

Minutes
May 8, 2012

CALL TO ORDER

President Barbara Falcigno called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and delegates then introduced themselves.

Matt Zabrosky moved to approve the April 10, 2012 minutes and Steve Cohen seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously. Matt Zabrosky moved to approve the agenda and Sharon Dooley seconded. The agenda was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Barbara Falcigno announced that on Tuesday, May 15, 2012 from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. there will be a streamlining development roundtable discussion in the cafeteria of the Executive Office Building on Monroe Street in Rockville. The roundtable will focus on easier ways to facilitate infrastructure development in Montgomery County. Next, there have been several attempted burglaries in the area, specifically in the areas of Christie Estates and Arden Woods. Please lock your doors and garages. There are many upcoming community activities that need volunteers such as Olney Home for Life and the First Annual 4th of July Picnic. All are listed on the GOCA website at www.goca.org. All volunteering for GOCA activities have been approved for SSL hours.

Paula Kahla announced that the Olney Chamber of Commerce received a grant for Capital Improvements to the Olney Police Satellite Station in the amount of \$10,000 from the State of Maryland. The Olney Chamber of Commerce would like to especially thank the state delegates of Montgomery County for their help in this effort.

Danny Benn announced that Relay for Life is on June 9, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. at Good Counsel High School. Anyone who would like to make a donation please consult with Danny Benn.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

1) State Delegate Craig J. Zucker of District 14

Delegate Zucker, a member of the Maryland State House Appropriations Committee, focuses his efforts on the state budget. In the latest developments, the Committee passed a capital budget which will create 144,000 jobs, help fund Montgomery County school construction dollars of which 40 million dollars will be reverted back to Montgomery County with 4 million dollars going to District 14 schools. Further, the capital budget will jumpstart local community projects with \$660,000 preauthorization funds for programs such as the Olney Police Satellite Station, the Woodlawn Barn, and the Sandy Spring Museum.

Another initiative where Mr. Zucker was instrumental involved the passage of legislation that protects children and those with disabilities against identity theft, the first its type in the nation. Mr. Zucker further spearheaded legislation that protects against foreclosure during mortgage restructuring and legislation that allows for texting of 911 emergencies in situations where a phone is unavailable.

2) State Delegate Anne R. Kaiser of District 14

Delegate Kaiser is the Chief Deputy Majority Whip of the Maryland State Ways & Means Committee and Chair of the Education Subcommittee. Ms. Kaiser focuses on the importance of funds reverting back to District 14 from the capital budget in the short term and how these funds develop partnerships with the community. For instance, the funding for the Olney Police Satellite Station enhances the partnership with the local police and the residents of Olney. Similar partnerships are needed. However, because the Maryland House and Senate could not agree on long term budget issues, “the doomsday budget” as advertised in the media, was triggered.

Overall, since a specific piece of legislation was not passed, the doomsday budget was activated, going into effect on July 1. This budget severely cuts money from community colleges and increases state college tuition by 13%. Further, this doomsday budget eliminates “the geographic cost of education index,” an index that mandates educational funding to Montgomery County in the area of 30-40 million dollars a year. Lastly, bio-tech and stem cell research funds would be lost. Hopefully, the special session of the legislature will cure this budgetary problem.

Please contact Ms. Kaiser for legislation ideas. She seeks your support.

3) State Delegate Eric Luedtke of District 14

Delegate Luedtke, in his second year as state delegate, is a member of the Maryland State Ways & Means Committee, the Education Subcommittee, the Transportation Subcommittee, the Finance Resource Subcommittee, and is one of the legislative representatives on the Maryland Commission on Disabilities. To begin with, Mr. Luedtke appreciates and strongly encourages constituents to contact their representatives to suggest bills for enactment. In fact, two bills which Mr. Luedtke has sponsored and has become law, originated from constituent contact with his office.

With a brother who is disabled, Mr. Luedtke considers his work on the Maryland Commission on Disabilities of high importance. Much of his focus during sessions is aimed at children with disabilities. Through Mr. Luedtke’s influence, the Governor has increased funding for services for adult developmental disabilities, reducing the time in which adults with developmental disabilities will receive services. However, passage of this legislation depends on the outcome of the special session. Another bill Mr. Luedtke introduced intends to restore a tuition waiver for adults with developmental disabilities at the community college level for non-credit courses in functional life skills. Lastly, Mr. Luedtke sponsored a bill allowing children in the foster care system to stay at their home school if the school is outside the jurisdiction of their new home and is in best interest of the child.

Mr. Luedtke, who is also a Social Studies teacher, stressed that the Education Subcommittee did tremendous work this year. Through their efforts, the Compulsory Age of Attendance bill was enacted, raising the age where a child may drop out of school to seventeen years for three years and to eighteen years in the following five years, concurrently. During those five years, the Committee will be working fervently on eliminating the issues that lead to child drop out. Mr. Luedtke also passed Social Studies legislation which requires any Social Studies test in high school to include a writing section and a critical thinking section.

Lastly, at the special session, Mr. Luedtke will address the gaming and transportation issues that face Maryland.

