

February 18, 2024

Presidents' Day Reflections on First Mayor Roy McCathran

To: Mayor and Council, Town of Washington Grove

What's in a name? It doesn't take much manpower to detach an old, pretty sign and slice off the first word. How will we feel after we make the name change to Town Hall, or Assembly Hall as it was at the beginning? Will we continue to stumble and say McCathran Hall regardless? How will we explain the change in the third volume of our history?

Change is inevitable. However meaningful change derives from deep intellectual cooperative thought and sound reasoning. I studied our town's history in 2023 to prepare for the celebration. Today, I am childishly optimistic that the glow our first campers had whether in sun, shade, rain, or mud will remain with us. Our modern town government congealed after the depression under the careful stewardship of Roy McCathran, Mayor, 1937-1957. This Mayor:

- Authored and published the Town Ordinances;
- Set up the Town Meeting style of local government to give citizens more control over taxation;
- Set up a legal entity to collect and disperse taxes;
- Reconciled Association shares with deeds and transferred the deeds to the Town of Washington Grove;
- Prodded recalcitrant owners to hook their properties up to the WSSC water and sewer lines;
- Closed contaminated wells;
- Contracted for refuse removal services;
- Set in motion paving town roads.

I don't see a need to change the name of our town hall as a gesture toward racial equity in America. We are America, but we are also Washington Grove.

Sincerely,

Meredith Horan