



GREATER OLNEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

2023-9-12 Representatives Meeting

- Minutes –

The 2023-9-12 Representatives Meeting of the Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA) was held online via Zoom and called to order at 7:40PM EST by President Helene Rosenheim, with Recording Secretary John Seng present. A quorum was present. All participants were introduced. Voting members denoted (*) as indicated. Those attending:

Officers

- Helene Rosenheim, President (Highlands of Olney)
- Irina Norell, Executive Vice President (Norbeck Meadows)
- Curtis Chappell, First Vice President (Olney Square)
- Matt Quinn, Second Vice President (Cherrywood)
- Jeff Duce, Treasurer (Norbeck Grove)
- Jamie Goad, Corresponding Secretary (Norbeck Meadows)
- John Seng, Recording Secretary (Transportation Committee) (Brooke Manor Estates)

Members

- Maria Bender (Brookeville Knolls)*
- Tina Craun (Highlands)
- Mike Dickerson (Olney Oaks)*
- Alden English, South East Rural Olney Civic Assn. (SEROCA)*
- Brandy Heckman-Stoddard (Lake Hollowell)
- Lee Kidd (Cherrywood)*
- Anika Mittu (Sandy Spring resident)
- Juris Mohseni (Village of James Creek)*

Guests

- Judy Hruz, *Greater Olney News*
- Aaron Kraut (Chief of Staff, Montgomery County Councilmember Dawn Luedtke, District 7)

Approval of Agenda for September 12, 2023 Meeting

The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes from July 11, 2023 Meeting

The minutes were approved as presented.

Announcements

Curtis Chappell congratulated Judy Hruz on the 8th anniversary of *The Greater Olney News* and thanked her for the newspaper's coverage of Olney events.

Helene Rosenheim shared information about the Brem Foundation to Defeat Breast Cancer fundraising event, "Brem, Boots and Bullseye," Saturday October 21, 2023 at 6:00 PM at Bella Vita Farm, Brookeville. For more information, visit <https://www.bremfoundation.org/>

Report on the “It’s Olney Time” Event

Curtis reported on the successful inaugural “It’s Olney Time” event on August 30 at Lone Oak Farm Brewing Company to introduce 17 Olney-based non-profit participating organizations to community members, and encourage engagement. Plans are underway to repeat the event in August 2024. Matt Quinn reported an estimated 200 participants.

Treasurer’s Report, Jeff Duce, Treasurer

Jeff reported that GOCA continues to search for a replacement for him as treasurer. GOCA rented banner space in August to two organizations.

Transportation Committee Report, John Seng

John reported that the evening’s scheduled speaker from the Maryland Department of Transportation, Montgomery County Community Relations Manager Tiffany Boulware, was not able to attend the meeting. He will seek to reschedule Tiffany for the October GOCA meeting.

John reported that Brooke Manor Estates had organized a meeting with the MDTA Police ICC Detachment Commander for September 20 at Manor Country Club to discuss excessive speeds and noise from racing motorcycles. Other community members from along the ICC will attend. Also, a letter was sent on August 25 to Maryland Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller sharing community concerns, with no response received as yet.

Transportation Committee member Mindy Badin will be working with John to create a community-friendly, online user guide from GOCA for residents to access State and County resources with concerns, questions and observations in the interest of streamlining road safety and repair enhancements.

Jeff Duce asked about speed bumps in Brooke Manor Estates, who paid for them and how they were installed. John indicated he didn’t think Brooke Manor paid and that he would confirm. Maria Bender shared that Brookeville Knolls worked with the County to have speed bumps placed on Queen Elizabeth Drive, with the County paying.

General discussion took place regarding various road safety improvements in different communities.

John proposed conducting a simple survey to poll community members regarding roads.

Olney Chamber of Commerce Report, Matt Quinn

Matt Quinn (also an Olney Chamber of Commerce board member) reported that Montgomery County Police Chief Marcus Jones and 4th District Commander talking to Olney Chamber of Commerce were scheduled on September 18 to speak with Olney businesses about crime incidence and concerns about increases.

He also shared there are a variety of events that the Chamber is conducting with business member segments, allowing for networking and discussion of issues to take to Councilmember Luedtke’s office or to State legislative representatives.

He also reported on proposed Montgomery County Council legislation to increase the hourly wages for tipped restaurant workers earning minimum wages. Matt raised the question as to what problem this proposed legislation seeks to solve. Matt learned from business owners that not only do they oppose

the draft legislation, but that restaurant owners indicated they will reduce staff, put QR codes on guest tables for patrons to order directly and instead only hire runners to deliver the food to tables. The proposed legislation will impact employment and raise costs that will be passed on to consumers. He is working to better understand what problems will be solved, but has not heard thus far.

“National Night Out” was a huge success, with more exhibitor tables compared to previous events.

Matt has received a number of emails regarding the panhandling at the Route 108 and Route 97 Georgia Avenue intersection. The loudest voices opposed to restricting panhandlers have been the firefighters. Matt relayed there are safety issues not just to panhandlers but also to vehicle operators: “It’s an accident waiting to happen.” Also, some businesses are complaining about the loitering.

John Seng shared his appreciation for Aaron Kraut’s participation in GOCA meetings to represent Dawn Luedtke and that it would be good to see representatives of at-large Council members at future meetings. Matt commented that at-large Council members should be invited to speak on specific topics and that other members have supported Olney initiatives.

New Business

Helene requested a volunteer to help as liaison with The Olney Art Association which will be celebrating its 50th anniversary next year and has asked for GOCA’s support. John offered to create a mailer for GOCA to solicit HOA/community associations to recruit volunteers.

Also, Helene reported that Matt and she met with residents in Brinklow who have concerns about a proposal to build “Camp Rippling Brook” <https://www.campriplingbrook.com/>. The Camp representative Kate Dadourian proposed to build a camp in the summer that would be leased out the rest of the year. The residents raised a number of issues with density of approximately 500 people on the property, and that Kate has an unusual business plan involving being designated as an agricultural business. Kate will be invited to the GOCA October meeting.

Regarding Will Jawando’s STEP Act, GOCA awaits a decision by the Montgomery County attorney as to its legality and possible conflict with State law.

Helene also reported that Matt Quinn had reached out to Councilmember Luedtke’s office concerning the situation with sexual harassment allegations against the Farquhar Middle School Principal.

Also, Helene requested that GOCA members start thinking about upcoming GOCA Awards and the GOCA Officer election. She also shared that GOCA officers are interested in reaching out to HOA and community group members to poll their opinions.

Maria requested a speaker from GOCA participate in the Brookeville Knolls November annual meeting.

Discussion took place regarding future GOCA in-person meeting space.

Adjournment

Helen Rosenheim adjourned the meeting at 8:57pm.