

**Village of Friendship Heights
October 14, 2025 Meeting Transcript**

[00:07:22.25] - Speaker 3

Friends and neighbors, it is 6: 33, a little bit late. Welcome Welcome to the meeting of the Village of Friendship Heights. I think we're going to start out by starting with Council member Klein speaking our names very clearly in the microphone so that our transcription can pick it up and people listening online can hear very well. Would you mind introducing yourself, Council member Klein? Thank you. Oh, introduce myself. Yes, my name.

[00:08:00.00] - Speaker 4

Francine Klein.

[00:08:02.16] - Speaker 7

Allison Ald. Vic Baisal.

[00:08:05.01] - Speaker 6

Roy Schafer.

[00:08:06.06] - Speaker 3

Martha Sold.

[00:08:07.17] - Speaker 8

John Kamlo.

[00:08:08.18] - Speaker 1

Al Mohler.

[00:08:10.05] - Speaker 3

As a reminder to everyone sitting up here, we've been told that people cannot hear us. We need to do a better job speaking directly into the microphone. If anyone here can't hear us, if you just

raise your hand or something or let our village manager, our assistant village manager, know, we are working on doing a better job so that people can hear us. If you help educate us, we'll try to do better. Welcome, everyone. The very first thing we're going to do, and this will probably be a habit for us, is to hear from our project manager on Page Park and the Red House. After he presents his comments and findings. He's willing to take some questions, and then he will be leaving, and we'll be proceeding with the rest of the meeting. There you are. Mr. Wilson, please. If you would also, I know you're The height of that microphone is not designed for you. If you could maybe speak a bit louder. Either shrink, that's fine, too, or speak as loud as you can. That's good. Thank you. Could you please give us an update? Gladly. I have to push any buttons here?

[00:09:34.13] - Speaker 3

If it's red, it's on. Just to be clear, Jim Wilson, he's our project manager for Page Park and the Red House. The floor is yours.

[00:09:47.07] - Speaker 2

Yeah. I'll start with the Red House. What we have done thus far is we have submitted for building permits for the Red House, and those are in. We're expecting Currently, we've had the zoning has been approved, electrical has been approved, and mechanical has already been approved. We're waiting on zoning, life safety, energy, and structural. Those are the disciplines that have to go and finish their reviews, expect probably four to six weeks in order to get all the permits back. They would allow us to potentially start construction as early as December Probably late December or January would be when we think we'd be ready for construction. We did, however, receive a draft of the updated cost from the contractor. As I saw the drawing start to happen, I don't know if anybody would remember, but I believe last time we came, I mentioned that the details that were in these drawings, I thought there's no way the contractor understood the complexity or how far the impact was going to go to be able to make this place fully accessible. So he has submitted to me. Sure. Okay, sorry about that. So I asked him, he submitted a proposal based on the updated drawing.

[00:11:23.25] - Speaker 2

Say, what happened to your number? The updated drawings have That significant impacts associated with the ADA experience has to be as soon as you drive into the parking lot. As a result, the parking lot, which was never part of their understanding of the scope, the parking lot actually has to be lifted up and leveled because you can't have more than a certain percentage of slope anywhere in the parking lot when a door for accessibility. Then you have to maintain

from the car, the handicap spaces, to the to be up lift also have to be accessible. The adjustments that all had to take place out there in the site were not insignificant. They gave me their proposal. It's a draft, and I asked them to compare their draft of their proposal to their original scope of what they understood. The contract that he sent over was approximately \$256,000, what it now costs, which I know the first one, and I went through it a little bit with Julian, but I can't remember exactly, but it was like 138 and had \$40,000 worth of other allowances. So it was in a \$170, \$180, \$1,000 starting point, which is so he's now suggesting that it's \$260,000.

[00:12:46.26] - Speaker 2

So I will be reviewing that with him, getting more information, a better understanding of what all this means. Is it appropriate? Are the numbers correct? Are the numbers fair, reasonable? And I will report back to you as soon as I probably know mid next week, the end of next week, I'll have a better feel. That was the Red House. If you want me to just keep going then from there to the... Page Park, or do you want to answer questions on the Red House?

[00:13:18.03] - Speaker 3

Why don't we do... Are there any questions on the Red House? First from the council? I think we all expected what you're saying, but go ahead.

[00:13:30.04] - Speaker 6

Yeah, just to get an order of the sequence, do we have to finish our work before the tenant can start theirs, or can there be some overlap?

[00:13:39.28] - Speaker 2

My suspicion is we will finish before they get themselves When I did meet with the tenant a couple of different times, and they are just now getting started with their architect and engineers, so they have a ways to go before they're going to be ready to go. Actually, my hope would be is we would be done and out, because when you start to co-mingle, it gets messy. My hope would be we could be done and out. Okay, thank you. Other questions from the council?

[00:14:12.06] - Speaker 3

I don't see any. Are there any questions from the public? It's our job. It's our expenses. Yes.

[00:14:34.16] - Speaker 6

And the lease has been signed.

[00:14:38.24] - Speaker 2

So as I understand it, your obligation is to give them a code-compliant ADA accessible building as part of the terms of the lease. So at Page Park, we have probably the biggest significant milestone is We did receive the forest conservation variants, which was important because there was starting to be some objection to the forest conservation variants, which says that we're not obligated to do forest conservation, which would have been probably anywhere from a eight month to a year and a half approval process in the county. So That was a big deal. We actually originally got some pushback from them and the engineers and we had conversations and Julian and Martha said, Let's set up a meeting. And all of a sudden things started shaking around and we got approved. So that was a big deal. The next thing that happens is the approvals in the county for site work are very linear in their processes. Then the next thing, you get forest conservation. Then the next one is you get stormwater management approval. Now they go and they submit their design drawings to the county for stormwater management. After they get stormwater management approval, they can submit what is called the Sediment Erosion Control Plan, which is how do you manage now when you're digging things up, there's dirt and rain and mud goes, how do you dig that?

[00:16:23.29] - Speaker 2

How do you do that without letting all that mud and everything go out into the public way? Then you have to get your stormwater management plan. After you get your stormwater management plan, the county has to put all of these easements in place because your bio-retention basins that are going to hold the water and treat the water, those actually have to be put into an easement, and they're all meets and bounds and legal agreements. So these are the things that have to follow. All of those processes put us Probably in being able to have a permit issued in, say, March, maybe April. If things go for a single cycle, it's going to go faster. If they go through multiple cycles, it can push it out. The earliest that we could start doing the renovations and doing the rest of the work in there is March, April then. We're just keeping track of each one of these permits and how are they tracking, how's everybody doing. That is from the stormwater management being able to manage all the site issues. The other piece that we had to circle back on and recreate was the building permit for the pergola.

