

**Executive Board Meeting Minutes**  
June 14, 2016

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Gregory Intoccia called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. GOCA representatives, alternates, invited guests and members of the public introduced themselves.

Intoccia asked for approval of the meeting agenda. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Intoccia asked for a motion to approve the May 10, 2016 minutes. Ruth Laughner made a motion to approve the minutes. Matt Zaborsky seconded the motion. All were in favor with one abstention (Gervais Crouch). The minutes were approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Matt Zaborsky discussed recent break-ins in the Norbeck Meadows and Cherrywood communities, where lawn equipment was being stolen. Matt said the police are aware of the recent break-ins and are asking the public to call and report crimes and to also consider reporting on the website [www.crimereports.com](http://www.crimereports.com). Police are urging people to lock their doors, leave their cars empty and use proper lighting around the house.

Greg Intoccia mentioned that on June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30, the Montgomery Parks will be holding a special meeting at Washington Christian Academy to discuss and summarize why they intend to permanently close the gate of the Olney Manor Recreational Park's southern entrance at Batchelors Forest Road.

**STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP-UP**

Intoccia introduced the legislative guests, Delegate Anne Kaiser and Delegate Benjamin Kramer. He asked that the delegates discuss their accomplishments during the recent legislative session and to mention what issues remain.

**Delegate Ann Kaiser**

Delegate Anne Kaiser is from Legislative District 14. She is the majority leader. She said that we are a citizen legislature and that she wanted to remind us to let officials know what we want to hear. Anne teaches at the University of Maryland and at Mt. Vernon. She is very excited for her new position. Anne stressed that we should call our legislative representatives with our issues. This past session her priorities were in the areas of higher education. The college affordability act was passed, which sets up college matching funds.

Another bill that passed had to do with the issue of Women's Pay. The pay equity bill and equal pay commission – bills passed to help gather more data -- make sure the public has the right answers and to make sure business are doing what they are supposed to be doing in terms of equity and equality.

Justice reinvestment is another area under great scrutiny – the State currently spends a lot of money on jails and prisons. For minor drug offenses, perhaps more people may need just treatment, not jail. Justice reinvestment looks at the whole package. How do we look at those that need this reinvestment program? This is coming out of conservative states like Texas. Prisons have a lot of older age people in jail.

The greenhouse gas bill was vetoed by the governor.

Bond bills - these are matching funds from the state, community invests in capital funds, money for Olney Theatre, the Our House program for young men that have had small adjudication issues.

Education issues – she chairs the education subcommittee. She looked at innovative issues and new models to try new things. She was every excited about that.

Anne explained that they work on up to 1,500 bills in a three –month session. Montgomery County has 24 of 141 delegates. There are 6 committees in the House. There are many bills being worked on that Ann is involved in. They only have one full-time person working during to assist. They don't deal with County issues like the School Board or County Government, but they can help if needed.

Regarding taxes, Anne explained there is no good way to accurately convey how much money is brought back on the dollar to taxpayers in the County. Historically, Montgomery County taxpayers have only received back a portion of what they paid to Annapolis in taxes. Why is this the case? Poorer jurisdictions get more money, the richer get less. Montgomery County is getting more due to low income students, more students with English as a second language. The County just has more needs. Transportation is not included at all. None is incorporated into the formulas. State schools get a lot of funding. No way to calculate these things. Montgomery County sends the most kids to school than the other jurisdictions. Anne believes the overall number is misleading. She believes that the leadership in Annapolis is making the argument to make things better.

### **Delegate Benjamin Kramer**

Delegate Benjamin Kramer is from Legislative District 19. He apologized for being sick and missing the May meeting. Ben said the Olney community is very fortunate to be well represented in state legislature. District 14 and 19, have very talented people in those delegations who work hard, with Ann at the top of the list. Ann understands how government functions and is an asset to all of us in Montgomery County.

