

The Town of
GLEN ECHO
Chartered 1904

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December 10, 2018
Town Council Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER: MAYOR POLAK. 8:06 PM

Present: Councilmembers, Dia Costello, Dan Spealman and Matt Stiglitz. Town Manager Nicole Ventura. **Absent:** Councilmember Nancy Long. **Residents Present:** Edie Springuel (Vassar Circle), Aaron Hirsch (University Ave.), Martha Shannon (Wellesley), and Emily Parsons (ECHO).

2. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 12, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

- Minutes were Approved with no changes.
Motion: CM Costello, 2nd CM Stiglitz –CM Spealman abstained since he was not present at the meeting - Approved 2-0.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER:

- The financial report for the month of November was presented by TM Ventura. There were no objections to the financial report as presented. Motion to approve: CM Spealman, 2nd CM Costello – Approved 3-0.

4. MANAGER'S REPORT:

- The need for the TOGE website to be ADA compliant was brought to our attention by the manager of Chevy Chase View. US federal agencies and governmental bodies websites must comply with Section 508 guidelines of the ADA laws which require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology (EIT) accessible to people with disabilities. TOGE website is 94% ADA compliant, per an online testing done by User1st. Full compliance may require the allocation of funds and professional assistance in the near future. It was agreed that TOGE consider budgeting funds for the FY 2020 budget and get bids for services at that time.
- Town Hall Improvements (window treatments and elevator) – The new blinds have been installed. The elevator is still out of order – The Mayor and Manager met with John Philips, a Kencor Representative concerning our elevator. He is going to prepare a proposal to replace the current elevator as well as other possible options. He offered a ball park figure of \$50,000 ± for replacement of the elevator or installing a commercial step elevator which would be in the ball park figure of \$12,000 ±.
- An Archival Progress Report was prepared by Martha Shannon and is attached to the Minutes.
- Other – Newcomers brochure prepared by Emily Parson was presented – all Council Members liked it – requested the following changes: (1) Welcome to Glen Echo changed to Welcome to Town of Glen Echo. (2) Under Town Government – Add a statement about the Town Hall being

available for rental. The final Welcome Brochure will be delivered to all residents and thereafter when the office hears of a new resident moving in, they will be provided with the brochure along with a reply card to be filled out with their address and other contact information so that the Town Office has the new resident's contact information.

5. PERMIT UPDATES REPORT

• BUILDING PERMITS

- **Vassar Circle Construction** – Builder Aaron Hirsch was asked to provide the Town Office a date for a Pre-Construction Meeting so that the residents of Town, especially those on Vassar Circle are aware of the work schedule.
- **7315 University Avenue: Update on Variance Hearing:** Per David Brown, Attorney representing the Town on the Variance Hearing, the deadline for the appeal is 12/16/2018. Mr. Brown has not been notified of any appeal being filed.

• TREE REMOVAL NOTICE

- **6101 Bryn Mawr Avenue:** Council received notice from the resident that they were removing a dead Zelkova tree in the rear corner of the property. Council did not have any objections to the removal of the tree.

6. PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING POLICY PROPOSAL

- In light of recent construction issues that forced the TOGE to hire a land-use attorney and incur significant expense to defend a case to the Board of Appeals, and in anticipation of upcoming new major projects, Mayor Polak recommended that the Town of Glen Echo consider instituting a policy that will offer public Pre-Construction Meetings on select projects. This is a common practice in many other municipalities and is designed to provide maximum opportunities for all parties involved in major construction projects to hear how those projects are expected to proceed and what is expected of the builder as well as the impact on the town.
- The criteria to be used to call for such a meeting would be whether a construction project has great potential to effect more than the immediate neighbors near the project. New home construction and major renovations would likely be on the list for consideration. Factors that would be considered include potential major disruption to traffic flow over an extended period of time, changes to roads, storm water, utilities such as power poles, gas and sewer lines; extensive excavation requiring large truck traffic and the like. The Pre-Construction Meeting would typically include the builder, the plan engineer and other representatives that the builder would wish to have available. The Mayor, Town Manager and the Town's Building Engineer Consultant, and Municipal Project Management Representative would be present at such a meeting.

