

The Town of  
***GLEN ECHO***

Chartered 1904

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TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
September 11, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: MAYOR DIA COSTELLO. 7:30 PM

PRESENT

Mayor: Dia Costello.

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

Town Manager: (TM) Beth Stickler.

Residents: Pete Epanchin (Wellesley), Robin Kogelnik (Princeton) Emily Parsons (Echo);

Guests: Ha-Yon Jeon (Del. Korman's office); Samantha Kreindler (MSW student)

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Costello acknowledged the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 terrorist attacks on the US. She thanked the council and TM for the response to the July 29 storm and noted the Town was reimbursed for the costs by LGIT (town insurance company). She thanked CM Stiglitz for building and installing the new Little Library in the pocket park. Mayor Costello spoke recently to police officer Johnson about crimes of opportunity. She credits residents with locking doors and turning on outside lights with the lack of these crimes in Town lately, but the Town will continue to send out reminders about safety.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

Mayor Costello offered an opportunity to take comments from the residents Pete Epanchin (Wellesley) urged the Council to take a less is more approach to regulation in Town and felt that the Council has overstepped in regulation in particular on fence permits.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL COMMENTS:

CM Wilson announced that the Livable Town Committee will schedule a Minnehaha Creek Clean Up this fall. She and CM Spealman will consider dates for this.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES: ACTION ON JULY 10, 2023 MEETING

Minutes of the July 10, 2023 Council meeting were approved as amended.

Motion to Approve Minutes: CM Wilson; 2<sup>nd</sup> CM Stiglitz. Approved 4-0.

FEEDBACK FROM CHESAPEAKE BAY TRUST RAINGARDEN INSTALLATION GRANT APPLICATION:  
Kogelnik

Robin Kogelnik reported on the July 27 2023 feedback meeting she and TM Stickler had with the Trust.

Background

- On June 28, 2023, the Town was notified that it did not receive Track 3 funding from the Chesapeake Bay Trust's (CBT) Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns program to install two micro bioretention facilities designed by Coastal Resources Inc. (CRI)
- On July 27, 2023 Beth Stickler and Robin Kogelnik met with Megan Andreasen from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to get feedback on the town's request, to better understand how the proposal was evaluated and scored, to identify strengths and weaknesses/areas for improvement, and to discuss best next steps.

Evaluation Criteria & Scoring

- The Trust received a high level of requests this year: 68 proposals requesting over \$4.6 million.
- All requests went through a multi-step evaluation process and were peer reviewed by technical experts.
- For this round of funding, the CBT awarded 36 grants totaling \$1.9 million.
- Glen Echo's proposal was ranked 40th out of the 68 received.

The Pros Identified by CBT Technical Evaluation Team

The CBT evaluation team highlighted the following pros of Glen Echo's proposal:

- The project addressed the right areas and priorities for stormwater management.
- The technical designs were very well thought out. The proposed approaches were clear, thorough, and many details were considered.
- The town (and the project) has a lot of great support from different groups and partners.
- The evaluation team "very much appreciated" that we included a maintenance plan and identified educational opportunities, earning high scores in the Sustainability and Climate & Resiliency categories.

The Cons Identified by CBT Technical Evaluation Team

The evaluation team highlighted the following cons of Glen Echo's proposal:

- Pricing
  - Despite multiple efforts to solicit bids from qualified contractors, we received only one estimate in time to meet the proposal submission deadline. Six more contractors submitted bids after the original RFP deadline after a new RFP was posted and sent out to more contractors.
  - The original contractor bid included in the proposal was considerably higher than the cost estimate developed by CRI.
  - CBT Evaluation: we needed more bids. The contractor estimate provided was "too high for the small amount of drainage area covered."
- Audience Need

- Compared to other requests, our proposal covered a relatively smaller amount of drainage area/treated a smaller amount of stormwater runoff that would eventually flow into the Potomac and the Bay. Other communities had more severe flooding or more substantial impact on the watershed.
- In terms of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ), the CBT considers demographics, median income and whether a grant request would support a community that has been historically under-resourced and excluded from the Chesapeake Bay environmental field. The CBT would like more discussion of audience needs in Glen Echo and recommends that we highlight different aspects of those needs in our future grant proposals.

### Recommended Next Steps

- The CBT believes we submitted an excellent proposal, and we would have likely received (some) funding if more contractor bids were submitted before the deadline and included in our request.
- Megan Andreasen recommended we follow up with Nguyen Le and Kathy Somoza, Program Officers at the Chesapeake Bay Trust, re: other grant programs.

