Village of Friendship Heights
November 9, 2026 Meeting Transcript

[00:01:29.02] - Speaker 1

Here, and I'm going to call the meeting to order. The first thing that we'll begin with— oh, we go down with the names. That's right.

[00:01:44.02] - Speaker 2

John Conlow.

[00:01:45.07] - Speaker 3

Allison Ault.

[00:01:46.13] - Speaker 4

Vic Basil.

[00:01:48.26] - Speaker 5

Roy Shafer.

[00:01:50.05] - Speaker 1

Francine Klein.

[00:01:52.07] - Speaker 3

Julie Anderson.

[00:01:53.21] - Speaker 4

Al Muller.

[00:01:55.27] - Speaker 1

Okay, we're going to start with the update on Page Park and the Red House from Jim Wilson, our project matter manager, who's attending virtually.

[00:02:11.26] - Speaker 6

All set. All right, thank you all. I'm sorry I couldn't be there in person. The Page Park— we are nearing the completion of the park. The primary remaining items is the installation of the handrails on the ramp that are required by ADA. Once we get that, we will have our final inspection by the engineer. Contractors indicated that the ramps and the handrails could be installed as early as next week, but they have to confirm that with their subcontractor. And hopefully we'll be hearing back in the next day or so. Once the rails are installed, we'll get inspection. And at that point, as soon as we get that, we will be able to reopen the park at that time. The grass seed has been installed. And all the landscaping that is there right now is— it needs to be established, but that does not prevent us from being able to open the park. But all these stormwater management and silt fences that are up will have to remain up until the grass is established. So, but we will be— the grass, the seed has been put down, it's been installed, and they'll just keep some fencing up around the grass areas so that we can be able to reopen the park.

[00:03:49.11] - Speaker 6

We're also working closely with the contractor to reopen the path to Somerset. And we should get that, you know, that will happen as soon as the handrails go in. The issue is there never were handrails. We could open it without handrails. However, we do know that it does not meet ADA, but you would be free to be able to open it, but you won't have the ADA-compliant handrails up at that time. So we're working as quickly as we can to open that up as well. Thank you. I don't know, Julian, if you had any other thoughts or comments about that.

[00:04:29.05] - Speaker 7

Back when this— back when this project began several years ago, we were allowed to keep that pathway open despite the non-ADA work on that path. At the very beginning, while the rest of the project was working, the county did allow us to do that. So I would like to get that path open even before the handrails are installed. And we just had a lot of questions and complaints from Somerset and Village residents. So we are working with the contractor to get that pathway open as soon as we can. And then the rest of the park would still be closed off. And then once the handrails are in, then the rest of the park opens up.

[00:05:12.26] - Speaker 1

Thank you. Questions or comments from the Council?

[00:05:21.19] - Speaker 8

Al? Jim, welcome. A few points on questions that have come up before. Have the sprinkler systems been or in the process of being reconnected? Do they know where all the grassy elements will be and will those be covered?

[00:05:43.26] - Speaker 6

Jim, did you hear the question? Yeah, yes, I did. Go ahead, Julian, you were going to answer.

[00:05:48.13] - Speaker 7

Yeah, I can take that because I did meet with an irrigation contractor that was recommended by the engineer, and we're waiting on a proposal. We want to move forward with that. Yes, they're going to reestablish the old system and extend it to the front of the park where there's going to be the additional plantings and where we did not have irrigation before. So that is in the works.

[00:06:12.25] - Speaker 8

And have there— has there been further, um, um, have, have signages been found that were discussed? I don't recall exactly what was decided, but there was discussion about prohibiting unleashed dogs and also where they might go specifically to protect the special— whatever they call those things that are protecting the runoffs, but also protecting any children in that area. Have those been looked at? And also, I think we discussed no smoking signs.

[00:07:00.27] - Speaker 3

I'll chime in here.

[00:07:02.22] - Speaker 8

So right now what the council has agreed to is the stands that have the dog bags and the trash receptacles, and on those signs we will have a reminder about leash and picking up after your pet. There is a good question if you could include a little no smoking sign on there. We probably can't hear you. Sorry, there is an option of perhaps we could put a no smoking sign on there. It's not required to post that in public areas, so in the past we've said that we, we don't need to include that at the park.

