

**TOWN OF GLEN ECHO  
COUNCIL MEETING**

May 11, 2009

ATTENDANCE: Debbie Beers, Mayor  
Nancy Long, Councilmember  
Eve Arber, Councilmember  
Steve Matney, Councilmember  
Dan Macy, Councilmember  
Cathie Polak, Clerk-Treasurer

VISITORS: Polly Angelakis, GEP, Site Manager  
Dottie Marshall, NPS, Superintendent, George Washington  
Memorial Parkway  
Peter Somerville, Resident  
Debbie Lange, Resident  
Gerry Bodlander, Echo Reporter  
Raya Bodnarchuk, Resident  
Constance Macy, Resident  
Philip & Willem Macy, Residents

Mayor Beers opened the meeting at 8:05 and invited Ms. Angelakis to present the Glen Echo Park report.

**GEP REPORT**

Ms. Angelakis reported that:

- Work is expected to take several months to prepare the area near the arcade for the Washington Music Conservatory at Glen Echo;
- Funding has been received for new playground equipment;
- Clara Barton National Historic Site (CBNHS) has received funds to repair water damage in the first floor parlor caused by a broken pipe, and to relocate a bathroom;
- Family day and the CBNHS open house were well attended;
- CBNHS will hold another open house on Sunday, May 24;
- The Washington Folk Festival will be in GEP on May 30, 31;
- Carrousel hours will remain the same this season
- The Park has written a letter to Montgomery County about safety concerns for bike path users near the upper parking lot;
- The Young Creative Spirit classes will move back into the First Aid house later this summer.

Councilmember Long inquired about the GEP budget. Superintendent Dottie Marshall explained that the approved budget is static, meaning that there have been no reductions from the previous year. She told Council that the NPS, as part of the U.S. Department of Interior, seems to get a level budget, without reductions. Ms. Marshall explained that

GEP is “holding our own,” and said she is more concerned about the Partnership and cooperators’ ability to maintain enrollment.

Superintendent Marshall reported that the CBNHS Geo-Thermal project did not receive stimulus funds. She said that she is encouraged that funding will be found; she hopes to secure remaining “left-over existing funds” while everyone else is focused on recovery funds. Ms. Marshall told Council that she has funds to cover the design phase of the geo-thermal study. Mayor Beers inquired about the timeline; the design study will take 120 days to complete, answered Ms. Marshall.

C/T Polak inquired if the NPS will move the propane-tanks underground as agreed if the geo-thermal funding was not received. Superintendent Marshall responded that she does not want to invest any more funds into moving the propane tanks while she is still pursuing funds for the geo-thermal.

#### Oxford Road

Superintendent Marshall told Council that the NPS response to Oxford Road ownership is “nothing different from the past.” She said the NPS position is that the town owns Oxford Road; the NPS owns the land under the road. While the NPS does not give away land, they may consider a quitclaim for transfer of the land provided the NPS has an easement for upgrading the electrical for a geo-thermal project, and access to the CBNHS.

Superintendent Marshall agreed to provide the NPS statement re Oxford Road exactly as the Solicitor’s Office wrote it, not in a summarized version. Mayor Beers noted that the Town’s attorney would review the statement. The Mayor and Council believed the original text was important to ascertain the exact meaning of this important decision.

#### Playground

Resident Peter Somerville asked about the playground equipment and expressed concern that the rope climbing equipment, Sirius Galaxy, is not properly re-installed. Ms. Angelakis agreed to look into the installation specifications. Ms. Angelakis noted that the equipment has to fit the footprint for safety concerns.

Councilmember Long inquired if the equipment will be plastic or wood. According to Superintendent Marshall, the superstructure will be galvanized metal to prevent rusting; wood will not be used in the superstructure.

Councilmember Long asked Debbie Lange if she is satisfied with the replacement equipment chosen. Ms. Lange noted that the new equipment, the Elements Collection, is not quite the same as the previous equipment, but it is acceptable.

#### C&O Canal

Mayor Beers asked if stimulus funding for the C&O Canal included repair of the break above Old Anglers. Councilmember Long explained that \$12 million of the \$14 million received by the C&O Canal will be used to repair damage done in the Washington County canal section known as Big Slackwater, severely damaged during hurricane Agnes. The repairs will bring users off a dangerous roadway and back onto the towpath. Councilmember Long described this as a “truly shovel-ready project.” She noted that the

C&O Canal Association donated \$80,000 for the design work for the Big Slackwater project.

