

The Town of
GLEN ECHO

Chartered 1904

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TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2022

Held Virtually Via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER: MAYOR DIA COSTELLO. 7:02 PM

PRESENT

Mayor: Dia Costello.

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

Town Manager: (TM) Beth Stickler.

Residents: Bill Vincent (The Echo).

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 FEBRUARY 14, 2022 MEETING

Minutes of the February 14, 2022 Council meeting were approved as amended.

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

INTRODUCE - TOWN ORDINANCE 22-03 – TO ADOPT A BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023 (FY 23)

The Council decided that the budget hearing information would be distributed via Constant Contact, and hard copies would be available for delivery by request from Town Hall.

Motion to Introduce Ordinance 22-03: CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Speelman. Approved 4-0.

INTRODUCE - TOWN RESOLUTION 22-04 – TO APPROVE LEVYING A TAX ON CERTAIN REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY FOR FY 2023.

Motion to Introduce Resolution 22-04: CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Speelman. Approved 4-0.

DISCUSSION ON CHANGES TO ORDINANCES REGARDING TREE REMOVALS

CM Kishore presented some proposed changes to the Code of Ordinances regarding tree removal, which are mentioned in Articles 3, 5 and 13. Each Article has a different caliper (tree diameter measurement) to qualify for notice to the Council for tree removal. The tree removal permitting process does not include considerations for removal to help guide residents in understanding permit qualification. Some local towns have specific tree removal criteria and have an arborist on contract while Glen Echo does not.

CM Kishore recommended updating Article 3 and 5 tree caliper measurements to “greater than 10 inches at 4.5 feet above the ground or that is more than 10 feet in height.” In Article 5 she suggested removing 60 days’ notice for topping as pruning is sometimes encouraged for flowering. She also presented a list of considerations similar to those in other local towns for tree removal, and adding the request to the resident to plant a replacement tree or large shrub. The tree removal considerations would sometimes require an arborist, and the Council noted that a resident would need to hire one. The Council discussed whether they have the power to refuse consent to a resident requesting to remove a tree. The Council was not in favor of adding the list of considerations. CM Kishore will bring the proposed changes back to the Council at its April meeting for continued discussion.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 22-01: AMENDING PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT REQUEST POLICY

The Town Council adopted Resolution 19-07 on the public information act. Resolution 22-01 amends 19-07 to comply with House Bill 183, adopted in the 2021 Regular Session (Ch. 658), which amends the Public Information Act. It takes effect July 1, 2022. It expands the authority of the state PIA Compliance Board and makes other edits to the Act. The amendments require adoption of a policy concerning what records will be “proactively disclosed.” Town Resolution 22-01 adopts this policy. The Town already proactively discloses these records.

Motion to Adopt Resolution 22-01: CM Speelman; 2nd CM Kishore. Approved 4-0.

FOLLOW UP ITEMS FROM MARCH 7 COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tulane/Oberlin:

One Way Streets: The cars would need to enter at Tulane and exit at the light at Oberlin. The County is willing to meet with the Town to discuss. The park is not in favor of changing Oberlin/Tulane to one way due to their service area. The Park thinks making those streets one way would be difficult. Since their service area is at the end of Tulane, before it turns into Oberlin, trucks would have a really difficult time (almost impossible if there are cars parked along Oberlin) to leave the service area and get back to MacArthur. Tulane is the road used to access both the permit parking lot and the service area/access road into the park.

Signs: “Business Parking Only” signs and installation would cost \$1386. Yellow striping could be added at the corner of Bowdoin and Tulane. The issue with posting signs would be enforcement. The signs may need to be more specific and state “No Glen Echo Park Parking.”

Irish Inn:

The Parking Lot Lease doesn’t convey: The license is non-assignable (per para. 13 of the original license). The license is granted to Ballymahon Corp. and Clon Clullen Corp. If the Irish Inn were to be sold, the license could not be assigned as part of the sale.

Irish Inn tables: Christy Hughes would like to leave them in his parking lot over the summer as patrons like to sit outside.

Cost of Street Name Signs:

Shannon Baum quote for signs (including a custom scroll and custom sign) and installation is \$17,200. If the Town uses a standard sign, it would be less.

Capital Streetscapes quote was for \$10,120 not including installation. Installation would be about \$3,000. Note that the quotes are not for exactly the same signs. Capital Streetscapes has a scroll available standard.

TM Stickler will send the Council the breakdown of street sign costs and pictures of the options.

Records archiving and digitizing:

At this point, Julie Sparacino has to bring the rest of the files that she has back, mostly the building records. She has a few papers to incorporate. She needs to relabel the boxes. She needs to take one last look through the records list before finalizing it. \$500 or less for the remaining work, which should be completed by the end of May. (current FY)

As far as digitizing, the records for scanning break down as follows:

Legal – 2 boxes

Minutes – 10 boxes

About 2 to 4 hours per box depending on the state of the records. The Town will need to establish some sort of filing system on the Town's computer or in the cloud to access the documents. We are looking somewhere in the neighborhood of \$1,500 to \$2,000 to scan the legal and minutes records and set up a system. (FY23)

CM Spealman suggested scanning the old Echos. This would be from 1948-2009 and would cost about \$8000. There are also some editions of the Clara Barton Times.

Street Repairs Costs:

November 2017 - Asphalt Patch Repairs were done through Town for \$17,692

May 2020 - Vassar Circle paving repairs (fix base while whole circle was being repaved). \$17,107

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS – PRIORITIES; AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN UPDATE ON POSSIBLE USES

Mayor Costello suggested using the ARPA funds for street repairs, and use Town funds in the FY23 budget to pay for street name signs and stormwater as this would reduce administrative costs.