4) Senator Karen Montgomery of District 14

Ms. Montgomery is a member of the Maryland State Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee. Through this committee, ethics and election laws have been strengthened through transparency. Each citizen can now view online who donates money to Maryland politicians and how much.

Ms. Montgomery reiterated the importance of passing a sound budgetary bill in the special session so as to avoid any curtailing of funding for those with developmental disabilities. In tandem with Mr. Luedtke, Ms. Montgomery encouraged constituents to contact their representatives with ideas for legislative bills, provided several examples of constituent ideas that were enacted into laws, and detailed the importance of the increased funding for services for adult developmental disabilities.

5) State Delegate Roger Manno of District 19

Mr. Manno serves on the Maryland Senate Budget & Taxation Committee. His Committee passed a \$36 billion dollar budget for the state of Maryland this year. Over the last six years, this Committee has reduced the rate of growth in government by \$7 billion dollars. However, budget cuts were never made until this year with the advent of “the doomsday budget.” In particular, failure to pass both SB 152 (The Budget Reconciliation Financing Act) and SB 523 (The State & Local Revenue Financing Act) on April 9th triggered this doomsday budget, eliminating \$500 million dollars through budget cuts. As a result, a large number of public employees have been let go. Hopefully, these issues can be resolved in a compromise between both political parties at Maryland’s special session.

Please contact Mr. Manno for legislation ideas.

6) State Delegate Bonnie Cullison of District 19

Delegate Cullison serves on the Maryland House Health & Government Operations Committee. Lauding the achievements of Maryland, Ms. Cullison stressed the fact that Maryland is one of five states in America that still retains its triple A bond rating, which is important for planning capital projects and building infrastructure. As a progressive measure, Ms. Cullison was instrumental in passing the same-sex marriage act to give civil rights to same sex couples. Ms. Cullison was also instrumental in passing a comprehensive healthcare benefit exchange program, providing seven hundred thousand impoverished Marylanders with healthcare and medical information through “navigators” who match individuals with health care that best fits their needs. The program works for both individuals and businesses.

Ms. Cullison also worked on passing legislation for Healthcare Enterprise Zones, allowing for physicians and healthcare providers to provide medical care to those in areas where there is little to no healthcare service (such as in rural areas). Lastly, Ms. Cullison has passed legislation to assist children with special needs, particularly those in need of physical therapy and occupational therapy.

7) State Delegate Sam Arora of District 19

Delegate Arora serves on the Maryland House Judiciary Committee. Prior to attending the this year’s Maryland General Assembly, Mr. Arora, along with Governor Martin O’Malley and County Executive Ike Leggit, travelled to India in an attempt to form joint ventures with businesses in Maryland, bringing back jobs the people of Maryland.

Falls by senior citizens is a major concern of Mr. Arora’s. As one of Maryland’s top senior citizen’s health care issues, Mr. Arora has developed a program for home safety inspections for the elderly. Further, Mr. Arora was key in closing a significant loop hole in the Maryland tax code for trust, generating for Maryland \$30-50 million dollars a year in revenue. Lastly, Mr. Arora passed legislation to allow for voice speech while driving to prevent texting while driving.

8) State Delegate Ben Kramer of District 19

Delegate Kramer serves on the Maryland House Economic Matters Committee. First, Mr. Kramer vehemently opposes the idea that The Teacher’s Pension fund should switch from a state funded program to a local government program as a form of balancing the state budget. Further, he intends to tackle the issues of the failure of the tax packages and lack of transportation funding for Montgomery County during the Maryland special session.

Mr. Kramer is proud to sponsor legislation requiring all banks in Maryland to be mandatory reporters of those who they suspect of financial abuse of the elderly, which was a top legislative priority for AARP. Mr. Kramer also introduced a secondhand smoke bill as a nuisance issue but needs feedback for clarification.

After all the delegates made their presentation, there was a period for lively questions and discussion.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

a. President's Report

Last month, GOCA approved a \$500 playground dedication to the memory of Ron Berger. Maryland Park & Planning has created a new policy whereby the cost has risen to \$2,000 for signage and maintenance for the dedication. The appeal process to the Commission has begun.

In October 2008, GOCA passed a resolution to allow the County Executive to collect ambulance fees through reimbursements by the patients' health insurance. No deductible or co-pay would be collected. The County Council approved the bill but it was overturned by the voters in a referendum during the last election. It now is back in the proposed budget and the County Council needs to decide whether or not to approve it again. Therefore, Arnie Gordon is at the Council hearing tonight reiterating GOCA's position.

Concerning the issue of the signage for RightTime Medical Care, Righttime Medical Center has created a wrap-around sign which conflicts with OTCAC Sign Variance Guidelines. Jim Smith did excellent job representing GOCA's interests at the Sign Variance Board hearing and investigating the matter in depth. Another hearing before the Sign Variance Board will be held on heating on May 9th, 2012 at 8:30 a.m.