[00:07:38.01] - Speaker 3

The issue that was brought up at the last park meeting was that a lot of the dog traffic comes from that back path that Jim said we're going to open sooner rather than later, so we are

intending on placing a dog bag receptacle in and the appropriate signage there at the back pathway as well, as opposed to just in the front.

[00:07:57.28] - Speaker 8

A question, could there be, in addition, in addition to that, which I fully support, could there be small reminder signs, especially, especially near the, the basins, but more especially near the children's play area? I'm really concerned the dogs with or without children in there are going to go in. Their owners are not— the dogs can't read the signs, but the owners do.

[00:08:26.20] - Speaker 3

The discussion right now, it's still under discussion, and I would say, you know, all of us are in agreement that none of us want dog excrement in the park. It is a very small park. There's a lot of debate as to whether these signs will curb any owner activity. And also just having too many signs in a small park. So we're still considering all of these things. We're, we're not against signage. The question, of course, is the utility of the signage and will it matter. So just know that everyone is well aware of the dog concerns, and, and we do want to try— I'm going to do my best to verbally remind people when I'm there personally, but we're still looking at all of the signing options.

[00:09:09.25] - Speaker 8

And just a final Follow-up on the smoking. I don't think you were on the council, and you might not have been at the meeting. There is actually a county law that within a certain number of feet from a play area— and this is not a full-fledged playground, but it's still a play area— there's not supposed to be any smoking, and there needs to be some sort of signage. That's in the Montgomery County law.

[00:09:35.25] - Speaker 3

We'll take a look at that. As far as I knew, there was no I don't know if there's a requirement for a sign, but of course there is no smoking in that area. But we'll take a look into it. I'll take a note.

[00:09:43.10] - Speaker 8

Yeah, thank you.

[00:09:44.04] - Speaker 5

I, I looked into that and I could not find a requirement for a sign on— in a public park for, uh, around the playground. There are some restrictions if it's a, uh, a playground in a multi-family dwelling or even a private dwelling where several families have access. So I really did look into it and I, I couldn't find anything.

[00:10:05.04] - Speaker 8

anything about a public park. With all due respect, when I brought it up, I brought copies and distributed it to each one of the council members. So I don't know what you're referring to, but it was— well, I didn't bring it tonight because I already brought it once, and I thought it was significant enough that I made copies.

[00:10:27.13] - Speaker 7

Just—

[00:10:28.06] - Speaker 1

well, let's, um, let's get another copy of that, Al. It would be helpful if you could remind us of what that is. And I know that at the Elizabeth, which Al was a champion of no smoking, not only in the building and in our individual, you know, units, but also around the building proper. And so you can't smoke on the terraces and you can't smoke in the arcade. And we find people who have done that. So I understand I understand your seriousness about the problem, and we certainly don't want people smoking in the park. So let's make sure that we comply with the county requirements and, um, and take the steps that we need to.

[00:11:15.18] - Speaker 8

Just a gentle reminder, all the buildings, not just the Elizabeth, are officially no smoking as far as I know now. All of the buildings. The office buildings, the rental buildings, and the condominiums, which means people are still smoking. Some of them have stopped finally, but they're looking for places to smoke. And you can find some of those places. Try sitting on the bench over here right near the center. You'll see a whole bunch of cigarette butts. The same in other places that are not officially government property. So I, I would hope— well, I will try to get a copy again and urge council members to look and see what the law is. It's, I believe, 25 feet from a play area with children, no smoking.

[00:12:12.21] - Speaker 7

Julian, just a quick point on the dog bag dispenser station. It does say on the dispenser to please pick up after your dog. It does not say anything about leashes or smoking or anything, so that would be a separate sign. But the dispenser itself says pick up after your dog, you know, prominently. And so we have ordered one of those for, for the park.

[00:12:39.16] - Speaker 1

Any other questions for Jim on Page Park? Hey, Jim, you want to give us a report now on the Red House?

