



Minutes of the Town Council
Monday, July 8, 2024, 7:30 p.m.
Approved August 12, 2024

Call to Order: Mayor John Compton called the meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:35 p.m. In attendance were Councilors Rob Gilmore, Kriss Grisham, Peter Nagrod, Barbara Raimondo, and Mary Warfield. Eva Patrone arrived after the vote approving the agenda. Many residents were also in attendance.

Approval of Agenda: Peter Nagrod moved to approve the agenda shown by Mayor Compton. Eva Patrone seconded the motion.

Action: Vote: 6-0. Agenda approved.

Public Appearances:

Christine Dibble would like the Town Council to revisit the idea of central air conditioning to McCathran Hall.

Treasurer's Report: Eva Patrone moved, and Mary Warfield seconded, accepting the June Treasurer's Report for 2024. Treasurer Jean Moyer summarized the year-end procedures before the FY24 books could be closed. Mayor Compton explained that he has negotiated an addendum to the previously awarded MT Laney road work contract to add work originally offered Ross Construction. Since the total contract award would exceed the combined FY24 and FY25 resurfacing budgets line items, he will propose accommodated using unspent funds remaining in the FY24 Streets, Roadways, and Alleys budget.

Action: Vote: 6-0. June 2024 Treasurer's report accepted.

Approval of Minutes: It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting from March 25, 2024. There was no discussion.

Action: Vote: 6-0. Minutes approved.

Mayor's Report:

a. *Kudos: Mayor Compton recognized the following residents:*

- *To the Rec Committee organizers of Music Weekend, and volunteers, for the Children's Recital (talented residents are many!), the Band Night at the Gazebo, and the Jazz Brunch events enjoyed by many residents.*
- *To Rec Committee organizers, to Kathy Lehman and her Muskrat musicians, to Alan Janus, to Charlie Challstrom, Rob Gilmore and all you other 'patriotic' Grove volunteers who contributed to the successful 2024 Washington Grove on the Fourth of July celebration - on a day it literally was "95° in the shade" - which didn't stop the enthusiastic turnout for the event!*
- *To Steve Werts, who made it possible for the mayor to have another opportunity to embarrass himself on the town tractor.*

- b. RASEC Outreach - RASEC expects to sponsor a Maple Lake event as an outreach to neighbors involved in RASEC activities. Permit requirements for Lake events will be met and Maple Lake users will be welcome as well. The planned event was briefly discussed.
- c. Conservation Meadow Restoration Planning – Mayor Compton outlined a restoration plan for the Conservation Meadow that is the outcome of discussions between the ad hoc resident meadow committee and Montgomery County Parks. He showed a map indicating cedar trees that would be removed to restore meadow viewscales. The proposed plan will be brought to the Town Council for Town review and residents will have an opportunity to voice their opinions.
- d. Climate Resilience Pilot Project with the Green Bank – The Montgomery County Green Bank has funded a one-year Pilot Climate Resilience Project with Washington Grove. This will target mitigating further damage from stormwater in the West Woods by aiding the Town in developing engineering solutions and identifying funding sources for the project. Also to be explored will be financial aid for flooding affecting private properties and for conversion from oil heating to renewable energy sources.

Administrative Matters:

- a. *Comprehensive Road Work 2024 Contracts – proposed revision.*
Mayor Compton reported that Ross Contracting declined to accept the repaving contract offered by the Town, and that M.T. Laney agreed to add the work to their contract (already signed) for the amounts offered in their original bid. The Mayor proposed to accept the additional cost that will exceed the combined FY24 and FY25 budget for repaving (\$82,173 vs \$80,000), the balance to come from excess funds remaining in the FY24 Streets, Roadways, and Alleys budget. Rob Gilmore moved to award the contract, including the overage, to M.T. Laney and Barbara Raimondo seconded the motion.
Action: Vote: 6-0. Contract approved.
- b. *Town Liability Insurance – brief review.*
Mayor Compton reviewed the Town’s liability insurance with the Town’s insurer LGIT (Local Government Insurance Trust). LGIT was enabled by the State to allow Maryland municipalities to pool their resources to obtain liability and property insurance. The Town policy includes General Liability coverage against all perils without qualifications. In particular, Maple Lake use and risk is not subject to exclusions.
- c. *In Person and Virtual Hybrid Meetings in McCathran Hall.*
Washington Grove is a member of Montgomery Municipal Cable (MMC), and Mayor Compton currently serves as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors. MMC has been consulted on how best to conduct hybrid (both in-person and virtual) meetings in the Town Council room(s) and main Hall. They have provided the Town with new equipment and will guide us in becoming comfortable with the necessary operations and procedures. MMC has also agreed to directly facilitate next May’s hybrid Annual Town Meeting. Lake Committee Chair Tom Land informed the Town Council that the Committee has been conducting hybrid meetings in the Old Council Room over the past year. Mayor Compton

is looking for Committee meetings to help test and refine implementation of the Town's hybrid meeting solution.

