



Commission Meeting Open Session Minutes March 18, 2026

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission met in a hybrid format in-person at the Wheaton Headquarters Building in Wheaton, MD, and via videoconference. The meeting was broadcast by the Montgomery County Planning Department.

Present

Prince George's County Commissioners

Darryl Barnes, Chairman

Manuel Geraldo

Brittany Jenkins (joined at 10:12 a.m.)

Billy Okoye

Montgomery County Commissioners

Artie Harris, Vice-Chair

James Hedrick

Josh Linden

Mitra Pedoeem

Not Present

Shawn Bartley

Chairman Barnes called the meeting to order at 10:10 p.m.

Item 1. Approval of the Commission Meeting Agenda

- a) Approval of March 18, 2026, Commission Meeting Agenda

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Geraldo to approve the meeting agenda

Seconded by Vice Chair Harris

7 approved the items

Item 2. Approval of Commission Minutes

- a) Open Session – February 18, 2026

ACTION: Motion of Commissioner Geraldo to approve the February 18, 2026 minutes

Seconded by Vice Chair Harris

7 approved the item

Item 3. General Announcements

- a) Women's History Month
- b) Financial Disclosure Filing Requirement April 30 (State and M-NCPPC Deadline)

Item 4. Committee and Board Reports

- a) Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes from February 3, 2026 (for Information Only)

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 Vice Chair Harris
8 approved the item

Commissioners entered Closed session at 10:15 a.m. Open session resumed at 10:38 a.m. Chair Barnes noted that during Closed session, the Commission approved past Closed Session minutes. The Commission also received a briefing from the Acting Executive Director on Collective Bargaining with the Fraternal Order of Police. Commissioners provided input and direction.

Open session resumed at 10:38 a.m.

Item 6. Action and Presentation Items

- a) Recommendation for Appointment of New Investment Managers for the Employees' Retirement System (Harris)

Employee Retirement System Executive Director Jaclyn Harris offered a briefing and recommended approval for the appointment of WCM Investment Management as a new investment manager for the ERS, as included and detailed in the packet. Director Harris noted that the ERS Board of Trustees met earlier in the month and approved a \$70 million investment in WCM's Focused International Equity Fund to complement Earnest Partners in the ERS portfolio's International Equity holdings for an 11 percent total target allocation in the portfolio.

ACTION: Motion of Vice Chair Harris to appoint new investment managers for ERS
Seconded by Commissioner Geraldo
8 approved the item

Item 7. Officers' Reports

Executive Director's Report

- a) Diversity Council Membership/Annual Report (Solomon)

Diversity Council Chair Rachel Solomon offered the Commissioners a review of the Diversity Council's 2025 achievements, as included and detailed in the packet. Ms. Solomon highlighted new initiatives, notable events and celebrations, and communication updates. Ms. Solomon thanked outgoing members Samantha Haye, Frederick Johnson, Atara Margolies, and Ilana Branda for their hard work over the past two years and welcomed incoming members Natalia Gomez Rojas, Bhavna Sivasubramanian, Angelica Deras-Penate, Hilary Covington, and Jason Busch.

Prince George's Parks and Recreation Director Darius Stanton thanked Ms. Solomon and the Diversity Council, offered support, and asked about new initiatives for 2026. Ms. Solomon responded that while work on 2026 new initiatives and efforts to translate written and video materials will continue, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, which take effect in April, will be a major focus for the Diversity Council in 2026.

Vice Chair Harris thanked the Diversity Council members for their hard work.

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

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

- d) Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for FY25 ended June 30, 2025 (Cohen)

Following opening remarks by Secretary-Treasurer Cohen and Deputy Finance Director Lawrence, Chris Lehman from SB & Company LLC briefed the Commissioners on June 30, 2025, Financial Statement audit results, as included and detailed in the packet. Mr. Lehman noted that SB & Co. issued an unmodified opinion because no instances of fraud or material weakness were identified. However, one significant deficiency in the FY23 audit related to Construction in Progress was identified. Mr. Lehman added that no audit journal entries were noted. He then reviewed SB & Co.'s audit process and approach.

Mr. Lehman presented highlights from the 2025 ACFR.

Following Mr. Lehman's presentation, Director Stanton requested a more detailed presentation with the Department of Parks and Recreation finance team; Mr. Lehman agreed.

