

## VILLAGE OF FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

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JULIAN P. MANSFIELD, *Village Manager*

4433 SOUTH PARK AVENUE  
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815

Phone: 301-656-2797

Fax: 301-907-3922

Email: [info@friendshipheightsmd.gov](mailto:info@friendshipheightsmd.gov)

Website: [www.friendshipheightsmd.gov](http://www.friendshipheightsmd.gov)



### **Approved Minutes** **Friendship Heights Village Council Public Safety Committee** **Monday, June 17, 2024**

**Council Public Safety Committee members present:** Cheryl Tyler;  
Bobby Pestronk; Melanie White.

**Others present:** Julian Mansfield; Capt. Jason Cokinos, MCPD; Al Muller; Tino Calabia; Roy Schaeffer.

At 6 p.m., Ms. Tyler called the meeting of the Friendship Heights Village Council Public Safety Committee to order. She referred to the meeting agenda.

#### **Safety Concerns**

Ms. Tyler stated that the police have reported a safety issue. Motorists have been receiving citations for failing to stop for a school bus that makes a stop at the Willoughby Condominium. Traffic tends to back up during the stop, and some motorists have dangerously attempted to go around other stopped vehicles rather than waiting for the bus stop to be completed, as required by law. Captain Cokinos suggested contacting Montgomery County Public Schools to inquire about a possible solution to address the safety concerns resulting from motorist conduct.

Mr. Pestronk reported that a resident at the Village Council meeting on June 10 made comments regarding safety concerns, and he followed up with the resident. The concerns relate to inadequate lighting on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue between Willard Avenue and South Park Avenue, and dim lighting in the walkway to the rotunda at the Friendship Heights Metro station. Mr. Mansfield will follow up on these items to report them to the appropriate officials.

Mr. Pestronk presented a list of potential security issues for the Public Safety Committee to consider:

- Foot patrol along internal streets and on Willard Avenue
- Increased presence of officers during nighttime hours (currently Tuesday and Thursday nights officers working)
- Traffic calming on Willard Ave based on speed data study
- Deployment of speed indicator along Willard Avenue

- Stop sign enforcement at Village intersections
- Assistance to contracted parking officer
- Patrols and response within Village parks
- Foot patrol along Wisconsin Avenue

The Committee discussed having the Village buy a speed radar device and donating it to the County Police Foundation so it could be earmarked for use on Willard Avenue. Staff will check on the pricing for the signs.

Capt. Cokinos reported there has been a significant reduction in theft calls from The Gap and Banana Republic since last year, and that there have not been any reports of commercial vehicle break-ins since December.

Ms. Tyler discussed scheduling the next safety workshop with business and property managers for late July or August. She also reported that the Village will be issuing a request for proposals for repainting the six pedestrian crosswalks that are crosshatched.

### **Camera Rebate Program**

Capt. Cokinos reported that cameras are getting installed elsewhere in the County. The Fusus program has been funded, starting July 1, and will allow individuals and businesses to voluntarily give access to the County Police's real time crime center for their external cameras. 911 calls will appear on a map with all available cameras on display to the 911 responder. A wide variety of camera types can be accommodated. In addition, businesses can purchase cameras and have the County Police install, maintain and service them along the Wisconsin Avenue corridor.

### **Drone Program Program**

Capt. Cokinos reported that the drone as first responder program was fully funded by the County Council in the FY 2025 budget. Bethesda will be getting a drone. Capt. Cokinos will meet with Commander Daum and the B-CC Chamber of Commerce to look at buildings in Bethesda to locate the drone such that it will be able to cover Friendship Heights. County Council member Andrew Friedson will be scheduling a town hall meeting in Bethesda to provide a public briefing on the drone program.

### **Update MOU re: Off-duty Police program**

Ms. Tyler reported that the Village will update the Memorandum of Understanding between the Village and the Montgomery County Police Department regarding the off-duty Police program in the Village, and the revised agreement will require signatures from both parties.

### **Off-duty Police Annual Report**

Capt. Cokinos reviewed the annual report he provided regarding the activities of the off-duty Police unit in the Village. In response to a question about regular Police beat coverage, he said the Village is located in the Edward 1 Police Beat, and there is one police officer assigned to this beat, which covers the area between Wisconsin Avenue, River Road, the Beltway (495), Massachusetts Avenue and Goldsboro Road. Captain Cokinos described the duties he has as the off-duty program manager: Helping recruit the officers; ensuring their paperwork is in

order; scheduling to ensure all shifts are adequately covered; reviewing reports that officers are required to file after every shift; providing summary reports and statistics as needed; and serving as the Village's point of contact on any police issues or incidents.


Over 800 traffic violation stops were made by the off-duty Police unit in the past year. The officers assisted Village parking enforcement officer Monica Milton 63 times with parking enforcement issues, handled 13 parking disputes, and towed 17 vehicles.

In response to a question about adequate funding for the Police Department, Captain Cokinos indicated there are 200 vacant Police positions that are already funded but remain unfilled.

Al Muller requested that an additional speed hump be installed on North Park Avenue between Shoemaker Farm Lane and Friendship Blvd. Mr. Tyler responded that the Public Safety Committee will do an assessment of the bumps that were recently installed to determine if any others should be added.

No other actions were taken by the Public Safety Committee. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Tyler', written over a horizontal line.

Cheryl Tyler, Public Safety Committee Chair