

**TOWN OF GLEN ECHO**  
**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**MAY 9, 2011**

ATTENDANCE:     Debbie Beers, Mayor  
                  Eve Arber, Councilmember  
                  Nancy Long, Councilmember  
                  Steve Matney, Councilmember  
                  Mark McCaffrey, Councilmember  
                  Nicole Fraser, Clerk-Treasurer

VISITORS:        Polly Angelakis, Site Manager, Glen Echo Park, National Park Service  
                  (NPS)  
                  Matt Stiglitz, Resident  
                  Raya Bodnarchuk Resident  
                  Brent Agnew, The Echo Reporter  
                  Susan Grigsby, Chair, Board of Supervisors of Elections  
                  Jim Shaut, Resident

**GLEN ECHO PARK (GEP) REPORT**

Polly Angelakis reported the GEP Family Day, Clara Barton Day and Junior Ranger Day were all great successes. Attendance was very high and the parking lots were full by 11:30 a.m. Ms. Angelakis asked if the traffic barricades placed around town worked well. Councilmembers Arber and Matney said yes, the barricades were placed very early in the morning and traffic within town was as usual. Mayor Beers reported that at the GEPPAC meeting she learned there were some problems on MacArthur Boulevard with traffic.

Upcoming events at GEP:

5/14: Gala - Art Deco at Glen Echo

6/4-5: Folk Festival.

Ms. Angelakis updated several maintenance projects in the park:

- 1) speed bumps have been placed in the upper (MacArthur Blvd) parking lot;
- 2) way finding signs are currently being installed around Clara Barton National Historic Site and GEP;
- 3) Drainage problem around bike path has been repaired.

Councilmember Matney thanked Ms. Angelakis and NPS staff as he hasn't seen any standing water on the bike bath since the repair. Mayor Beers said she had seen a puddle on the edge of the bike path within the park's jurisdiction.

Ms. Angelakis reported that there have been three vehicle break-ins at the Park during March and April of 2011. Park Police report that break-ins usually peak in the spring. She suggests that park visitors place valuables in the trunk before reaching their destinations. Flyers have been distributed and electronic signs have been positioned to alert people coming into the area. The

break-ins happened in the upper parking lot; Ms. Angelakis was not certain what time of day or night. If cars are broken into, people should contact the US Park Police. Montgomery County and the Park Police have worked together to stop graffiti and tagging; no new graffiti has appeared.

The shared use path plan (known at its inception as the Bikeway Improvement Plan) continues with Montgomery County. After the plan is approved the US Park Service will complete a tree mitigation plan and archeology tests. Ms. Angelakis said that Montgomery County is considering a public meeting to have people comment on the shared use path plan.

Mayor Beers announced that the town attorney has sent to NPS the Town's proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Oxford Road, Ms. Angelakis has not received it yet.

Councilmember Long noted that the planking on the bridge across Minniehaha Creek has been completed. She continued that many of the trees planted by First Bloom have survived: one sycamore is particularly healthy and there are pawpaws and oaks.

Mayor Beers asked if the county had started on the bike path. Ms. Angelakis said that she thought the funds would be released on July 1<sup>st</sup> but they can not start until the environmental assessments are done. Councilmember McCaffrey said that it was his impression that the Glen Echo portion was first and the project would then proceed southward.

Councilmember Long reported the Adventure Theatre won a Helen Hayes award for the most outstanding children's theater presentation in the greater Washington DC area. A long profile of the Adventure Theatre director and Town resident, Michael Bobbitt, appeared on the front page of the May 1<sup>st</sup> arts section in the Washington Post.

### **ELECTION REPORT**

Susan Grigsby reported that on May 2<sup>nd</sup> an election was held: Mark McCaffrey received 57 votes, Nancy Long 56 votes and there were 5 write-ins. All went smoothly. She gave thanks to Rex Rhein, Matt Costello and Joci Khalifa. Ms. Grigsby said that to have 60 people vote in an uncontested election was an unexpectedly good turn-out.

### **SWEARING IN OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS AND CLERK-TREASURER**

Mark McCaffrey, Nancy Long and Nicole Fraser respectively took the oath of office for council members and clerk-treasurer.

### **PEPCO**

Jim Shaut reported that Pepco told him that the electrical wires in town are not insulated as it "helps them stay cool." Mayor Beers said that she was told by Pepco that the town is so old that they were never insulated. Councilmember Matney said that the wires do not need to be cooled; Glen Echo has no major transmission lines that would require them to be cooled. Mr. Shaut explained that he felt the lack of insulation was a safety hazard should the lines fall. Mayor Beers said that this should be brought up with Pepco community relations but she did not know

the current person in charge. Councilmember McCaffrey offered to contact a personal friend at Pepco that might be able to get some answers to the Town's questions.

