

The Town of
GLEN ECHO

Chartered 1904

Town Hall · 6106 Harvard Avenue · Glen Echo · Maryland 20812 · (301) 320-4041
townhall@glenecho.org

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 10, 2022
Held Virtually Via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER: MAYOR DIA COSTELLO. 7:01 PM

PRESENT

Mayor: Dia Costello.

Councilmembers: (CM) Mona Kishore, Dan Spealman, Matt Stiglitz, and Julia Wilson.

Town Manager: (TM) Beth Boa.

Guests: Dhani Jones

Residents: Mimi Ikle – Khalsa (The Journey Space), Matt McFarland (Vassar Cir), Emily Parsons (The Echo), Vanessa Sax (University Ave).

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

Mayor Costello offered an opportunity to take comments from the residents. There were no comments.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES: ACTION ON DECEMBER 13, 2021 MEETING

Minutes of the December 13, 2021 Council meeting were approved as amended.

Motion to Approve Minutes: CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Kishore. Approved 4-0.

TULANE LOT DISCUSSION: Costello

The Council continued discussing options for the Town-owned lots on Tulane. Mayor Costello suggested surveying residents about the options of selling, leasing, or using the land. The Council continues to be in the early stages of discussion. Some Council members agreed that leasing would allow the Town to control how the land was used. Vanessa Sax (University Ave), a resident who works for a professional commercial leasing agency, provided input that it would be tough to sell as housing lots and suggested leasing the land and have the lessee pay to rezone, rather than the Town. She encouraged the Council to ask the residents if they have other ideas for the land. If leasing becomes a serious consideration, she suggested the Town hire a commercial real estate attorney and the interested party hire their own real estate attorney. Vanessa Sax offered to help negotiate the terms so that the Town would not have to pay a commission. Mayor Costello asked Matt McFarland to talk to Chris Hughes (owner of the Irish Inn) to discuss his idea for a beer garden on the lots. He will also talk with Mimi Ikle-Khalsa, owner of The Journey Space on Oberlin. She would like to be kept informed about plans for the land.

IRISH INN PARKING LOT LEASE: Costello

The Town's parking lot lease with the Irish Inn, amended in 2006, includes one – year notice to cancel the lease. The Town attorney drafted a new amendment that changes the notice to six months for any flexibility needed.

The Council authorized the Mayor to discuss this with Irish Inn owner Chris Hughes.

Motion to Approve Negotiating the Lease as Drafted ; CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Kishore. Approved 4-0.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN UPDATE: Spealman

CM Spealman met with TM Boa to go over the requirements of 2 CFR 200 – procurement guidelines as they will apply to American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The meeting also included discussion of the Final Rule, the compliance guide, and policies the Town will need to establish for ARPA.

CM Spealman also discussed the options for use of the funds. If the Town were to grant the funds to another party adversely affected by COVID, the Town would have to oversee the use of the funds. CM Stiglitz noted that the Final Rule allows a standard deduction of the full amount of the grant for lost revenue that can be used for Town services and capital improvement projects.

TOWN ENGINEER: Costello

The Town reached out to two engineering firms, confirming they have the insurance required by the Town.

Applicants:

Jason Azar is with Clark and Azar. They have been doing plan reviews for Poolesville for nearly 15 years and recently have started reviewing permits for a couple of other municipalities. They have worked in Chevy Chase View and Garrett Park and were open to working with Glen Echo. The hourly rate ranges from \$125 for a staff engineer to \$145 for a project manager. They are a woman-owned business.

Lance Ball, PE and Peter Noursi, PE are with Oyster, Imus and Petzold, Inc. They have been doing stormwater work in the Town of Chevy Chase since 2016. Their rate is \$110/hour.

Their work at Chevy Chase includes:

- review and approve plans for new construction to ensure that they conform with the Town's water drainage ordinance.
- inspect construction to ensure that the SWM is constructed substantially in accordance with the approved plans
- after construction is completed, conduct annual inspections of the properties to see if the SWM is functioning as designed.
- advise TOCC residents regarding drainage problems, if requested (requests must be made through the Town of Chevy Chase)

TM Boa spoke with the two firms and checked references.