### **SWEARING IN**

Mayor Beers explained that she was sworn in at the Montgomery County Clerk's office. She then swore in council members Eve Arber, Dan Macy, and Steve Matney.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion 2009-11** to approve as amended the April 13, 2009, Town Council meeting minutes:

- Page 3, paragraph 8, line 2, change: ~~May 16~~ April 16
- Page 4, paragraph 1, add Clerk's note: Note: The Budget Hearing and Council meeting were changed to May 20, 2009, at 7:30 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

### **ELECTION REPORT**

Superintendent of Elections, Susan Grigsby, sent the follow election report.

On May 4, 2009, the Glen Echo citizens elected the following candidates for the positions of Mayor and Town Council seats. Deborah Beers was reelected by 66 votes as Mayor. She ran unopposed. For the four-year position term, the incumbents won: Eve Arber with 64 votes, and Steve Matney with 47 votes. Mark McCaffrey came in very closely with 46 votes. For the two-year term, which was the former seat of Robin Kogelnik, Dan Macy won with 53 votes to Jim McGunnigle's 31 votes.

There were a total of 84 votes: 77 voters who came to the polls, and 7 absentee ballots were registered. One vote had to be voided because a voter voted for too many of the candidates. Thank you to Chris Hewitt, Jocelyn Khalifa, and Matt Costello, the other election judges, who helped to register voters, to keep the records, and to tally the votes at the end. A special thank you to Cathie Polak for her support.

Susan Grigsby, Chief Judge of the Election Board

### **C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK (NHP)**

Councilmember Long explained that Sharon Cleary and other canal staff members have been attending local government meetings, including the Glen Echo Town Council, to "see what the towns talk about," relative to the canal. Councilmember Long is of the opinion that Ms. Cleary's attendance at Town meetings is an unproductive use of her time. Towns like Hancock and Williamsport look to the canal for economic development to enhance their financial conditions.

### **STREET REPAIR PROJECT**

Councilmember Matney reported that he spoke with Bob Harrison, A. Morton Thomas (AMT), who explained the inconsistencies in the bid documents.

Mayor Beers then said that AMT has begun the bid solicitation and asked Councilmember Matney to oversee the street project from an administrative side; there will be an AMT official to oversee the project in the field.

### **TOWN HALL USE**

Councilmember Long reported that the Town Hall will have a “big weekend of use;” one event on Saturday and two events on Sunday.

The Budget Hearing and special Council meeting will be held May 20 at 7:30 p.m.

The annual Town picnic will be Sunday, June 28, Sunday at 5 p.m.

The film festival was poorly attended. Following an established practice, there will be no movies shown in June, July or August.

Councilmember Macy noted that the soundproofing has made a big difference. Councilmember Matney asked that the window shades which have fallen down be rehung.

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

Councilmember Arber reported that Montgomery County and Prince George’s County MML Chapters held a joint meeting at the Takoma Park town center with Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) to discuss infrastructure problems and solutions. WSSC started the meeting with reference to the River Road water main break as an example of the serious problems facing WSSC, which does not have sufficient funding to test for potential problems and to replace/repair ailing/failing pipes.

The May MML meeting will be held in Barnesville on May 21.

### **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

1. Union Arch Bridge Traffic : Mayor Beers noted that the new paving at the south end of the bridge appears to create a passing lane designed to move southbound traffic off the bridge more efficiently, where there is a left turn lane at Wilson Lane. He stated that the lane appears wider than the existing road. He expressed concern about the cross walk, which will now require pedestrians to cross three lanes of traffic rather than two. There appears to be no separation between the bike path and the new passing lane. The change is expected to relieve some traffic backups from Cabin John on MacArthur Boulevard as traffic waits to cross the bridge. Councilmember Matney reported that Cabin John residents requested that the stop light sequence be timed to clear the bridge of traffic leaving Cabin John.

Councilmember Macy suggested Council ask for a “walk your bike” sign over the bridge. Council was concerned that the Town was never notified of construction, there were numerous problems caused by mismanagement of the traffic around the project, the sidewalk/bikepath approaching the bridge was closed with no alternative route for

pedestrians, and the bus stop had been apparently obliterated, leaving no place to discharge passengers.

Councilmember Arber suggested a red light camera for the bridge.

C/T Polak suggested that the MacArthur Boulevard traffic back-up going over the bridge into Cabin John could be relieved by adding a right hand turn lane up Wilson Lane.

Mayor Beers plans to write a letter to Montgomery County voicing Council's concerns.

2. Carlotta Anderson/Echo: Mayor Beers said she would like to recognize Carlotta Anderson's service as editor of the Echo. Councilmember Long suggested recognizing Brockie and Jane Stevenson's for their many years of producing the Town's address book. Council agreed that Carlotta Anderson's volunteer commitment should be honored separately; Mayor Beers suggested using the Town picnic as the venue for publicly thanking Ms. Anderson.

Note: The new editor for the Echo will be Kathleen Kotcher.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10.