Ben serves on the economic matters committee, including property and casualty committee, the banking industry, economic development, workers compensation, unemployment insurance, public utilities to mention a few. This past session, much of the work that he did started with those in the community and GOCA:

The first situation, he said, was of what happens here in areas like Olney. The first is door to door sales for home improvements, which are a source of scams and cons. A resident of Olney was completely ripped off by door to door sales. Ben spent three months with the Attorney General and Secretary of Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation which has jurisdiction over the home improvement industry, working on the issue, and was able to get her back her \$4,000 deposit on a contract for windows. The passage of a new bill now requires if home improvement contract of door to door sales, consumers have five days to rescind the contract. If a consumer is 65 or older, he or she gets seven days to cancel the contract. Seniors are being targeted. You have to be notified orally that you can cancel and that you were notified by signing a document in writing. This now gives Maryland the strongest door to door sales law in the Country.

The next issue was solar panels. A resident of Olney had solar panels installed and waited for months for Pepco to come place switch gear to start using them. The resident waited for months, paid all the money and cannot use them. A national survey was done one year earlier of all the major public utilities in the Country, and Pepco was the worst in the nation. Some utilities were turning them around in 20 days. This new bill will require them to place switches in place within 20 days to place, otherwise face fines.

Digital age – people pass away and don't make arrangements for the information that is on devices such as computers. All Internet companies have terms of policies that state that no one main gain access to your account other than you. Businesses are doing business entirely online. Fiduciaries cannot gain access to that information. This is a huge problem and was getting bogged down in the courts. This was a pressing concern. MD is the second state in nation to have address, passed a national model, new framework for how it will be addressed, it addresses privacy, just as fiduciary steps in on all other matters, they can now do so with digital assets.

Maryland is the only state that has given their Attorney General the authority to step into financially exploited senior citizen in court. This has never been done. It is the fastest growing crime in Montgomery County and Maryland. 70% of wealth in the nation is in the age of 60 and older. It is their nest egg. It cannot be replaced and they do not have the means to hire counsel. The monies are gone, been stolen; now the Attorney General can go in on their behalf and hopefully it won't make it to court.

Another bill sponsored gives citizens with disabilities priority on hiring if they are qualified. They continue to be unemployed in high numbers. Tax credit to private companies that hire disabled individuals.

Legislation was introduced to help shut down puppy mill operations. This will protect Maryland citizens from getting puppies from puppy mill operations.

Legislation was introduced on the ignition interlock bill ("Noah's law"). Officer Noah Leotta, raised in Olney, age of 24 was killed in December by a drunk driver while in process of making a drunk-driving stop. This legislation has been in the works for seven years, and if convicted of driving while drunk, ignition interlock must be put in place and the convicted person must blow each time into a breathalyzer to determine if he or she is sober enough to drive, and if the car will start. If not, the person is locked out and cannot start the car. In 2015, there were 28,000 occasions that an individual tried to start car and were locked out. Studies show that if this type of activity is required to be followed for 6 months by

those who have had a problem with drinking and driving, their behavior changes. Community and media played a great role in the passage of this legislation.

Greg Intoccia opened the floor for questions.

Jonathan Arias asked Delegate Kaiser about the cost of education in Maryland and the rising costs. Anne indicated that they are taking steps to address the rise in college costs.

Sharon Dooley asked Delegate Kramer if the elderly protection bill extended to home health aides or nurses regarding theft, etc. Delegate Kramer said the Attorney General can step in and will help serve as a deterrent to those that are committing these crimes. Hopefully the scammers and con artists will take their business elsewhere.

Sharon Dooley asked Delegate Kaiser about the new legislation for 401(k) for employers for those that do not provide it to their employees. Delegate Kaiser spoke about the Maryland Small Business Retirement Savings Program and Trust bill requires certain private sector companies to make the program available to their employees. Those that offer this program will be exempt from the annual filing fee for business and entities. This will not be implemented immediately due to federal law that still needs to be sorted out.

Matt Zaborsky asked Delegate Kramer if there was legislation considered or passed regarding putting the liability on parents for serving alcohol. Progress was made and the bill was watered down from what was introduced. The legislation that passed puts certain bars that have to be met before the parents can be held responsible. The bill creates a criminal sanction, but the parent has to knowingly, they have to have knowledge of the fact that the individual that consumed alcohol. Delegate Kramer hopes the bill will be passed in coming year.