[00:12:49.26] - Speaker 6

Sure. Thank you. The Red House, the contractor had submitted the revision. The county required structural revisions for the foundation of the porch. They had comments on it, and the engineers have revised their comments, and they've gone back to the county, and we're currently waiting for that to be approved. Every— the contractor is very, very diligent in pursuing and pushing that along because they want to get done just as much as anybody does. So, but we can't— as soon as we get that permit, then we can proceed with the work. And the work is, you know, maybe a week or so. It's going to take a week or 10 days to do the work. It won't take that long. On a separate note, that the tenant that has engaged another architect on their to help them expedite their approval process and their permit for the renovation that they need to do. Once they receive their permit, they think that they have about 2 months to complete their work. So they are in the, in the grinds of getting county approvals as well.

[00:13:59.15] - Speaker 1

That's great. Great to hear they've got an architect Al?

[00:14:04.15] - Speaker 8

Thank you. With the help of Julian, we did search through a lot of village photos and maps. When we finally got this tenant, I had spoken to them. They're very excited about having their business in a historic house. They've named it after the, the builder. So it'll be Pyle's Provisions. They have gotten their license, but they were interested in having anything historic that we could loan them. And with the help of Julian, we have found a few things, actually not where they're being stored, but in our conference room itself where nobody sees them anyway. So we don't know whether they will— They're not going to see them. Like them, whether they'll have a wall or someplace that they could have. But we have the original copy of the original deed from the shoemakers who owned all of this land, including where we're sitting tonight. And for history

buffs, it can add a little bit of historicness to the house. So that also is I'm awaiting whenever Jim comes down and Julian can show him and see what he thinks of it.

[00:15:27.24] - Speaker 1

Thank you. Anyone else have any questions about this? Okay. Yes, ma'am.

[00:15:38.01] - Speaker 9

My name is Pat Donovan. I live at 4620. I had a couple of questions for Jim about Page Park. May I ask them now or do you want me to—

[00:15:46.17] - Speaker 1

Yes, I see you're also on the list. Was that— is this the same thing you wanted to talk about?

[00:15:52.14] - Speaker 9

Well, there's one other thing, but—

[00:15:54.16] - Speaker 1

Okay, so let's just deal with Page Park. Yeah, Page Park.

[00:15:58.17] - Speaker 9

Jim, I understand that there are going to be a couple of trees planted in the front of the park this fall. They're waiting for delivery, I guess. Is there any plan Either in the fall or in the spring, to plant on the right side of the path where there used to be plantings up near 4615 because right now a lot of it is just dirt, and also in the lawn area in front of the big oak trees where you've now planted grass seed. There are a couple of random stones that are left over from the old design. Is there any plan?

[00:16:45.13] - Speaker 6

I don't believe there's anything to the right of the path. That would just— that should also go back as anything that was disturbed should be going back as turf or seed. Okay. And I'm not familiar with the— it is a good question, though. I think it probably is worth asking, making sure the landscape architect— that nobody's overlooked something that should be there. Okay. But the other area, I'm not— you're talking about in the back?

[00:17:16.02] - Speaker 9

Well, I'm talking about on the left side of the big circle where the oak tree, those big oak trees are. It's now all seated apparently. There is one bench back there, but now it's all seated. But there are a couple of, you know, sort of big rocks that were part of the original new landscaping that are still there, just randomly. I just wondered if you had a plan for that or there was a plan for that.

[00:17:49.25] - Speaker 6

Yeah, I know what you're talking about. I'd have to look back at the original plan, see what was happening there. Julian, we should probably talk when we meet with landscape architects when they're doing their final inspections.

[00:18:05.06] - Speaker 9

Okay. I don't think they have seeded the area on the right up by the building, which will just be mud if they don't do something with it. I think that's just sitting there as dirt now. Yeah. Yeah. Anyway.

[00:18:21.09] - Speaker 6

I agree.

[00:18:22.04] - Speaker 9

Okay.

[00:18:22.19] - Speaker 6

I agree.