[00:17:50.13] - Speaker 2

I don't know if you recall, there was an issue that they couldn't get the inspections done. The inspector said, Tell us, give us a stamped engineered drawings for the foundations of the

pergola. In reality, there were no foundations drawn. They drew a slightly thicker concrete slab that they bolted the columns of the pergola to. In Montgomery County, anything taller than 6 feet or 6 feet, 6 feet, something like that has to have a building permit. If it has a building permit and these are structures that stand, they have to have a footing, and the footing has to go below the frost line, which is 30 inches. At the last meeting we talked about, we hired Myers Engineering, who could engineer the footings, engineer the design, but also actually act as an inspector. We got photographs from the work that had been done and that there did not appear to be any footings that were ever installed there. The solution is that we have to... Essentially, we have to take the pergola down and cut and put in 10. There's 10 posts on the pergola. We have to cut and install 10 footings, a footing under every column that is approximately, well, not approximately, 16 inches square and 30 inches deep.

[00:19:26.01] - Speaker 2

It was what I was afraid of what was going to have to happen, and that is where we are. I've sent that off to a contractor to give us a quick estimate on what's going to happen there with this pergola, but it is becoming the Most expensive pergola ever known to man right now. We're thinking that it's probably about a four-year \$30, \$50,000 to take this pergola, disassemble it, take it apart, put it aside, cut the holes, put the rebar, put new anchor bolts, and put it back in place. I would be... I have to ask the question is, the pergola, it's a nice feature, but it's an expensive thing to take apart and put back in. You don't have to decide anything now, but I think we're going to get a number on what does it cost to just... What would it cost to take them off and just have it be an outside patio? I understand that's a nice design element. I understand why it was done. Still, that'll be something you don't have to decide now, but it would be something, in my view, it'd be worth considering, say, what would it look like without it.

[00:21:03.08] - Speaker 3

Thank you. I'm going to ask you to pause for a second. We need to do, shall I say, a cleanup motion related to the force conservation task. I'm going to make a motion to approve the revised Page Park design to remove the walkway in the north end of the park from the Stream Valley buffer zone, as recommended by Clark Azar Associates. Would someone second that one? I'll second. Thank you. We did vote it, but the opposite way. To include it, we have to take it out, or we can't have the force conservation exemption. When the park is done, we will look for a way to make that ADA accessible, but we cannot do that and to get the force conservation exemption.

[00:22:03.15] - Speaker 1

Are we talking about the same thing, though? I thought the back path, the one that went to the old grill, we were going to stop and not complete that. Are you talking about a different path?

[00:22:18.16] - Speaker 3

Would you mind explaining it? Sure. That way I don't mess it up.

[00:22:23.05] - Speaker 2

As you come up the ramp off the street, you enter the circle. From there, going back to the fire, to the grill or the pit, back in it, that was all going to be... It's not concrete right now, and it's going to be made concrete. And so what the forest, the Montgomery County Parks, excuse me, said that you're adding impervious area in the street valley buffer, can't do it. So that was what we had to do to get the was to say, We're not going to put that concrete back there.

[00:23:02.19] - Speaker 1

I thought that we had decided. We agreed at your advice that we didn't need it, and we did vote not to have it. I thought we'd done that.

[00:23:12.24] - Speaker 3

Actually, we voted the other way. We voted to have it and make it ADA accessible.

[00:23:17.01] - Speaker 1

No, I'm sorry. I thought we voted to not have the cement because the other, whatever they call it, was it looked more woodsy and it was not any more cement.

[00:23:28.06] - Speaker 2

Two different things. Where when you came up, what happens right now is you come off the street and you come up a ramp, and at a midpoint of the ramp, you would turn left. You would turn left, and that was concrete, and we said to make that a wood deck.

[00:23:50.23] - Speaker 1

To go to the pergola.

[00:23:52.06] - Speaker 2

To go to the pergola. Then you go up to the next level, which is at the level of the circle. I don't believe we talked about from the circle back to the back corner, that that currently is concrete. And that was something, I think that we picked up later. They said, Do we need to do that? And Azar says, No, we don't.

[00:24:11.14] - Speaker 1

It is presently, as I recall, it is presently cement up to about where the smaller circle is. And then it's that gravelly stuff that goes around into the woods. So I thought we were going to leave it that way and not have more cement.

[00:24:33.24] - Speaker 2

So whatever how we got there, we're still getting to the same place of saying we're not going to put cement there. We're not going to put concrete back on that. So it's whether it was understood that way. I don't think that was the intent last time, but it is the intent here to say, let's not continue the concrete back towards that place, which would be the same thing as what you thought we were doing anyway. Questions, comments? Are we prepared to vote? All in favor say, I embrace your hand. Thank you, unanimous. That puts this issue.

[00:25:14.02] - Speaker 3

We've cleaned this So do you have more to share or are you ready for questions? Ready for questions. Okay. Council member. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Council member, Basel.

[00:25:27.27] - Speaker 6

He raised his hand first. Okay. So if we did remove the pergola, what are our options at that point? I don't think we can just fill that in with cement.

[00:25:39.10] - Speaker 2

I'd have to see what it's going to be. You don't want anything that looks like you got scarred and you didn't figure something out. Wherever these 10 posts come out, somehow designers would have to say, Do something, whether you put a piece of flagstone in there, you'd have to do something back, but you don't have to dig it all up and forth. So we'd keep the pit in some form, and we'd still need to make it accessible then. Excuse me, I'm confused now. We're talking the purgola. The pit is in the far back right.

[00:26:17.18] - Speaker 6

Okay. I call it the purgola pit.

[00:26:19.01] - Speaker 2

Okay, the purgola pit. Okay. Yeah. No, you still have the stone walls and you still have the area. If you needed to do something that you can't put an awning, anything that is considered It's either temporary, does not need a building permit. So if there was an awning that went up in there, there was some other shade element that could go there, that they do make nice ones, you could put that. You don't need building permits for those. But if you took it out, you would You'd find something to make the concrete look like it's intentional. I don't know what.

[00:26:52.22] - Speaker 3

I think Council member Baisal had the next.

[00:26:58.06] - Speaker 6

Can you give an estimate, your best estimate as to when people are actually going to be able to use the park? Not until the...

[00:27:10.18] - Speaker 2

If I don't know the answer to that because if we eliminated the pergola, which was the building permit, is what we got all stopped on and stump on. And if you eliminate the pergola, our Are we then allowed to use that? I would have to ask that question. I don't know. I think you don't have to have the... I don't know that you wouldn't be allowed to use it. It's a good question.

[00:27:45.29] - Speaker 3

Wouldn't we have to make it ADA accessible?

[00:27:48.00] - Speaker 2

Otherwise, it wouldn't be until March that you get your permit, and then it's going to be probably two months of work.

[00:27:56.05] - Speaker 1

We still need the post for the steps, which I don't know have been ordered. Those posts take a while to get there, and we definitely need those for the steps.

[00:28:09.13] - Speaker 2

You're right. You're right, the access would be... I was thinking the building permit on the pergola, but you're right. There's the steps. The ramp going up is not compliant, so you won't get it until June-ish. Because if we're not going to get a permit to do it until March or April, then we can start to do the work. It's probably a couple of months of work.

[00:28:35.14] - Speaker 1

When can we actually order those darn posts for the steps? It seems to me that could be going on even if we don't put them in.

[00:28:44.14] - Speaker 2

I have gone to the contractors and tried to get before I'm going to go and order. I've asked them. They keep telling me they're going to send me prices. I haven't got the prices back to do what's on these drawings. Before we do anything, I would get that, and I will see if I can get it out of them.