General Counsel's Report

- e) Litigation and Administrative Hearings Report (For information only)
- f) Legislative Update

Deputy General Counsel Aniton noted that while there were currently no legislative updates to discuss with the Full Commission, Senior Government Affairs Analyst, Jordan Baucum-Colbert, would provide relevant updates to both Planning Boards during their meetings tomorrow.

Commissioner Linden requested an update from General Counsel regarding State Senate Bill 1005, a bill that proposes significant changes to the structure of the M-NCPPC and was submitted late in the legislative session process. The proposed bill is now being discussed in the Senate Rules Committee.

In response, the Deputy General Counsel noted that there were no new updates, adding that Senior Analyst Baucum-Colbert has been working with the M-NCPPC's lobbyist and has been in contact with the delegations.

Commissioner Linden noted that the Montgomery County Planning Board voted to oppose SB 1005 during their March 12 meeting. He added that the Commissioners would not meet again until after the bill has been acted on and requested that the Commissioners discuss and vote on the bill.

In response, Chair Barnes stated that the Prince George's County Planning Board has two new Commissioners and has not taken up the bill for discussion but would receive a closed session briefing at their March 19 meeting. The Planning Board will then provide an update.

Commissioner Pedoeem stated that while she realizes that many of the Prince George's Commissioners are new, the potential for this bill to negatively impact upwards of 5,000 retirees and current employees, as well as residents of both counties, should not be taken lightly and noted her concern if anyone supports this bill.

Chair Barnes agreed to discuss the bill but reiterated his recommendation against holding a vote.

Commissioner Hedrick noted that both Planning Boards received information on the bill at the same time and thereby have had the same amount of time to review it. He added that Commissioner Jenkins could abstain from a vote and requested a briefing from the Deputy General Counsel followed by a vote to oppose the bill.

Commissioner Okoye supported Chair Barnes's recommendation for no vote on the bill. He also questioned the rush to vote, to which Commissioner Linden stated that the bill is currently in the Senate Rules Committee, which can often expedite a bill through the legislative session.

Vice Chair Harris concurred with Commissioner Linden's need for timeliness in this matter, requested a briefing from the Deputy General Counsel, and recommended that following tomorrow's Planning Board meeting, Prince George's Commissioners issue a statement regarding their stance on the bill.

Chair Barnes stated that the State Senate has not voted on the bill, and the cross-over of the bill to the House of Delegates is not until March 23, 2026, so there is no need to rush a vote. He added that Prince George's County Planning Board would issue a statement regarding its stance following tomorrow's meeting.

Commissioner Pedoeem noted her hope that whatever decision the Prince George's Planning Board makes is for the good of M-NCPPC retirees, current employees, and Prince George's and Montgomery County residents and is not politically motivated.

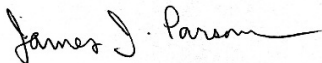
Deputy General Counsel Aniton briefed the Commissioners on the bill, noting that if passed, the bill will remove the requirement for the Commission to appoint a General Counsel, divesting that responsibility to each individual Planning Board, with each General Counsel serving at the pleasure of the Planning Board that appointed them. The Commission would then appoint one of the two Planning Board General Counsels as its legal representative. Each Planning Board would also have full and direct authority over its own Human Resources, Information Technology, and Procurement functions, effectively removing the authority from Central Administrative Services (CAS). He added that should the bill pass, there will be significant operational and fiscal impacts to the M-NCPPC, particularly for CAS.

Commissioner Linden noted that splitting CAS would also add millions of dollars of operational administrative costs to each county's yearly budget and seriously impact and hamper the administration of pension, retirement, and benefit funds, affecting thousands of retirees and current employees. He added that he was concerned that there have been no conversations between the M-NCPPC and the Maryland General Assembly prior to the bill's introduction or since.

Vice Chair Harris concurred with Commissioner Linden's assertions and concerns regarding the bill but recommended moving on from the topic.

Chairman Barnes adjourned the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

ACTION: Motion of Vice Chair Harris to adjourn the meeting
Seconded by Commissioner Okoye
8 approved the item



James J. Parsons, Senior Technical Writer



William Spencer, Acting Executive Director