[00:18:23.10] - Speaker 9

And I will just say, since I look out on Page Park, people are quite good about picking up after their dogs. You rarely see a dog that doesn't, you know, somebody who doesn't do that. They just aren't so good about letting dogs go anywhere they want to go, and that will be a problem for the storage pools.

[00:18:46.12] - Speaker 6

And a note about the bioretention spaces. The bioretention spaces are you as the owner and the kind of the keeper of that park. you're required to keep those plants healthy in those bioretention areas. So, you know, if animals are in there, whatever it is, you're gonna have to— you're gonna be required by the county to replant. So you won't be having it look run down or not healthy. Thank you. is, is not actually an option for the village.

[00:19:29.26] - Speaker 1

Good points. Thank you very much. Um, I think Lois, you could turn that back.

[00:19:34.23] - Speaker 10

Yes, thank you, Francine. I'm sorry. Thank you, Jim, for those comments.

[00:19:39.04] - Speaker 11

I pulled off of the—

[00:19:42.23] - Speaker 10

Lois Forrester from 4620 North Park. But I, um, but I want to thank Jim for those last points. I pulled off— it's off the Montgomery County website. And yes, Roy, I'm going to be very good tonight. Sweet. Sweet, kind of. But I want to share with you— it's on the backside— the maintenance requirements for these bioswales so that you all have them, so you know what Jim just said. They have to be maintained. You cannot let erosion go in there, et cetera. So I want to share this with you. I'm going to leave this when I've finished. But I guess I don't agree that the park should be open. I think the pathway, the fencing that's around, should be cut in such a— should be put along there in such a way that the people from Somerset can walk up and around. Thank you. Because I don't know if you're going to let— allow people to walk on that straw. I didn't quite understand what you said, Jim, about the— about that. When the park opens, would you allow people walking on the straw that's there where it was seeded?

[00:21:02.18] - Speaker 6

No, they— the contractor will— the contractor is obligated to Take care of and do what they need to do to have a lawn established so that there is no erosion that can take place. If the community will, he needs to put fencing around that so that we stay off it, because if the community stays off, if the community is walking on all the newly planted seed and hopefully young grass, and we kill it, he's going to say it's not my fault and now it's yours and now you

have to deal with it. Okay. Just wanted to confirm. He's responsible to make it be grass. And we have to stay off of it until it becomes grass. All right.

[00:21:45.13] - Speaker 10

But maybe, Jim, you did not see that park when it was first opened the very first time and all the plantings. When you first enter the park on the right next to 4615, it was beautiful, just gorgeous plantings. And it was all planted. And if that's left that way, I really would not want— I would like the plantings to go back. They're better erosion control than the grass because that'll wear away. And I've seen the erosion. I've got pictures of the erosion. When it rains hard, it just pours off and down the sidewalk and into our stream. So hopefully somebody has a picture of what it looked like when it first opened. It was gorgeous on the right side next to 4615. I know.

[00:22:36.20] - Speaker 1

Can you describe what sort of plants were there?

[00:22:40.19] - Speaker 10

There were native grasses. The larger plants are dogwood, twig dogwoods. They're more of an ornamental, but they are all native. There were flowers that were blooming. It was all filled. It was literally filled with plantings until the dog owners allowed their dogs and kept killing off inch by inch all the plants that were there on the right. Particularly the small plants.

[00:23:11.27] - Speaker 9

You can't plant little plants there. They'd have to be bigger ones.

[00:23:16.07] - Speaker 10

Well, even the larger grasses, the grasses that came up like this in the summer kind of die back a little bit in the fall or in the winter especially. I mean, they were all killed off.

[00:23:28.18] - Speaker 8

And the larger plants. They also had, remember, all that damage on 4615, the walls, and they had construction and they had other things.

[00:23:37.14] - Speaker 10

It didn't touch it. It did not touch that, not at all. You can't blame it on them. I watched. I look right over that park. I watched. It did not. They did not there.

[00:23:49.04] - Speaker 6

Partly they did. It was removed a good bit. And it's a conversation that we've been having with the engineers of exactly what are their— what their documents call for. So that's— I know what you're referring to. I know what you're talking about there. And, you know, just taking that, taking plants down and putting grass back is not necessarily the right answer in all the locations.

