

Meeting Summary for Town Council Zoom Meeting

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Quick Recap

The Town Council meeting covered a range of administrative and community matters, including agenda modifications, budget planning, and policy updates. The council adopted Robert's Rules of Order to improve meeting efficiency and discussed changes to snow removal policies, as well as the potential for hybrid meetings and delivery options for the town bulletin. Additionally, the council addressed various community concerns, including speed hump installation, vacant property maintenance, and historical preservation efforts.

Next Steps

1. Mary and Chris to revise the vacant properties resolution into a proposed ordinance revision, incorporating Paula's suggested edits and working with Sue Ellen.
2. John to write up and distribute a formal policy on limited use of salt for snow removal, and look into alternatives for ice melting.
3. Eva to create a form to gauge resident interest in receiving printed bulletins in PO boxes, with John including information about bulletin availability options.
4. Kathy to explore changing the format of the town bulletin to make it more readable on electronic devices.
5. Peter to send out proposed changes for the commercial corner ordinance to the Council within the next two weeks and present them at the next Council meeting.
6. John to plan and organize hybrid Town Council meetings for the budget work session and April Council meeting.
7. Council members to prepare for implementing Robert's Rules of Order in future meetings.
8. Meadow Committee to submit a budget request as a newly recognized town volunteer committee.
9. Oscar Ramos and Eva to continue leading the playground work group and develop a playground proposal.
10. HPC to prepare a proposal for installing commemorative signage at historic locations.
11. HPC to continue reviewing the progress of converting town historical records to electronic form and organize them for accessibility.
12. Paula and Eva to assist with printing and distributing bulletins to residents who opt in, once the interest is gauged.

Summary

Jungle Gym Removal Agenda Discussion

The matter revolved around the discussion of removing an item from the agenda concerning the jungle gym. Eva proposed to amend the agenda to remove this item, citing that it was unanimously voted to remove it in the previous meeting and there was no new information to reconsider the decision. Barbara supported Eva's motion, emphasizing the consensus reached on the playground issue and the lack of new information or circumstances to change the decision. Peter expressed concerns about the process and the potential for revisiting past decisions, while John suggested that reconsidering the decision was not unreasonable if there was new information or a different argument. The council ultimately decided to remove the item from the agenda.

Agenda Adoption and Tree Planting Update

In the meeting, John led the discussion on the agenda, removing item 16, and the subsequent vote. Peter abstained from voting, while Mary, Chris, and Peter voted in favor of removing the item. The agenda was then adopted. The council also discussed the minutes from previous meetings, with Peter offering to correct a few typos. Howard raised concerns about snow and ice on the roads, and Jean provided an update on the tree planting expenses and the George Payne Memorial Fund. Jean also announced that the town has collected \$4,000 for a carving project, with the town matching the donations up to \$5,000. Dennis expressed gratitude for the donations.

Fiscal 26 Budget Process and Updates

In the meeting, Jean outlined the detailed timeline for the fiscal 26 budget process, which includes various deadlines and communication points with residents. John emphasized the importance of public input and the need for everyone to review the draft budget before the annual town meeting. Jean also mentioned the need to address some contracts in a timely manner. The conversation ended with John's report, which included kudos for the holiday show, the stormwater infrastructure maintenance contract, and the Conservation Meadow Restoration Plan. Administrative matters included the engagement of Myers and Laws for tree removal and Conservation Meadow work.

Adopting Robert's Rules of Order

In the meeting, John led the discussion on the adoption of Robert's Rules of Order for the Town Council meetings. Barbara proposed the motion, which was seconded by Eva. The rules aim to make meetings more organized, efficient, and predictable. The Council agreed to adopt the rules, with the understanding that there would be a learning curve and adjustments needed. The rules will be enforced from the next meeting. The Council also discussed the importance of residents providing input and being proactive in their engagement with the Council. The conversation ended with the unanimous adoption of Robert's Rules of Order.

Updating Snow Removal Policy

John proposed a change in the town's snow removal policy to allow the use of salt in specific instances where ice is a significant problem. The previous policy, agreed upon by the council, was not to use salt. However, after a recent incident where trucks slid off the road into the ditch due to ice, the council agreed to update the policy. Eva made a motion to update the snow

removal policies to use salt in circumstances deemed necessary by Peter and Rj. The council agreed to this proposal, with the understanding that they would look into alternatives to salt. Peter expressed his gratitude to Steve for his help in the situation. John agreed to write up the policy and send it around for approval.

Town Bulletin Delivery Options Discussed

The meeting revolved around the idea of delivering the town bulletin to post office boxes. Eva proposed a motion to give all town residents the option of receiving the monthly bulletin in their post office box, as well as through email. However, there were concerns about the cost, time, and effort required for this task. Kathy suggested changing the format of the bulletin to make it easier to read on electronic devices. The council decided to explore the idea further by sending out a form to gauge interest from residents. The final decision on whether to proceed with the idea will be based on the response received.

Hybrid Town Council Meetings and Speed Humps

In the meeting, John proposed the idea of conducting hybrid Town Council meetings, where council members would be physically present in the Town Hall while residents could participate virtually. The aim was to refine the hybrid approach for the upcoming annual town meeting. However, there was some confusion about voting procedures, with some members expressing concerns about being excluded from voting if they were not physically present. It was agreed that remote participation with voting would be allowed for the trial meetings. The Meadow Committee was also recognized as a volunteer committee, with guidelines to follow, and would be treated like other committees with budget requests and oversight. Lastly, the installation of new speed humps was discussed, with the policy for approval to be clarified.

Speed Humps and Vacant Property Resolution

John discussed the process of installing speed humps, emphasizing that a group of residents must request it and the council would evaluate their request. Kriss shared her conversation with a Montgomery County community officer about potential speed humps and sought the council's opinion on new locations. The council then discussed a resolution regarding vacant properties, maintenance standards, and enforcement. Mary and Chris, who had proposed the resolution, were asked to revise it into an ordinance proposal, incorporating suggestions from Paula. The council also discussed the definition of a vacant property, with Peter suggesting that it should not include properties where residents are present, even if they are not always there. The council agreed to continue working on the resolution and will consider it for adoption in the future. In the meeting, the council discussed the possibility of deferring a resolution to the next council meeting to allow for further work on converting it into an ordinance.

Town Council Reports

They discussed the progress of the playground work group, the Gateway Committee's plans for Railroad Street improvements, and the maintenance of the snow and ice. The council also discussed the potential for commemorative signage at historic locations and the conversion of town historical records to electronic form. Lastly, they acknowledged the loss of Allan Janus and expressed gratitude for Liz's organization of the tribute event.