[00:29:03.16] - Speaker 3

But that would be- I'm sure you'll have more to share at the next meeting. Does a Council member find?

[00:29:10.10] - Speaker 4

Yes. What is the purpose of Pergola? I know it's beautiful. I was there many times before it had to be closed. I didn't find that it gave a tremendous amount of shade. Going down the steps, there is no place to sit. From my perspective, if you look at other parks where they put in seating with some permanent umbrellars, like on Arlington Road, the playground. I had not seen tables with umbrellas like that before. It's more than an umbrella. It's not something that shakes in the wind. It stays out no matter what the weather is, but it does provide shade. That's what I thought we'd be aiming for with the pergola. I'd like to substitute something like that for the pergola, if it makes sense. That's a good... It's definitely worth thinking about and considering. Say, Can you get something that you could sit there? The pergola was there.

[00:30:28.01] - Speaker 2

They looked pretty You can hang plants from it. You could do things. They could string some lights across it or whatever. There's things people do to make pergolas look pretty, but they're really not a shade component. They don't keep weather away. So if you wanted something, it

would be worth thinking about something that doesn't require a building permit. Any other council members? Council member Miller? Yes.

[00:30:56.04] - Speaker 1

Just to respond to Councilwoman Klein, the original The purposes of the pergola were twofold. The top was supposed to have colorful flowers that would appeal to the residents living, especially in 4620. The seating could be of two types in the pergola itself. It could be additional chairs or furniture, or in addition, sitting on the stone wall. And there was intended to be seating there because in the pergola, you get really from the vantage point, you see not only the trees and the shrubs that have been planted, but the forest behind. And that was specifically thought to be a cozy little spot. But there could be other ways to take care of that.

[00:31:54.25] - Speaker 3

Are you open to a few questions from our people here? Sure. If I I think we have time. Well, they're four people, so those four who raised their hands, if you wouldn't mind Stanne asking your question loudly, I'll repeat it into the microphone before Jim, you answer. Okay. I thought I Can we start? Yeah. That works, too. Yeah. I don't really have a question. It's a reminder that you all have had public comments calling on you all to rip this thing down and start again. And one rather vocal critic was Paula Durban. She used to look at this from her apartment, and she complained about the level of concrete that was involved.

[00:32:49.22] - Speaker 7

And we had another woman, I remember, who stood up and called for a more naturalistic approach.

[00:32:57.17] - Speaker 3

So it's just worth remembering I'll take that. Thank you. Thank you, sir. We would like to start first. We've been on this discussion for a long time, but I don't think that I could demand to the The question is, is there a master plan for the park. Is there a master plan for the park? Is there a master plan for the park? The question is, is there a master plan for the park? Because it seems like we're just doing bits and pieces.

[00:33:32.04] - Speaker 2

The park has been fully designed and engineered and drawn and built. The drawings that currently exist are just how to treat all the stormwater management as well as provide

accessibility. And so those drawings are completely done. There's no phasing of it. There was just this one piece that was out there that was snagging the Forest Conservation Group that could have been left as what it was, but it was put on the drawings to keep going. So there's no haphazardness about what's happening. It is a full-blown drawing. The pervolution of the The fellow that's there, the choice on the pergola is, do you spend \$40, \$50, \$1,000 taking it down, doing the foundations and putting it back? That would just be a question that I would raise. It would be one that you could address, and you would get the architect, whoever designed it to begin with, say, If we can't do this, or is there a less expensive solution? Do they want to do it? I'm just telling you to put it back. That's the order of magnitude is what I want to let you know. But you don't have to decide on that for a while.

[00:35:01.02] - Speaker 3

Well, we- Sir, I would urge you to look at the Page Park page on our website. The original park was created with no permit. So we're trying to fix that. Council member. Yes.

[00:35:18.01] - Speaker 4

Until tonight, the expense was not known how much it would cost to deal with the pergola. It's not that anyone doesn't want the pergola back. It's just, do we want to spend that much money for it? That's what we're trying to figure out. I think you were next.

[00:36:01.28] - Speaker 3

Could I repeat that? Could I share that? He said that in response to Council member Mueller, one of the purposes of the pergola or features of the pergola was to have wisteria growing that would provide shade. Is that pretty accurate of what you just said? Yeah. Go ahead with the microphone.

[00:36:21.02] - Speaker 2

So one park feature that the council might consider under the circumstances circumstances that have been described tonight, which is this issue of removing the pergola, perhaps because taking it down, putting it back, who knows what that will cost? You might fill in the area that is now under the pergola.

[00:36:49.06] - Speaker 1

The pergola won't be there. You could fill it in, put grass or other plantings, which would address the naturalization of more of the park than is presently the case.

[00:37:01.29] - Speaker 2

I offer that as a suggestion. Probably you're going to have expense to take down the posts anyway and dig the stone up, the blue stone. If you're doing that, take it out, put more park in there that can be used. Then you could put tables and umbrella there, as you could put it on the rest of the park.

[00:37:24.26] - Speaker 1

The next isn't... I wasn't sure I understood Chairperson Solt, it is the Council's intention to put concrete on the back pathway to the...

[00:37:40.01] - Speaker 2

Or that's out of the question now.

[00:37:42.20] - Speaker 3

I'll let our project manager answer that, but that is not consistent with having a force conservation exemption.

[00:37:51.10] - Speaker 2

Is that correct? That was not... The concrete was never It was never contemplated. It was never contemplated to be back there. It was just when they made accessible, the engineer extended the piece of concrete from point A to point B. I said, Why did you do that? He goes, I don't know. I thought it was that a thing. That happened to be the piece of concrete that snagged the Forest Conservation Cert. The last council decided that that should be just gravel and leave it that way. This council decided, as I recall, to make it concrete. I understand now that snagged the forest conservation permit. I'm glad it did because I think it can be left and it would still be accessible back there. Okay, Ms. Forrester. Martha, could I just one comment on that? And I think the gentleman is correct. Whoever designed this park to begin with, if they go and say, No, you absolutely... The plan of what should happen, somebody needs to... It would be appropriate to have them weigh in on, Here's, no, this is perfectly fine or it's not okay or do it as grass or do whatever. It should not be the deciding on a pergola or no pergola should really be informed also by the architecture the fact that did the place to begin with because it is a very meaningful piece.

[00:39:22.07] - Speaker 2

Okay. Thank you.

[00:39:26.17] - Speaker 7

I hope... Close to the microphone, please. Yes. I hope in hearing all of this about permits and so forth, and especially for management or general manager, are listening very carefully because while the stupid landscape company did not get a permit, it was on us to ask, Where is the permit? So I want to suggest and make a recommendation that there might be a county coming in to educate our management and the board of when permits are required. I'm a land use planner by education, and I did it for 38 plus years. And not to get a permit and not to check for a permit is like a death nail. And now you learn your lesson, and it's costing us. I do not want Any awnings we put up, please check to see if we need a permit. I noticed that we did not put in the Yet, the bags for siltation around the spots where I sent pictures to Julian. Did you see that? Yes. When it rains hard, where there's bare soil, as you just slowly ramp up where all the dogs kill the plants, then when that runs off, it's chocolate milk going down our stream.

