

Minutes
April 8th, 2014

CALL TO ORDER

President John Webster called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and the GOCA Representatives, alternates, and members of the public then introduced themselves. Barbara Falcigno moved to approve the March 2014 minutes; seconded by Lou Saporito. The minutes were approved unanimously.

A motion was made was by Jodi Finkelstein to accept the April agenda. The second was made by Dave Rada. The April agenda was approved unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENTS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcement was made by Barbara Falcigno

The US Census Bureau is hiring, rate of pay is \$18 per hour.

NEW BUSINESS

Center for Jewish Living Expansion

The concept for Center for Jewish Living Expansion (18320 Georgia Avenue) was delivered by Rebecca Walker. Discussion included the use during the week and parking. A use statement will be part of the application to Park and Planning. Traffic studies were conducted. Brookville Knolls HOA asked about the impact to green space buffering the property, specifically related to the mature trees in the green space. It was stated that there would not be an impact to those trees. A forest conservation plan is part of the project to include storm water drainage. Ms. Walker suggested a separate meeting with Brookville Knolls HOA.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

1. President's Report John Webster reported.

The Montgomery County Commission on Common Ownership Communities (CCOC) will host its annual forum on Saturday, April 26 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the North Creek Community Center, 20125 Arrowhead Rd., Montgomery Village. Homeowners and residents of common ownership communities in the County are invited to attend, as well as professionals who work with those communities.

The US Census Bureau is hiring locally for the 2014 Census Test. The Census Test allows the Census Bureau to test, on a small scale, a variety of new methods and technologies that are under consideration for the 2020 Census. The 2014 Test will take place from June 23 thru September 25, with Census Day on July 1, 2014. The Census Bureau will open a temporary Local Census Office in Silver Spring, MD to conduct the 2014 Census Test. The positions generally run from March thru September with salaries ranging from \$15 to \$29 per hour. For more information, call (888) 480-1639. You can also email gocapresident@gmail.com to have brochures forwarded to you electronically.

Bethel World Outreach Ministries International has purchased the former Washington Christian Academy property and will begin using the property for church services in the near future. The church will be holding an introductory meeting at the property (16227 Batchellors Forest Road) on Wednesday, April 9 at 7PM.

Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration is proposing to convert storm water facility No. 150023 (located on the northeast corner of MD 97 and Batchellors Forest Road) from a dry detention facility to a wet pond. GOCA is reviewing this plan and formulating a position. The comment period ends on April 15, 2014.

The Officers Committee respectfully requests that GOCA Delegates abide by the following rules during open discussion periods:

- o Wait until recognized by meeting Chair before proceeding
- o State name and association to help improve accuracy of meeting minutes
- o Stay on topic
- o Be succinct, concise, and to the point
- o Avoid repeating prior comments
- o Do not speak out of turn
- o No side conversations
- o Exercise civility and mutual respect

2. Mid County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) Greg Intoccia reported.

March 17 the County Executive sent his operating budget to the County Council

Public hearing scheduled by the Council on the budget April 8-10.

County Executive's budget currently reflects additional funds for schools, police (23 new officers), increased funding for pedestrian safety, 3% increase in agency budgets, 5% increase in Park and Planning Commission, and 10% increase in Housing Initiative fund and affordable housing. Silent on special taxing district for Bus Rapid Transit, flat funding for Regional Service Centers, and maintains property tax at the County Charter maximum limit.

Current status of County Transit Corridors Master Plan (passed in the fall by the County as a "vision" document for the County's long term transit development, including Bus Rapid Transit) –everything is dependent on availability of funding of projects, yet to be determined.

3. Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) Kathy Curtis reported.

OTCAC invited Nancy Navarro to the March meeting to see what the role of the County Council could play in promoting Olney projects for inclusion in the County Capital Improvement Projects list.

