

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 in person at the Village Center

Monday, March 13, 2023

ATTENDEES:

Michael Mezey, Chairman
Melanie Rose White, Mayor
Bruce Pirnie, Vice Chairman
Alfred Muller MD, Secretary
Paula Durbin, Treasurer
Michael Dorsey
Carolina Zumaran-Jones, Historian
Julian Mansfield, Village Manager
Jason Goldstein, Assistant Village Manager
Robert Bryant, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER:

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

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS TO AND FROM THE COUNCIL:

- Prem Garg inquired whether income is anticipated from purchase of the Red House. It was explained that income is anticipated from the Red House, although that was not the primary purpose of the purchase. (2) Mr. Garg complimented the Village on the newsletter. (3) Mr. Garg suggested holding an Open Forum at the end of each Council Meeting in addition to the forum held at the beginning.
- Roger Cochetti spoke in opposition to the new park being proposed at Little Falls Parkway. (2) Mr. Cochetti also spoke in opposition to the possible creation of a Friendship Heights Urban District.
- Pat Donovan raised concern about the amount of concrete and stone being implemented in Page Park. She suggested taking out the stone semicircles in the grass area.
- Phyllis Edelman spoke on behalf of the Chair of the Citizens Coordinating Committee of Friendship Heights. She asked the Village to join the Coordinating

Committee in opposition to the Parks Department’s proposal to permanently reduce a portion of Little Falls Parkway from four lanes to two.

- Norman Knopf provided a brief report on the status of the long-awaited dog park, which seems unlikely to be developed at this time due to the level of opposition raised.
- Alfred Muller thanked Julian Mansfield and Jason Goldstein for having the Center monitors to replace the bulletin board in Humphrey Park.

MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor White announced that off duty Montgomery County police officers will begin working in the Village on Thursday, March 16, 2023. The officers will work eight hours per day, Monday through Friday. During the next Village Council Meeting on Monday, April 10th, a report will be presented by the coordinating Police officer, concerning this off duty detail.

Mr. Pirnie presented an update on the Page Park project. Approximately two-thirds of the contractual work has been completed. The next phase of work will involve the final landscaping, installation of the sprinkler system, and installation of a sign with the name Page Park. Mr. Pirnie spoke favorably regarding the quality of the workmanship being done in the park; summarized the plantings that will be installed during Spring; and stated that the park will remain open to pedestrian traffic while the project is in progress.

SECRETARY’S REPORT:

Dr. Muller moved, Ms. Zumaran-Jones seconded approval of the minutes as distributed from the Council’s Public Session held on Monday, February 13, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER’S REPORT:

Treasurer Durbin presented a summary of the Council’s financial standing as of Tuesday, February 28, 2023. Cash on hand in the General Fund totaled \$3,237,600.05. The Capital Improvements Fund totaled \$11,521.84. The OPEB reserves totaled \$1,361.39. The Council budgeted for \$833 of interest income, but has received \$16,060.78 of interest income. Mr. Dorsey raised the importance of having a solid financial plan in place to help guide the Council.

FINAL PUBLIC HEARING - FY 2024 DRAFT BUDGET

Dr. Muller moved, Mr. Pirnie seconded approving the FY 2024 budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Report from the Community Advisory Committee (CAC):

Dr. Muller reported the following topics were discussed during the Wednesday, March 8, 2023 CAC meeting:

- The proposed creation of a Friendship Heights Urban District.
- The recent elections held at The Willoughby.
- The Willoughby approved a nonsmoking designation for their condominium in their bylaws.
- Willard Towers and 4615 North Park are converting to keypad entries for their units and their buildings.

- A State law now requires community associations to have fire sprinklers installed in their high rise residences by January 1, 2033.
- The next meeting of the Community Advisory Committee will take place on Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Village Center. The meeting is open to the public.

Several Council members thanked the Community Advisory Committee for their work and commended the work being done by Chair Joe Bucherer.