[00:41:11.27] - Speaker 7

On the back side, that a Granular stuff that made the trail partially is going down toward the stream on the backside. Is anything coming on that?

[00:41:24.24] - Speaker 3

Thank you. We're considering that. Okay.

[00:41:27.15] - Speaker 7

Okay. Finally, I'm very pleased to hear, because I brought this issue up last time, about fencing around the bioretention basins because of the dogs that will destroy them. I'm so pleased to find I'm going to take out there is an easement by the county, because once they're destroyed, I'm more than happy to pick up the phone, as I've done in many cases around in DC and elsewhere. I Has a permit been obtained for this? I think this fire retention isn't working anymore. I do plan on doing that. So as to the fence, any ideas that you came up with?

[00:42:14.16] - Speaker 3

We're not at that step yet. Thank you. But we've got your recommendation, and we've written it down.

[00:42:20.08] - Speaker 7

And then on the Red House.

[00:42:22.11] - Speaker 3

We're talking only about Page Park right now. Okay? Okay. I think we need to move on with our meeting.

[00:42:27.15] - Speaker 7

Okay. Thank you. I do have comments on the Red House.

[00:42:30.00] - Speaker 3

You can send an email or you can talk to any of us. Okay? Thank you.

[00:42:35.16] - Speaker 7

I give good ideas. Thank you.

[00:42:40.14] - Speaker 3

Anything else from the council? Okay. Thank you very much, Jim. Your help in navigating through this process is very much appreciated. Thank you. Now we're on to Chairman's comments. For those of you at the Fall Festival on Saturday, October fourth, we all had wonderful weather, great fun, and thanks to all who helped make that a possibility. We really appreciated the music, the food, and the visits from our elected representatives. Everybody who lives here knows we are still affected by the government shutdown. Montgomery County has provided additional resources to people affected by this, mainly contractors and employees who are not getting paid at this time. That includes financial assistance, and job hunting assistance. There's more than a couple. Handouts are on the table there if you're interested in getting that information, and we have more on our website. The planning board We'll hold a hearing on Thursday, October 23rd at 1: 00 PM, about the Geico property. Our development committee has done incredible work on this, and I really offer my thanks to all who participated in that challenging effort. I'd like to acknowledge the breadth of participation from our community, the variety of opinions, and of course, the efforts of Council member Klein to lead the group.

[00:44:26.11] - Speaker 3

The village will testify at the hearing, as I understand, some of the condo boards in the area. But any member of the public may sign up and testify. That information is also on the table if you'd

like to pick that up. Just so you know, we will be having a close meeting after this meeting. Moving on to Village Manager's report. No, I'm sorry. General comments from the council. Madam Chair? I'm sorry.

[00:45:03.16] - Speaker 1

I need a little help. I don't know if any of you would notice, but there is something that's happened in the village that I've not seen happen in 50 years. The squirrels have all disappeared. I have called Montgomery County Animal Rescue, and they assure me that they're located up in Gaithersburg, that they've still got squirrels there, but there are no squirrels squirrels. It's particularly noticeable because we have all these oak trees, and this is feast time for our squirrels. I think I've seen one. They are all gone. I don't see any carcasses. I don't know if they're being kidnapped by Hawks or foxes, but this has never happened in 50 years. We really do need some conservationists or climate change people or someone further that can look into It is very disturbing. Anyway, thank you. Adam Sheer.

[00:46:05.18] - Speaker 7

Can I address that quickly? We do have a number of squirrels still. There is a fox population that does live here.

[00:46:11.24] - Speaker 3

They are out late at night or very early in the morning.

[00:46:15.01] - Speaker 7

They do prey upon squirrels, so this might just be a natural part of the life cycle. You have more foxes, less squirrels, then the foxes leave and more squirrels get.

[00:46:27.25] - Speaker 1

The foxes, you're right. The foxes do come out later at night. They're nocturnal. The squirrels are not. The squirrels are usually there early morning to mid-afternoon, and the foxes have been here as long as I have and longer. I mean, it is one possibility. We also have Hawks, but I don't know what to make in that. It's never happened before.

[00:46:52.07] - Speaker 3

We have three people who would like to speak. Peter McGann. Is that the correct pronunciation? Peter. Peter. I'm sorry. Okay. Ms. Forster. Did she leave? I think she's outside. I'm having trouble reading this. Dana or Danita? Coder Hart, something? The first name starts with a D. Is there anyone else who would like to? I think you'll have to wait till next time. Thank you. Village Manager's report, please.

[00:47:52.02] - Speaker 5

Thank you. Two quick items. One is the village, the fountain in Humphrey Park has a number of issues that we've discovered that will need to be addressed, and we have shut it down for the season just over the weekend. Normally, we would shut it down in late October anyway, so it's getting close to the time. But there will be some repairs we need to do for leaks, which have resulted in some heavy water usage and expensive water bills. Also the fill valve, which is a piece of equipment that's apparently rather expensive that needs to be replaced. Also Some lighting issues that Council member Mueller has been tracking and letting us know about the original lighting inside the fountain is no longer what it used to be. We're going to put together an invitation for bids for a contractor. Our regular maintenance, irrigation contractor is not able to do this type of repairs. We've had several vendors look at the site, but we will need to issue an RFP to do this, so that will be forthcoming. Second issue, just a report about an incident that happened last week with a streetlight pole that got knocked down.

[00:49:04.19] - Speaker 5

A woman lost control of her car and hit another car and then reversed and knocked over a streetlight at the corner of North Park in Friendship Boulevard by the Will Fortunately, nobody injured. The streetlight pole was destroyed, and we were very pleased that the contractor acted quickly and came the next day and removed the pieces and installed a new streetlight. We will pursue the insurance reimbursement from the driver's insurance. I want to commend our police, our off-duty police officer who was working that shift, was very capably provided a lot of assistance that day and helped with the scene. There were several police officers on hand that helped with traffic control and removing the woman's car that had knocked over the street light. So it was a good ending to an unfortunate incident. Thank you.

[00:50:00.00] - Speaker 3

Thank you. Thank goodness no one was hurt. Council member Miller. Yes.

[00:50:05.13] - Speaker 1

Thank you. Madam Chair, I appreciate your comment on how so many people that work for the government have been either threatened with firing or actually let go, many of whom live in this community. You've always been a storm supporter. It's very frustrating, and I know everyone on this council shares your It's very frustrating because there's so little that we can do for that. However, I think it's particularly, I'm reminded right now, it's particularly important that we show support for the staff that we have. And this year, this week, our manager celebrated and was recognized by his professional group for 35 years of service in this village, 30 years of which he had been as our village manager. I think this is just one example of a lot of the work done behind the scene by our staff, symbolized by our manager, but by everyone that he has helped to bring on board here. One example that you may not even notice, but a few weeks ago or a month ago, Councilwoman Klein's committee pointed out that one of the intersections was not safe because the trees have grown so big that they obstruct the stop sign.

