

Executive Board Meeting Minutes
October 13, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

President John Webster called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. GOCA representatives, alternates, invited guests and members of the public introduced themselves.

Webster asked for a motion to approve the September 8, 2015 minutes. A motion was made and seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

A motion was made to approve the October 13, 2015 meeting agenda. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements or comments.

UPDATE ON WSSC SEWAGE SPILL

Since Lisa Feldt, Director, Department of Environmental Protection, could not be present, David Lake, Montgomery County Department of Environment Protection (DEP), gave an update on the WSSC sewage spill in Lake Hallowell. He said 1.2 million gallons of sewage was spilled. He noted that WSSC was asked to monitor sites on Lake Hallowell and James Creek for bacterial analysis, to walk the site and determine what needed to be done to clean up the site. Results for 5 to 6 weeks have been graphed and results are also on their website. Protocol requires that warning signs be placed until the effects of a sewage spill are gone. There has been a dramatic decline of bacteria levels in Lake Hallowell and streams. Although no one swims in these lakes, WSSC uses full body contact (i.e. swimming) as a recreation health standard to determine bacterial impact. Rains have helped to flush out the bacteria, but levels have increased somewhat after the recent heavy rains, so WSSC has continued to sample for bacterial levels in Lake Hallowell and James Creek. Within the next week or two, there will be a press release stating that DEP feels that the impact of sewage in James Creek is over and the warning signs will come down and they will stop sampling. Biologists have found wild life around the lake, and agree there is no long term effect on Lake Hallowell or James Creek. However, the lake will need to be dredged. It is within DEP's program to do this, so it will be approved and funded by the City Council. When this is approved, the plan is that the lake is scheduled to be dredged in July 2017. He acknowledged that he understands that there is a resolution about this and that the expectation is that dredging would occur much sooner than that. DEP and WSSC understand and is striving to move the process forward. He said that the agreement normally is that 30 days after a sewage spill, the warning signs come down, but in this case, this didn't happen because they want to continue to monitor the bacteria level.

Lake then took questions from the Board and visitors.

Conrad Hocking (Lake Hallowell) said that the sewer pipe breaks occurred in July and August – not in September. He wanted to correct the record on that. They have baseline data from July and he asked Lake whether his facts were correct. Lake responded that he did not know on the spur of the moment.

Hocking noted that with all the duckweed vegetation, residents cannot walk around the lake. David Lake responded that the increase in duckweed was due to the shallowness of Lake Hallowell. Hocking, however, felt that DEP has no sense of urgency regarding this critical situation and that July 2017 is too late to dredge the lake. Lake responded that DEP understands the situation.

Mary Gentry (Lake Hallowell) asked what had caused the bacteria levels in Lake Hallowell to decline and then increase. She asked whether it was due to animals in the area. David Lake said that all suburban areas have bacteria in their water from warm blooded animals. The water is not “pristine”. He said that the DEP would be back in October and November to sample the water again to determine the bacterial impact.

Tania Shuy (Lake Hallowell) noted that there are 400 homes in Lake Hallowell and homeowners are suffering from “lack of use” of the lake. The wildlife count around Lake Hallowell is down. She asked what WSSC would do about this

Another Lake Hallowell resident noted that a long term homeowner has married and moved from her townhome, which is now vacant because she is hesitant to sell her property now because she would likely take a large loss on potential revenue if she tries to sell with the current Lake Hallowell situation.

Barbara Falcigno noted that the sewers in Olney are pressurized and that GOCA has long argued against pressurized sewers and wants gravity sewers only. She urged the group to keep this spill in mind when future land development issues come up. She asked what is the baseline bacterial count in Maryland. David Lake said that the bacterial count they use is from the State of Maryland. DEP is still sampling and testing the water. Falcigno asked whether Olney communities could send water from their streams to DEP for testing. Lake said that they would probably double test the waters.

Ed Weisel felt that the entire burden of abating the sewer spill nuisance is on the taxpayer when WSSC should have the responsibility for this.

A question arose on the timeline for the abatement and whether it is July 2016 through June 2017. Lake said that the money is first approved for a project and then the design phase is initiated. What is the realistic timeframe? He does not know and suggested Edy Stevenson as the contact person in charge of maintenance programs.

A question arose on what else could be done in advance of this to help push this project forward. Lake said that the money must first be approved by the County Council.

Questions arose on how to avoid future sewage spills and whether we would be replacing the pipe with a better pipe since the failed pipe did not last as long as expected.

Brandon Stewart (WSSC) said they are still working on getting the bypass pipe installed. They have met with the Church off Old Baltimore Road and have secured a staging area and scheduled work times.

