

VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

VILLAGE COUNCIL

MELANIE ROSE WHITE, *Mayor*
ROBERT M. SCHWARZBART, *Chairman*
LEONARD J. GRANT, *Vice Chairman*
ELIZABETH DEMETRA HARRIS, *Secretary*
ALVAN M. MORRIS, D.D.S., *Treasurer*
JOHN MERTENS, *Parliamentarian*
CLARA M. LOVETT, *Historian*
JULIAN P. MANSFIELD, *Village Manager*
LESLIE STRATHMANN, *Village Manager 1987-1996*

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APPROVED MINUTES

PUBLIC SESSION FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING September 8, 2014

ATTENDEES:

Melanie Rose White, Mayor; Leonard J. Grant, Vice Chairman; Elizabeth Demetra Harris, Secretary; Alvan M. Morris, Treasurer; John Mertens, Parliamentarian; Clara Lovett, Historian; Julian Mansfield, Village Manager; Robert Shapiro, Assistant Village Manager; and 13 residents.

ABSENT:

Robert Schwarzbart, Chairman.

CALL TO ORDER:

At 7:30 p.m. Mr. Grant called the Village Council Meeting to order.

Mr. Grant opened the floor for comments from the audience. He noted that persons representing organizations will have five minutes to speak; individuals will have three minutes to speak.

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS TO AND FROM COUNCIL:

Dr. Alfred Muller (The Elizabeth) thanked Ms. Lovett for meeting with him, Millie Shott (Art Curator), and Betty Ardizzone last month. The main focus of the meeting was to discuss what would happen to the Centennial exhibition at the end of the Centennial year. Suggestions were made that addressed the concerns (adequate display space) of Millie Shott.

The audience reiterated their opposition to the Council's approval of the plans for the Page Park playground. The lack of community involvement in the playground planning process and the eradication of trees and green space were major contentions. The audience also expressed concern regarding the removal of trees

as a violation of the Maryland Forest Conservation Act. They encouraged the Council to step back for a few months and “really think” before proceeding with the playground plans.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ms. White made the following announcements:

Please join us for the Taste of Friendship Heights on Saturday, September 27, from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. at the Village Center and in Humphrey Park.

GEICO will have a shredding truck on Saturday, September 27, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon in the GEICO parking lot along Friendship Boulevard. This service is free and open to Village residents.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day will be Saturday, September 27, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Village Center.

Mr. Mertens made the following announcement:

The Capital Improvements Committee, a standing committee of the Council, will meet Tuesday, September 9, at 5:30 p.m. in the Village Center. The refurbishing of this room and the adjoining hallway will be discussed. All are invited to attend.

SECRETARY’S REPORT:

Ms. Harris presented the minutes for the Council public session held on August 19, 2014 and recommended approval as amended.

- (R) Ms. Harris moved; Mr. Mertens seconded, that the Council public session minutes for the meeting held on August 19, 2014 be approved as amended. The motion carried. (6-0-0)**

TREASURER’S REPORT:

Dr. Morris presented the financial summary for the period ending August 31, 2014.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discussion/vote on proposals to prepare construction documents for Page Park playground: Mr. Grant stated that the discussion of the park projects has been going on for nearly three years. He gave a summary of the resolutions passed by the Council at the August 19 meeting: The Council approved the basic

plans submitted by Grace Fielder for the redevelopment of Page Park with a caveat that these plans may be modified if required as a result of unanticipated ground conditions. Modifications to the plans were the removal of the gazebo; placing an appropriate safety fence along the back of the park; and removal of the fencing around the tree and the two children's play areas.

Mr. Grant stated that the Council's next step is to convert the basic plans into construction documents to secure competitive bids for land grading; purchase and installation of equipment; and maintenance and upkeep of equipment.

In response to resident concerns regarding the removal of trees in Page Park, Dr. Morris stated that, according to an arborist report, the beech tree does have some problems, but is expected to last for a while and the river birch tree has a hanging limb that needs to be removed so that it will not damage the beech tree next to it. He offered his assurance that there are no intentions to remove or damage any of the trees in Page Park. He reiterated that the tree removal is a misstatement on the drawings.