[00:51:34.08] - Speaker 1

Well, miraculously, but it wasn't miraculous, the managers have now found a way of extending that stop sign right out here so it goes beyond the tree without impeding trucks at the same time. That's one small example. It's a stressful job, and I think recognition is appropriate not only from his professional group, but also from us here and in a way that shows our support for staff in general. So for one, I'm going to stand up and applaud.

[00:52:12.14] - Speaker 5

Thank you very much.

[00:52:22.12] - Speaker 3

Thank you. We move on to Mayor's announcement, please.

[00:52:25.14] - Speaker 6

Okay, thank you. I have two announcements I was asked to read. The Village will once again participate in National Drug Takeback Day on Saturday, October 25th, from 10: 00 AM to 2: 00 PM at the Village Center. A Montgomery County police officer will be at the Village Center lobby to collect and safely dispose of your unwanted or expired prescription drugs. On the same day, October 25th, Saturday, the Goodwill truck will return to the Village from 10: 00 AM to 2: 00 PM. The truck will park on Friendship Boulevard adjacent to the Village Center, and village residents are invited to bring their donations. I just have three things to say. First, at a recent Friendship Heights Alliance meeting, Council members sold the Village Manager, and I met briefly with a representative of the Donohoe Corporation. Donohoe is the owner and developer of the site at

5,500 Wisconsin, adjacent to the Marriott. The approved plan for that site includes 300-unit rental project with retail space. Some preconstruction activities have been completed. However, Donohoe has not announced a construction start date, and we will provide updates as they become available. What that means for us is that there's almost no chance that building will be built and occupied before 2028 at the earliest.

[00:53:54.20] - Speaker 6

This is a timely event. I started coordinating with our program director to hold a monthly evening discussion group for those affected by federal staff cuts and grant losses. I think it is very timely, and we're still working out how that's going to be presented and held. So please contact me if you would like to talk about it or discuss. And the last thing is at the Thursday, October 23rd Planning Board meeting that Council member Solt mentioned, Council member Klein will be testifying and representing the village.

[00:54:32.14] - Speaker 3

Thank you. Treasurer's report, please. Okay, Treasurer's report.

[00:54:38.28] - Speaker 8

We just completed the first quarter of fiscal year, 2026 through September. Comparing our first quarter this year to last year, our revenues came in approximately \$34,000 less than the same period last year. Our interest income also came in \$14,000 less, partly because interest rates are coming down. In total, revenues are down 50,000 compared to last year. Expenditures are up slightly by 15,000 because of modest increases in employee If it's telephone utilities and center maintenance and repairs. But overall, our budget is in good shape. When forecasting our budget for the first quarter through the end of the year, we're well within in our proposed budget, so that's not a concern. Capital expenditures for the first three months totaled 55,000, mostly for Page Park and Red House renovations. Also, our reserves remained strong at approximately \$4. 6 million, similar to last month's results. So, yes, our budget is in good shape, but there are obvious risks going forward. We need to keep a especially close eye on income tax revenues because of obviously increasing unemployment due to the government shutdown and continuing federal layoffs. As of August, the latest data available on unemployment in Montgomery County is 4%, it's up from 3.

[00:56:44.26] - Speaker 8

6% just a month earlier and 3% from a year ago. We'll keep an eye on that as well. Thank you. Thank you. Council members, any questions for our treasurer?

[00:57:03.02] - Speaker 3

Moving on to Advisory Committee on Development, Council member Klein. Thank you. Is this the point at which I make motions?

[00:57:19.12] - Speaker 4

Do I make it during the report or does that come later? Okay. Well, I have a report first, and I ask you to bear with me. This is both for my fellow council members and also people in the audience, people who may be listening, because there's a lot about the Geiko situation that's not immediately obvious. I say that as someone who's been living in the village since 2013 and who lived in Montgomery County since 1985. There was a lot I didn't know. I've always liked Geico. I look at it from my condo. It's where I have my insurance for the car for many years. But I'd like to update you on that, including the history of why Geiko is now asking for another extension. If you live in Friendship Heights, you're going to be familiar with the property, with the streetbound degrees along Willard, Friendship Boulevard, and Western Avenue. Most of the time when you're going south, unless you make it a habit to go out to Wisconsin Avenue, you're going to be passing the property. The Geiko headquarters building is iconic. It was completed in 1959. It was designed by a pre-eminent architect in the mid-1900s, Vincent Kling, who was particularly active in Philadelphia.

[00:59:00.00] - Speaker 4

Virginia. The headquarters building was a new type for the era, and I'm saying this based on things that I've read by the historic preservation groups in Montgomery, Comrecy County and also on the web. It was considered as a significant example of the international style of architecture, with a landscape campus, low-slung wings, and glass and porcelain enamel panels. With that structure in the campus, about 40 years later, in 1998, Geiko applied for and received the plan to redevelop its headquarters site while keeping its headquarters in the same location. Now, that's changed. Geiko will move its headquarters to Bethesda, but it was originally going to have its headquarters site It was planned in 1998 to keep it on the same property. Geiko wanted to demolish the headquarters building as obsolete. It wanted to replace, and that's still the plan, it wanted to replace the building with 810,000 square feet of office buildings along Friendship Boulevard. It also wanted to build 300 multifamily units along Willard Avenue in four four-story buildings. Finally, it wanted to build 200 townhouses in the interior of the property. Now, Friendship Heights Village had input into that original 1998 plan. In, which was done along with Bookdale and other communities.

[01:00:53.12] - Speaker 4

It represented the thoughts of that time, 25 or more years ago. Bookdale, which is a community of single-family homes to the south and west of the Geico campus, individually negotiated an agreement at the same time to protect its interests. On October 13th, 1998, the Montgomery County Council approved an order affecting the Geiko site plan that referenced significant significant off-site amenities. This was the Brookdale Agreement. There was to be a greenway of 50 to 70 feet wide, right by the property, dividing the two properties, an enlargement of Bookdale Park from 3 to 3.7 acres, a one acre central open space north of Bookdale Park, an open space adjacent to Western Avenue, large enough for Little League baseball games, and a buffer area, along with the tree save area. These were all important at the time and were described as binding elements, which means that the rezoning was agreed to by the Montgomery County Council. It was a vote by the Council itself because of these planned features. So absent extraordinary action by the Council to reverse itself, these binding elements were remain in place no matter who develops the property. And this is important to understand because one of the issues we're facing now is whether if we oppose an extension of the Geiko plan at this point, the benefits that Bookdale negotiated for the community, and that benefit us as well, whether those would go away.

[01:02:55.17] - Speaker 4

We've gotten legal advice from our lawyer, Dave Brown, who's an expert in this area, that these are binding elements, and the Montgomery Council reversing itself in a specific vote, these binding elements will remain in place no matter who develops the property. As the years passed between 1998 and today, Geiko submitted a number of requests for plan extension, saying that it hadn't settled its own office requirements and couldn't contract with the developer firm to demolish its headquarters building until it had. It requested in another extension, it said that it was not in the real estate business and does not have the expertise needed to handle a project of this magnitude. The site itself, the campus, an associated property is 26 acres. It also said that delay would be beneficial to the community because allowing the plan to expire would mean the amenities worked out with Brookdale and other communities. The park and the ball fields would no longer be a realistic vision for the future of Friendship Heights. Now, that wasn't accurate when they made that statement, but that is what they argued to justify getting another extension. And then it explained it wanted to keep its headquarters building up and running until had a new headquarters building, but developers wanted to demolish the existing headquarters building first to accommodate residential development.

