



City of Bowie

15901 Fred Robinson Way
Bowie, Maryland 20716

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2021

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The Special Meeting of the Bowie City Council was held on Tuesday, December 21, 2021, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Adams called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

Mayor Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

QUORUM:

In attendance were Mayor Adams, Councilmembers Boafu, Esteve, Gardner, Harrison, Ndebumadu and Woolfley, City Manager Lott, Assistant City Manager Mears, City Attorney Levan, and Staff.

DISCUSSION ON COURSERA AGREEMENT:

In the process of drafting the contract, it came to City Attorney Levan's attention that what the City would be getting from Coursera was not what was presented to the public which was 125 licenses for \$50,000. In actuality, what the City would be getting is one year of service and the use of up to 125 licenses which would be discontinued after the one year is up, meaning the City could be getting substantially fewer than 125 licenses. Some licenses could also be substantially shorter than one year.

Council clarified for the public that the contract with Coursera would be \$50,000 for one year of service during which time up to 125 licenses and 250 Google Certificate Scholarships can be used. Coursera agreed to provide 125 of the Google Certificate Scholarships and an embeddable form at no cost to this City, automating the process and allowing residents to directly sign up for Coursera without staff needing to provide support. The licenses are good for one year from the City's license start date, not the date on which the individual licenses begin being used. There was some discrepancy between what Coursera stated to City Attorney Levan and what Mayor Adams and Councilmember Ndebumadu believe could happen based on their business experience. They believe the license start date could be within 90 days of the signing of the contract and that the one-year time period would start at that time.

Councilmember Gardner asked if Coursera could be invited to attend a meeting and explain the proposed contract to Council to get some clarity. City Attorney Levan responded that two of the offers from Coursera, the extra 125 Google Certificate Scholarships and the embeddable form at no cost, were only good through the end of the week.

It was clarified that if a resident signs up after the start date of the licenses, they will not have the full twelve months to utilize the services, only whatever time is remaining until the City's one year anniversary. If the resident has not finished the training at the end of the City's one year period, they would need to pay out of their own pocket if they would like additional time to complete the training.

Councilmember Harrison stated that she thinks the terms should be written out and that residents should need to agree to them when signing up so that they are clear on what they're getting, the terms, and when the product will expire. Councilmember Gardner agreed.

Communications Director Una Cooper discussed the marketing for this program, stating that the City won't be able to work with Coursera on marketing until the contract is signed as they would not provide marketing materials to the City until the contract is signed and the money is paid. It will take a bit of time to get that moving. She does not believe that the City may not have 90 days to market the program before the license start date, but the City can continue to market after that as well. City Attorney Levan said what they would be talking about is the City undertaking its own marketing efforts before the effective date of the contract. Ms. Cooper stated that it would be in that 90-day period because Coursera is supposed to provide canned information, helping to develop press releases, and marketing materials.

City Attorney Levan will verify that the license start date and the one-year period can be different than the date on which the contract is signed. If that is true, City Attorney Levan was directed by Council to finalize and sign the contract with the latest possible license start date.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Pro Tem Boafu motioned to adjourn the Special City Council meeting. Councilmember Esteve seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carolyn Fifer".

Carolyn Fifer (for City Clerk Awilda Hernandez)
Assistant to the City Clerk