



Minutes of the Town Council
October 14, 2024, 7:30 p.m.
Approved January 13, 2025

Call to Order: Mayor Compton called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Councilors Rob Gilmore, Kriss Grisham, Peter Nagrod, Eva Patrone, Barbara Raimondo, and Mary Warfield. Also in attendance were Treasurer Jean Moyer, Phil Edwards, Joan Mahaffey, Steve Werts, Peter Nagrod, Ken McCathran, Paula Puglisi, Kathie Evans, Nan Aitel-Thompson, and Meredith Horan.

Approval of Agenda: It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda.
Vote: 6-0, as presented.

Regular Business

Public Appearances: There were none.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Jean Moyer reviewed revenue and expenses in the September Treasurer's Report. She noted that a new lease agreement was signed by Action Hauling, renter of Town land on the south side of Railroad Street, which provides for penalties if rent is paid late.

Action: Vote: 6-0 to accept the September Treasurers Report.

Mayor's Report:

a. ***Kudos:***

- To Tom Land for organizing the contractor's appreciation event. It was a great idea.
- To all the volunteers who organized the 70+ birthday party. Bravo!

b. *Testimony to the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission* – delivered by Councilor Barbara Raimondo on October 5. Mayor Compton thanked Barbara for stepping up and present very compelling testimony concerning the Town's acknowledgement of past racist actions and future commitment to anti-racist and inclusive policies.

c. *Green Bank Washington Grove Climate Resilience Project* – Status Report. As part of the Green Bank's pilot program with Washington Grove, Maryland Environmental Services (MES) has been engaged for planning and engineering in support of identifying sources and seeking funding to restore and protect the streams within the West Woods.

d. *Energy Audit Planned* – An energy performance assessment (audit) by Elysian Energy is planned for McCathran Hall.

- e. *Sustainable Communities Grant award from PEPCO*. The Meadow Committee led by Bruce Daggy made a successful application to Sustainable Maryland and was awarded \$10,000 for environmental stewardship purposes to be used for tree culling in the Conservation Meadow.
- f. *Streetlight Inventory* – The Town and PEPCO have finalized a comprehensive inventory of streetlights in the Grove.
- g. *Parliamentary Procedural Training* – The session was held October 13 for the Council and committee leadership.
- h. *“State of the District” event at McCathran Hall* – Saturday, October 19, District 39 State Delegate Gabriel Acevero will be hosting a public event with a theme of environmental justice, as well as to discuss District resident’s concerns. Residents and the public are invited to attend.
- i. *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)* – Training will be given by Leadership Montgomery on November 16 from 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Sign up is required and registration forms are forthcoming.
- j. *Washington Grove Haunted Woods* – October 26th at the Gazebo at 4:00 pm.
- k. *Trick-or-treat in the Grove* – October 31 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm.
- l. *150th Posters* – Available as appreciation gifts to invited participants at Town events.
- m. *Speed Bumps in Town Being Considered* – Residents should contact Peter Nagrod with their ideas for placement.

New Business

Status of the Washington Grove Connector Shared Use Pathway (PDF). DOT Project Leader Jean Kapusnick was invited by the Shared Use Pathway Liaison Committee and Mayor Compton to provide the Council with a status report. After a short summary of the project’s history by the Mayor, Jean reviewed the ambitious timeline required to complete engineering and move on to construction. With 35% engineering completed, necessary permits from Parks and WSSC are being obtained, after which the mandatory referral review by the Planning Board will be scheduled, where public input will also be possible.

Various questions and aspects of the pathway were discussed. The Liaison Committee will provide a thorough review and feedback to MCDOT of the 35% engineering plans as soon as they are available. The Mayor and Council thanked Ms. Kapusnick for her participation in the discussion.

Proposal to Re-Publish “Grove Gatherings” (1975, by Rosalie Shantz) – Phil Edwards and Meredith Horan appeared before the Council to discuss publication of a new edition of this personal accounting of Washington Grove events that they consider a valuable historical

resource. “Grove Gatherings” is out of print and they have performed minor editing improvements to prepare the book for re-publication both electronically and in print.

The Council was asked whether the Town would be interested in publishing the book (the Women’s Club having declined to do so). An in-depth discussion focused on questions of inaccuracies and controversial content, and it was suggested as an alternative, that a resident group could get together and publish the new edition.

Action: None taken in the absence of any motion.

Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance Contract Award - Patty Klein, representing the SWIM advisory committee, presented the Council with a summary of the written review of the two bidders, SMI and Biohabitats, that the group provided to the Council, which was based on evaluation of the bidder interviews held by the Council July 30 and August 13, and included references for each bidder the group obtained since then. The group recommended SMI for award the contract.

Peter Nagrod moved and Eva Patrone seconded award of the SWIM contract to SMI. At the request of the mayor, the motion was altered to approve entering into negotiation of a contract with SMI to be approved by the Town Council.

Action: Vote 6-0, motion passed. Mayor Compton will begin contract discussions. The mayor will also confirm with Soltesz (Jason Mills) that he will accept a contract to serve as Town engineer to advise on engineering quality and performance for the duration of the project.

Restoration Plan for the Conservation Meadow – Discussion continued on the recommendation from the Meadow Committee to approve Phase 1 of the tree reduction plan proposed by Montgomery County Parks. Referring to the confusion and controversy evident in the extensive public input received on the proposal, Mayor Compton proposed scheduling a Special Town Council Meeting on the restoration proposal, at which the Council and residents would receive information on the history of the creation of the Conservation Meadow, background on the existing meadow management plan, and the rationale for a new plan. In addition, groups of residents with alternative suggestions could present, and individual residents could offer verbal testimony on the restoration proposal.

*Action: It was moved and seconded to schedule a Special Town Council Meeting to be held either November 2nd at 10:00a – 1:00p, or November 3rd at 9:00 am – noon.
Vote: 6-0, approved.*

More New Business

Request to Remove Supporting Documents from the Town Website for Resolution 2023-01 “Acknowledging Washington Grove’s Racially Exclusionary Past and Committing to an Equitable and Inclusive Future” – Discussion and possible deferral to a future Town Council Meeting. A consensus of the Council, expressing interest in discussing this request

received from several residents, asked for a motion on the proposal. A motion to approve the request was offered by Peter Nagrod and seconded by Mary Warfield.

Discussion proceeded, touching on the reasons for the request, whether anything had changed since adopting the Resolution, concern for setting a precedent, and the need for consistency in public access to materials on the website.

Action: Vote 0-5, motion failed. Kriss Grisham abstained, explaining he was not sufficiently familiar with the discussions surrounding passage of the Resolution.

Town Council Reports – Of note:

- a. Forestry and Beautification (Raimondo): Fall planting to total 13 trees and 9 bushes.
- b. Washington Grove Conservation Park – Meadow Committee (Grisham): Discussion of the meadow restoration proposal and dissemination of information. Also see Agenda item 9 above.

Approval of Minutes: none.

Next Meetings:

- a. Special Town Council Meeting on the Meadow Restoration Proposal:
Virtual, either November 2, 2024, 10:00a – 1:00p, or November 3, 2024, 9:00 am – noon.
- b. Regular Town Council meeting: Virtual, Monday November 11, 2024, at 7:30 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45p.

Kathryn L. Lehman