

TOWN OF GLEN ECHO
Town Council Meeting
March 11, 2013

ATTENDANCE: Deborah Beers, Mayor
Nancy Long, Councilmember
Eve Arber, Councilmember
Steve Matney, Councilmember
Mark McCaffrey, Councilmember
Nicole Fraser, Clerk-Treasurer

VISITORS: Aaron LaRocca, Acting Site Manager of GEP¹ & CBNHS
Sally McGunnigle, The Echo reporter
Matt Stiglitz, Community Police Advisory Board Representative

Mayor Beers called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm

GLEN ECHO PARK REPORT

Acting Site Manager Aaron LaRocca reported that due to sequestration GWMP received direction to implement a 5% budget cut. This could result in a hiring freeze; cutting less essential costs; eliminating seasonal hires and suspending furlough positions. Mr. LaRocca said that GWMP may only need to implement the first step to comply.

Mr. LaRocca reported that GEP/CBNHS has lost two positions, one interpreter (Samantha Christine) moved to Arlington House and museum curator technician (Neva Senesky) accepted a job elsewhere. Both positions will not be filled due to the sequester. The loss of these positions will have an effect on visitor services, e.g. staffing the Candy Corner and other interpretive projects.

Nick Lambert asked if NPS would be interested in natural gas for CBNHS. Mr. LaRocca said that NPS is pursuing a green energy project, not necessarily about heating or cooling but climate control. Mr. LaRocca said the cost of propane for CBNHS is about \$7,000 a winter.

NPS-GWMP has closed the comment period for comments on the county's MacArthur Boulevard shared-use path through parts of GEP and CBNHS. There were not many comments (5 on the website, 2-3 letters written) and a few public comment cards at the open house.

Mr. LaRocca announced a special event on March 16th by Mary Ann Jung; she will do a first person portrayal of Clara Barton starting at 2 pm followed by an open house at

¹ Abbreviations used in this document include GEP (Glen Echo Park), GEPPAC (Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts & Culture), GWMP (George Washington Memorial Parkway), CBNHS (Clara Barton National Historic Site), MML (Maryland Municipal League), NHP (National Historical Park), NP (National Park), NPS (National Park Service) and WG (Washington Gas).

CBNHS. On April 20th at 1 p.m., re-enactors from the 54th Massachusetts regiment will be coming to CBNHS (rain location: Bumper Car Pavilion). Also on April 20th, Dr. Sandra Manning will give a presentation on the Emancipation Proclamation. The annual GEPAC Gala is scheduled for May 18th, featuring the glass studios this year; a preview, The Art of Venetian Glass, will be presented by Marilyn Nugent in the Ballroom Annex. [N.B. – Ms. Nugent is one of the first glass instructors selected by NPS for its Creative Education Program.]

Mr. LaRocca announced that the acting superintendent of GWMP will go back to Deputy Superintendent. Alex Romero, from National Capital Parks East will spend 4 months as GWMP acting superintendent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion 2013-07 to accept the January 2013 Council Meeting minutes with the following edits:

- 1) Final paragraph of GEP Report, first sentence, change “Mary” to “March;”
- 2) First paragraph of Natural Gas Survey, after the second sentence, insert “WG has also confirmed that residents have twelve months to install gas-fueled appliances, not the 6 months originally quoted.”;
- 3) Under Glen Echo Fire Department, insert sentence at end of paragraph: “The Glen Echo community representative position is currently open.”

Motion made by Councilmember Matney; seconded by Councilmember Arber. Motion passed unanimously.

GEPPAC

Mayor Beers announced that a contribution to GEPPAC was made in error. The discussion was to have been postponed until this council meeting and await clarification on the voting and term status of the Town of Glen Echo representative to the GEPPAC board. Mayor Beers said that the new Town of Glen Echo representative will be subject to term limits. Councilmember Matney suggested that the term limits should not be applied retroactively.