Mayor Beers outlined that after 2010 snowstorm power outage and two fires caused by falling wires, she sent a detailed letter to Montgomery County Councilmember Roger Berliner and state legislators complaining about Pepco's general unreliability, casual attitude concerning public safety. Mr. Berliner followed up and Pepco invited Mayor Beers to a local governors' conference call but found that it was only a recording.

Mayor Beers detailed the electrical process by which Glen Echo is being isolated into several smaller segments on various loops and as a result, Glen Echo falls to the back of the queue since the number of residents affected is less than other communities. Pepco responds first to areas with larger populations; by dividing Glen Echo into several service sections, the Town would go to the end of the queue. It is likely that the Town's power came back on so quickly after the last snowstorm because of the tree fire at Harvard and University which required immediate response. Pepco's lack of transparency and reliability has been frustrating for all of the community. Mayor Beers said that we should keep better track of all power outages, not just those in snowstorms or thunderstorms, to approach Pepco about the seriousness of the problem in Glen Echo.

#### **GLEN ECHO BAPTIST CHURCH (GEBC) ANNEX**

Mayor Beers announced that she expected to have Ms. Palumbo at tonight's council meeting to discuss with the Council her proposed purchase of the GEBC Annex. She hoped that the Council could intercede on her behalf to GEBC. Councilmember Long reported that Ms. Palumbo had phoned her with the same inquiry and she told Ms. Palumbo that the Town Council could not do that; the church is free to sell to whomever it wishes that complies with zoning laws. Mayor Beers said that Ms. Palumbo would like to establish it as a residence; she said she would need to spend \$100,000 renovating the place and she needed financing to do so. Another potential buyer does not need financing. The Council and Mayor discussed whether or not Annex is zoned as a residence or church. It was inconclusive.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

**Motion 2011-10** to approve as corrected the March 14, 2011 Town council meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **TOWN BUDGET**

Mayor Beers planned to distribute the budget tomorrow to all town residents, it will be 13 days before the hearing usually it is 14 days. May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 will be the budget hearing. The hearing will adjourn and go into the regular meeting at 8:00 pm. The only change in the budget will be a loss of revenue from a variety of sources.

#### **MONTGOMERY COUNTY POLICE CITATION REPORT**

The two policemen issued 50 citations/warnings over the past few weeks costing \$1120. Copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

### **TOWN HALL USE**

Councilmember Long provided a copy of the calendar of events scheduled for the Town Hall for May and June. Copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

5/16: Mohican Pool Association

5/19: Conduit Road Fire Board (Not open to the public)

English Country Dance continues on Wednesday evenings. And a town resident will start conducting Pilates classes on Thursdays at 10 am in June.

### **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

Town Resident Jim Shaut suggested that the town switch from twice a week trash pick-up to recycling pick-up twice a week. Councilmember Matney said it might be easier to keep recycling to once a week but switch to the larger bins. Mayor Beers said that some residents have moved to the blue bins which in her opinion are unsightly. She queried of Waste Management might have large green bins available. She noted that unfortunately some residents are leaving their bins on the streets between recycling dates.

Mayor Beers proposed to introduce Article 9 and to vote on it at the next meeting. The town council needs to decide to have an "opt in" or "opt out" provision of Montgomery County laws that apply to Glen Echo. The town will follow the county's animal control and noise control ordinances. Unfortunately the county is refusing to enforce their vehicle control laws in the town. Mayor Beers said that Norman Knopf is working on the vehicle issue with Somerset or another community.

**Motion 2011-10** to reintroduce Article 9 for a vote at the next council meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **TOWN MAINTENANCE**

Councilmember Long said that she would like to include town maintenance as a regular agenda item. She noted that there is a potential drainage problem at the front door of the town hall, a trench to the right of the door as one exits needs to be reestablished to keep water from draining toward the front door.

Councilmember Long said that she was contacted by Meris Steele about removing a dying tree on the border of her residence and the town hall parking area. Mayor Beers said that Ms. Steele need not ask for approval she need only notify which she has done.

Yellow curbing paint has virtually disappeared in some sidewalk areas, only disappearing only from new concrete pavement.

Councilmember Long said that some people in town would like to participate in some of the landscaping plans, in particular helping to establish more native plants. Councilmember Long would assemble a group of interested people to ascertain what species would be feasible and to possibly focus on the older park at Princeton and University. Mayor Beers said that the town has a landscaping plan; as long as it is not black walnut or elm planted she has no concerns.

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Councilmember Long would like to establish in Town Archives a file to retain articles of interest to town residents such as material related to the celebration of Jim Anderson's life.

Councilmember Arber noted that there was a new business in town. But she could not recall the name.

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Nicole Fraser

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Deborah Beers, Mayor

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Date