

DRAFT
Representatives Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Note: this meeting was conducted via Zoom and Live Stream You Tube due to the Coronavirus restrictions in place.

Matt Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

A motion was made by Curtis Chappell and seconded to approve the Minutes for the November 10, 2020 Representatives Meeting. A second motion was made by Curtis Chappell and seconded to approve the Agenda for December 8, 2020. (Both motions were made at the end of the meeting in order to allow enough time for the presentation of Chief Markus Jones.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Terri Hogan will not be covering GOCA meetings and events for the Greater Olney News for now. Billy Becker and Barbara Falcigno both spoke about how helpful Terri has been over the years and praised her thorough and balanced coverage of all events. We'll miss her presence, but hope to see her around town.

CHIEF MARKUS JONES—HIS VISION ON REIMAGINING POLICING IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

- Michelle Graham introduced Chief Markus Jones, chief of the Montgomery County Police.
- Crime is down in Montgomery County.
- Everyone is engaged.
- Always open to improving.
- Mental health issues provide challenges. There are times when police should not be involved (when no safety or criminal issues are involved). There are other resources that could handle these problems, but they are not always available (due to funding issues) and then police are called.
- People need to be educated about policing. It's truly a local matter.
- Olney is part of Police District 4 which covers a lot of area and is the largest in population. We have fewer officers per person.
- We need to understand what the term "defunding" really means. It means taking money from police and applying it to other resources. The Police budget still covers lots of areas and needs. Removing money from the police budget affects other areas.

- Chief Jones takes accountability very seriously. He is working with the Maryland Chief's Association and other state officials.
- He supports reform.
- Educating the public and taking our time making good decisions is important.

School Resource Officers

- Have been around in Montgomery County for over 20 years
- There are 26 high schools in Montgomery County
- The officers partner with public schools. Applicants go through the Police Department and are paid by the Police Department.
- Their roles include community engagement, mentoring, serving as emergency managers, doing work with security teams, traffic control, supporting at athletic events.
- They take training required by the State of Maryland.
- Officers work with Middle Schools as well.
- The Resource Officers care about the students and are an integral part of the schools.
- Remember there are always stories behind the data (often victims on both sides).
- The officers only make arrests in cases of robbery, possession of drugs with intent to distribute, gang violence, and weapons.
- Montgomery County Public Schools are working on improving the project (how to address minor crimes).
- The officers do not make arrests out of discipline issues.
- Resource Officers play a very important role in the schools including dealing with threats of violence to schools.

Substation in Olney

- Is housed in a trailer on part of the property where the old Giant was located and a new gym will be.
- It's one of the last substations left.
- Updated facility will be slightly larger.
- Chief Jones is doing a workload analysis.
- How can we reallocate our resources?
- He wants officers to be mostly on active patrols.
- Would like to have people assigned to substations rather than just an area.

Traffic

- Have there been any changes in traffic enforcement?
- With COVID, the department scaled back with officers in case many would be affected by the virus. Many were taken off the streets.
- Initially, traffic was much lighter. No rush hours or heavy traffic.
- Traffic has been increasing over time.
- Took some speed cameras down, but they are now back up.
- In September, traffic officers were brought back.
- Growing speed camera and red light camera projects.
- Proposed centralized traffic enforcement unit.

Mental Health Crisis Team (Carolyn Knight of Olney Oaks asked about its status)

- There has been a Health and Human Services team for many years. It's not always available 24/7.
- Minimal staffing.
- Primarily in Rockville through a hotline.
- Officers are given mental health training.
- This needs a lot of investment.
- Will push most mental health issues to them.

Police Bargaining (Ed Weisel of Norbeck Meadows asked if police officers have a place at the table)

- Yes, there is collective bargaining with the Fraternal Order of Police.
- All have a voice.

Duty to Intervene (Curtis Chappell of Olney Square asked: With the varied demographic in Olney, what is the duty to intervene?)

- At the time of George Floyd's death, the Montgomery County Police didn't have a policy in place to know when to intervene with fellow officers.
- They do now.

Use of Force

- Creating new policy (chokeholds have been banned in MC since the 1990's)
- Excessive use of force—body cameras used for all officers.
- All use of force is reviewed and a disciplinary process is used if necessary.
- Reviews take place and actions taken even if not requested by someone.
- There were 125 protests in Montgomery County after George Floyd's death. There was no violence, looting, or arrests.

Bikes for Officers (Barbara Falcigno of Olney Oaks wondered if more are needed)

- GOCA helped provide in the past.
- Not sure what our need is at this time.

Encrypting Police Dispatch Communications (Louis Willen of Cherrywood asked how the media will get access if this is done)

- There is talk of giving them an app. to listen to certain information.

What does MOU between Police and MDTA mean (John Seng of Brooke Manor)

- They worked with Colonel Anderson on this.
- More law enforcement will be available.
- Ability to patrol beyond their assigned areas.
- Use other technologies.

How are the Police Preparing for Future Leadership Transitions? (Matt Quinn of Cherrywood)

- Mentoring future leaders.

MARYLAND COALITION FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY (JOHN SENG)

- Launched in June 2020.
- Nearly 100 members.
- Goals are to improve safety and reduce noise.
- Collaborating with the state of Maryland.
- Working on stronger deterrents.
- John Seng is proposed asking GOCA and Home Owners Associations to provide funds to hire a consultant to help work through the process of getting legislation passed.
- GOCA Officers will discuss the idea and propose a motion or no motion in January.
- For questions or more information about the Safety Coalition contact: JohnSeng@gmail.com

SPEEDING TRAFFIC IN NEIGHBORHOODS

- Send an email to: trafficops@montgomerycountymd.gov
- They will send a van to observe and study the problem area.

CALENDAR ITEMS

- Next GOCA officers meeting date TBD 7:00 PM via Zoom (usual date would be Thanksgiving)
- Next General Membership Meeting January 12, 2020 at 7:30 (Districts 14 and 19 legislative goals)

Ed Weisel made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 PM. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted
Carol Frenkel, Recording Secretary

In attendance:

GOCA Officers

Matt Quinn, President – Cherrywood; Hilary Phillips-Rogers, Executive VP – Victoria Springs; Dave Miller, 1st Vice President – Norbeck Meadows; Curtis Chappell, 2nd Vice President -- Olney Square; Carol Frenkel, Recording Secretary – Olney Mill; Ryan Martin, Corresponding Secretary – Brookeville Knolls; Billy Becker, Past President – Ashley Hollow

GOCA Representatives and Alternates

David Rada (Brooke Manor), John Seng (Brooke Manor), David Sager (Brookeville Farms), Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood), Louis Willen (Cherrywood), Helene Rosenheim (Highlands of Olney), Howard Greif (Lake Hallowell), Conrad Hocking (Lake Hallowell), Matthew Bernhard (Norbeck Grove), Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows), Christine Picaut (Oatland Farm), Jim Smith (Oatland Farm), Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres), Carolyn Knight (Olney Oaks), Barbara Falcigno (Olney Oaks),

Presenters, Guests & Public

Jim Ruspi, Michelle Graham, Chief Marcus Jones, Terri Hogan, Bill Gaskill, Judy Hruz, Mickey Daye,

Danny Benn, J. Church, Elizabeth Bur., Amy K., M.G.