

The Town of
GLEN ECHO
Chartered 1904

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TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
December 11, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: MAYOR DIA COSTELLO. 7:34 PM

PRESENT

Mayor: Dia Costello

Councilmembers: (CM) Dan Spealman, Julia Wilson, and Dawn Tanner. Absent: Matt Stiglitz

Town Manager: (TM) Beth Stickler

Town Clerk: (TC) Emily Parsons

Residents: None

Guests: Ha-Yeon Jeon (Del. Korman intern)

CLOSED SESSION: On December 4, 2023, the Town Council met in open session on Zoom for the purpose of entertaining a motion to enter closed session pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Maryland Code, General Provisions Article, Section 3-305(b)(1) to discuss the appointment/ employment of employees over whom this public body has jurisdiction.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

There were no residents.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL COMMENTS:

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

Old Business

Mayor Costello asked the Council if they wanted her to pursue converting the Town land by Oberlin and Tulane Aves. from residential to multi-use. CM Spealman said that we shouldn't do it if it was prohibitively expensive, but we could find out how much it would cost. TM Stickler recalled that estimates from the research done in 2018 on this were over \$100K and added that it is a very complicated process. A developer buying the property could also then rezone it. None of the CMs felt that a lot of effort should go into this at this time. Mayor Costello said she'd see if she could find any real estate lawyers who would give us an estimate for the cost of rezoning. CM Wilson asked if GEPPAC had any interest in buying the land, and the Mayor said it did not.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES: ACTION ON NOVEMBER 20, 2023 MEETING

The minutes of the November 20, 2023 Council meeting could not be voted on because there wasn't a quorum. CM Wilson wasn't at the 11/20 meeting, and so there were only two CMs able to vote at this meeting. The November minutes will be on the January 8, 2024 meeting agenda.

Per that meeting, the Mayor made note that resident Emily Parsons had been hired by the Town as the new Town Clerk and was currently training with outgoing TM Stickler.

43 WELLESLEY CIRCLE UPDATE: Costello

Mayor Costello said that she would be the main point person on 43 Wellesley, including once a week check-ins with Julie Lull, who works for McFarland Woods. Any new information will continue to be shared with interested neighbors in a timely fashion. Trees will continue to be removed on 12/12 and 12/13, and permits for demo and construction from the County are still pending. Six new street signs indicating construction and resident vehicle parking are being made by Shannon Baum for around \$450 and will be delivered next week. McFarland Woods has volunteered to install the signs.

Construction plans were available for CMs to look over.

TREE STATEMENT: Costello

The tree statement is to explain why the Town Council is proposing changing the Tree Ordinance (23-05). It will be published on Constant Contact sometime in January after CM Spealman and CM Tanner edit it. The Tree Ordinance hearing will be held at the February 2024 Council meeting. The ordinance was reintroduced at this meeting.

Motion to Re-Introduce Ordinance 23-05: CM Wilson; 2nd CM Tanner. Approved 3-0.

23-03 VOTE: AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO CLARIFY AND ADD REGULATIONS AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR FENCES, AND TO REQUIRE A PERMIT FOR A REPLACEMENT FENCE:

For administrative reasons, this needed to be adopted again as the Town lawyer Ron Bolt didn't send the revised ordinance to the County Council prior to the vote last time. No changes to the ordinance since the last vote.

Motion to Adopt Ordinance 23-03: CM Spealman; 2nd CM Wilson. Approved 3-0.

ACCOUNTANT OPTIONS: Costello

Mayor Costello has engaged LSWG, formerly the town auditor, to provide the town with accounting services for \$850/month. This includes converting everything to virtual except for deposits. LSWG will also create the financial statements for the Council meetings each month. If Mayor Costello wants help from LSWG for reviewing next year's budget, there will be an extra hourly cost. TM Stickler and TC Parsons are getting bids from potential new auditors.

Motion to hire LSWG for town accounting services: CM Wilson; 2nd CM Spealman. Approved 3-0.

ACCOUNTING SERVICE BUDGET AMENDMENT

This also creates a new code and line item in the current budget.

Motion to amend the budget: CM Spealman; 2nd CM Tanner. Approved 3-0.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER: TM Stickler

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

Revenue:

Income Tax: The Town received \$64,336 which is 47% of budget.

Expenses:

Bolt Legal Expense was \$891 for October: 27% on reserved parking space, 73% on traffic ordinance.

OIPA Expense was \$413 for permit review for 6109 Princeton fence permit/easement issue.

CM Tanner asked how often the Town consults with our engineers, OIPA, due to the higher than usual expenses. TM Stickler said they would most likely look at any plans for brand new fences, but the recent work on the fence for 6109 Princeton was unusual and therefore more expensive.

Motion to Approve the Financial Report: CM Wilson; 2nd CM Tanner. Approved 3-0.

OPERATIONS REPORT: Social; Infrastructure; Administrative: TM Stickler

Social:

Holiday Party: December 9 from 10-11:30. Thank you to all the volunteers! All went well except the elevator malfunctioned.

MLK Service Project: CM Wilson: The Livable Town Committee is organizing a bagged lunch assembly again this year on MLK Day at Town Hall. The space has been reserved from 8:30am-1pm. CM Spealman said that there was money left over from last year's event and it was rolled over to Winterlude (with resident permission). Again this year, a group of youth volunteers will go door-to-door in town to fundraise for this event. The Mayor asked that she get to meet with them prior to heading out for a little training session on polite soliciting. This has been planned for January 2, which is a no school day. The kids can earn SSL hours.

Winterlude: CM Spealman: This raises money for Greentree Shelter and will be March 2, with March 3 as a rain date. This year will feature a chili cookoff and residents have the option of either cooking or judging. The chili will arrive hot and be eaten at the start of the event so that we don't have to plug in cookers. The prize will be Jan's Jams, supplied by resident Jan Shaut. The event will be outside in the evening with fire pits and luminaries as in past years.

Infrastructure:

Elevator: We need to have the elevator serviced again, because it is getting stuck on the second floor again. CM Spealman asked if it was time to get serious about replacing it. Last time it was priced, it was over \$150K. Mayor Costello said we have the ARPA funds. She also said that many other town government offices don't have elevators and that it isn't required by law to have one in an old building. The CMs agreed that we should have a functioning elevator. TM Stickler will have the elevator serviced and will ask about getting an estimate for a new elevator. CM Spealman asked if TM Stickler could run a report showing how much we have spent in recent years maintaining the current elevator.

Rain Garden: Robin Kogelnik will come to the January meeting to update the Council with any estimates for a rain garden in front of TH and also share how an upcoming meeting she will have with Chesapeake Bay Trust goes. The big question is do we have a chance of getting the funding for the rain garden if we reapply.

Community Garden: The soil test showed that the soil is good. Aaron Hirsch will likely come to the January 2024 meeting with updates.

Bike Rack: Mayor Costello continues to consider alternative spots for a free County bike rack. She's going to have her contact at the County take a look at the right-of-way near the Bee and Butterfly garden.

HVAC Duct Cleaning: TM Stickler and TC Parsons will get more estimates for cleaning the TH ducts after an initial \$5,650 estimate.

Administrative:

January Meeting Date: It will remain January 8.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

There were no residents.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to Adjourn: CM Spealman; 2nd CM Tanner. All in favor. Meeting Adjourned 9 pm

Minutes Prepared by: Emily Parsons, Town Clerk

Approved: Dia Costello Date: 1-12-2024

Mayor, Dia Costello