They have also met with residents and surveyors to make sure that all the pipes are not impacting private property. They are working fast and are trying to complete the work in one third of the usual time while still doing it correctly. They will provide answers to frequently asked questions regarding the construction phase. He showed a map of the affected area as well as the area of pipes to be replaced and noted that this map is on the WSSC website. He summarized the replacement procedure with design and permits. Bypass work will occur before winter. The failed pipe will be replaced with polyethylene pipe, which is non-reactive and a much better product. Design of the project will be complete by this Friday.

A question arose on when, specifically, the pipe bypass would be done. Stewart said it would be complete in the near future because they need a procurement process to be complete first. He said the pipe has been ordered and is on its way. He said that when WSSC has the information and the green light to proceed, they will inform the residents. He said that the permits have been expedited and they are working expeditiously. He would not give a firm date for completion.

Barbara Falcigno asked how many other pipes are in jeopardy of breaking because of corrosion issues. Stewart said that there is a risk this could occur again and that tests on this are pending and will be done when the failed 2000 feet of pipe has been replaced. David Lake added that WSSC has looked at whether there are other locations that are prone to corrosion. He said that the design of the line creates corrosion and is the reason for the spill. He questioned whether there should be a design standard.

Ed Weisel asked whether Montgomery County has a map of corrosion-prone pipes in the Olney area. He asked how to decrease the stench from the spill and questioned whether the sewers could be opened to help alleviate this. Stewart responded that this would not help since this would be chlorinated water and they have vacuum trucks to pump out the sewage. Corrosion is occurring within the entire sewer system, which is aging. They will conduct routine inspections and do preventative maintenance, but pinpointing specific areas of corrosion is impossible. The Lake Hallowell spill caught them off guard since the pipes were not that old.

Conrad Hocking said there is a need to bracket the start and end dates for the remediation process. Public relations work is needed ahead of this to get needed information to the property managers of Lake Hallowell, who will inform the homeowners within the community. Brandon suggested that homeowners reach out to Mr. Tom Van Pelt on this. Landscaping is underway.

TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

Roads Subcommittee

Barbara Falcigno, Transportation Committee Chair, introduced Anthony Watkins, member of the Roads Subcommittee. He said there is a serious traffic problem in Brooke Manor with respect to the volume and density (spacing of cars) on Georgia Avenue. Frustration among drivers spills over into the Brooke Manor community as drivers cut through the Brooke Manor neighborhood because they cannot get to the left turn lane on Georgia Ave (97) to turn onto Emory Lane. Drivers maintain the same speed through the community as they did on the ICC. They do not stop at this intersection and go across when they have only one or two car lengths between them. It is a very dangerous traffic issue. Traffic islands have not worked. Cars go around them, over them, or into traffic. The community is looking for a

solution that works. He proposed extending the left turn lane on 97 south down past Hillcroft and possibly have two turn lanes to handle the volume of traffic going left on Emory Lane. For morning commuters, he proposed the Cashell entrance be blocked into Brooke Manor between 7 and 9:30am. The commuter traffic through the community is very dangerous.

Falcigno said the committee is working with State Highway Administration (SHA) and has proposed making two turn lanes into Emory Road. However, SHA has proposed a double cycle green left arrow at that intersection within the light cycle. This means the left arrow would appear at the beginning and the end of the cycle. The hope is that the left through lane will be able to move forward, opening the current left turn lane. SHA will implement this solution and evaluate it before considering other options.

Howard asked why not prevent the left turn lane onto Hillcroft. Falcigno said the Committee has explored that option, but the local community has a few issues with that idea.

There is a new road proposed to go in front of the Goddard School, which would connect all the small roads/alleys to Morningwood. They are looking for the funding now. The grid system is a good way to alleviate congestion (multiple ways to get to a location). The more the parking lots are connected the better to get out onto Georgia Avenue. The road connection was proposed in the Olney Master Plan.

Route 97/28 Issue

The Transportation Committee is continuing to push for funding of the 97/28 grade separated interchange. SHA is currently studying the entire 28/198 corridor east of 97. The Transportation Committee has asked SHA to separate the section of 28 from 97 to Norbeck Blvd (entrance of Leisure World) and consider making this section two lanes (0.4 mile or ~2000 ft). Currently vehicles traveling east on 28 have to immediately merge into one lane east of 97. During the PM peak hours, this causes a back up through the intersection with 97, and sometimes cars don't clear the intersection, blocking NB 97 traffic.

Trails Subcommittee

Joe Fritsch presented SHA's project to build a multi-use trail on the north side of 108 from New Hampshire to Sharp St (Sherwood ES). Since the proposal, SHA reduced the length and current plan is to end at Brooke Rd.