OLD BUSINESS:

Friendship Heights Village Business Alliance; and County Council Proposal to Create a Friendship Heights Urban District: Natalie Avery, Director of Strategy & Engagement with the Friendship Heights Alliance, introduced herself and colleagues before presenting background on the Alliance and the survey conducted to gather input from residents regarding the commercial aspects of and programs for the Village.

Mr. Mezey then reported on the bill that was introduced by County Councilmember Andrew Friedson to create a new Urban District in the Montgomery County portion of Friendship Heights. A separate proposal to create a Business Improvement District is being introduced on the D.C. side. When asked whether the Village could be represented on the proposed Urban District Advisory Board, Mr. Friedson expressed concern that other local municipalities and elected representatives on the D.C. side may have to also be included. A suggestion was raised about the possibility of appointing someone as an Ex Officio member without voting authority to represent the Village. Councilmember Friedson will determine whether that option is possible, and will report his findings to the Council. Dr. Muller read a letter from Barbara Tauben who was concerned with this proposal. Comments were raised by members of the Village Council regarding the proposal. It was announced that Councilmember Friedson is willing to speak with the Council regarding the proposed Urban District.

Adding Exterior Security Cameras in the Village: A decision regarding whether to have the Village properties install security cameras was deferred from the February 2023 Council meeting. **Following comments from the Council, Mr. Mansfield was asked to further investigate the possibility of having a security camera installed on the wall at 4615 to enhance security at Page Park.**

Installation of Audio/Visual Equipment to Facilitate Live Streaming/Recording Council Meetings: After publishing a public bid for proposals to install audio/visual equipment to facilitate live streaming/recording of Council meetings, Village management received seven bids from five companies ranging from \$15,196 to \$80,030. Management recommended hiring Advanced Media Solutions of Virginia since they have a long track record of successfully providing similar services to several municipalities in the D.C. Metropolitan area. They are also able to provide a broadcast recording for placement on the Village website, and can address any possible technical issues that may arise. **Ms. Zumaran-Jones moved to approve the proposal from Advanced Media Solutions in the amount of \$33,200 to install three cameras in the Village Center for the purpose of streaming and recording Council meetings. Mr. Dorsey seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS

County Council Proposal to Create a Friendship Heights Urban District: Please see the Old Business section of these minutes.

HVAC Preventive Maintenance Contract for Village Center: As a result of steadily increasing costs from Densel Company, at Councilman Dorsey's suggestion the Village requested bids for the quarterly inspection and preventive maintenance of the Village Center's four HVAC systems as well as the nine wall-mounted units. A total of 16 bids were received ranging from \$1,870 to \$42,000. Management recommended contracting with Kelly HVAC at a cost of \$6,955, as Kelly has been in business since 1994 and provided very good references. **Mike Dorsey moved to approve the proposal from Kelly HVAC to provide inspection and preventive maintenance of the Village Center's four HVAC systems and nine wall-mounted units. Ms. Zumaran-Jones seconded. The motion carried unanimously.** Mr. Dorsey lauded the job done by the management team to request, receive, and analyze bids as well as provide clear bid summaries.

Proposed Little Falls Parkway Project: Please see "Comments/Questions To and From the Council". Additionally, Council members discussed whether to submit a letter in support of or opposition to the County's Parks Department's plan to reduce lanes on Little Falls Parkway to provide more outdoor space for recreation and exercise. **Mayor White moved that the Friendship Heights Village Council support the objections of the Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCFH) in creating a linear park and instituting a road diet on Little Falls Parkway. Dr. Muller seconded. The motion carried by a vote of five in favor, zero opposed, and two abstained (Dr. Muller and Ms. Zumaran-Jones). Mr. Mansfield will draft the aforementioned letter.**

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m. with the unanimous consent of the Council.

Respectfully submitted,



Alfred Muller, MD
Secretary