Anthony Watkins asked delegate Kaiser about transportation concerns, traffic, as a result of the ICC and Georgia Avenue. Delegate Kaiser did not have all the details in front of her and said she will have to get back to us.

Dave Miller asked delegate Kaiser about gerrymandering in the County. Dave asked if the borders could possibly be adjusted regarding how districts are setup. Delegate Kaiser said this is something that could be looked into as long as we respect the County border issues. Delegate Kramer said this is a highly political issue which he supports. This is a national issue. Kaiser thinks this should be a Federal issue.

Jim Smith asked delegate Kramer what the puppy mill issue was. Kramer said the industry is an abomination and money maker for the Amish community. They breed dogs that are kept in in horrific conditions, terrible conditions. Dogs are used and then killed when done. This prohibits retail stores from getting puppies from the mills that are getting the worst citations. This puts strict regulations on retailers. Delegate Kramer suggests if you want a puppy, you adopt or seek out a local breeder.

## **OFFICERS/COMMITTEES/LIAISON REPORTS**

### **Public Policy & Community Affairs Committee (PP&CAC)**

Matt Quinn said it is too late for us to take a position on the property tax increase. Matt thinks we should try and figure out a way to find out if there is a specific metric that we can use to see if the increase in money will be helping out are local schools. Lee Loftus said our increase is higher than Howard County and Fairfax County. Lee thinks this is priority issue.

### **Correspondence Report**

Bob Hambrecht, in place of Jackie Benn, passed the correspondence folder to the Board.

### **Membership**

Matt Quinn stated that membership is making progress. There are about ten communities that have not yet paid.

### **Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board**

Greg Intoccia reported that Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation is having a public meeting on the Wheaton Redevelopment on June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 to update the community on the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission building that is being built and to talk about the public town square that will be built as part of that project.

Next Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for June 21<sup>st</sup> at the Mid-County Rec Center.

Barbara Falcigno noted that there is a gas station in Aspen Hill requesting a State Discharge Permit to dump water into the Rock Creek tributary. GOCA had previously limited water dumped into the Rock Creek tributary because it is part of the Olney Master Plan area. Falcigno also discussed this item with Fletcher's Car Wash. They recycle 100% of their water. If Aspen Hill Gas Station and Car Wash is allowed to discharge their water into the tributary, they would have an unfair advantage. There will be a public hearing on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

Falcigno also noted that Montgomery General has a community liaison meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June if anyone is interested in what they are doing that may affect the surrounding communities.

There was a brief discussion on whether or not the Olney Town Advisory Committee's (OTCAC's) concept plan will be presented to the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB). As of today, it has been solicited for their endorsement. Greg Intoccia believes this could give it validation.

### **Chamber of Commerce**

There was no update since there was no representative at this GOCA meeting.

### **Olney Town Advisory Committee**

Lydia Rappolt showed a draft of the Concept Plan for a Civic Center and Town Commons which can be found at [www.olneytowncenter.org](http://www.olneytowncenter.org). The task for the summer is for OTAC to request letters of support from Olney organizations (HOA's) for the Concept Plan for a Civic Center and Town Commons for Olney, Maryland. They would like the letters of support by early September. The July meeting has been eliminated due to lack of attendance.

Jim Smith is the Chair of the Subcommittee that is finishing up the concept plan for a Civic Center and

Town Commons. Jim is seeking tonight a resolution from GOCA supporting the concept plan that would then be turned into a letter from GOCA to be added to the appendix of the Concept Plan. There was a discussion about the next steps and the possibility of a charrette to take place.

**Jim Smith made a motion and Matt Zaborsky seconded the motion.**

WHEREAS, in 2000 Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) and the Olney Chamber of Commerce joined forces to create an Olney Community Center Task Force to petition Montgomery County for a facility to house a variety of public and community services.

WHEREAS, the Olney Town Center Advisory Committee (OTCAC) was created as an advisory committee to the Montgomery County Planning Board to, in part, create a Concept Plan for a civic center and town commons.