### Ongoing Efforts by Environmental Committee

- The Environmental Committee is continuing to vet the contractors who submitted bids, review their estimates against CRI's cost estimate, meet with vendor representatives to walk the project areas and discuss specifics, and call all references to qualify a potential contractor to do the work.
  - Of the six bids received, two companies were recommended by CRI: Denchfield Landscaping and Pay Dirt, LLC.
  - We are doing side by side comparisons between all six bids to make sure we are doing an apples to apples comparison of the costs submitted.
- Other Costs to Consider
  - Maintenance (watering, weeding, mulching, etc. of the trolley/right of way bioretention facility will be a new, ongoing expense)
  - Maintenance of existing storm drain pipes: clearing debris from inlets, storm drain pipes, and/or drainage channels, re-establishment of drainage channels which may have eroded or silted up over time
- Once this contractor evaluation has been completed, the Environmental Committee would like to present its analysis and recommendations to the Town Council at a future council meeting.

### Funding Considerations

- In its study of the recurring stormwater and flooding issues in Glen Echo, Greening Urban identified these projects as the top two priorities for the Town to address flooding and stormwater management.
- Given the increased frequency and severity of storms in the area, the Environmental Committee believes these projects would be timely, prudent, effective and appropriate applications of a portion of the Town's ARPA funds, and the Town should move forward and fund these projects instead of waiting another year for the next round of [possible] funding from the Chesapeake Bay Trust.
- If the Council approves both the contractor recommended by the Environmental Committee and the use of ARPA funding for these projects, the Environmental Committee can then pursue additional grants to address the next set of stormwater management priorities identified in the study.

The Council discussed whether the Town should use ARPA funds or reapply for the grant in March 2024. This would delay the installation and other stormwater project progress. The Council agreed that the Town could have Coastal Resources Inc. assist with reviewing the pricing in the bids. The Council noted that there are

other needs for ARPA funds so was not ready to authorize funding for the installation at this meeting. Robin Kogelnik will return to a future Council Meeting with a recommendation on the vendor and a request for funding.

23-03 INTRODUCE: 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: Costello

The ordinance would require permits for replacement fences without a permit fee, to make the process more streamlined so that the TM, Mayor and Council would not have to spend so much time dealing with complaints from residents about fences. The Council discussed whether this ordinance is necessary and whether the County DPS should be involved instead of the Town. The Council made some amendments to the ordinance, and will hold a hearing on it at the October 9 meeting and consider the amendments at that time.

Motion to Introduce Ordinance 23-03: CM Stiglitz; 2<sup>nd</sup> CM Wilson. Approved 4-0.

Motion to Amend Ordinance 23-03: CM Wilson; 2<sup>nd</sup> CM Stiglitz. Table until clear language at the October 9, 2023 Council Meeting.

23-06 RESOLUTION: PERMIT FEES: Costello

TM Stickler will highlight the changes to the permit fees and bring it back to the October meeting.

23-05 INTRODUCE: AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ARTICLE 3 (BUILDING CODE) AND ARTICLE 5 (VEGETATION CONTROL) TO ADD CRITERIA FOR TREE REMOVAL DECISIONS AND CLARIFY EXISTING PROVISIONS: Costello

The Council amended the ordinance at the meeting and will hold a hearing at the October council meeting.

Motion to Introduce Ordinance 23-05: CM Spealman; 2<sup>nd</sup> CM Tanner. Approved 4-0.

UPDATES ON TRESTLE BRIDGE DEMOLITION: Costello

Mayor Costello updated the Council on discussions with WMATA. The Town is exploring options to protect the Town and its environment. Mayor Costello and TM Stickler met with the WMATA Realtor; the Town can have the bridge at no cost; the land it is on is 2/3 WMATA land and 1/3 NPS land. The Town looked into having it fenced/caged off completely; the materials would cost \$16,000 and the fence company stated it would be difficult to do as it is in a valley. Attorney Ron Bolt advised that even with fencing and no trespassing signage the Town may still have liability. Resident Matt McFarland met with Mayor Costello and TM Stickler and said his company could remove the metal portions of the bridge and leave the concrete with less environmental damage than WMATA.

Mayor Costello will reach out to Steve Ryan (Town resident and lawyer) about his opinion. The Town has no idea of the potential timeline for bridge removal by WMATA; it is still in the Section 106 process with NPS.

REWORDING ORDINANCE 19-10; TRAFFIC CONCERN UPDATE: Costello

Mayor Costello addressed some concerns of residents about speeding on roads from MacArthur Blvd to University Ave. The Traffic Engineer (Joe Cutro) did not recommend a traffic study. A traffic study in 2018 on University Ave did not show excessive speeding. He suggested trying new stop and mph signage. If this doesn't help he suggested considering speed bumps.

Mayor Costello and the Council reviewed section 19: Vehicle Control of the ordinances. Some of the wording no longer applies and some is contradictory. TM Stickler will have Attorney Ron Bolt draft a revised ordinance for the October meeting. The Council discussed boat parking in Town. At this time, the boat at the bottom of Yale Ave can remain until the Council considers changes to the vehicle control ordinance as it is used frequently and needs clarification.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST: TM Stickler

The months of July and August were busy months in terms of revenue and expenses.