TM Boa and Mayor Costello recommend the Council approve the contract with Oyster, Imus and Petzold, Inc. (OIP).

Motion to Approve the Contract with OIP: CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Wilson. Approved 4-0.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN: Spealman

CM Spealman added to the draft Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) spreadsheet to include more information on timing and expected costs. The Council suggested adding columns for the source of the budget and whether they are funded by other sources besides the Town, and which items are necessary and which are optional. Mayor Costello, CM Spealman and TM Boa will discuss the CIP and bring it back to Council.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS: Costello

New Category: 20.4 Health Insurance - February through June 2022 \$3,000 to Montgomery County as a Participating Agency. This covers 80% of the premium cost. Remaining 20% is paid by employee.

The Council was asked to approve a budget amendment of \$3,000 for Employee Health Insurance premiums through Montgomery County.

Motion to Approve Budget Amendment for Health Insurance: CM Kishore; 2nd CM Wilson. Approved 4-0.

Category 22:110 TH Improvements - \$4,210 spent of \$3,500 budgeted. Expenses were fixing the iron fence by the post office, fixing electrical issues, and repainting the post office sign on MacArthur Blvd. The Council was asked to approve the addition of \$1,500 to this category for a budget of \$5,000.

Category 22.22 Software / Domain: \$704 spent of \$750 budgeted. This category includes Zoom, Constant Contact, laptop warranty, domain, hosting. The Council was asked to approve \$300 to this category for a budget of \$1,050.

Category 22.120 Office Furniture: \$438 of \$300 budgeted. Some new office furniture was purchased including a shelf and cabinet. The Council was asked to approve \$138 to cover the expense.

Motion to Approve Budget Amendments: CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Kishore. Approved 4-0.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER (copy attached), TM Boa

The month of December was an average month in terms of revenue and expenses.

The Town received:

Property Tax collections of \$1,892 – the Town has received 57% of expected revenue in this category.

Expenses:

Bolt Legal expense was \$1,116 for November broken out by categories as follows: 39% attend Council meeting; 22% on ZTA on cell towers; 25% Wild Bird Center parking pad agreement.

Joseph F. Toomey Associates: \$720 for months of July through November. 44% Vassar Circle; 3% WMATA trestle bridge; 6% 7316 University porch; 6% 6004 Bryn Mawr fence; 9% 5906 Oxford fence; 6% 29 Wellesley shed permit; 13% meeting with Town Manager on permit process.

The Council asked about some items in the budget; TMBoa will respond to the Council regarding the expenses in 22.73 Miscellaneous Admin Fee as this item was over budget, with \$593 spent of \$500 budgeted.

PROPOSED BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

- Budget Development Work Session on Monday March 7th
- FY 2023 Budget Ordinance and Tax Resolution Introduction and Council Meeting: Monday March 14, 2022, 7 PM
- FY 2023 Budget Hearing and Council Meeting: Monday April 11, 2022, 7 PM
- FY 2023 Action on Budget Ordinance and Tax Resolution and Council Meeting: Monday May 9, 2022, 7 PM

The Council agreed with this timeline; these meetings may be held via Zoom or in person.

Motion to Approve the Financial Report: CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Kishore. Approved 4-0.

OPERATIONS REPORT: Infrastructure; Administrative; Social: TM Boa

Infrastructure:

Pepco: TM Boa asked that Town Council Members Wilson and Kishore be able to accompany Pepco on the vegetation evaluation walk through in Town. The Pepco representative said that she would share this request with Vegetation Management to see what accommodations can be made to support this request. Regarding the EV Charging Facility, the location at Town Hall presents several significant challenges for construction and at this time Pepco does not recommend moving forward with an installation at this location. They are open to considering other areas in the Town we suggest.

Curb Repairs on Vassar Circle: This has been postponed twice due to weather and is now scheduled for January 13.

Social:

Winterlude: The Livable Town Committee will host Winterlude February 5 at 5:30. It will include luminaries (\$2 apiece to benefit Greentree Family Shelter), fire pits and baked potatoes, hot dogs, cocoa, and marshmallows. CM Wilson noted that two years ago the Town raised \$300 for the shelter. The rain date is February 6.