Resolution on Multi-Use Trail on Route 108

Whereas Route 108 east of Dr Bird Rd is a narrow two lane road with no shoulders and high vehicle volume during am and pm peak hours

Whereas there are two public schools (Sherwood ES and Sherwood HS) along this section of Route 108

Whereas the current plan is to only build a trail from 650 to Brooke Rd leaving no connection to Sherwood ES

GOCA hereby resolves to support the 10 ft wide multi-use trail to be built the FULL length of the Project Limits (650 and Sharp St)

And

Requests the shared use path is extended west to Dr Bird Rd in order to provide safe routes to these schools for students and for commuters from the Olney area.

The Resolution passed unanimously with 20 in favor

The Bowie Mill Road Bikeway Project

Daniel Rubenstein, Chair of Bikeways and Pedestrian Subcommittee presented the Bowie Mill Road Bikeway proposal.

Bowie Mill Road connects Route 108 to Muncaster Mill Road. There is an elementary school along Bowie Mill Rd and a high school right around the corner on Muncaster Mill Rd. There are already plans and partial funding to create the Needwood Road Trail, which will connect to Shady Grove Metro. This will be phased in over a couple of years. A Bowie Mill Road bike lane would connect Olney to the Lake Needwood Trail and provide safe access to the Shady Grove Metro Station. The Executive Board approved a resolution earlier this year supporting the Bowie Mill Bikeway. The Committee spoke to County Council members and got strong support on this (specifically from Councilmembers Riemer and Navarro). State Senator Montgomery has been very supportive. The Subcommittee is proposing on-road separated bike lanes referred to as Cycle Tracks. The County is currently updating the bicycle master plan for the entire County, and there have been discussions about upgrading the Bowie Mill Bikeway plan, changing it from a Class 2 Bikeway to separate bike lanes with physical barriers separating cars and bikes (also known as cycle tracks). Based on survey results, more people would use a bike path if it were separated from traffic.

After some discussion, Falcigno presented the resolution proposed by the Transportation Committee, so it does not need to be seconded. She asked for a vote.

Resolution

Whereas GOCA overwhelmingly supported, and continues to support a Resolution on April 14, 2015 in favor of construction of bike lanes along Bowie Mill Road (the “Bowie Mill Bikeway”); and
Whereas GOCA’s Transportation Committee has continued to actively study and communicate with County planning officials, elected leaders, and local residents regarding the Bowie Mill Bikeway; and
Whereas the Transportation Committee has determined that additional planning considerations for the Bowie Mill Bikeway should be taken into account, in recognition of:

- The relatively high (40 m.p.h.) speed limit on Bowie Mill Road for vehicular traffic;
- The potential for increased vehicular traffic on Bowie Mill Road at certain times of day, particularly during peak rush hour times that coincide with school arrival/departure times;
- The potential for increased utilization of the Bowie Mill Bikeway by a greater proportion of the population, through certain safety enhancements;
- Active proposals by the Montgomery County Planning Department to solicit feedback and implement safety measures in response to similar considerations in nearby areas;¹ and
- An active proposal by the Montgomery County Planning Department to update the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan more generally;

GOCA hereby resolves to endorse the recommendation of its Transportation Committee, that the Bowie Mill Bikeway should be constructed as separated bike lanes (also known as cycle tracks or protected bike lanes).

¹ See Montgomery County Planning Department, Bicycle Master Plan: Proposed White Flint Separated Bike Lane Network (Draft), September 2015, *available at*: <http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/bikeways/documents/whiteflintseparatelaness9.29WEB.pdf>

The Resolution was supported unanimously, with 20 in favor

A question arose about the gap between Bowie Mill Road and Needwood Road, a very dangerous intersection for cyclists, which must be addressed. There is no definitive answer and the County will have to work on this. An option is to circle around behind the Casey House, but that is protected land and will need to be addressed in the future.

Falcigno noted that at the November meeting, one hour would be devoted to Transit including the Independent Transit Authority (ITA) proposal. The ITA has been revised, so GOCA should update our solution before the hearing on 11/30 with the Montgomery County state delegation. The ITA is focused on building rapid transit on Veirs Mill Road, Route 29, and Route 355. There are no local independent transit authorities right now in the county. All are regional. The proposed ITA would be funded by special taxes, which would not fall under the county charter limits. It would operate separately from MCDOT and oversee the Ride On service. There has not been any comparative analysis of BRT and other less costly solutions. The taskforce (33 people) delivered its first report. It passed unanimously (of approximately 16 members that voted) to take the proposal to Annapolis for approval of the Transit Authority for Montgomery County. Eminent domain is a big question. Montgomery County cannot create the ITA without permission from the State of Maryland.