The Mayor informed the Council that she is considering outsourcing the bookkeeping. This would be to protect the Town and its employees from fraud. She and TM Stickler had met with one accountant. They also consulted with LSWG, the Town auditor, who supported the idea of outsourcing the bookkeeping. The Council will consider this at the October meeting.

Audit: All items requested were submitted and LSWG Auditor Eva Webb will attend the October Council Meeting to go over the audit results.

July 29, 2023 Storm Expenses:

\$5,928.75 from Mulheron Tree Experts

\$3,668 from Level Green Landscape for debris clean up

LGIT Claim: \$1000 deductible up to \$10,000 reimbursement

Total reimbursement from LGIT (Town Insurance): \$8596.75

Investment Options:

PNC Money Market TM Stickler asked for better rate; offered 4.25% for 6 months

MLGIP RATE: 5.36% as of September 5, 2023

PNC CD rate: 8 months 4.8% APY 4.71%

SANDY SPRING BANK CD

5.358% APY 5.5% 8 months

TM Stickler asked former council member Kishore for advice on investing in a CD: The CD is favorable if interest rates are expected to start dropping. The Fed is expected to raise rates one more time this year then likely keep them steady. She suggested the Town wait until October to move funds into a CD. At that point, it's a good idea to lock in the Sandy Spring CD for 8-12 months; however long is the best locked in rate. But she discouraged doing longer than 12 months to give flexibility if the Town needs to pull back the funds for any reason. The Council noted that TM Stickler has the authority to open a CD and manage the investments, and agreed with the opening of a CD at Sandy Spring Bank for 8 months.

Revenue:

Highway User Revenue: For FY 23 Received final payment: \$4018.05 at 100% of budget

FY 24 Tax Duplication: Received 42,004 at 100% of budget

Property Tax: Received \$649 for FY23

Received \$2687 for FY24

Cable Franchise: Received \$114 for FY24 for Comcast and \$698 for FY23 for Verizon

Admissions and Amusement Tax: Received \$151 for FY23

Income Tax: Received \$400 for FY 24

Expenses:

Bolt Legal Expense was \$31 for June: 100% traffic order on Bowdoin.

Bolt Legal Expense was \$2508 for July: 6.5% traffic order; 10% for consult on cart; 37% charter amendment; 5% fence ordinance; 32% draft changes to ordinances; 6% trestle bridge; 2% tree liability discussion.

OIPA Expense was \$165 for July: 83% permit review for 41 Wellesley shed; 14% for 30 Wellesley deck permit.

Motion to Approve the Financial Report: CM Wilson; 2<sup>nd</sup> CM Stiglitz. Approved 4-0.

OPERATIONS REPORT: Social; Infrastructure; Administrative: TM Stickler

Social:

Flu Shot Clinic September 30th 10-2 with CVS

Town Yard Sale October 14th 9-1

Infrastructure:

Water Main: On August 17 WSSC came to Oxford Rd to investigate a water main break. They told TM Stickler it was a terracotta storm drain pipe that was leaking. After meeting with County DOT, TM Stickler hired Busy Service Inc to repair. They determined it was a WSSC main and repaired it. TM Stickler is pursuing reimbursement from WSSC for the repair. The total cost was \$23,517.20.

Storm emergency July 29: As discussed in the financial report, the Town was badly impacted by a storm on Saturday night, July 29. Debris and tree clean up took about a week.

Asbestos test results: The Town Hall was tested in the entryway and the electrical room floors. The electrical room was positive for asbestos. TM Stickler is getting quotes for remediation.

Administrative:

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update: TM Stickler met with the County and a contractor regarding the FEMA hazard mitigation plan 5 year update. The Council will need to adopt a resolution in spring 2024 to adopt the hazard mitigation plan. This allows access by the Town to grant funding for mitigation projects.

Bellringer Bike Ride October 21: TM Stickler and Mayor Costello met with the organizers of this fundraiser. The ride will end at Glen Echo Park, with bikers entering via upper Princeton off of MacArthur. County police will be stationed at the top and bottom of Princeton and other roads off of MacArthur will have barricades saying residents only.

Leaf pick up: Mondays: November 6, 20, 27; December 4, 18

**Permits:**

The Town has not yet received permit applications for the demo/rebuild at 43 Wellesley Circle; they have applied for County permits. The Mayor would like to put temporary signs up saying: Resident Parking Only/No Construction Parking. The Town will also require flaggers during demo/construction.


OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

Mayor Costello announced a closing opportunity for comments by the residents. There were no comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to Adjourn: CM Stiglitz; 2<sup>nd</sup> CM Spealman. All in favor. Meeting Adjourned 10:21 pm

Minutes Prepared by: Beth Stickler, Town Manager

Approved:  Date: 10-12-2023

Mayor, Dia Costello