

Baltimore Local Development Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 5, 2018, 6:30-7:30PM
Baltimore City Department of Planning
417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

Attendance -- LDC Members:

Keisha Allen, Del. Luke Clippinger, Jasmine Esteve (proxy for Andrew Gervase), Bill Ferguson (Chair), Alvin Lee, Gilda Johnson (proxy for Karl Lowe), Bill Reuter, Wayne Vance, Beth Whitmer, Tom Casella (proxy for Jacqueline Grace).

Quorum Present: Yes

Baltimore City Agency Representatives: Brent Flickinger (Department of Planning)

Proceedings:

1. Sen. Ferguson called the meeting to order at 6:35PM and requested introductions by LDC members present.
2. Sen. Ferguson explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide feedback to the Mayor on the proposed FY'20 Spending Plan for fiscal year 2020 casino local impact grant (LIG) funds and led a discussion on what direction or advisement should be provided, as follows:
 - a. An overview of the documents that were presented at the November 8, 2018, meeting, including the budget table showing the proposed new allocation for FY'20 (Exhibit A) and the detailed description of projects and their current status (Exhibit B);
 - b. Requesting comments on any programmatic allocations that are proposed in the Spending Plan (i.e. what funds are proposed to be used for); does the LDC believe any items should or should not be maintained going forward or would potentially benefit from heightened oversight?
 - c. Gilda Johnson questioned if funding could be allocated for improving water distribution systems.
 - i. Senator Ferguson explained that LIG funds in prior years had been allocated for infrastructure improvements in the street right of way, which may include water, and that in FY'19-'21 an equivalent amount (\$2.5 million per year) is being allocated towards construction of a new City animal care facility. No new funding has been contemplated for water or other utility infrastructure.
 - ii. Brent Flickinger commented that improving water systems is part of the City's routine obligations and therefore does not fall within the typical uses of LIG funds.
 - d. Senator Ferguson raised concern that the expenditures on the Police Department's Casino Sub-District require more detailed reporting and oversight, and suggested that this be reflected in the LDC's "advice letter" to the Administration. A potential measure to address this concern could be a monthly, itemized accounting of payroll expenses by personnel and the types of compensation (regular salary or overtime) being charged to the unit, and for whom. The concern is to ensure that funds allocated for the sub-district are going towards personnel working in the unit at any given time.
 - i. Beth Whitmer echoed the need for this.

- ii. Delegate Clippinger stated that the LDC and City need to analyze if the staffing level is adequate given its mission and what have been the effects, if any, on the incidence of crime since the casino opened.
 - iii. Senator Ferguson reported that a discussion with BPD has been sought to consider revising the boundaries of the sub-district and the ability of officers to be deployed inside the casino.
- e. Senator Ferguson asked for feedback on other operations, such as those under the Department of Public Works:
 - i. Enhanced Bureau Solid Waste services: He asked if community representatives are satisfied that the gateway/corner cans are being serviced twice daily as per the plan. Bill Reuter and Keisha Allen both confirmed that they are.
 - ii. Smart-solar trashcans: LDC members reported these are popular. Bill Reuter posed a question as to whether they are being monitored, and if operations are responding to the smart technology that reports when cans are full. He cited, for instance, that after Ravens games he witnessed some cans overflowing with trash.
- f. Senator Ferguson informed the LDC that he would like to advise the Mayor's Office to not sign a long-term lease for the Employment Connection Center (ECC) at its current location in the Carroll-Camden Industrial Area. There is an effort to open an "Adult High School" with a full suite of educational and employment programs in Cherry Hill. The City should explore co-locating the ECC with the Adult High School. The next lease renewal term for the ECC is two years, running until from April 1, 2019, through March 31, 2020. Comments were offered about the pros and cons of both locations.
- g. Wayne Vance raised a general concern about prior-year funding allocations that appear to be languishing or slow in implementation.
 - i. Funding for upgrades to parks, for example: it is unclear if there is a clear plan for allocating and spending down remaining funds (from FY'17).
 - ii. Spending on the Middle Branch waterfront planning, for which \$200,000 has been carried forward from prior years, appears to be inactive. Senator Ferguson reported that the City has signed a contract with Parks and People Foundation for assistance in securing a world-class design team to lead the project ("phase one"). That process will use the carry forward funds and will result in an invited "design competition," in which three teams of firms will present their visions for the network of open spaces and trails around the Middle Branch.
 - iii. Wayne asked for further clarification on the FY'20 new appropriation of \$200,000 for the Middle Branch planning. This is not carry forward or cumulative funding but rather is a new allocation for "phase two," which includes the design development and feasibility assessments for the waterfront projects by the selected team. The available carry forward funding (\$200,000 from FY'16 and FY'17) will be spent during phase one, mostly by the end of FY'19.

- iv. Senator Ferguson highlighted the Community Enhancement Projects as an example of projects that are moving slowly. He recommended that the LDC obtain an update on when these will be finished.
- h. Gilda Johnson asked the group how the LDC is able to verify that the spending reports are backed up by projects being completed.
 - i. Keisha Allen, Delegate Clippinger and others responded that the LDC is advised of events, such as dedications and milestones on projects supported with LIG funds;
 - ii. The Employment Connection Center sends out regular newsletters and announcements of hiring events; the ECC also produced a report on two years of progress in 2017;
 - iii. The Mayor's office representative, Ethan Cohen, provides reports to the LDC at quarterly meetings and agency representatives are available at those meetings to discuss progress.
 - iv. It was suggested that more real-time or monthly reporting mechanisms would be helpful.
- 3. Senator Ferguson introduced a motion to approve the FY20 Draft Spending Plan with comments reflected above. All voted in favor with no opposing or abstaining.
- 4. Senator Ferguson presented certificates of recognition from the Maryland 46th Delegation to Wayne Vance, Bill Reuter, Pastor Alvin Gwynn and Keisha Allen for their six years of service on the LDC.
 - a. Pastor Gwynn noted that service for some was six years "plus two," under the prior iteration of the LDC.
 - b. It was acknowledged that Brent Flickinger has served the LDC and this effort since then as well. Brent remarked on the extra work that has been done in Baltimore to establish a thoughtful, transparent and inclusive process for allocating LIG funds, which was over and above what is required by law and far exceeds the efforts of other jurisdictions. He credited the leadership of the elected officials from the State and City for developing such a robust process.
 - c. Discussion that there are four vacancies for next year, with the term limits of these four representatives above. Seats are available for two neighborhood representatives (residents) and two institutional or business representatives.
 - d. Senator Ferguson reported that the Mayor is looking to change appointments to match Mayoral terms, in this case two years for the next round of appointments and then four years after that. Brent raised the concern that four-year terms could potentially impede the goal of rotating neighborhood representation.

Meeting adjourned 7:10 PM

No meeting dates are currently set for 2019.

Minutes were prepared by Ethan Cohen, Senior Project Coordinator, Office of Mayor Catherine E. Pugh (Strategic Alliances).