A public hearing is scheduled for November 30.

Olney Traffic Survey Results

Falcigno summarized the Olney Traffic Survey results. There were 800 respondents, and the results were similar to the first. In terms of using a shuttle to get to metro/work, 24% of respondents said they would never take a bus but 76% said they would consider taking a bus if cost-effective and on schedule. The Transportation Committee is looking at options and is working with a private company to develop this service.

NEW BUSINESS

Webster called for discussion on the Lake Hallowell Resolution on WSSC Sewage Spill. Howard Greif proposed several changes to the resolution – adding WSSC to several places to make clear who is responsible for the remediation. The changes were made, and the final resolution reads as follows:

Lake Hallowell HOA Resolution on WSSC Sewage Spill

Recitals

WHEREAS, on or about July 28 and 29th there were two separate breaks in a 20-inch pressurized sewer pipeline in the Lake Hallowell residential section of Olney, Maryland.

WHEREAS, on or about August 12th a third break occurred in the 20-inch pressurized sewer pipeline in the Lake Hallowell residential section of Olney, Maryland (collectively, the “Breaks”).

WHEREAS, as a result of the Breaks, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (“WSSC”) reported that about 1,250,000 gallons of raw sewage escaped onto adjoining property, into a nearby creek, and from there, into the

Lake Hallowell (a storm water management body of water and owned by the Montgomery County; the “Lake”), as well as including but not limited to James Creek, Havilland Mill/Browns Bridge, and Hawlings River/New Hampshire.

WHEREAS, in the days following the Breaks, breached sections of pipe were excavated and replaced. In the process, a material amount of landscaping damage occurred along the path of the pipeline, some of which was subsequently repaired, and some of which still requires further remediation.

WHEREAS, in the process of analyzing the root cause of these failures, WSSC, conducted a video inspection of the pipeline and has reported there are additional weaknesses. As a result, WSSC reports (1) they are planning to replace approximately 2,000 feet of the pressurized sewer main, and (2) they have taken certain steps to reduce the risk of another break in the short-term.

WHEREAS, as a result of the Breaks and related raw sewage flow, residents living/utilizing the areas adjacent to the Lake Hallowell neighborhood creek and the Lake areas reported a stench that persisted through the summer; exacerbated by the persistent drought experienced until recently. Also, many residents reported an uptick (vs. prior years) of mosquitoes, especially concentrated in the slower flowing sections of the Lake. These residents reported these conditions made the path along the creek, Lake and hundreds of homes backing to these bodies of water unusable for walking recreation. Some reported they were unable to utilize their respective backyards and decks due to the stench and fear of contracting illness if bitten by mosquitos from the Lake. After the Breaks, the Lake was fouled by raw sewage, and related stench, mosquitos and a much higher than normal incidence of algae and duckweed. To this day, WSSC signs remain along the creek and Lake warning people to stay away.

WHEREAS, after complaints from area residents, Montgomery County’s Department of Environmental Protection (the “MCDEP”) became involved in monitoring the situation. Representatives of MCDEP, have observed and sampled many of the impacted water areas, and periodically reported back findings.

WHEREAS, prior to the Breaks, the Lake suffered from a deteriorating overall condition, and earlier this year, Montgomery County’s Field Supervisor Storm Water Facility Maintenance told representatives of the Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association the Lake needed to be dredged. He was unable to commit to timing due to his budget/operational constraints. Conditions worsened after the Breaks, when due to the pre-existing impaired flow, combined with over 1,250,000 gallons of raw sewage, and no rain for months to help clear the situation.

Relief Requested

NOW, THEREFORE, the Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association seeks relief as follows:

- 1. Fix the Sewer Pipeline.** Notwithstanding the efforts undertaken by WSSC to reduce the risk of another break in the short-term, residents remain highly concerned about further breaks and associated impacts. While WSSC has committed to replace approximately 2,000 feet of the pressurized sewer main, they have declined to be commit of be specific regarding when the project will start/finish. Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association has been patient and willing to work with WSSC, however, Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association is requesting WSSC timely resolution and definition around when/how the current situation will be ultimately resolved.
- 2. Fix the Landscaping.** Similarly, for the Landscaping; WSSC needs to complete their clean-up and restoration of areas currently adversely impacted during the repair of the Breaks. A recent attempt to obtain help along these lines was declined by WSSC in favor of first replacing the approximately 2,000 feet of the pressurized sewer main. The disturbed conditions associated with the Breaks cannot persist and need to be timely addressed. The Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association plans to submit a reimbursement request to replace damaged trees not heretofore replaced, and expects timely reimbursement. If additional damage occurs, then it, too, should be addressed at that time. Lake Hallowell

HOA is requesting WSSC timely resolution and definition around when/how the current situation will be ultimately resolved.

