

VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

VILLAGE COUNCIL
MELANIE ROSE WHITE, *Mayor*
MICHAEL MEZEY, *Chairman*
BRUCE R. PIRNIE, *Vice Chairman*
ALFRED MULLER, M.D., *Secretary*
PAULA DURBIN, *Treasurer*
CAROLINA J. ZUMARAN-JONES, *Historian*
MICHAEL J. DORSEY
JULIAN P. MANSFIELD, *Village Manager*

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APPROVED MINUTES

PUBLIC SESSION

FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS VILLAGE COUNCIL

Conducted at the Village Center and via Zoom

October 11, 2022

ATTENDEES:

Michael Mezey, Chairman
Melanie Rose White, Mayor
Paula Durbin, Treasurer
Alfred Muller, M.D., Secretary
Michael Dorsey, Parliamentarian
Carolina Zumaran-Jones, Historian
Julian Mansfield, Village Manager

ABSENT: Bruce Pirnie, Vice Chairman

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Mezey called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Mayor White announced, in light of a recent incident involving a Village official and a Village resident, that the Council reaffirmed its view that, as they engage in political discourse, gratuitous references to anyone's race, religion, age, sexual preference, gender identity, or country of origin are always inappropriate and unacceptable - no matter the exact wording or the circumstances that might have provoked the wording.

Dr. Muller then apologized for losing his temper during a recent public confrontation, and assured everyone he recused himself from drafting the opening statement presented by Mayor White. Dr. Muller also assured everyone, if he disagrees with someone on any topic, it is only disagreement with the topic being discussed, not with the individual's gender, sexual orientation, or other personal classification. (see attachment)

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS TO AND FROM THE COUNCIL:

The Council received public comments:

- Relaying experiences they had with dogs in the area, and encouraging the Council to study the relationships among the Village’s residents and pets.
- Expressing gratitude for the statement read by Mayor White, and asking that it be made available to the community. Mr. Mezey informed everyone the statement would be included in the October 11, 2022 Council minutes.
- Thanking the Council for offering a Zoom connection to their meetings.
- Referencing a memo sent to the Council regarding the property on Willard Avenue; requesting the memo’s inclusion in the November 2022 newsletter; and urging the Council to send a letter to the County regarding alternative uses for the property. Mr. Mezey stated the Council has conducted two unanimous votes in support of developing a dog park. However, printing citizens’ petitions in the newsletter could be problematic. The request can be considered by the Council Communications Committee.
- Urging residents to keep dogs off the various properties in the community to avoid damage to the landscaping.

MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor White encouraged everyone to participate in the Village’s Annual Fall Festival on Saturday, October 15th from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Humphrey Park. Details were available in the October 2022 newsletter.

The Village shredding truck will return on Saturday, October 22nd from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A shredding truck will be parked on Friendship Blvd. outside the Village Center’s main entrance.

National Prescription Drug Takeback Day will take place on Saturday, October 29th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A Montgomery County police officer will be in the Village Center lobby to safely collect and dispose of unwanted prescription drugs.

A new service is available for residents to receive text or email updates regarding Village Center activities, Council meetings, development and construction updates, urgent information, and more. There is a blue “Sign Up” button on the top of each page on the Village website.

SECRETARY’S REPORT:

Dr. Muller moved, Ms. Zumarán-Jones seconded approval of the minutes as distributed from the Council’s Public Session held on Monday, September 12, 2022. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

Dr. Muller moved, Ms. Zumarán-Jones seconded approval of the minutes as distributed from the Council’s Closed Session held on Monday, September 12, 2022. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

TREASURER’S REPORT:

Treasurer Durbin presented a summary of the Council’s financial standing as of September 30 2022. Cash on hand in the General Fund totaled \$3,017,124.06. The capital improvements fund totaled \$11,355.35. The OPED reserves totaled \$1,341.71.

Mr. Dorsey indicated that the Village is long overdue to have a nationally respected company conduct a financial review of the Village’s investments at no cost to the Village Council. The effort was supported by three Council members, but was opposed by the four other Council members. Mr. Dorsey asked if anyone on the Council has expertise in financial investments; and requested the name(s) of the person(s) making decisions regarding the investment of

taxpayers' dollars. Ms. Durbin expressed the understanding that the Council is maintaining the investments made by the previous Manager. Mr. Mansfield stated the Council has recently been referred to a financial advisor from Morgan Stanley who works with The Elizabeth Condominium. The Council management team will arrange a preliminary meeting with the advisor and report the results to the Council for consideration.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

No Committee Reports were presented.

OLD BUSINESS:

No matters of Old Business were presented.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion/Vote - Adding Express Shuttle Bus Service from 6:40 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. on Wednesdays: The Council has received several requests to add express shuttle bus service on Wednesday mornings. Mr. Mansfield reached out to Art Miesemer with RMA to explore the feasibility and costs of adding Wednesday morning express service from 6:40 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. with the same route and stops as the other express days. Mr. Miesemer informed the Council that the additional service would cost the Village an extra \$642 per month.

Dr. Muller moved, Mayor White seconded approving the addition of express shuttle bus service from 6:40 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. for an additional cost of \$642 per month. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Vote - Snow Removal Contract: The Council received proposals from seven companies to provide snow removal services for the streets and sidewalks that are under the purview of the Village. Management has been pleased with the current service provider, Mulheron Tree Experts, and therefore recommended renewing a contract with that company. **Ms. Durbin moved, Ms. Zumaran-Jones seconded approving a three-year snow removal contract renewal with Mulheron Tree Experts at the rates listed in their proposal. The motion carried unanimously.**

Tree Work: Ms. Zumaran-Jones announced that Montgomery County still plans to perform tree work at the corner of Willard and Wisconsin Avenues.

ADJOURNMENT:

Pursuant to Maryland Code, General Provisions Article, Section 3-305(b)(1). Ms. Durbin moved, Dr. Muller seconded entering the October 11, 2022 Council Meeting into a Closed Session at 8:21 p.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom the Council has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals. The motion carried unanimously (7-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,



Alfred Muller, MD
Secretary