

The Town of
GLEN ECHO

Chartered 1904

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TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: MAYOR DIA COSTELLO. 7:31 PM
PRESENT

Mayor: Dia Costello.

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

Town Manager: (TM) Beth Stickler.

Residents: Mark Brewster (Wellesley), Aaron Hirsch (University), Robin Kogelnik (Princeton), Emily Parsons (Echo)

Guests: Kenneth Love-Fabrizio (Del. Korman intern), Lotia Myrie

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Costello will be adding a new section to the agenda for upcoming Council meetings: to provide any necessary follow up from the previous council meeting.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:

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

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL COMMENTS:

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

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES: ACTION ON OCTOBER 9, 2023 MEETING

Minutes of the October 9, 2023 Council meeting were approved.

Motion to Approve Minutes: CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Spealman. Approved 3-0.

COMMUNITY GARDEN PROPOSAL: Hirsch

Resident Aaron Hirsch discussed his idea of a community garden on the land at Oberlin Ave. He is conducting a soil test through the University of Delaware to confirm there are no pollutants.

For a water source, WSSC would charge \$15,000 to install water. Digging a well would cost \$7000. A 500 gallon water tank could be brought in and filled with a water truck as needed. Journey Space has offered to allow the garden to use their water, and pay for its portion. Bannockburn Gardens pay about \$50/year for water with nine plots.

Fencing to keep out animals would cost \$8000. There may be grants for installing the gardens/fencing. The Town is not committing to supporting the garden financially.

The Garden effort could be a sub committee of the Green Team (Environment Committee). The Council discussed options for paying for the garden: The Town, residents, or a fundraiser. Glen Echo Park needs to be informed to get their input as they use the land nearby for events. The Irish Inn also needs to be informed as they use a plot off of Tulane for parking. Other ideas for the land are to plant fruit trees and install benches.

His survey of residents indicated 20 people would like a plot. He has four volunteers for his committee. The gardens may be open to primarily Glen Echo residents or perhaps other neighbors.

The land is currently zoned R-60; Mayor Costello would like to discuss zoning it CRT (commercial residential transition) at the January 2024 Council meeting.

The Council generally was in favor of the garden idea, and Aaron Hirsch will attend a future council meeting to keep them apprised of the proposed plans.

RAINGARDEN UPDATE: Kogelnik

Resident Robin Kogelnik has looked at the proposed designs to install two micro bioretention facilities in Town. She believes the designs are overly conservative based on the soil infiltration tests and that raingardens may suffice. She suggested planting more trees on the right of way to help with stormwater. She will ask the Chesapeake Bay Trust if a grant proposal can be submitted by the Town for raingardens. She will attend the December 11 2023 Council Meeting with another update.

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 in the January 2024 Echo. The Tree Ordinance hearing will be held in January 2024. The statement will be reviewed by the Council again at the December 11 meeting.

Motion to Move Consideration of Ordinance 23-05 to January 8, 2024 Council Meeting: CM Spealman; 2nd CM Tanner. Approved 3-0.

SAFETY ISSUES: Costello

There have been a couple of incidents in the last month in Town. The Town will send safety reminders on Constant Contact regularly.

ACCOUNTANT OPTIONS: Stickler

The Town has reviewed three accountant options.

Cathie Miller \$53/hour

Nancy Hull \$75/hour. Works for Montgomery Municipal Cable currently.

LSWG: The current town auditor. \$850/month; includes converting everything to virtual except for deposits. Would need to hire a new auditor.

Mayor Costello suggested using LSWG. The Council asked TM Stickler to get another bid on an accounting service similar to LSWG and will reconsider at the December meeting.

INTRODUCE 23-07 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REMOVE THE OFFICE OF THE VEHICLE CONTROL OFFICER; TO PROHIBIT PARKING ON ANY CURB, SIDEWALK, OR DRAINAGE STRUCTURE; AND TO CLARIFY EXISTING PROVISIONS: Costello

Mayor Costello and the Council reviewed the proposed ordinance. The sections on impounding vehicles were discussed and on Ron Bolt's advice they will be retained. The Council agreed that trailers take up parking areas and are not meant to be indefinitely parked on Town streets. A hearing and vote on adoption will be held in December or January.

Motion to Introduce Ordinance 23-07: CM Spealman; 2nd CM Stiglitz. Approved 3-0.

43 WELLESLEY CIRCLE UPDATE: Costello

The Town held a meeting November 14 for residents regarding the demolition and rebuild of the house at 43 Wellesley Circle. 18 people attended. The Town will communicate weekly with the residents living nearby.

The Council asked to see the plans for the construction at the December 11 Council meeting. McFarland Woods representatives will be asked to attend.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER: TM Stickler

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

Revenue:

Income Tax: The Town received \$6,720 which is 4% of budget.

Expenses:

Bolt Legal Expense was \$990 for September: 27% on reserved parking space, 73% on traffic ordinance.

The Council asked for an explanation of the increase of interest. This is due to an increase in the interest rate in the money market account and the high rate of the MLGIP account. The Council asked for an explanation of the use of the traffic consultant, which is over budget. He has advised on installation of new speed limit, stop, and handicapped signs. He will not be doing further work in Town this FY, as there is no urgent work to be done. The Council asked for an explanation of the Town Hall supplies account which is over budget. TM Stickler will provide a list of expenses in that account (22.91) at the December Council meeting. Budget amendments will be made at that meeting.

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

OPERATIONS REPORT: Social; Infrastructure; Administrative: TM Stickler

Social:

Holiday Party: December 9 from 10-11:30.

Infrastructure:

Yale and University landscaping proposal: Speke Wilson is working on a path forward on this. The Town received two bids but the Council did not agree to fund this.

Streetlights: The Town received an estimate from Pepco for installing LED streetlights.

The estimate is as follows for 47 street lights:

GLEN ECHO STREETLIGHTS W/ TREE TRIMMING

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| MATERIAL COST | \$65,573.65 |
| + ENGINEERING MH'S | \$5,780.27 |
| + PMDTAX21 | \$59,485.60 |
| TOTAL | \$130,839.52 |

This comes out to \$2,784 per light.

This amount includes costs attributed to the overgrowth of some vegetation where PEPCO Vegetation Management will have to perform tree trimming first (TM Stickler edit: this cost is about \$21,000). In addition, Pepco will also require TCP (traffic control personnel), as part of working safely in tight confined spaces (narrow streets in Glen Echo).

The Town may want to consider whether it would want to purchase and own its LED streetlights rather than going through Pepco. TM Stickler will ask Section 3 about their process and expense for purchasing streetlights.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCIL TO HEAR RESIDENTS' COMMENTS:


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

CLOSED SESSION: The Town Council met in open session 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.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to Adjourn: CM Stiglitz; 2nd CM Wilson. All in favor. Meeting Adjourned 9:43 pm

Minutes Prepared by: Beth Stickler, Town Manager

Approved:  Date: 1-2-2024

Mayor, Dia Costello