[00:24:17.21] - Speaker 10

So it needs to be looked into.

[00:24:20.02] - Speaker 6

We're having the review. We've asked for the engineers to come out and do their— even though the contractor is not 100% finished, we did ask the engineer and the landscape architects to come out and do a preliminary kind of a pre- inspection walkthrough, just because, you know, if there's things they need to get done, they need to get them done now.

[00:24:39.24] - Speaker 10

So, um, I'll try to find my pictures and send them to you, Jim.

[00:24:44.10] - Speaker 6

That'd be helpful. Thank you.

[00:24:46.06] - Speaker 1

If you could—

[00:24:46.21] - Speaker 8

We have original pictures of what the original plantings were from the original contractor. Right.

[00:24:54.21] - Speaker 10

Share with— share that if you have it. I don't have that, obviously. Finally, my last point—

[00:25:00.12] - Speaker 1

I just want to say, Jim, that I want to make sure that the council and, and Julie, as head of the Parks Committee, that she gets this information on what the plan is for the right side of the park. That's very important.

[00:25:20.16] - Speaker 6

Absolutely. Thank you.

[00:25:22.29] - Speaker 10

Okay, then, Jim, I have a question. You got it blocked off, but it is exposed to the so-called social path behind— what's your building? 4701. 4701. There's quite a bit of erosion behind that, but between that building and where you have it all kind of fenced off with the black fencing, That northwest corner of Page Park, what do you plan to do with that? I'm sorry, the plants missing because dogs have been back there. I ran out of ink, so I apologize. I don't have. I ran out of printer's ink tonight.

[00:26:19.16] - Speaker 1

Yeah, I mean, that, that's the area that's, uh, somewhat near the play area, right?

[00:26:26.28] - Speaker 10

It's, it's, it's in the northwest corner of that play area.

[00:26:30.08] - Speaker 1

Yeah.

[00:26:31.24] - Speaker 10

And there, that the dogs have been going in there and probably plants. There used to be a path that went around there and hooked up. What's the plan for that area? And I'll just leave it as a question now because it needs to be studied between Jim, the landscaper, and you all.

[00:26:49.01] - Speaker 1

Yes.

[00:26:49.16] - Speaker 10

Okay.

[00:26:50.07] - Speaker 1

Yes.

[00:26:50.20] - Speaker 10

The other concern I raised the other day at the meeting with grounds— the grounds— Parks and Grounds was the step-offs that go into the woods. Those are not my comments, quote unquote. How— what you have back there off the step-offs that go to the social path is severe erosion. And I want to share these pictures with you. I'll start with the head of the parks, and you can share this. Is that our property? It is our property. Here's the step-off. You can see You can see the amount of erosion.

[00:27:38.08] - Speaker 12

Here's where— here's where it is.

[00:27:41.02] - Speaker 10

It's all erosion here.

[00:27:42.12] - Speaker 3

So you can see we—

[00:27:44.09] - Speaker 10

bare tree, you're going to lose those trees.

[00:27:46.14] - Speaker 3

We understand. Yeah, we, we also have walked this area.

[00:27:49.20] - Speaker 10

And, um, here's the second picture of the second walk-off from that used to step off from somewhere that was— and this too is going into the erosion. So And behind your building, it's kind of—

[00:28:07.16] - Speaker 1

Meaning 4701. Yeah. Yeah. We appreciate—

[00:28:11.16] - Speaker 10

I'm an expert in this because I've done floodplain management for 32 years. I've looked at erosion every time I went to a disaster site. I know what I'm talking about. That is why I wanted to get together with Roy and talk to Somerset, the mayor, and get the conservation, the tree overlay people out there to examine this area, potentially to cut it off. It's a mess back there erosion-wise.

[00:28:38.22] - Speaker 6

So with that—

[00:28:40.12] - Speaker 10

Yeah, go ahead, Jim, or somebody.