[01:04:45.14] - Speaker 4

And it got another extension. Then it submitted a third request for extension in 2011. It gave the same reasons for the second extension. It wasn't ready to move yet on leaving its iconic headquarters. The planning staff at that point wanted to reject that request. They said that Geiko did not meet the standards for getting an extension on its plan, that Geiko was in control of the situation. They also noted regrettable loss of years of coordination between the applicant, Geiko, the staff, and the community. They noted that review of the initial plan had occurred over 10 years earlier, and that if an extension were granted, the plan might not be implemented until 20 years after the review took place. And they said, and this is important, they said, A delay of that length renders the review of the project that occurred in 1998 less relevant to today's circumstances. It is, on We're fortunate that more progress has not been made by Geiko to advance the preliminary plan towards record plight. Nevertheless, the passage of time and financial loss have not historically been adequate reasons for the Planning Board to grant extension requests. Well, despite that view of the staff, there was a decision by the planning board that they would give another extension, and that was in 2011.

[01:06:31.16] - Speaker 4

Well, fast forward today in 2025, and Geiko, once again, is seeking approval for a site plan modification, and they want to remove, at this point, the 810,000 square feet of office space along Friendship Boulevard while retaining the residential multifamily units and the townhouses. They also want to remove previously required off-site transportation improvements that were part of the 1998 plan. They have other things that they want as well to increase their ability, I guess, to move forward. As part of their justification, recently, they said that just this year, the company had determined that the existing headquarters building no longer meets its needs because of the condition of the building and the overall size of its workforce, and it was moving to Bethesda. Well, if we look back, we know that that was the reason that they were giving at a 1998 and periods in between. At this juncture, the Friendship Heights Village Council has taken a vote previously and opposes an extension for Geiko. I want to go through those reasons, the Geiko extension. It doesn't meet the standard for a grant of another extension because that standard requires substantial impairment of the applicant's ability to timely validate the plan due to the occurrence of a significantly unusual or an unanticipated event beyond the applicant's control and not facilitated or created by the applicant.

[01:08:28.20] - Speaker 4

In addition, there It used to be exceptional or undue hardship to the applicant if the plan is not extended. Well, that is not the case in our situation. Their decisions to delay their recognition that they themselves were not in the real estate business. They couldn't work things out the way they wanted. Those were decisions that they made. It was not something that happened to

them. We need fresh reconsideration of the plan plan, both the residential and office components. We know that notions of what our best practices in planning and design in central business districts have rapidly evolved, and more than sufficient time has passed since 1998 to take another look. And it's coincidentally, we're undergoing the new sector plan, so it's a good time to be discussing both. Most in need critical reconsideration is the property fronting Friendship Boulevard, and as well as the buildings on Willard, the four-story multi-four multi-story buildings that they want to build. Right now, a white hole exists where the 810,000 square feet office development on three separate lots has been abandoned. They've abandoned that desire to build there at this time. All that we know is that there's a promise of a future development application, but nothing at this time.

[01:10:18.19] - Speaker 4

And extensions should not be allowed on a plan which excludes all detail of the anticipated development over 50% of the approved floor area and 20% of the land area. It's not a good way for us to be proceeding. We have no idea what the shape of the hole will look like. So given the passage of time, we also have had a tremendous growth of trees. The number of specimen trees that are 30 inches or more in diameter has nearly quadrupled from 32 to 112. And specimen trees under Montgomery County law are supposed to be preserved with removal allowed only tree by tree via a variance process. Green space needs to be preserved. And not surprisingly, Geiko told the planning staff, because they shared that with us when we went to visit them at the end of September. Well, we didn't visit them physically. We were on a team's call, but you feel like you're in the same room. When we spoke to them at the end of September, they said that Geiko didn't want to have to do a forest conservation plan, and they didn't want to have to do a storm runoff plan, and they didn't want to have to do traffic studies.

[01:11:52.05] - Speaker 4

I'm almost done. I have a few more things to say. In 2005, Montgomery County initiated a program called called Montgomery Mount Modern to identify and preserve unique examples of mid-century modern architecture in the county. The iconic Geiko headquarters building has not only been reviewed for historic preservation, and a plan permitting demolition of the Geiko headquarters building, in my opinion, should not be issued until a historic preservation review has been completed. I've been told that one of the reasons why it was never done is because of the existence of the plans that have given them permission to demolish the building going back to 1998. Now, we have a wonderful attorney representing us, Dave Brown. We've talked to the Planning Board staff. I know that they decided to recommend issuing what they call a placeholder plan with conditions. They actually said, When we asked them, Why do want to give Geiko another plan after all this time? They said that they thought Geiko needed the plan so

they could get more money for the property. That's unfortunate because I don't think the plan, as it's conceived now, as they want to proceed, is the best for us today, which is to take nothing away from the individuals who work so hard to get the plan in place, including AI.

[01:13:36.27] - Speaker 4

You have done so much. Julian did so much. It was a plan from 1998. That was a good plan. But we're a quarter of a century later now, and we've got to think about it a little differently, I think. So many properties within Montgomery County have, based on what our own development committee, Advisory Development Committee, Advisory Development they talked about, more modern plans for what is essentially an urban area. Given the history of the planning process, the need for reconsideration of the substantive decisions. We are going to continue opposing, issuing a new plan extension. As Mayor Schafer said, I will be testifying lying before the board. So thank you for giving me an opportunity to share this with you. Now, in a related matter, I would like to move at this time that we authorize a letter to be sent by Mayor Schafer to the planning board dealing with the medical building, site at 5550 Friendship Boulevard and the Geico site and the Sacks Fifth Avenue site with regard to traffic studies. With regard to 5550, the issue is making certain that we maintain the green space in front of the building, which was called for in the last sector plan, retaining that green space, which is important.

[01:15:35.21] - Speaker 4

I might move to do that and then turn it over to you, John, if you'd like to discuss this. Because he has written the letter, I apologize. Okay, I think you...

[01:15:51.04] - Speaker 3

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. We need a second for that?

[01:15:53.08] - Speaker 4

I made the motion, didn't I?

[01:15:54.23] - Speaker 3

Are you willing to second the motion? Can I repeat it? Are you willing to second her motion? Yeah. Yes. Okay, proceed.

[01:16:04.02] - Speaker 8

I think the letter that's being proposed to send to the Montgomery County- Can I ask you to pause a second?

[01:16:13.14] - Speaker 3

Our secretary has asked Would you like the motion to be repeated? Will you allow me to do that? Absolutely. Okay.

[01:16:21.01] - Speaker 4

Here we go. I move that we authorize a letter to the planning board regarding the green space at 5550 Friendship Boulevard and the need for traffic studies concerning development of Geico and the Sacks Fifth Avenue sites.