There are 6 projects that the committee and the Mid-County Citizen's Advisory Board had forwarded to County Executive Leggett. The discussion at this meeting focused on the 2 highest priority projects that OTCAC would like to see funded - the Civic Center/Town Commons for the town center of Olney and a connection of North High Street to Morningwood Drive.

OTCAC has been in contact with our state representatives and with the County Executive and want to get the projects on the Council's radar screen as well. Even if funding isn't possible immediately it would help to get more people knowledgeable about the projects. Nancy Navarro's aide Ken Silverman was there representing her. There was a lengthy discussion with Ken including Fred Boyd of Parks & Planning and the OTCAC members. In the end the consensus was that OTCAC should work to identify possible sites and then work with both the public and private sectors to figure out funding. Ken offered help from Councilmember Navarro in connection with her Council colleagues.

The other project for the CIP budget is a road connection between North High St and Morningwood Dr. which is in the Master Plan. The road connection is needed before development can occur in that area. There is developer interest but not if they need to pay for the connection. Our committee noted that redevelopment along North High St would increase taxes paid to the County which should be considered in any effort to get the County to agree to build the connection.

On BRT, Ken stated that Nancy Navarro does not support a special tax district to pay for it in Olney. It does appear to be an appropriate funding mechanism in White Flint where the developers have asked to be taxed to pay for it. Ken also said that 'under no circumstances would there be a special tax district on existing residential'.

The Subcommittees reported on their work plans over the last 2 years and officers were elected for the next two years. Helene is passing the torch back to Jim Smith as Chair, Lydia Rappolt continues in her Vice Chair role as does Audrey Partington as Secretary.

Our next meeting will be May 27th in this room.

4. Legislative Report Bob Reel reported.

State

House Passes \$39 Billion Budget for FY 2015

The Maryland House of Delegates passed a \$39 billion budget proposal for fiscal 2015. The House voted (100-38) to pass its version of the State's operating budget bill (SB 170) on March 27. The House also voted (96-42) to pass SB 172, the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2014, a companion bill needed to balance the budget for this fiscal year. In the bill, the House concurred with the Senate's action to use \$200 million that had been planned to strengthen the long-term financing of the state's pension system to plug a budget hole. The Senate voted (41-6) to pass SB 170 earlier this month. A conference committee will be appointed to reconcile the differences between the two bills.

Senate Passes Expanded Medical Marijuana Bill

On March 27, 2014, the Senate passed (45-1) legislation giving Marylanders with serious medical conditions access to marijuana if recommended by a specially licensed physician. The House passed a different, more restrictive, version of the legislation earlier this month. It is anticipated that a conference committee will be appointed to work out the differences between the two versions of the legislation. The legislation is intended to modify the medical marijuana system adopted last year, which limited marijuana programs to academic medical centers. None of Maryland's academic medical centers signed up to participate in the program and patients were not able to gain access to the medical marijuana.

Fairness for All Marylanders Act of 2014

Earlier this month, the Senate voted (32 to 15) to pass legislation (SB 212 – Fairness for All Marylanders Act of 2014) that bans discrimination based on sexual orientation and sexual identity but includes an exemption for religious organizations, private clubs and educational institutions. After a lengthy and contentious debate, the House also voted to pass the legislation (82-57).

Advancing - Prohibiting Use of Eminent Domain to Seize Mortgages

Sponsored by Senator Joan Carter-Conway (D-Baltimore City), SB 850 – Real Property – Prohibition on Acquiring Mortgages or Deeds of Trust by Condemnation, would prohibit the State or any of its instrumentalities or political subdivisions from acquiring mortgages or deeds of trust by condemnation. As reported last week, this bill was amended to ban the practice in Maryland for two years and passed the Senate (43-3). The bill is scheduled for a hearing in the House Environmental Matters Committee on April 3.