Dr. Morris stated that there have been many meetings with the community since the presentation of the initial proposed plans from Grace Fielder for the renovation of Page Park. He noted that the Council has listened intently to the comments and objections. Ms. Fielder has incorporated many of these suggestions into the plans. Consequently, the cost of the drawings has changed from \$9,500 to over \$20,000.

Dr. Morris reported that the Council has two proposals (Phase III and Phase IV) that are part of Grace Fielder's contract. Phase III, in the amount of \$12,375, is for the preparation of detailed construction documents to advertise for bids for the playground installation. Phase IV, in the amount of \$8,732, is for bidding and construction observation. The total cost of the proposals is \$21,107. Dr. Morris noted that Mr. Mansfield has contacted Ms. Fielder regarding a cost adjustment for the proposals because the original cost was for two parks and now there will be only one park. As of today, Ms. Fielder has not consented to reduce the cost.

Dr. Morris stated that the Council has received a proposal from A. Morton Thomas & Associates, an engineering firm with whom we have done a number of projects over the years, including Humphrey Park and road paving. The proposal included revising the schematic of the Fielder plans, preparing design development and construction documents, the supervision of construction, and other aspects of the plans for the renovation of Page Park. The total cost of the proposal is \$16,300. Dr. Morris expressed that he is very confident that A. Morton Thomas would do a superb job.

- (R) **Mr. Mertens moved; Ms. Lovett seconded, that the Friendship Heights Village Council accept the proposal submitted by A. Morton Thomas & Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$16,300 to prepare the final drawings for**

the improvement of Page Park and the installation of playground equipment. The designer will prepare the final drawings with the understanding that Page Park is and will remain a multi-use community facility. The designer will work with the Village Manager under the oversight of the Council's Capital Improvements Committee. Discussion ensued. The motion did not carry. (3-3-0)

- (R) Mr. Mertens moved; Dr. Morris seconded, that the Friendship Heights Village Council accept the proposal submitted by A. Morton Thomas & Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$16,300 to prepare the final drawings for the improvement of Page Park and the installation of playground equipment. The designer will prepare the final drawings with the understanding that Page Park is and will remain a multi-use community facility. The designer will work with the Village Manager. The motion carried. (6-0-0)**
- (R) Mr. Mertens moved; Mr. Grant seconded, that the Friendship Heights Village Council take measures necessary to preserve and protect the healthy mature trees in Page Park, improve the overall quality of the landscaping, and ensure proper long-term maintenance of the Park and of the installed equipment. The motion carried. (6-0-0)**
- (R) Ms. Harris moved; Mr. Mertens seconded, that the Friendship Heights Village Council get a report from an arborist and an environmental specialist before implementing any aspect of the drawings for the redevelopment of Page Park. A brief discussion ensued. The motion carried. (6-0-0)**

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion/vote on proposals for printing Village Centennial history book:
Ms. White presented the three proposals received for printing the Village Centennial history book. Ms. White stated that MasterPrint is the less expensive option and that she highly recommends MasterPrint. She also noted that she is familiar with the quality of their work. The proposal is for quantities of 500, 1,000 and 1,500 copies. It is a 72 page publication with many photographs of the Village. Ms. White asked for the Council's input on the quantity to be printed. The decision to charge for this book would be made at a later date. A brief discussion ensued.

- (R) Ms. White moved; Dr. Morris seconded, that the Friendship Heights Village Council approve the proposal submitted by MasterPrint in the amount of \$8,766 to print 1,000 copies of the 72-page, plus cover Village Centennial history book. The motion carried. (6-0-0)**
- (R) Mr. Mertens moved; Ms. White seconded, that the Friendship Heights Village Council approve the transfer of \$17,000 from the General Fund to**

the Capital Improvements Fund to cover the cost of the proposal submitted by A. Morton Thomas in the amount of \$16,300 for the preparation of final drawings for the renovation of Page Park and the installation of playground equipment. The motion carried. (6-0-0)

- (R) Dr. Morris moved; Mr. Grant seconded, that in honor of the 100th Anniversary of Friendship Heights Village, the Friendship Heights Village Council change the name of Page Park to Page Centennial Park. The proper signage will be incorporated into the final design for the redevelopment of Page Park. Discussion ensued. Dr. Morris withdrew the motion.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the Council, Dr. Morris moved, Ms. White seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. The motion carried. (6-0-0)

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth Demetra Harris

Secretary