[00:28:42.27] - Speaker 6

Yeah, I was just going to say that, um, the reason we had to put our fences around the areas that we were disturbing was so that we didn't cause anything else to get worse. What you're talking about is I believe is beyond— was outside of our project. It's not saying that it's not something that is in need of attention.

[00:29:01.26] - Speaker 10

Some of it needs— right off the step-offs, just shortly beyond where the playground is going to be, that wall. And there's 2 paths that were nicely put in to nowhere, and that nowhere has created substantial erosion. And it's affecting the trees. And that I will share with the overlay people, but I think it is on the park's property. It would be nice to put some stakes there that clearly mark the park. And, um, I am going to monitor this park all winter, uh, to make sure that things aren't getting worse. But I do want to leave with you—

[00:29:44.07] - Speaker 3

Before, before you, I'd like to comment on that. So the area that— the area that— okay, Lois. It's to the right of that, sir. To the right of it? It's to the right of that.

[00:30:05.16] - Speaker 1

Okay, Lois. First, I want to thank you, and I know you have tremendous expertise in this area, and I really appreciate it. I appreciate the I appreciate the fact that you're going to be monitoring the park over the winter and letting us know what you see. You don't have to wait till the winter is over. No, I don't plan on it.

[00:30:25.04] - Speaker 10

But I, I would like to—

[00:30:26.03] - Speaker 1

I think you are, but I wanted to make sure that we had a common understanding that you'll let us know. Julie, I think— and I would like to let our council member respond to what you've said now. Julie, did you want to say something? Please.

[00:30:38.04] - Speaker 3

Yeah, thank you. I also fully agree. None of us want erosion, just like none of us want damage from dogs. So we're all on the same page, so to speak, with Page Park. And we do want to control anything that's going to damage the forest, the woods. The idea of this park is it's a green space that should be protected. So we're aligned. So my request would be that rather than come here and spring this on us in this manner, that you would engage with You can engage with me— wait, I'm not done. I would like you to share with me any of your conservation findings and that information because I would love to learn more about it. Obviously you're an expert in this area. Thank you for sharing it, and I hope you continue to come here with the common goal of us solving the problem together.

[00:31:25.29] - Speaker 10

I have not sprung this on you. I have talked to board members—

[00:31:31.13] - Speaker 3

You have not spoken to me, and I'm new, so I'm asking I will continue to engage with you.

[00:31:36.08] - Speaker 10

If you have a card to reach out, or if you're online now, I can catch your email address. But I do plan on keeping— but I do want to engage with the mayor from Somerset, with somebody from the council, and I believe Roy volunteered for that. I'll keep you in line— in mind with— if I can get that going with the tree overlay person to come out and examine the site. I truly want that, um, that social path closed. It's just not right to have that amount of erosion back there. Thank you very much.

[00:32:14.03] - Speaker 1

Thank you, Louis. Uh, all right, Jim, are you, uh— did you want to speak about the park, Page Park, where— yes, please.

[00:32:26.27] - Speaker 6

I, I think I'm— I think I said what I needed to say.

[00:32:31.25] - Speaker 1

Now, Jim, we have one more resident speaking.

[00:32:35.01] - Speaker 4

Yeah, Bobby Pastron, 4701 Willett Avenue. It wasn't difficult, in support of Councilmember Muller's suggestion about smoking in the park, to do a quick search to see what the rules are, and signage is legally required to notify the public. About restrictions in public places, including public parks. It's Section 24-9 of the Montgomery County Code. There's specific legal language that needs to be included, or symbols that can be used in place of that. So I speak in favor of the recommendation. I've walked through that park in its current incarnation and previously. People smoke in there all the time. There is a need to have signage, and we can have our own. And I have, Councilmember Anderson, like you, when I was on council, made it my business to tell people that it was closed, that they couldn't smoke, that the dogs had to be on a leash. There needs to be signage because the other thing that I did was I asked our own county police officers to enforce the law. in the park. And when I first talked to them about it, they said, well, there's no signage there about it. But after they looked up the rules, they would themselves go and talk to people who were not following the rules in the park.