TOWN HALL USE

Councilmember Long reported that the Town Hall will be used for the annual Town St. Patrick’s Day party on March 17, 2013. The party will be open to Glen Echo and Bannockburn residents. The Scottish Fiddle Club will use the Town Hall on March 24th for fiddling and dancing; this event is open to Town residents. On April 7th, the C&O Canal Association board meeting will be held; the event is open to the public. Report attached.

C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Mayor Beers noted that there is more water in the canal near the Sycamore Store; the breach has been repaired. Councilmember Long reported several possible impacts due to the sequester according to superintendent Kevin Brandt, the C&O Canal deputy superintendent has been transferred to Biscayne National Park; the position will not be filled. Three or possibly four vacant positions will not be filled, nor will seasonal employees be hired. Seasonal employees are used in the operation of the canal boat at Great Falls and some of the

historic structures that. There will be no furloughs. Mayor Beers asked how this will impact maintenance on the canal. Councilmember Long said that there are never enough maintenance personnel for the C&O Canal NHP. Councilmember Long noted that the park may be able to run some boat trips at Great Falls. There is no large boat in Georgetown, the business community there is considering a funding drive to raise money for a passenger barge to be pulled by mules. [*N.B.* – the existing barge is beyond repair and will be dismantled.]

COMMUNITY POLICE REPORT

Matt Stiglitz, the Town's representative to the community police advisory board, reported on an excursion to the emergency call center in Gaithersburg on March 6th. There they met with the call managers. The call center fields about 800,000 calls a year. All the 911 operators are civilians and based on the type of call these go to EMS, Fire Department or Police. The call center has a good database of common name for locations, so if a caller does not know an exact address, an approximate landmark may suffice. The call center does get a large number of hang-ups, but the dispatchers will call back. If you misdial, Mr. Stiglitz advises to stay on the line and explain the error. With internet calls, the call address will show up where the IP address was registered. Approximately 25% of all calls to 911 are legitimate distress calls. Mr. Stiglitz noted that the non-emergency number is 301-279-8000.

Mr. Stiglitz reported that there have been a few commercial burglaries in the Bethesda business district. Air bags have been stolen from cars in adjoining neighborhoods.

MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Councilmember Matney reported on the February 22nd MML meeting with County Executive Ike Leggett. The county executive gave his rationale for the raises for the County workforce. Teachers in Montgomery County make 20% more in salary than in neighboring counties and the school board receives its funding directly from the County. The County's budget is now tight in part due to the raises given to County workers. The county executive detailed the impact of loss of federal wages on the County due to the sequester. The County is seeking out major business investment projects however the County consistently loses projects to Northern Virginia. Northern Virginia has an excess of office space, better transportation infrastructure (e.g. two major airports) and tax benefits.

Councilmember Matney reported on a new "No Smoking" bill that would prohibit smoking within 25 feet of any County property; however, there are no plans for additional enforcement. The county executive also described the new tree canopy bill that applies only to large lots and is aimed at larger developments and/or any activities that require a sediment control permit.

At the MML chapter business meeting, MML representatives listened to a statewide container recycling program group that proposed to put a deposit charge on any glass or plastic container however redemption sites had not been identified yet. Highway User Revenue funding is set to be 50% of what is owed this year and then drop again to 13%. Ongoing bills before the state legislature that are of interest to MML constituents (e.g. electronic notification of notices, tax duplication, ethics bill, speed cameras) are still under review. A new bill has proposed that any

member of MML who speaks with state legislators would have to register as a lobbyist.
Councilmember Matney did not think that bill had any merit and hopefully would not pass.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

1. The elevator repairman checked on the elevator and the tension for the door has been adjusted so the door closes securely.
2. Clerk-Treasurer Fraser reported that town resident Jeannette Koonce asked if the town was interested in organizing mosquito spraying. Council suggested that if individual residents wished to organize they may do so, but the Town will not sponsor spraying.
3. No natural gas updates. Mayor Beers said a constituent services representative from Congressman Van Hollen's office offered to look into grant funding for natural gas.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Deborah M. Beers, Mayor

Date

Attached: Police citation report
 Town Hall use report