3. Continue Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection Monitoring. Due to the Breaks and series of related adverse events and conditions that haven't cleared; the Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association believes continued testing is warranted. Additionally, on information and belief, soil around the Breaks, where raw sewage emanated and flowed, was treated with lime but not tested and reported by MCDEP, and thus needs to be accordingly expanded. Lake Hallowell HOA is requesting that MCDEP continue and expand periodic monitoring and reporting for the foreseeable future. Further, in the event of a subsequent Break, Lake Hallowell HOA is requesting MCDEP become contemporaneously involved.

4. Dredge the Lake Hallowell in 2016. Prior to the Breaks, the Lake's condition had materially deteriorated to the point where Montgomery County's Field Supervisor Storm Water Facility Maintenance told representatives of the Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association it needed to be dredged. The impact of the Breaks materially further degraded the situation. Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association is requesting that Montgomery County make this dredging be made the very highest priority and occur in 2016.

5. Restore the flow of water in James Creek. Prior to the breaks James Creek was fully functional and was a source of water flowing into Lake Hallowell. Lake Hallowell Homeowners Association is requesting that James Creek be restored to its prior state thereby allowing the flow of water into Lake Hallowell and as a natural resource for the wildlife in the surrounding area.

Basis of Relief

WSSC has an obligation to provide a safe raw sewage pipeline, without repeated incidence of raw sewage escaping into the surrounding environment.

Webster asked for a motion to support the Lake Hallowell resolution. Dave Miller introduced a motion for GOCA to support the Lake Hallowell Resolution on the WSSC Sewage Spill. Ed Weisel seconded the motion.

The Resolution was supported with two abstentions.

OFFICERS/COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

Mid-County Citizen's Advisory Board

Greg Intoccia reported no substantive information. He has been elected as the Chair of the Mid-County Citizen's Advisory Board. He reported that the newest GOCA member is Batchellors Forest.

Public Policy & Community Affairs Committee

Matt Quinn asked that any requests for legislative issues for state delegates be submitted to him.

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee

Kathy Curtis reported that the Committee met with groups to talk about the Olney Town Center Concept Plan. She referred to the website Olneytowncenter.org for information on this. The next meeting is Dec 1 with a case study to be presented in January by MNPPC.

Correspondence Report

Jackie Benn reported that very little new correspondence had been received, and that the correspondence folder was being circulated among Board members.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Joe Buffington thanked everyone for their support of Olney Community Night.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Judy Broseker, Recording Secretary

In attendance:

GOCA Executive Board

John Webster, President - Manor Oaks; Greg Intoccia, Executive Vice President - Ashley Hollow; Matt Quinn, 1st Vice President - Cherrywood; Bill Calomeris, 2nd Vice President - Olney Mill; Judy Broseker, Recording Secretary - Brookeville Knolls; Jackie Benn, Corresponding Secretary - Fair Hill Farm; Kathy Curtis, Treasurer – Lake Hallowell; Barbara Falcigno, Immediate Past President - Olney Oaks

Lydia Rappolt (Camelback Village), Danny Benn (Fair Hill Farm), Don Schmelter (Highlands of Olney), Helene Rosenheim (Highlands of Olney), Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres), Jay Feinberg (Olney Oaks), Ruth Laughner (Williamsburg Village), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), Howard Greif (Lake Hallowell), Dave Miller (Norbeck Meadows)

Invited Guests

Dave Lake, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
Brandon Stewart, WSSC Customer Advocate, Utility Services Team Office

Public

Emmet Tydings (Greater Olney News), William Wanatosky (GOCA Transportation Committee), Tanya Shuy (Lake Hallowell), Jim Kleiger (Lake Hallowell), Nannett Bowman (Lake Hallowell), Stacy Heipe (Lake Hallowell), Dari Vizzi (Lake Hallowell), Terri Hogan (Lake Hallowell/ Greater Olney News), Jennifer and Josh Sussel (Manor Oaks), Beata DeLuigi, Roberto Conte (Batchellors Forest HOA), Kristine De Castro (Batchellors Forest HOA), Mary Gentry (Lake Hallowell), Kim McCary (Cherrywood), Brandon Stewart (WSSC), Ira Ungar (Office of Del. Bonnie Cullison), Joe Buffington (Olney Chamber of Commerce)