Passed Senate (36-10) - Blighted Property Bill

SB 947 – Blighted Property – Nuisance Abatement authorizes a local government to require the owner of a “blighted property” to “remediate” the property’s blighted condition by taking specific actions or to receive a six month extension of the remediation requirements to list the property for sale. If an owner violates the bill’s provisions, the local government may declare the property a nuisance and order the owner to abate the nuisance. If the owner fails to abate the nuisance within a specified period of time, a fine may be imposed on the owner equal to *three times* the amount of the local property tax imposed on the owner.

Passed House and Senate - Financing Statement Legislation

HB 99 - *Maryland Uniform Commercial Code – Secured Transactions – Notice of Filing of Financing Statement* sponsored by Delegate Sam Arora (D-Montgomery County) requires a notice be sent if debtors and secured parties named on financing statements are individuals. UCC financing statements may now be filed without the debtor’s signature. The notice required in HB 99 will ensure that individual debtors are aware that a financing statement has been filed. This bill is intended to address the issue of fraudulent financing statement filings – that are on the rise across the country. Frequently, the victim of fraudulent filings may not be aware of the filing until they attempt a transaction – such as applying for a line of credit - that uncovers the fraudulent financing statement. Fraudulent filing can result in damage to the target’s credit and more.

Financial Literacy Requirement

Sponsored by Senator Klausmeier, SB 1007 - State Board of Education - Financial Literacy Curriculum - Graduation Requirement would have required the State Board of Education to require each public school to administer the *National Financial Capability Challenge Test* to each student before high school graduation during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years to evaluate student performance based on the financial literacy curriculum taught in public schools. The State board must develop curriculum content for a semester-long course in financial literacy to be taught beginning with the 2018-2019 school year. Each local board of education must implement in every high school beginning with the 2018-2019 school year (1) the financial literacy curriculum content developed by the State board or (2) curriculum content that has been developed by each local board that is comparable to that developed by the State board. Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, every student must complete a financial literacy course in order to graduate from high school.

Minimum Wage Passes the House – Moves to Senate

The minimum wage increase legislation (HB 295) passed the House of Delegates by a vote of (89-46). As amended by the House, the legislation: increases Maryland's minimum wage to \$10.10 in three annual increases by 2017; excludes the provision that would have indexed the minimum wage to inflation after 2017; excludes the fixed tipped wage provision. The legislation has crossed over to the Senate and will be heard by the Finance and Budget & Taxation Committees on March 26.

Montgomery County

Bill 18-14 would amend the County's secondhand personal property law to prohibit the use of automated purchasing machines in the County. An automated purchasing machine (APM) is a self-service kiosk that dispenses payment, typically in cash, for cell phones or other electronic devices. Prohibiting the use of APMs is out of concern that APMs provide a convenient opportunity for cell phone thieves to convert stolen goods to cash without human interaction, thereby encouraging such thefts.

Bill 11-14 would require the Department of Permitting Services to implement an expedited review process for permits to install electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and require the Department to charge reduced fees for those permits. Electric vehicle charging stations will be more common and necessary as EV usage increases.

5. Chamber of Commerce Report Joe Buffington reported

The chamber is now accepting applications for their High School scholarship. Details, including how to apply, can be found on the Olney Chamber of Commerce website, www.olneymd.org.

6. Civic Federation

There is no new information to report.

7. Transportation Paul Jarosinski Reported

On the Rt 97/28 issue Paul has copies of about 18 letters of support. Our state representatives are not clearly supportive. Only Karen Montgomery is 100% supportive. The Purple line impacts the issue because it takes up most of the transportation budget and 5 county council people live in either Takoma Park or Bethesda. 60% of the projected Purple line riders already use mass transit. Council persons Riemer and Berliner, 2 of the 3 on the council transportation committee, have mass transit as their priority. There does not appear to be a balance between mass transit and road projects. The power of the purse is in the state officials' hands. State representatives can make an impact toward state action. Potholes are being repaired.

j. Land Use Report

There is no new information to report.

