

**Town of Glen Echo**  
**Council Meeting Minutes**  
**September 8, 2008**

Attendance: Debbie Beers, Mayor  
Nancy Long, Councilmember  
Eve Arber, Councilmember  
Robin Kogelnik, Councilmember  
Steve Matney, Councilmember

Visitors: Sophie Keefer, Echo Reporter  
Sharon Cleary, C&O Canal Park  
Norm Bernhardt, Resident  
Eleanor Balaban, Resident  
Roger Brofeus, English Country Dance, FSGW

Mayor Beers called meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

**GLEN ECHO PARK REPORT**

Mayor Beers noted that there was no GEP representative present and asked Councilmember Long to report on GEP.

Labor Day Art Show was a great success, with 25% greater participation than last year; a total of 529 artworks.

Dottie Marshall, formally assistant to Audrey Calhoun, has been named Superintendent of George Washington Memorial Parkway. Ms. Marshall will assume the new office in November. Mayor Beers suggested inviting Ms. Marshall to a Town Council meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion 2008-24** approved as amended (typo) the August 11, 2008, Town Council meeting minutes. Motion passed as amended.

**STREET REPAIR REPORT**

Councilmember Kogelnik reported that A. Morton Thomas (AMT) has provided a tentative schedule for preparation of bid documents. AMT plans to have submitted proposals available for Council to review in January, with a target start date of April 2009.

Councilmember Kogelnik emphasized that moving the start date to April will allow Council more time to review and negotiate any changes with the selected bidder. Mayor Beers asked if AMT expected many bids; they will mail to particular companies but can not guarantee who will submit proposals.

Resident Karim Khalifa has volunteered his expertise with the bid documents review and selection process.

### **STORM WATER MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Mayor Beers reported that Michael Mitchell, Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT), said the County plans to begin the storm water management improvements above MacArthur Boulevard next month. NPS and DPWT officials agreed to allow Montgomery County to improve the storm water inlet at University Avenue and Oxford Road. Additionally, NPS plans to explore the drain with a camera to see if the pipe has collapsed.

### **TOWN HALL MAINTENANCE**

Painting of the exterior of the Town hall began the first week of September and was completed by October 1. C/T Polak reported "The Painters" were attacked by bats when they disturbed the bats living behind the town hall shutters; an approved Maryland Department of Natural Resources bat removal company was called to safely remove the bats. A proposal was presented to modify the shutters and add custom bat houses to the town hall.

**Motion 2008-25** to accept the AB & BE proposal for \$1200 to remove the bats, modify the shutters and cupola, and add bat houses to the town hall. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Kogelnik inquired about the timeline for soundproofing the town hall. Councilmember Matney explained that he has been researching soundproofing options. He has had difficulty finding a company interested doing a facility as small as the town hall.

### **TOWN HALL USE**

Councilmember Long reviewed the attached calendar and presented two requests to use the town hall:

- Folklore Society of Greater Washington's (FSGW) family dance to be held one Sunday a month from November-April. Their fee is \$50 per use. Councilmember Long noted that the FSGW person in charge of family dances, Margie Jervis, manages the event more efficiently than her predecessor. Council raised no objections to this use which is open free to Town residents.
- Seneca Valley Sugarloafers Volkswalk, booked over a year ago for October 18. Their letter mentions that their walkers will travel through Town. This group has provided a brochure to their participants stating parking restrictions, pet rules, etc. There were no objections from Council for this use.

Councilmember Long also noted that there will be a FSGW concert on September 27, featuring a group of Siberian folk musicians. The concert is free to Town residents.

### **MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE (MML)**

Councilmember Arber attended the MML August 28 meeting held in Somerset. Maryland's deputy secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation spoke on projects in Maryland including rail to Dulles, speed cameras by municipalities, Bay Bridge, use of rail to reduce the number of cars on roadways, and highway funding issues. Funding will be diminished because of fewer vehicles due to increasing fuel costs.

The next MML meeting will be held September 25 at the Kensington Café.

### **ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCE**

Mayor Beers explained to Council she and C/T Polak were subpoenaed to court because of an altercation between a town resident and another dancer attending the English County Dance (ECD) and questioned why the town was involved. The town resident claimed he was an employee of the town and filed a “peace order” so the other dancer could not come near the Town Hall building (which includes the Post Office) and the resident’s home. The charges were dismissed when Mayor Beers told the town resident the town would not support his claim that he is an employee of the town.

The Town will hire a handyman service for town hall maintenance and small repairs done previously by town volunteers.

Roger Brofeus, the FSGW’s ECD representative, told Council that the dancers are concerned about losing use of the town hall. FSGW has sent a letter to all parties involved. Mr. Brofeus asked what FSGW could do to improve relationship between ECD and town. Mr. Brofeus noted that there are about 30-40 regular ECD; resident Norm Bernhardt added that there are a few town residents attending.

Mayor Beers said that if there are any further altercations, ECD will be terminated. The town can not be subjected to law suits; it is a question of liability.

### **MACARTHUR BLVD BIKEWAY IMPROVEMENTS**

Discussion was held about the upcoming September 11 MacArthur Boulevard Bikeway public hearing:

- Council members Arber, Long and Matney plan to attend the hearing, as does Mayor Beers.
- Mayor Beers said she approves of the bikeway plans because something needs to be done with the Boulevard’s problems.
- Mayor Beers received one email opposing the development
- Councilmember Arber said she approached a GEP supervisory ranger about sending a representative to replace Sean McCabe, who has been moved to Yosemite National Park.
- Councilmember Kogelnik inquired as to why the middle section of the bikeway is scheduled first.
- Kym Elder, previous Site Manager for GEP, told Councilmember Matney that there was no agreement by NPS for the County to go through the park’s section.
- Councilmember Matney noted that bike commuters use the bike path; high speed bikers use the roadway.

No decision was made concerning a statement from the Town for the hearing record.

### **C&O CANAL REPORT**

Ranger Sharon Cleary reported to Council that the C&O Canal sustained extensive damage during the most recent storm. The first reports indicate 75 downed trees, 7 wash outs and 95 feet of towpath missing below widewater. Water was drained from the canal on Saturday morning; the Canal was full by 5 p.m. Rangers were not able to keep up with the volume of water. Ms. Cleary said that they do “band aids” until real repairs can be made; it will take several weeks to come up with a temporary solution for towpath users. The damages are a civil engineering challenge.

Mayor Beers asked about repair funds. According to Ms. Cleary there are no funds available and estimated that it would require \$2-5 million to repair. Councilmember Long asked about emergency funds. Ms. Cleary said they would be competing with “end-of-the-year-must-spend-your-money” attitude and hopes to locate some funds from parks that under-spend.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30.