

Meeting Summary for Town Council Zoom Meeting

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Quick Recap

The council discussed various topics including the hiring of a parliamentarian for parliamentary training, the need for air conditioning in the Town Hall, and the treasurer's report for the fiscal year. They also deliberated on the town's liability insurance policy, the bids received for the stormwater infrastructure maintenance project, and proposed changes to Resolution 2024 regarding the governance of Washington growth committees. Lastly, they discussed the inclusion of non-residents in leadership roles on town committees, the structure of their committees, and the need for a two-phase DEI program.

Next Steps

Here are the key action items from the meeting:

- Paula to review the Leadership Montgomery DEI training proposal and provide feedback at least a week before the August meeting.
- Barbara and Mary to meet with Paula to discuss any questions about the Leadership Montgomery DEI training proposal before the August meeting.
- Mary to organize a subcommittee to recommend actions and draft policy/procedures for addressing maintenance of unoccupied properties in town.
- John to schedule the next special Council meeting for July 30th or 31st to hear from stormwater infrastructure bidders.
- Barbara to hire Michael Swift to conduct a three-hour parliamentary procedure training for the Town Council and mayor.
- Barbara to check if committee chairs can also attend the parliamentary procedure training.
- Planning Commission subgroup to present proposed changes to commercial corner ordinances at an upcoming Council meeting.
- John to ensure the June 10th and April 16th meeting minutes are prepared for approval at the next Council meeting.

John to follow up with Green Bank about potential climate resilience projects, including air conditioning options for the Town Hall.

Eva to report on results of the Woodward Park playground survey this month.

Summary

Council Meeting Agenda and Deadlines

In the July 8th Council meeting, John led the discussion on various topics including a proposal to hire a parliamentarian for parliamentary training, an item on education about Robert's Rules of Order, and the need for air conditioning in the Town Hall due to rising temperatures. The council approved the proposed agenda without any objections, with Eva seconding the item about parliamentary training. Kathy shared her difficulties in meeting deadlines, prompting John to agree to clarify expectations. Jean presented the near-final treasurer's report for the fiscal year, indicating that while the books were close to being closed, there were still some close entries not included in the report.

Year-End Review and Future Planning

Jean reported that the year-end books and records showed an income ahead of the budgeted amount and expenses just under two-thirds of the budget. She also noted that there would be no need for a budget transfer ordinance and that the year-end entries conformed to generally accepted accounting principles. John proposed that the road work budget for the next fiscal year might exceed this year's budget. The Council also recognized several town events and individuals for their contributions. Lastly, it was announced that RASEC would sponsor an outreach to neighbors to be held at Maple Lake, which was intended to be a low-key, neighborly event to showcase the lake's limitations and capacity.

Party Permits, Meadow Restoration, and Climate Project

Paula highlighted the need for party permits and additional lifeguards for larger groups, while the Conservation Meadow Restoration was discussed with John detailing the Ad Hoc committee's plan to restore the meadow, including the removal of cedars and the opening up of viewscapes. The potential impact on noise from the highway and the need for community feedback were also addressed. Furthermore, John presented the "Climate Resilience Pilot Project" in partnership with the Green Bank and Montgomery County, aiming to tackle climate change challenges. Lastly, John reported on the approval of contract extensions for Laney and Ross Construction for comprehensive road work contracts, with a plan to transfer construction contracts from Ross to Laney due to Ross's inability to undertake the work.

Town's Liability Insurance and Hybrid Meetings

John discussed the town's liability insurance policy, highlighting its coverage and limitations, particularly regarding the lake. He also introduced the concept of hybrid meetings, which the town had successfully implemented. There was a discussion about the need for a trial run to test the audio-visual setup before the annual in-person meeting next May, with Christine noting that the Lake Committee had been conducting hybrid meetings for several months. Lastly, concerns were raised about the council's ability to handle a large number of virtual attendees, and it was clarified that some committee meetings had been held late with only a few people physically present.

Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance Project Bids

John presented the bids received for the stormwater infrastructure maintenance project, highlighting that both the Bio Habitats and SMI proposals exceeded the project's budget. The council and the stormwater team were urged to assess what could be achieved within the budget. Two council meetings were planned for July to review the proposals and allow bidders to answer questions. John praised the flexibility of Bio Habitats' proposal, while also noting the need for an engineer to oversee the project, with Soltesz being suggested for this role. A pre-meeting was arranged before the council meeting.

Washington Growth Committees Resolution Changes Discussed

The council scheduled a special meeting on Monday, July 29th, to discuss proposed changes to Resolution 2024 regarding the governance of Washington growth committees. Robert Gilmore, who was absent from the previous meeting, opposes the proposed changes. There was a mute issue during the meeting where Marilyn barked at something. The original resolution was revisited, as the council did not approve the amended version with tracked changes.

Discussing Non-Resident Roles in Committees

The town council discussed the inclusion of non-residents in leadership roles on town committees. Robert proposed non-resident committee members should not have voting rights to maintain ties with neighboring communities and ensure responsible oversight of spending. Peter disagreed, arguing that non-residents could bring valuable input and that leadership doesn't necessarily require election. The majority of the council agreed that while non-residents should be encouraged to participate, the town's resources and needs should be prioritized. The council is considering a proposal to limit the role of non-residents in committees but emphasize their inclusion, with specific requirements.

Improving Council-Committee Relationship and Leadership Roles

The team discussed ways to improve the Council's relationship with committees, including providing more guidance and amending resolutions for clarity. They also deliberated on the distinction between leadership positions and committee officer roles, ultimately deciding to define leadership as being tied to elected positions. The inclusion of non-residents in leadership positions was debated, with the conclusion that they could make valuable contributions but should not be identified as leaders. The team agreed to continue working through changes before making any decisions and opened the floor for public comment on the agenda.

Committee Structure and Resident Prioritization

The leadership team discussed the structure and composition of their committees, with a focus on the balance between resident participation and volunteerism. Marilyn raised concerns over the representation of the town in resolutions, leading to discussions on the need for revisions and the importance of clear guidelines. The team also debated the distinction between standing and ad hoc committees, and the criteria for becoming a voting member. The discussion concluded with Dick Cavicchi's concerns about the town's

perception by non-residents, and the team agreed that the opinions of residents should be prioritized in decision-making.

DEI Specialist Training and Committee Leadership

The town discussed amending a resolution to prohibit non-residents from holding leadership positions on committees, but ultimately passed an altered version allowing for non-resident participation. A proposal from Leadership Montgomery regarding a DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) specialist training was also discussed, with concerns raised about the focus on calling out wrongdoing. The Council decided to proceed with the proposal, but deferred the action to August for further public comment and review. The need for a two-phase DEI program was emphasized, with the first phase aimed at defining DEI and the second for leadership workshops led by Barbara.

Committee Formation and Council Matters

The formation of a Council committee to recommend actions to address the maintenance of unoccupied properties was proposed by John and Mary, Kathy, Kriss and Bob agreed to serve on it. Two resolutions to authorize bow hunting in the East and West Woods were passed, and the need for parliamentary procedure training for the Town Council and the Mayor was recognized by Barbara, who hired Michael Swift for a three-hour session. Various topics including Woodward Park survey results, tennis shed maintenance, new signage, and planning commission work were discussed, with Peter noting positive feedback from Bell Properties. The next meeting was scheduled for August 31st, and an issue about air conditioning the council hall was brought up, with potential solutions being proposed.