



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 7F

Government of the District of Columbia

One Commitment, Our Community.

May General Commission Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2024 6:30 p.m.

1. Moment of Silence

Chairperson Holcomb asked all participants to observe a moment of silence

2. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Holcomb at 6:38 PM.

A quorum was established with 8 commissioners present: Hayes, Thompson Wright, Edwards, Hughes, Ruff, Nelson, Arol, and Holcomb.

3. Consideration and Adoption of the Agenda

Commissioner Ruff moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Hughes seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

4. Public Safety Update - 6th District MPD

Lieutenant Roberts from MPD provided an update on crime statistics in PSA 603. He reported a 32% decrease in violent crime, with significant reductions in homicides and assaults. He emphasized ongoing efforts to enhance community policing and address concerns related to noise disturbances from vehicles, particularly along Minnesota Avenue.

During the discussions with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), Commissioner Orendoff specifically addressed the need for increased patrolling on the side streets off Minnesota Avenue. He noted that these areas often see a rise in criminal activity, particularly as new residents move in, which can lead to tensions and safety concerns within the community.

Commissioner Orendoff emphasized that proactive patrolling in these side streets could deter crime and provide a visible police presence that reassures residents. He advocated for the MPD to develop a strategic plan that prioritizes these less-traveled areas, incorporating community feedback to identify hotspots and times when increased patrols would be most effective.

Commissioner Thompson-Wright supported this initiative, highlighting the importance of not only policing but also building relationships with community members in those neighborhoods. She suggested that officers engage in community outreach while on patrol, providing residents with contact information for local police officers and encouraging open dialogue about safety concerns.

Chairperson Holcomb echoed these sentiments, proposing that the MPD consider implementing community policing strategies in these areas. He noted that officers familiar with the community dynamics could better address specific issues and foster trust among residents.

Overall, the Commissioners collectively recognized that enhancing patrols on the side streets off Minnesota Avenue is critical for ensuring public safety, preventing crime, and strengthening community relationships. By increasing visibility and engaging with residents, the MPD can create a safer environment that addresses the unique challenges faced by these neighborhoods.

5. Administrative Updates

Chairperson Holcomb provided an overview of recent activities and initiatives undertaken by the ANC. He highlighted ongoing community engagement efforts and noted the importance of addressing local concerns, particularly regarding public safety and neighborhood development. The Chair also emphasized the need for continued collaboration with local law enforcement and community organizations to ensure that the needs of residents are met effectively.

Holcomb mentioned the upcoming budget advocacy efforts, stressing the significance of community input in shaping local priorities. He encouraged commissioners and residents to participate actively in the budget discussions and provide feedback on essential services that require funding.

6. Approval of April Meeting Minutes

Commission Secretary, Commissioner Edwards moved to approve the minutes as read. Commissioner Ruff seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

7. Presentations/Special Guests

Michelle Wilson, Deputy Director of Administrator, Department of Corrections

Presented detailed information about the new correctional facility project. She stated that the new facility aims to replace the outdated Central Detention Facility (CDF), which has been criticized for its aging infrastructure and inadequate rehabilitation services. The plan involves a significant investment of approximately \$477 million, allocated over six years, to create a modern facility that prioritizes rehabilitation, mental health care, and substance abuse treatment.

Wilson emphasized that the facility would not only focus on incarceration but also on providing educational and vocational programs designed to reduce recidivism. The new design aims to create a more humane environment for individuals in custody, incorporating therapeutic spaces and treatment options tailored to the needs of the population, which has increasingly included individuals with serious mental health issues.

Concerns from Commissioners:

Commissioner Thompson Wright expressed particular concern about the location of the new jail and its potential impact on the surrounding community. Questioning how the facility would integrate with existing neighborhood dynamics and whether adequate measures would be taken to mitigate any negative effects on safety and community cohesion. Urged for a clear plan on how the facility would operate in conjunction with local law enforcement and community organizations to ensure that it supports, rather than undermines, community safety.

Commissioner Hayes Commissioner Hayes expressed a range of concerns and perspectives regarding the new D.C. Jail. Emphasizing the importance of ensuring the facility promotes rehabilitation rather than just incarceration. Highlighting the need for comprehensive mental health services and educational programs to support inmate reintegration into society. Also noted that the design of the jail should prioritize safety for both inmates and staff, advocating for a facility that fosters a more humane environment. Additionally, Commissioner Hayes pointed out the significance of community involvement in shaping policies related to the jail, underscoring the need for transparency and accountability in its operations.

Commissioner Ruff expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs, noting past failures in addressing the needs of returning citizens. Additionally, highlighting the importance of transparency and community engagement in the planning process to address fears and misconceptions about the facility.

Response from the DC Department of Corrections:

Wilson acknowledged these concerns, stating that community input is crucial in shaping the facility's operations and programs. She assured attendees that there would be ongoing public engagement opportunities, including community forums where residents could voice their opinions and ask questions. She also committed to



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working closely with local organizations to ensure that the facility would align with community needs and values.

Feedback from Attendees:

Residents voiced their skepticism about the project, expressing fears that it could exacerbate issues already present in the neighborhood. They emphasized the need for resources to support individuals reintegrating into society, such as job training and counseling services, rather than merely focusing on incarceration. The community reiterated the importance of addressing broader social issues, like poverty and education, to prevent crime in the first place.

Public Comments/Community Concerns:

In addition to the jail discussion, concerns about persistent noise from vehicles, particularly dirt bikes and loud cars, were raised. The community requested more proactive measures from MPD to address these issues, including regular patrols and increased engagement with local residents.

8. Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business, acting-Chair Thompson-Wright adjourned the meeting at 8:17pm.

Attachments:

Presentation slides from the DC Department of Corrections