Current Business

Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance RFP – *Bids received. Discuss the contract award process and set date for presentations and Q & A by bidders.*

Mayor Compton reported seven vendors participated with Town representatives in walkthroughs of the proposed work areas in our Request for Proposals. Complete bid responses have been received from Biohabitats and SMI Environmental. Both bidders have been asked to present a summary and have a Q & A with the Town Council. A date was discussed for this session to happen prior to the August 12 regular Town Council meeting. Mayor Compton observed that plenty of time remains for adequate Council consideration since ARPA requirements dictate the funds be committed by contract before the end of 2024. He also noted it would be prudent to engage a separate Project Manager and suggested Soltesz should be considered.

Action: A Special Town Council Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, July 30, 2024, at 7:30p.

Resolution 2024-02 “Guidelines to Provide for Proper Governance of Washington Grove Committees” – *Discussion and possible adoption.*

Resolution 2024-02 was discussed and amended at the June Town Council and action deferred to permit further public comment. This resolution will replace Resolution 2019-13. Councilor Nagrod moved for its approval.

Additional Council discussion on the motion included Councilor Gilmore expressing opposition as he favors a more positive message to our non-resident neighbors about participation on town committees and also that they should be allowed as leaders; clarification of the new “Whereas” which expressly encourages non-resident participation on committees; the oversight process for committee expenditure of funds, and other related aspects of committee operations.

The Question was Called by Councilor Nagrod and it passed 5-1 (Gilmore opposed).

Action: Vote: 5 – 1 (Gilmore opposed), Resolution adopted.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Education – *Discussion of alternative proposals.*

Barbara Raimondo introduced and described two proposals for DEI community education from Leadership Montgomery. She moved acceptance and Eva Patrone seconded her motion. Council discussion and public comments included the following: contrasting the LM proposals and the specialist programs recommended by RASEC, researching any DEI training offered by Montgomery County, another review of the relevancy of the Town DEI survey results. Councilor Warfield thanked RASEC for all their hard work. Paula Puglisi requested another month for RASEC to review the LM proposals.

Action: The Council deferred action on the motion until the August meeting. Barbara asked that comments from RASEC be provided at least a week ahead of the meeting and offered to meet separately with RASEC to further explain the proposals and answer any questions.

Maintenance of Unoccupied Properties – *Proposal to Form a Subcommittee to Recommend Actions and Draft Policies and Procedures to Address the Maintenance of Unoccupied Properties in Town.* Mayor Compton indicated his support for creating a Council subcommittee to make

recommendations. Councilor Warfield moved to approve to form a subcommittee and Rob Gilmore seconded the motion.

Action: Vote: 6-0, subcommittee approved. Councilors Mary Warfield and Kriss Grisham, Town Clerk Kathy Lehman, and HPC Chair Bob Booher volunteered and were charged with delivering their recommendations to the Town Council.

New Business

Resolutions 2024-04 and 2024-03; Authorizing Deer Management Bow Hunting Sessions – Discussion and approval.

Mayor Compton presented two Resolutions, identical to those of previous years, authorizing deer bow hunting sessions during the Maryland state deer hunting season September 6, 2024, through January 31, 2025, in the East and West Woods, and in the Conservation Meadow in cooperation with Montgomery County. Resolution 2024-23 and 2024-24 were moved and seconded for adoption. There was no discussion.

Action: Vote: 6-0, resolutions adopted.

Education on Robert’s Rules of Order – *Proposal to Hire a Parliamentarian for Parliamentary Training.*

Councilor Raimondo reviewed previous discussions of ways to improve the conduct of business at Town Meetings and possibly also Town Council meetings. She proposed training in Robert’s Rules of Order (use specified in the Town Charter) could be offered to the Town Council. She identified two qualified specialists and obtained their proposals. She reviewed the proposal from Michael Smith (a Certified Professional Parliamentarian) for a three- hour “class” for around 10 persons at a cost of about \$750. Mayor Compton commented funds were available. After brief discussion and a request to include Committee and Commission Chairs in the class, it was moved and seconded to hire him.

Action: Vote: 6-0 to hire Mr. Smith at a cost up to \$1000, include committee chairs and to schedule the training class.

Other Regular Business

Town Council Reports – Of Note:

- a. *Woodward Park (Patrone)* – The results from 75 responses to the Playground Survey will be reported this month.
- b. *Maintenance (Nagrod)* – Volunteers have been working on repairs to the tennis shed, including painting and installing gutters for rainwater collection. New signage has been placed in Woodward Park.
- c. *Planning Commission (Nagrod)* - Peter also reported that a small group will be formed to examine the ordinances and possibly re-write them as needed.
- d. *Historic Preservation Commission* – The HPC has prioritized updating their Design Guidelines document in FY25.

Approval of Minutes –

- a. Minutes of the Public Hearing on Ordinance 2024-01 on May 21, 2024 were approved without amendment.
- b. Minutes of the Town Council meeting May 21, 2024 were approved without amendment.

Next Meetings –

- A special Town Council meeting will be held by Zoom on Tuesday July 30, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. The principal business will be to interview the two bidder responses to the Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance RFP.
- The next regular Town Council meeting will be virtual on Monday August 12, 2024, at 7:30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.