[01:16:49.26] - Speaker 3

You'll second that again? I second the motion. Now we have discussion. Council member Cunnell? Very briefly, the The letter is being written primarily in response to the sector plan update process which is currently underway. There's two things going on, a sector plan update, as well as Geiko's proposal to redevelop the property. This letter is proposed to go forward primarily in response to the sector plan update. Two issues. One is the 5550 site where the medical building is under the original sector plan as Francine noted. That space fronting the building was originally designated as Parks and Open Space. The Planning Commission, Planning Committee staff, Commission staff, I should say, I think, has indicated recently in its existing conditions and visioning processes that that property is available for development. The letter basically states that if you develop that property, you're going to create, not only are you going to take green space away from the village, but you're also going to create traffic and pedestrian safety issues. The same thing, similar comments with respect to Geico as well as Sacks Fifth Avenue.

[01:18:18.22] - Speaker 8

What we're asking the Planning Commission to do is to make it clear that when major developments are proposed right on the outskirts of our village, that independent traffic studies be required that assess the impact of these developments on village traffic. As things work now, and we've seen it with the Geiko site, they do these brief traffic plans, and they say, as in the case of Geiko, no problem, no additional traffic, don't worry about it. We need independent studies. Major developments on the outskirts of the village are going to have a major impact on traffic. It's not that we oppose or development necessarily. What we're saying is if we have this

to develop, and we have to assess the impacts on our village, and we have to mitigate those impacts. Thank you. Council member Mullen.

[01:19:26.11] - Speaker 1

I don't know where to begin. Let me begin with Councilman Conloes. I think it's very important for everyone to understand what he's basing this opinion on. The village, and the village alone, is responsible for maintaining, repairing, and building our roads. That's very important because we get that authority, although we're a special tax district, we get that authority from the state, which means it has precedence over the county, and therefore it is very important, I agree with the Councilman that we get current traffic studies, especially because there are some that will disagree with me. But the thing that protects North Park Avenue from increased traffic flow more than anything else is the fact that we have an agreement with the Somerset House Group that there is, I call it a drawbridge through traffic can't go through there. That's a private road, Somerset Terrace. And as long as that remains, the traffic can't come through as a shortcut the way it does on Hills Plaza. We know what will happen if they open that. They definitely will have a shortcut that comes through from Wisconsin Avenue to Somerset Boulevard to Friendship Boulevard, no gate, down to North Park, and then all the way down North Park.

[01:21:02.26] - Speaker 1

It will definitely be the same shortcut they're taking coming in through Hills Plaza, zigzagging. And therefore, I fully support that. We definitely need traffic studies. We definitely need that drawbridge to remain down. However, with all due respect to someone that I admire and respect on this council, who's a very good lawyer, Councilwoman Klein, presented quite accurately the history. However, I disagree with her option of what goes on Geiko. Because what is presently the sector plan, which basically Geiko is asking that they be able to use except for the part of their property that goes along Friendship Boulevard, that if that is changed, it opens the possibility, the very real possibility, in my opinion, that more housing, higher housing structures can be put on what is presently planned as a low-story rental and lots of townhouses. Councilwoman Klein is absolutely correct. It's not going to do away with the Green Corridor that protects Brookdale. It's not going to do away with Brookdale Park. However, it does open up a new sector plan which can change what is presently a low-rise development, which is what Geiko was asking be extended. I feel that that would be a Russian roulette.

[01:22:57.07] - Speaker 1

We have, what's the saying? We have a bird in the hand is worth two in the Bush. If we try to get every tree saved, as opposed to as many as we can, we may end up with a lot more high

rises than we presently would have. Now, I do think we should be focused on areas that there is consensus, which is how we got the present sector plan by working with Geiko, not preventing them from coming and explaining and being able to debate and discuss. What the community must understand, with all due respect to my colleagues, is that Geiko and its representative were not able to come to either the development committee or to this full council and have an open and full discussion, the way we're having right now. Before the council, my colleagues voted to oppose the plan. Geiko wasn't to try to persuade us that it would be wisest to work things out with them, as we did for the present sector plan. Those four-story apartment houses were before we had full and open and consensus-related discussions with Geiko, those were going to be a lot taller. We worked things out.

[01:24:24.07] - Speaker 1

I think from what was decided by the staff just yesterday, which I don't think was mentioned, the staff of the planning board just yesterday released their recommendations, and their recommendation was to give Geiko the extension. I repeat, The staff, having heard already from this council and having heard from a lot of other people in the community and businesses, have agreed to give the extension with conditions And the conditions include just such discussions and consensus building as I would hope we can still do. So I find myself in the strange position of agreeing with the concepts of more green space and save the trees, but not wanting to risk having less of those. So I think that is my rebuttal. I'm not a lawyer, and Francine Klein has done an excellent job of presenting, I think, the Council's opinion, but I respectfully disagree with it. Thank you. Other Council members?

[01:25:46.01] - Speaker 3

I just have a few comments. I very much appreciate. It's been very, very difficult work understanding this plan and coming up with ideas on what is best for our community and working with people who have strongly held beliefs and different views. So I very much appreciate the time and effort people have put into this. I don't want to sugarcoat it. Geiko is very powerful in this county. They have tremendous political power. It doesn't surprise me that the planning board staff is recommending that, in essence, they get their way, at least at this point. I don't believe It's in our interest to help Geiko make more money now that will just make the housing more expensive, everything more expensive. I think it's appropriate to be skeptical. It's appropriate to consider the needs of our community first. I'm not saying this to counter anything anyone here has said, but I think we need to take our own interests first. I should add something that I failed to mention before. We did invite Geiko's lawyer to attend this meeting, and he declined the invitation.

[01:27:28.04] - Speaker 1

After we decided I would appreciate Council members waiting to be called and not talking over each other.

[01:27:38.07] - Speaker 3

So lots of work was done. I think we're ready for a vote unless someone else has comments. And I-. Yes. I hate to do this to you, Secretary, but would you mind reading the motion where we're authorizing issuance of a letter. Okay, can we ask Council member Klein again? I think Council member Klein.

[01:28:13.10] - Speaker 4

It It would be exactly the same.

[01:28:17.05] - Speaker 3

Okay. Do you want to take a pause and write it out really quickly?

[01:28:20.07] - Speaker 4

Yes, that would be very helpful.

[01:28:21.09] - Speaker 3

We will take a very quick break. Thank you.

[01:31:30.00] - Speaker 3

We'll probably need a new second, and then we'll be able to vote. Okay. Thank you for everyone's patience. Yes.

[01:31:35.17] - Speaker 4

I move to authorize a letter to the Montgomery County Planning Board from Mayor Schafer on behalf of the Village of Friendship Heights, concerning the need to maintain the green space in front of 5550 Friendship Boulevard and to perform traffic studies for the Geico and Sacks Fifth Avenue sites.

[01:31:56.22] - Speaker 3

I believe we've already had discussion She just made a new motion, and John seconded it. That's what I have. Okay. I believe we're ready to vote. All in favor of that motion, which is the issuance of a letter, raise your hand and say, Aye. Aye. I believe that's... I don't see... Oh, there's Allison. Okay, we're unanimous on that. Thank you very much, and thank you for your patience.