The Spring Arbor Development issue will be discussed in depth at the next month's GOCA meeting. Next meeting, Representatives from MNCPPC will present the new zoning code, specifically how the zones in the Olney Master Plan area will change.

b. Correspondence Report

Howard Greif stated the following was in the GOCA correspondence binder: The testimony of Arnie Gordon on the new ambulance fee, hot topics on local transportation issues, letters from Board of Appeals, information on the Olney Estates, postings for county council job openings, and other correspondence including information on the Olney Chamber of Commerce grant for Capital Improvements to the Olney Police Satellite Station and Barbara Falcigno's testimony on Sandy Spring Bikeways.

c. Chamber of Commerce Report

The Olney Chamber of Commerce thanked the state delegates of Montgomery County for their help in procuring the grant for Capital Improvements to the Olney Police Satellite Station. The Olney Chamber of Commerce Awards will be on Thursday, June 14, 2012 at the Norbeck Community Center from 6:00- 9:00 p.m.

d. Olney Town Center Advisory Committee

OTCAC had no issues to report.

e. Civic Federation Report

The Civic Federation had no new issues to report.

f. Membership Report

John Webster reported that two new HOAs have registered with GOCA. Six HOAs are still outstanding.

g. Transportation Report

There is a new representative at the State Highway Commission who will send GOCA a quarterly report detailing any upcoming issues at the State Highway Commission.

GOCA would like to have a second left turn lane running west onto Route 28 at Georgia Avenue and Norbeck Road. The State Highway Commission has been doing road count studies to see if this is feasible. However, GOCA has not been given the results of the study.

Installation of a traffic signal at Bowie Mill and Route 108 will begin this in April. This project will also widen the northbound Bowie Mill Road approach to Route 108, providing two lanes at the intersection. This work is scheduled to be complete by September of 2012.

Georgia Avenue is being repaved up to Queen Mary Lane and Tidewater Court.

h. Treasurers Report

Ruth Laughner announced that as of March 31, 2012 the current bank balance is \$21, 503.78. In the month of March, Ruth has received \$150 in donations from two HOA and \$420 for the banner fees.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Olney Days

Olney Days have added 2 new events this year with the Olney Idol competition at the Olney Theater. There will be 23 contestants with ages from 7 ½ to college, making up four categories. This event begins at 7:00 p.m. in the amphitheater. The other event is the Shed-It Event on Saturday afternoon from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. at the Sandy Spring Bank parking lot.

There will be 4 music bands and 20-25 vendors during the festivities.

Update on First Baptist Church of Wheaton

Judicial review of the planning board resolutions has named GOCA, SEROCA, and Countryside Alliance as petitioners, along with several individuals. The Planning Board has until mid-May to file the agency record with the court. The Planning Board has entered the case however, First Baptist has not. Once First Baptist has filed, all petitioners will have 30 days to file briefs. The judge is Sharon Burrell. Everyone is seeking a continuance of the August 7, 2012 hearing date due to scheduling conflicts. Park and Planning has consented to the continuance but, the Court has not ruled on the motion.

There have been two complaints for declaratory judgment and administrative mandamus where SEROCA and other individuals as plaintiffs seek to invalidate the resolution by the council on the sewer on this property. No judge has been assigned nor a date set for this hearing.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Farmer's Market at the Hospital Grounds will open on Mother's Day.

The next GOCA meeting will be on Tuesday, June 12, 2012.

ADJOURNMENT

Matt Zabrosky made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Sharon Dooley at 10:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark K. Hill, Recording Secretary

GOCA Executive Board

Barbara Barry (Perspective Woods), Danny Benn (Fair Hill Farm), Jackie Benn (Fair Hill Farm), Steve Cohen (Oak Grove), Joe Corbett (Williamsburg Village), Sharon Dooley (past president, Janus Creek), Della Dorsey (Camelback Village), Barbara Falcigno (President), Lori Goodwin (Hallowell), Chuck Graefe (SEROCA), Mark Hill (Recording Secretary, Camelback Village), Jeff Kahan (Christie Estates), Andrea Keller (Fair Hill Farm), Troy Kimmel (Lake Hallowell), Howard Grief (Corresponding Secretary, Norbeck Grove), Ruth Laughner (Treasurer, Williamsburg Village), Lydia Rappolt (Camelback Village), Helene Rosenheim (past President, Highlands), Jim Smith (Oatland Farm), Carol Sullivan (Cherrywood), John Webster (Executive Vice President, Manor Oaks), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), Matt Zaborsky (past President, Norbeck Meadows), Geff Kinder (Norbeck Grove), Vicky Aceto (Olney Square), Greg Intoccia (Ashley Hallow).

Invited Guests

Senator Karen Montgomery of District 14, State Delegate Anne Kaiser of District 14, State Delegate Eric Luedtke of District 14, State Delegate Craig Zucker of District 14, State Delegate Roger Manno of District 19, State Delegate Bonnie Cullison of District 19, State Delegate Sam Arora of District 19, State Delegate Ben Kramer of District 19, Terri Hogan (Gazette).

Public

Joe Buffington (Olney Chamber of Commerce), Paula Kahla (Olney Chamber of Commerce), Barbara Ray (Brookville) John Salzberg (SSCA), Joe Fitsch (Highlands), Dale Ann Pearlman (Norbeck Hills), Max Levin (Olney Acres), Alden English (SEROCA), Ira Unger.