7. TOWN RESOLUTION 18-11 – BUILDING PERMIT FEES MODIFICATIONS

- Based on the recent complete absence of County oversight of construction and permitting in TOGE, the Mayor believes that additional town-controlled oversight is needed for building plans, construction activities and the authority of the town to issue Stop Work Orders. As a result of review of costs associated with overseeing construction projects, Mayor Polak recommended that an increase in the building permit fees be considered.
- The Mayor noted that building fee increases being proposed were based on comparing TOGE's current fees to other nearby municipalities who employ professional building construction plan oversight as well as project management. Neighboring fees reflect those municipalities' experience with providing that supervision and oversight. Currently TOGE's permitting fees are \$50 or 10% of the County's fees, whichever is greater. A policy designed to align permitting fees with actual costs of oversight would help the Town to protect itself and its taxpayers.
- After a brief discussion, Council requested that a notice be sent in the form of a flyer to all residents explaining the reason for the increase and showing the current fees and the new proposed fee. A deadline would be provided for residents to comment on the fees by December 28th so that the proposal could be acted on by the Council at the January 14th Council Meeting. Attached to is a copy of the notice and fees that were sent to the resident.
- No action on this was taken it was tabled until the January Council Meeting.

8. TOWN RESOLUTION 18-10 – ADOPTING NEW RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR TOWN HALL RENTAL

- CM Costello appointed in charge of Town Hall Rental Fee Review notified the Council that she received less than 10 e-mails from residents concerning the new rental fees proposed for Resident of Town of Glen Echo. Those new rental fees are summarized as follows:
 - **Personal Use** – parties, celebration, and events where no admission fee is charged by resident: \$25.00 for up to 5 hrs and \$10 per additional hour. This is a change from prior policy which was two free uses and \$25 thereafter with no time limit.
 - **Limited Professional Use** – training classes, workshop, presentations, and the like, where an admission fee is charged - \$50.00 for up to 5 hrs. and \$10 per additional hour. Prior policy did not address this.
 - **Non-Resident Use Fee**– remained the same that was approved earlier during the budget hearing - \$50 per hour with a minimum of 3 hours.
- The Town Hall Committee created a new category for **Allowable User Groups** – e.g. scouts, NPS, fire department and such other groups that provide a benefit to the Town. Fees for this group are proposed at \$25.00 for up to 5 hours, and \$10 per additional hour. There was no previous policy.
- The Security Deposit was increased to \$200 for all users from \$150.00
- The Cancellation Policy is 45 days or greater – full refund, if less than 45 days there will be no refund of Rental Fee. Previously there was no cancellation policy and the initial proposal had 60 days' notice required.

- The rules were reviewed with the change of cancellation policy to 45 days and adding wording that the elevator is only for ADA use and may not be used to move freight equipment and other items.
- New Policies and fees to be effective January 1, 2019. Any current rental reservations received prior to January 1, 2019 will remain at 2018 rates.

Motion to approve TOWN RESOLUTION 18-10 – ADOPTING NEW RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR TOWN HALL RENTAL was made by CM Costello, 2nd by CM Stiglitz – Motion passed 3-0


9. NEW/OLD BUSINESS:

- **Small Cell Tower (5G) Initiative:** Council was updated by the Mayor on the status of 5G deployment in municipalities, including a copy of a sample ordinance drafted by Attorney Bolt. Additional issues will be addressed in January in order to meet action requirement deadlines by the FCC. Significant challenges exist given the multiple levels of government involved in eventual approval of small cell tower deployment by municipal, county state and federal governments. All down county municipalities are working together to agree to a mutual ordinance that can be shared.
- **Update GEPPAC:** Mayor attended monthly Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture meeting and reported that they are still going through the transition from National Park Service to Montgomery County.
- **Police Advisory Board** – CM Stiglitz attended a meeting on November 15th with the 2nd District Station, Captain Paul Liquorie, Commander and other municipalities as a member of the Police Advisory Board. These meeting take place on a quarterly time frame to allow the community to interact with the Police and discuss issues that they feel are needed to be addressed. The highest crime report for our area continues to be thefts from autos. Due to the Holiday Season, packages being stolen from porches have increased. The most important action that residents can take is if they have any issues or see something, they need to report it to the police non-emergency number. (301-279-8000), the more reports the Police receive from an area, the more patrols will be ordered.
- **National Park Service Update:** Chief of Staff, GW Parkway, Josh Nadas did not provide the Town with any updates on the ongoing matter – road barriers at the entrance to the park, redesigning the entrance to the park to alleviate traffic in Town, and addressing the drain on Oberlin. The Mayor and Manager have scheduled a meeting with Montgomery County to go over these outstanding items.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn: CM Costello, 2nd CM Stiglitz; All in favor. Meeting Adjourned 10:30 pm

Minutes Prepared by: Nicole Ventura, Town Manager

Approved by: 
Mayor, Willem Polak

Date: January 10, 2019