[01:32:30.25] - Speaker 4

I have a second motion. I understand. Yes. Okay. I make a motion to update the retention letter with the Village Land Use attorney, David Brown, to provide the Council with his legal advice on the sector plan.

[01:33:07.07] - Speaker 3

We have a motion and a second. Open to discussion.

[01:33:11.03] - Speaker 6

Just to clarify, this is in addition to- Yes, this is in addition because he was only retained to give us advice on Geiko.

[01:33:21.18] - Speaker 4

And much of what I read is as a result of his work educating me. And Now we need the same assistance with regard to the sector plan.

[01:33:39.08] - Speaker 3

Any more discussion or questions? Do we understand the motion? Which is obtaining additional legal advice from Dave Brown, but this time on the sector plan. That's a slight rewarding. Yes. All in favor say, Aye and raise their hands. I think that's unanimous. Thank you very much on that vote. Now we move to Finance Committee. Finance Committee Report, and then we'll move on to a vote on investment procedures, I think. Just the process. Okay.

[01:34:25.10] - Speaker 8

I just wanted to briefly mention some of the things that we've been working we're working on, the Treasurer's report this month includes an addition, a Village Investment and Operations Account Summary, so that we have a clear indication on a monthly basis of how our money is invested. We've also added a listing of monthly transactions. I'm currently working with Village

staff to revise the list to make the a little more readable and easier to understand. But basically, the list is also included with this monthly accounting report. The statements are part of an ongoing effort to streamline our accounting and finance systems and make the entire process more efficient and transparent. Other related initiatives in the pipeline, including upgrading the accounting system, streamlining the check signing process, developing a multi our capital plan, and that starts with pedestrian safety, which we've talked a lot about tonight, but we've also recently put out an RFP, a Request for Proposals, to do a comprehensive pedestrian and traffic safety study of the village, of all the intersections in the village. That's basically an update on the Finance Committee. The next item on the agenda is the Finance Committee at its last meeting in September, approved an investment procedure, which we're recommending for council approval, and I can go ahead and read that if that's appropriate.

[01:36:13.04] - Speaker 5

Is there anything that I think it is. Yes, it's number 3, and the document that's titled Village of Friendship Heights Investment Procedures, approved and It's in your view. It's in.

[01:36:30.28] - Speaker 3

Yeah, got it. I think it's helpful that we have it in front of us before you proceed, which I think I found mine. Have you found yours? Right here, it's under two. This one. Just wait one second. Sure. Everybody's on board here. Absolutely. Can we have it? Have you guys located it? Okay. Go ahead. Okay. The proposal, as I mentioned, previously approved by the Finance Committee and recommended to the Council for approval today is as follows. Village investment policy is explicit that management responsibility for the investment program is delegated to the Village Council Council, which shall establish written procedures for the operation of the investment program consistent with Village investment policy.

[01:37:39.27] - Speaker 8

Because Village investment policy is detailed and explicit in types and durations of investments allow. Investment of village funds is considered an administrative function. The village manager is designated under this procedure as custodian of investments and as such, authorized to manage village investment accounts, confer with the village's investment advisor, report on pending decisions to the Finance Committee and village council, and subject to approval by council, invest village funds in strict conformance with previously approved village investment policy and procedures. It's also recommended that the village manager should seek to ensure that original signed documents, including the e-signature documents, accurately reflect

information required to fully and accurately execute financial transactions. That's the recommended procedure.

[01:38:45.00] - Speaker 3

Do I understand correctly that the motion basically starts right here? Or is it to adopt this entire- It's really- That we're adopting all of number three? Yeah. Okay. So your motion is for the council to approve the review and approval process for investment decisions in the Village of Friendship Heights investment procedures? We have a motion and a second. Any discussion or questions? I don't see any. Ready for a vote. All in favor, raise your hand and say, Hi. All right. That looks unanimous to me. Thank you very much. I know that's a difficult and sometimes tedious language. Thank you. Policies and Procedures Committee, Council member Baisal. Thank you.

[01:40:05.11] - Speaker 8

The Policies and Procedures Committee met on October sixth to further consider policies required by the State of Maryland. We completed review of the open meetings regulations, and a copy can be found in the briefing book. The committee voted unanimously to recommend passage by the full council. The open meetings policy states that all meetings of the council and the council committees are open to the public, with the exception of personnel matters and legal advice. So given that, I'd like to offer the following motion. I move that the open meetings policy be adopted as presented. I'll second. Discussion or questions?

[01:41:05.07] - Speaker 3

I think people want to get out quickly, don't they? Okay. I think we're ready for a vote. All in favor of adopting this policy? Raise your hand and say, Aye. Aye. That looks unanimous. Again, thank you very much. We skip over to new business. I believe the village manager or assistant manager will Can you talk to us about snow removal and give an accurate prediction of how much snow we will have this winter.

[01:41:37.16] - Speaker 5

Yes, and not really. We issued an RFP for the snow removal contract. This is a three-year contract period, so it covers this coming winter and the next two after it. Mulheron Tree Experts is the incumbent bidder and contractor, and they've done an excellent job for a number of years, many years, actually, in the village. We received seven bids, and Mulheron is actually the lowest bid on nearly all of the pricing. There's a number of different hourly prices that comprise the proposal, and Mulheron is the low bidder overall. We're very happy to recommend Mulheron to

continue for another three years, and also to note that they have not raised their price since the last period. It's been at least six years now. It will have been six years with no increase, and probably even before that. We have notified them about the salt usage to restrict salt, which we did last year, and we will notify them again this year to make sure. But as we've noted, that's a little bit more. It's not a big issue with the buildings and the sidewalk than it is with the streets. But we are very happy to recommend Mulheron for approval for this contract.

[01:42:55.11] - Speaker 5

Is there a motion on that? Okay, we have a motion.

[01:43:03.17] - Speaker 6

Yeah, I move to accept the proposal from Mulheron Cree Experts for snow removal for the next three years.

[01:43:13.19] - Speaker 3

Council member Muller will I liked it. Thank you. Discussion, questions, comments? My only comment was I very much appreciate the spreadsheet that was in the Friday memo. It was easy to understand and clear.

[01:43:31.07] - Speaker 5

Thank you. Thank you. Credit to Jason for doing that.

[01:43:33.23] - Speaker 3

Thank you. All in favor of this motion? All right. That's unanimous. Again, thank you very much. This ends the open portion of our meeting. I just do have to mention we have been getting messages that people still cannot hear when they are at home. We will, and some people hear. One person walked out unable to hear. I don't want to say I hear you because that's like... But we will work on this. We're aware of the problem, and we'll try to find something that works better. Thank you. We will be having a closed meeting now, and Do you have a statement I am to read? Thank you very much. Okay. I have to make a motion, don't I? I make a motion to have a closed meeting at 8: 10 on October 14th, 2025. Which item under here? One. Number... Okay. To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals. We will also be approving minutes from prior closed meetings. I made the

motion to close the meeting, and Council member Klein second in it, and I believe it's a unanimous vote on this.

[01:45:54.20] - Speaker 3

Thank you for all who attended. Appreciate very much, and we're open to feedback. Thank you.