the M-NCPPC or an employee of the State of Maryland. He also asked if these amendments permitted the IG a level of autonomy beyond Commissioner oversight. Inspector General Renee Kenney replied she is an appointed non-merit employee of the M-NCPPC, similar to a department head. She added the intent of the amendments was not to give the IG such reach, and the changes are primarily to clarify the responsibility and process of posting of official audit reports to mncppc.org.

Commissioner Bartley asked if the IG would be able to make statements to the media or public without Commissioner vetting. IG Kenney replied she has never felt compelled to speak to the press in her 13 years as Inspector General but maintained that independence is an important tool for any IG. Chair Harris said the IG reviews all matters with the General Counsel, the Chair and Vice Chair. He added his support for the amendments considering the checks and balances that are already in place.

General Counsel Borden stressed that independence is critical for the Inspector General, and that these amendments address a specific statutory requirement about the posting of audit reports. She added that the General Counsel's office meets with the IG to review every report to consider MPIA, personnel, and cybersecurity matters, criminal investigations or any other sensitive information that may be in a report. There is a need to collaborate, and we do so. But the independence of and ability for an Inspector General to speak independently of the governing body is an important check and balance and last line of defense. That said, any professional IG would need to consider such a move as one of last resort.

Commissioner Pedoeem, who is a member of the M-NCPPC's Audit Committee, posed a similar question regarding these amendments during yesterday's Audit Committee meeting and was sufficiently satisfied with the responses and the enumeration of checks and balances and was in full support of the amendments.

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Geraldo to approve the Amendments to Practice 1-31
Seconded by Commissioner Pedoeem
7 approved the item
1 not present (Hedrick)

ITEM 6

OFFICERS' REPORTS

Executive Director's Report

- a) MFD Quarterly Purchasing Statistics (for information only)
- b) Quarterly Budget Transfers Report (for information only)

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

- c) Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (Cohen/Rodman/Lehman)

Secretary-Treasurer Cohen introduced Mr. Chris Lehman from SB & Co Auditor, and Accounting Manager Abbey Rodman, who presented from information in the packet.

Mr. Lehman, auditor for SB & Co., reviewed the M-NCPPC's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, which provided an unmodified opinion on the agency's financial statements. He noted the audit revealed no fraud or material weaknesses in internal controls. One significant deficiency noted from last year showed significant improvement. He said the auditors received full cooperation from management and said no journal entries were noted. Finally, Mr. Lehman reviewed SB & Co.'s audit process and approach.

Ms. Rodman presented highlights from the 2024 ACFR itself.

Chair Harris thanked Mr. Lehman and congratulated Secretary-Treasurer Cohen on the clean audit. Commissioners thanked Ms. Rodman for her report.

Secretary-Treasurer Cohen also introduced the new Deputy Secretary-Treasurer, Jason Lawrence.

General Counsel's Report

- d) Litigation Report (For information only)
- e) Legislative Update (Borden)

General Counsel Borden provided Commissioners with an update on the current Legislative session. She said crossover did happen and the session appears to be winding down, adding we're in good position for the bills we've been monitoring. Will have one task force bill on affordable housing to discuss with the planning boards tomorrow. Other legislation that is still pending includes the solar bill and housing for jobs act. We are following both closely.


Pursuant to the Maryland General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, section 3-305(b)(9) a closed session is proposed to conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations.

Item 5. CLOSED SESSION

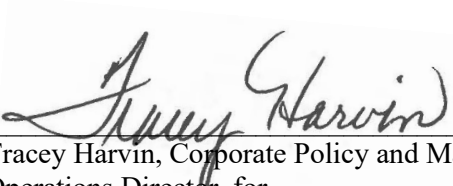
ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Geraldo to enter closed session
Seconded by Commissioner Hedrick
8 approved the items

Commissioners entered Closed session at 11:10 a.m. Open session resumed at 11:47 a.m. Chair Harris said during closed session, Acting Executive Director Spencer briefed Commissioners on the status of, and requested input on, negotiations with the Fraternal Order of Police and Municipal and County Government Employees' Organization collective bargaining units. The Commissioners also passed closed session minutes from previous meetings.

Chair Harris adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.



James F. Adams, Senior Technical Writer



Tracey Harvin, Corporate Policy and Management
Operations Director, for
William Spencer, Acting Executive Director