STATE OF THE COUNTY Ike Leggett

A copy of the County Executive FY15 recommended operating budget was passed out. Mr. Leggett thanked the group for allowing him to speak. Budget is in better shape than past budgets. Prior to taking office the budget had increased by 14% the prior year. The past 5 years the county tax burden had a net increase of 0. Many services were reduced, no pay increases for county workers and county employees were furloughed. The county work force was by 1253 positions, approximately 10%. Closed \$3B in county budgetary shortfalls. AAA bond rating was maintained. Currently the county has

the highest reserves in the history of the county at 8.4%. Achieved about 90% of the goal to increase the MCPD by 143 positions. Crime has been reduced to 3 times below the national average. The ambulance fee has been enacted. This allowed the county to collect from the insurance companies and from Medicare. The county will recover \$15.6M, allowing improved response time across the county. The library budget has been restored. This has allowed for renovations, additional staff and materials to the county library system.

Challenges - public school growth at 2000 students per year and expected to continue for up to 8 more years. Current budget can manage the growth for the next two years. Construction dollars are needed. Asked the state for additional funds and hope this will be available in 2016.

Concern regarding the resolution of the Comptroller v. Wynne.(Whether the United States Constitution prohibits a state from taxing all the income of its residents — wherever earned — by mandating a credit for taxes paid on income earned in other states). - Potential of a \$155M revenue loss, retroactively, plus \$25M per year going forward, which could impact the reserve fund.

Property tax bills were not increased. The average property tax bill will go down by about \$17 per property. The overall average tax impact has gone down by 10% over the last 3 years.

The county has not met the state level Maintenance of Effort for the last 5 years. This budget cycle went over the Maintenance of Effort by \$26M. MCPS asked for \$52M. There was an \$11M cash reserve that was utilized to move the total to \$37M. The increase provided came about to manage the growth in students, provide programs and materials to address an achievement gap that was identified.

Question was asked regarding the feasibility to add funds, to the CIP, to conduct a study for a town commons area and a street connection. Mr. Leggett felt monies could be found in the next CIP (no time for the current CIP).

Can Mr. Leggett help with the potential rezoning for higher density at the 97/28 intersection, which would impact the grade separation project? He was unaware this and will look into it.

Question regarding water protection. Water quality protection fund is the 1st line of defense. The new requirements for the MS4 permitting process should also help. It is an uphill battle when dealing with development. There are tools in place.

Question on the pothole repair process. He will double check. \$20M was added for road repair.

How will the 6.7% increase on the libraries be meted out? For increased staffing, hours and materials.

BRT - Georgia Ave corridor is way out in the future, if ever. Many, many years away. No decisions on where a transit center would be built. Only routes considered are Rts 29 and 355. There is not any money for BRT anywhere. A committee would be convened to allow comments on any plans for BRT to Olney.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Quinn, Recording Secretary

GOCA Executive Board

John Webster, President -Manor Oaks, Greg Intoccia, Executive Vice President - Ashley Hollow, Bob Reel, 2nd Vice President - Victoria Springs, Matt Quinn, Recording Secretary – Cherrywood, Jackie Benn, Corresponding Secretary - Fair Hill Farm, Kathy Curtis, Treasurer - Lake Hallowell, Barbara Falcigno (Immediate Past President, Olney Oaks), Helene Rosenheim (Highlands), Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood), Judy Broseker (Brookeville Knolls), Jenni Davis (Cherrywood),Jodi Finkelstein (Hallowell), Arnie Gordon (Norbeck Meadows), Alma Hinton (Olney Oaks), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), Andrea Keller (Fair Hill Farm), Sharon Dooley(James Creek), Louis Saporito (James Creek), Ann Marie Saporito (James Creek), Joe Corbett (Williamsburg Village) Alden English (SEROCA), Stephen Dubzik (Oatland Farm), Bill Calomeris (Olney Mill).

Invited Guests

Terri Hogan (The Gazette)

Public