



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH MISD BOARD

FEBRUARY 6, 2025

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

School Board President Maggie Tai Tucker called the joint meeting to order at 6:15 pm in the MISD Administration Building Board Room located at 4160 86th Ave SE Mercer Island, Washington.

Mayor Salim Nice, Deputy Mayor David Rosenbaum and Councilmembers Jake Jacobson and Ted Weinberg were present. Councilmembers Lisa Anderl, Craig Reynolds, and Wendy Weiker were absent.

JOINT MEETING BUSINESS

Safe Routes to Schools

Chief of Operations Jason Kintner reviewed projects included in the City's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), with reference to the attachment to the agenda. The projects focus on safe routes to schools and are planned for the period 2025 through 2030. The presentation highlighted eight key projects scheduled for construction, including sidewalk improvements across various locations and improvements/enhancement along Island Crest Way. It was noted that the design phase for these projects typically occurs a year prior to construction. Two of the planned projects were delayed by a year due to the water emergency in summer 2024, which necessitated the replacement of a water supply line before any sidewalk construction could occur. Some discussion occurred, and District staff expressed appreciation for the partnership with the City in ensuring student safety.

Police Chief Chris Sutter offered comments on e-bike/scooter safety around school facilities. He noted that educational campaigns aimed at students and parents are in the works, focusing on the legalities and safety measures associated with these vehicles (e.g., assembly at IMS, student-led efforts at MIHS). Deputy Mayor Dave Rosenbaum noted that there is little the City can do when a parent purchases an e-motorcycle for their child; however, they are looking at what restrictions might be applied on City-owned property to improve safety, especially in advance of warm weather. Superintendent Fred Rundle acknowledged Deputy Mayor Rosenbaum's and Chief Sutter's efforts to listen to PTA members, principals and others and consider their input. Councilmember Weinberg inquired about reviving the bike rodeo to help educate kids in a fun environment.

Long Range Facility Planning

MISD Owner's Representative Brandi Fox discussed capital projects planned for the summer of 2025, specifically repainting the interiors and exteriors of the elementary schools (i.e., Island Park, Lakeridge and West Mercer) and the progressive design build project at Mary Wayte Pool, which will require some collaboration with City staff.

Mayor Salim Nice discussed the City's comprehensive capital facilities assessment to evaluate all buildings within its inventory. He noted that, during this assessment, asbestos was discovered at City Hall, necessitating immediate investigation and leading to the conclusion that reoccupying the was not feasible. The costs associated with addressing the asbestos issues surpassed the building's value, resulting in its permanent closure. The focus has now shifted to addressing the essential needs of City services, including public safety and public works, with an early design phase underway for a new public safety and maintenance building to be located on the former City Hall campus. This site is intended to accommodate the significant vehicle movement related to public works and police operations. The City held a study session in October to discuss design options for the new building and intends to look into funding options once five percent of the overall design details are finalized. The building will include a "store front" which will serve as an expanded customer service area to house the City's Customer Service team. Chief of Operations Kintner indicated that the City is focused on maintaining existing facilities and discussed the seismic retrofit at the current public works building to extend its life by five to seven years. Councilmember Jake Jacobson discussed the need to address rerouting of the City's water system.

Some discussion occurred around the District's bond initiative, scheduled to be included on the April special election ballot, as well as anticipated projects in the future to address three aging elementary schools. Councilmember Ted Weinberg emphasized the need to find a balance between revitalizing schools and modernizing the City's water and sewer infrastructure. He noted that the City has steadily increased investment in water and sewer and is seeing the benefit of a reduction in the number of water main breaks each year. He suggested that the City will likely need to continue issuing bonds to fund this investment and he encouraged collaboration between District and City leadership when bringing something before the voters.

Points of Collaboration and Partnership

Mayor Nice discussed the impact of the bomb cyclone in November, including the unique challenges, lessons learned and extraordinary unbudgeted costs. He expressed appreciation for the District's collaboration in opening IMS for use as a charging station, warming center and a gathering place for information as well as providing access for refueling of certain police and powered vehicles. Superintendent Rundle and directors also acknowledged the City-District partnership, highlighting, among other things, the relationship with Mercer Island Youth and Family Services (MIYFS). YFS Administrator Derek Franklin shared that 500 people have registered to attend the annual MIYFS breakfast on February 12 and noted this is a great chance to come support school counselors and the organization.

ADJOURNMENT

The Special Joint Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.



Salim Nice, Mayor

Attest:



Andrea Larson, City Clerk