



GREATER OLNEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
2024-7-09 Representatives Meeting
DRAFT Minutes

The 2024-7-09 GOCA's meeting was conducted in person in the Oaks Ballroom, Sandy Spring Vol. Fire Department, Sandy Spring, MD and online via Zoom.. President Irina Norrell called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm EST, with a quorum present. Members attending virtually are denoted by a V.

Those attending:

Officers

- Irina Norell, President (Norbeck Meadows)(Transportation Committee)
- Curtis Chappell, First Vice President (Olney Square)
- Matt Quinn, Second Vice President (
- Tina Craun, Treasurer (Individual)
- Helene Rosenheim, Recording Secretary (Highlands of Olney)

Members

- Mindy Baden (Transportation Committee Chair)(Olney Mill)*
- Maria Bender (Brookeville Knolls) - V
- Alden English (SEROCA)
- Paul Jarosinski (Cherrywood)
- Lee Kidd (Cherrywood) - V
- Carolyn Knight (Olney Oaks)
- Joe Krempasky (Brookeville Knolls)
- Diana Littlefield (Olney Acres) - V
- Juris Mohseni (Village of James Creek)

- Mike Payne (Olney Oaks) - V
- Kristen Quinn (Norbeck Meadows) - V
- Darlene Saulsbury (Olney Mill)
- Marlene Saulsbury (Forest Crossing)
- Jim Smith (Oatland Farm) - V
- Ed Weisel (Norbeck Meadows) -V

Guests

- County Council Member Evan Glass, At-Large
- County Council Member Will Jawanda, At-Large
- County Councilmember Dawn Leudtke, District 7
- Billy Becker, (Ashley Hollow)
- Lee Gilpan
- Judy Hruz (Greater Olney News) - V
- Kathleen Kidd - V
- Holly Kline, Asst, Councilmember Evan Glass
- Aaron Kraut, Chief of Staff, Councilmember Dawn Leudtke, District 7
- Nick M.- V

Approval of the July 9, 2024 Agenda - Agenda was approved as present.

Approval of June 11, 2024 Minutes - The minutes of the June meeting were approved unanimously with one correction (Pg 2, Paragraph 3, Ln 2 deleting the words "to end") and no additions

Announcements: None.

Montgomery County Council Member Updates

President Irina Norell noted that with this meeting we are establishing a new tradition of annually inviting our District 7 and At-Large Montgomery County Councilmembers to present updates on current and future Council actions. And she welcomed Dawn Luedtke, District 7 and Will Jawanda, At-Large; and Evan Glass, At-Large,

Councilmember Luedtke:

Thanked GOCA for being so involved, adding that she has cited us as an example of how to be organized. And, she has been holding meetings to help people understand how the Council works and how to interact with the Council.

They are working on:

- Amending some County laws and regulations that are not consistent with current realities;
- Expanding the Police Department Drone Pilot Program to the UpCounty area,
- Putting in place a system to register information with the County on people in a residence who may have an adverse or agitated response if an EMT or police officer enter their home, such as a person with dementia so the responders are aware and can interact appropriately with those individuals while responding to a call; and
- Permitting camping and overnight stays in limited parts of the Agricultural Reserve as an option for property owners, not a requirement.

Her first bill was to remove reporting surgical procedures from employment forms, unless they are somehow relevant to the duties of the position, first for County employees and later to all employment forms in the County.

Councilmember Glass:

Also thanked us for the invitation and all that we do. And, he thanked Mindy Baden for all she has done to increase safety on the roads in the County..

He is

- Continuing to work to make it safe for people to get around safely on our roads with the passage last year of the Safe Streets Act and increasing the number of speed cameras
- Working on the Move Act that addresses the issue of substantial vacant office space, post COVID; and
- Programs to support businesses moving into the County or expanding and creating more affordable housing.

He noted he had recently seen State Delegate Moon, the author of the HB1300 bill who indicated he had heard the concerns about the bill and they are refining the bill.

Councilmember Jiwanda:

Housing is a huge issue worldwide and many residents are "house burdened" So we need more housing, more types, more different sizes with different price points. He is concerned with the level of mansionization with people buying modest houses, tearing them down and rebuilding much bigger houses.

They are working on the Attainable Housing Strategy, mass transit, rent stabilization, and efforts to address learning and socialization losses during COVID, creating an interest-bearing Child Investment Fund that would give \$1,800 to County residents when they turn 18 to use to buy a house or in seeking employment.

During Q & A's, the following were discussed::

- Using vacancy office space for housing: Councilmembers noted It is very expensive to convert these spaces and some can't be converted. Most vacancies are in older buildings that really just need to be torn down and could be rebuilt as housing; and they are not sacrificing housing to save office space - doing both.
- Proposed Urban District Light for Olney: Councilmembers were reminded that our community continues to be very interested in the Urban District Light we had discussed with several County representatives.
- The sense that crime has increased: Councilmembers noted they are trying to create communities that contribute to all feeling safe and addressing factors that lead to criminal activity.. While overall, crime is down; it cannot all be eliminated, but they are working to further reduce crime.
- Child Investment Fund: Councilmembers noted to be eligible individuals have to be born in Montgomery County, and living in Montgomery County when they apply between ages 18-35.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tina Craun reported that members are now going to be able to make dues payments online through Zeffi.

Transportation Committee

Mindy Baden, Transportation Committee chair, reported that:

- Speed limits on Veirs Mill Rd reduced to 35 MPH in response to an earlier accident.
- On July 1st, the Maryland Gas Tax went down, in part, because of increased electric vehicles (EVs) and hybrids; and registration fee for vehicles is going up 120% with options to renew for 1 or 2 years.
- There will be a surcharge on EVs and hybrids to offset the loss of gas tax revenue.
- There has been another bad accident at Rte. 108 and Village Center Dr, she believes because the traffic light there is confusing. She reported concerns using the GOCA Road Report on our website, goca.org and encouraged others to report concerns about that intersection to increase the likelihood of getting some action on this intersection.
- The line painting at the Shady Grove Metro Station has been completed.
- She will report at the next meeting on her attendance at a recent Congressional hearing.

Adjournment

Before adjourning the meeting, Irina noted the special GOCA meeting on the Attainable Housing initiative on July 16th in the ballroom of the Sandy Spring Fire House in Sandy Spring where this meeting was taking place and asked people to RSVP to the email invitation sent out to participate .

Adjourned: 9:02 pm

Submitted by Recording Secretary Helene Rosenheim