WHEREAS, the OTCAC has completed a *Concept Plan for a Civic Center and Town Commons for Olney, Maryland*.

Be it resolved that GOCA hereby endorses the *Concept Plan for a Civic Center and Town Commons for Olney, Maryland* and requests that County officials dedicate resources to help identify facility needs, a site or sites for the facilities in the Olney town center, and begin the facility planning process.

**17 Yes**

**2 Opposed**

**3 Abstentions**

**Motion Carries.**

**Transportation Committee Report**

Barbara Falcigno discussed the proposed closing of the southern entrance at Olney Manor Recreational Park's at Batchelors Forest Road. She discussed why Olney Manor wants the gate closed and what the ramifications of the gate closing would have on traffic and in the area. This was not made known to any of the local residents that may be affected by this. There is a meeting on June 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the issue. Barbara proposed the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Montgomery Parks has issued a public notice that it intends to permanently close the gate of the Olney Manor Recreational Park's southern entrance at Batchelors Forest Road.

WHEREAS neither the Montgomery Parks nor any other County or State governmental entity has studied the impact that such gate closure would have on traffic congestion and traffic safety on Georgia Avenue and other nearby streets.

THEREFORE, GOCA resolves that Montgomery Parks must not close the gate until after:

- (1) the State Highway Administration, in coordination with any other appropriate State and County agency, has conducted a professional study assessing the impact that the gate closure would have on traffic congestion, traffic safety on Georgia Avenue and nearby streets, as well as propose mitigation measures and
- (2) Montgomery Parks and the appropriate State or County agency or agencies have issued the study and have conducted a public meeting allowing the public to fully understand the impact of the gate closure, and have provided the appropriate opportunity for public comment on the completed study and proposed mitigation measures. This study should not be conducted during the summer months in order to include in the study an assessment of the normal flow of traffic throughout most of the year.

**23 Yes**

**0 Opposed**

**0 Abstentions**

**Motion Carries.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Howard Greif followed up on the proposed resolution from the residents of Lake Hallowell in regards to limiting GOCA's involvement in education and schools. The Lake Hallowell residents want to keep GOCA focused on domestic issues. They are concerned that the current open-ended resolution could dominate GOCA's agenda. They would like to request that the resolution be changed to state that GOCA will not be involved in not be involved in issues related to curriculum, athletics, or individual staffing. The following motion was made by Howard:

WHEREAS the objectives of GOCA include to study, plan, coordinate, and promote the civic, economic, and cultural welfare of the Olney Community;

WHEREAS the continued vitality and growth of good jobs in the Olney community depend on an educated workforce, and an educated resident workforce benefits stakeholder community companies who look to hire,

WHEREAS local government depends in part on Olney residents as a tax base, and Olney homeowners benefit from strong property values;

THEREFORE, the Public Policy & Community Affairs Committee will, under the direction of its Chair, form a subcommittee on SCHOOLS, to study, plan, coordinate, and promote school-related issues of concern to the Olney Committee, not to include curriculum, athletics, or individual staffing.

Intoccia asked for discussion

Jonathan Arias briefed those in attendance on what the initial intent of motion was when it was passed in February 2016. Jonathan provided background on the issues, which part of the issue is that schools are eroding, the quality of education and other complicated reasons. GOCA wants to be an advocate and wants to help the greater Olney students that are getting an education.

Howard's motion included the following changes from the initial motion that was passed:

- Removal of the fourth WHEREAS clause:

WHEREAS improved academic outcomes (such as improved grades and higher graduation rates) result in a broader range of professional opportunities for graduates and the potential for greater and more effective civic participation in the community;

- Under THEREFORE, the following was added:

“, not to include curriculum, athletics, or individual staffing.”

**The motion was seconded by Meg Pease-Fye:**

**5 Yes**

**16 Opposed**

**2 Abstentions**

**Motion Failed to Carry.**

There was no other old business to discuss.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, a motion was submitted to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Robert Hambrecht, Treasurer, on behalf of Stacy Levine, Recording Secretary