Administrative:

American Rescue Plan: On January 6, Treasury adopted their final rule for the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (State and Local Funding). This makes several key changes and clarifications in the final rule, outlined at the bottom of this email. TM Boa attended a webinar January 10 regarding these issues.

KEY CHANGES AND CLARIFICATIONS IN THE FINAL RULE

The “final rule” delivers broader flexibility and greater simplicity in the program, responsive to feedback in the comment process. Among other clarifications and changes, the final rule provides the features below.

Replacing Lost Public Sector Revenue

The final rule offers a standard allowance for revenue loss of \$10 million, allowing recipients to select between a standard amount of revenue loss or complete a full revenue loss calculation. Recipients that select the standard allowance may use that amount – in many cases their full award – for government services, with streamlined reporting requirements.

Public Health and Economic Impacts

In addition to programs and services, the final rule clarifies that recipients can use funds for capital expenditures that support an eligible COVID-19 public health or economic response. For example, recipients may build certain affordable housing, childcare facilities, schools, hospitals, and other projects consistent with final rule requirements.

In addition, the final rule provides an expanded set of households and communities that are presumed to be “impacted” and “disproportionately impacted” by the pandemic, thereby allowing recipients to provide responses to a broad set of households and entities without requiring additional analysis. Further, the final rule provides a broader set of uses available for these communities as part of COVID-19 public health and economic response, including making affordable housing, childcare, early learning, and services to address learning loss during the pandemic eligible in all impacted communities and making certain community development and neighborhood revitalization activities eligible for disproportionately impacted communities.

Further, the final rule allows for a broader set of uses to restore and support government employment, including hiring above a recipient’s pre-pandemic baseline, providing funds to employees that experienced pay cuts or furloughs, avoiding layoffs, and providing retention incentives.

Premium Pay

The final rule delivers more streamlined options to provide premium pay, by broadening the share of eligible workers who can receive premium pay without a written justification while maintaining a focus on lower-income and frontline workers performing essential work.

Water, Sewer & Broadband Infrastructure

The final rule significantly broadens eligible broadband infrastructure investments to address challenges with broadband access, affordability, and reliability, and adds additional eligible water and sewer infrastructure investments, including a broader range of lead remediation and stormwater management projects.

Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant: Robin Kogelnik wrote up feedback to Greening Urban on their draft proposal. Holly Shimizu and TM Boa discussed it and will send it to Greening Urban. The Town is requesting further guidance on priorities and costs. The Trust requires a progress report by February 1.

Wild Bird Center: The building sold on December 28, 2021 to Josh Carleton & Jyll Kauffman and their holding company The Old Bird House, LLC. They plan to live in part of the building and lease out the rest. Wild Bird Centers has moved out completely although Matt McFarland, Amy Collins and George Petrides (renting back a small office) will stay as renters. The new owners will open a hair salon in a year. It is zoned Commercial Residential Town (multiuse).

Town Hall Rental: Several rentals for January were canceled due to COVID. Simon Says Yoga has moved to its new location. The Council will require that rentals be canceled for a month if the vaccine passport or social distancing is required by the County.

County Vaccine Requirements: There is a resolution that is scheduled to be introduced by the Montgomery County Council, sitting as the Board of Health, on Tuesday, January 11, 2022, regarding vaccination requirements to enter bars, restaurants, fitness centers, and other covered establishments. The vote on this may be held January 25.

Rapid Test Kits: The County will provide rapid Covid test kits to the Town, to be distributed to residents. More information on this will be forthcoming.

Building Updates & Other Permits:

6101 Harvard: Fence

7316 University: Dumpster

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

Mayor Costello announced a closing opportunity for comments by the residents. No residents made comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn: CM Stiglitz 2nd CM Wilson. All in favor. Meeting Adjourned 9:00 pm

Minutes Prepared by: Beth Boa, Town Manager

Approved:  Date: 2/22/2022
Mayor, Dia Costello