TM Stickler will ask a pavement company the current cost of square footage for street repaving as Joe Toomey's estimate was from 2020.

The Council will continue its consideration of ARPA funds at the April 11 Council Meeting.

IRISH INN PARKING LOT LEASE: Costello

Mayor Costello and the Council discussed Christy Hughes' request to have the right of first refusal if the lots are for sale by the Town, and what the time limit would be for him to make an offer. CM Stiglist will talk to resident Tom Helf, who is a real estate lawyer, about the lease.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Budget Amendment Expenses:

Category 24.51 Town Tree Pruning: \$4,980 spent of \$1,500 budgeted. Most of this was to cut back along Oberlin, Columbia, and around Town Hall and the Town. The Council is asked to approve \$3,480 to cover the expense.

Category 24.4 Refuse/Recycling: Montgomery County (Key) Sanitation is requesting a \$300.00 a month increase to cover the overall diesel fuel price increase. They would like it to make this retroactive to March 1st through August. If fuel prices go back down to \$3.60 they will immediately bring the price back to the original. In December fuel was \$3.60 as of now it is \$5.85. The Council is asked to increase the budget by \$1,200 to cover the remainder of this FY (current budget is \$40,000; current charges are \$3200/month). CM Stiglitz will review an email to Key Sanitation to relay the decision.

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

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY (copy attached), TM Stickler

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

Revenue:

Special appropriation to FY2022 operating budget of Montgomery County Council: \$18,995 for Glen Echo as part of tax duplication reimbursements. The Town should receive funds in June.

The Town received:

- Income tax of \$31,531, now at 77% of budget.
- Property Taxes \$5,362, now at 95% of budget.

Expenses:

Bolt Legal expense was \$279 for January broken out by categories as follows: 100% Contract with new Town Engineers (OIPA).

Joseph F. Toomey Associates: There was no bill for January;

Rolling Acres Landscaping \$2425 for snow services. Total spent is \$15,968 (budget is \$25,000).

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

UPDATE ON RAYA'S GARDEN

Mayor Costello reported that Bevan Shimizu developed a garden plan that would cost \$400 and would be installed under the big tree in front of Town Hall. Residents will be asked to make donations to cover the cost. No Town money will be a part of this project as it is fully volunteer run. A metal statue by Raya will be donated by her estate. Meditation benches will be installed.

OPERATIONS REPORT: Infrastructure; Administrative; Social: TM Stickler

Infrastructure:

Pepco Vegetation Cutback: TM Stickler spoke with Pepco about the tree pruning. She shared a map from Pepco with CM Kishore and CM Wilson. Pepco will start on Oberlin and Tulane. They will also remove vines from poles. Work can be expected to begin within the first two weeks of May, but could be subject to change as they are frequently required for storm responses in the spring months. Pepco will provide notifications via door hangers for the residents' homes.

The areas on the Tulane/Oberlin side of Town will be done this year, Pepco goes line by line and the circuit that runs on that side hasn't had work plans begun for it yet. Pepco will notify and provide the Town with a work map when they begin that area. They may need to close off some areas, however that will be more at the cutting crews discretion. They're typically able to manage the tight streets with their flagging crews to allow traffic through.

Water Main Break: On January 25, there was a water main break in the parking lot in front of the Irish Inn. WSSC fixed it and patched the lot; a permanent patch was installed March 7.

Sealing Town Hall Parking Lot: The Town received two quotes for sealing/restriping the parking lot at Town Hall. Both were for \$4,440. Sealcoating not only protects asphalt parking lots from external elements like moisture, chemicals, and salts, but it also covers scars and patches on the pavement. A sealcoat can make the asphalt surface longer lasting. TM Stickler will ask the Town Engineer if this needs to be done.

Administrative:

Submitted Application to Chesapeake Bay Trust for stormwater funds.: Thank you to Debbie Lange and Paul Levine who worked on the application narrative and the RFP to find contractors. The Town is requesting funds for the design of a raingarden at Town Hall and the swale in the right of way. These were suggested in the conceptual plan by Greening Urban, which was paid for by the CBT grant in 2021.

Resilient Maryland: The Facilities Committee of the GEPPAC has been looking at a funding opportunity that the State has now open through their Resilient Maryland initiative. As a continuation of the previous work studying on the Parks infrastructure previously done by the University of Maryland's engineering Capstone efforts, they are considering going after a grant to study the potential for a future microgrid for the Park. They asked to add the Town of Glen Echo to the proposed feasibility study's scope of work as this may be a good partnering opportunity.

Town Hall Rental: My Gym may be using the space for a month on a trial basis to hold children's classes 2 times/week. The English Dancers start back March 30.

Building Updates & Other Permits:

4 Vassar: Fence reinstalled out of the Public Improvement Easement.

10 Vassar: Fence

6105 Bryn Mawr: Washington Gas requested a permit to install a gas line. The residents need to apply for a permit.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

Mayor Costello announced a closing opportunity for comments by the residents. No residents made comments. The April 11 budget hearing and council meeting will be held via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn: CM Wilson 2nd CM Stiglitz. All in favor. Meeting Adjourned 8:59 pm

Minutes Prepared by: Beth Stickler, Town Manager

Approved: Dia Costello Date: 5-4-2022
Mayor, Dia Costello