[00:34:01.01] - Speaker 4

And people won't follow the rules and they don't follow the rules. So I want to compliment Councilmember Muller for being persistent on this issue. He has. It's a longtime issue of his.

Thank you. And Councilmember Anderson, I look forward to your attention to the signage issues also. It sounds as though you're willing to give some attention to this and make sure that the simple-to-find requirements for signage in the park are posted. Thanks.

[00:34:30.18] - Speaker 5

Can you share that section of the code with me?

[00:34:33.00] - Speaker 4

I just did.

[00:34:33.26] - Speaker 5

Well, could you send it to me?

[00:34:35.28] - Speaker 4

No, I won't. I will ask you to do the search. because these have been distributed to you already. Okay. And, and, uh, Mayor Schaefer, your response is simply consistent with the manner in which you have conducted yourself as a council member and as a mayor. I gave you the section. You are perfectly competent to look it up yourself. Nobody needs to provide you with anything else. Thank you.

[00:35:05.06] - Speaker 10

One last question, or one last comment on the sign. I would really like the sign to read— because I've gone to a lot of parks and it's often said, um, something like pick up after your dog and, and on leash, it's the law. So whatever sign you get, it would be great if we could add it's the law, because Montgomery County And I believe you have law— a law on the books regarding dogs specify that dogs have to be on leash. So I hope the signs say that so people understand, because it is the law.

[00:35:44.22] - Speaker 1

Okay. Anything else in the audience about the Page Park or the Red House? Anything else on the council? All right, this topic is now closed. Thank you very much, Jim. We appreciate it.

[00:36:03.14] - Speaker 6

Thank you all.

[00:36:04.09] - Speaker 1

The next thing on the agenda is chair's announcement. I don't have any announcements, so we can move on to the next, which is general counsel— general comments from the public to the council. Patricia Canessa.

[00:36:24.14] - Speaker 13

Good afternoon. Yes, I am Patricia Canessa. I live in the Willowby, 5500 Friendship Boulevard. I have lived in this community for 3 years already, and I came here for 2 things. One is a challenge, and the other one is a problem. The first one in the challenge is in reality I have done many, many testimonies in the past. And I stopped to come because I am always finding that there is no response to testimonies. Okay? Many times they don't have— the council doesn't take even the courtesy of sending a note back saying, we assigned your question to blah, blah, or we found the information is already running. I think that this type of community engagement in which people will have the goodwill to come here and give you feedback about this community needs to be responded in some way, or immediately during the council session, or in the future when you find a response to those concerns. You have our names in the, in the minutes. You have the way to find that. So I think that that's the challenge. The second one is just a problem. On Wheeler Avenue, there is 3 or 4 passing opportunities for people walking from one side to the other of the street.

[00:37:49.24] - Speaker 13

They just built one that is exactly after a curve. So you come from River Road, you enter into Willard, and not in the curve itself, but immediately after the curve, you have a passing that is new one and that was recently built. What's the problem with that is that the 2-lane becomes 1 lane for large cars, for trucks, for, for any kind of vehicle that comes. It's extremely dangerous. It's extremely dangerous because for people that doesn't know the neighborhood, doesn't know when they need to stop behind or to slow down looking for the possibility of people crossing the streets. Thank you. and having the permission to do it. Yes, because we need to stop, but you don't have a space to stop, and the curb doesn't allow you to turn either. So large cars usually will go on top of the sidewalk in order to enter into the larger Wheeler Avenue. So my request is somebody can check on that and look in the possibility of modifying that entrance that is extremely dangerous and we'll see accidents pretty soon. Thank you.

[00:39:15.05] - Speaker 1

John, are you following this issue?

[00:39:19.06] - Speaker 2

No, but I will follow up and make sure I understand it and respond to it.

[00:39:24.11] - Speaker 1

Thank you very much. I appreciate it. And thank you for your comments.

[00:39:27.25] - Speaker 8

Madam Chair?

[00:39:28.24] - Speaker 1

Yes.

[00:39:30.18] - Speaker 8

Patricia, just so you know, the suggestion originally was made by the county's streets and engineering department, and they came down here and their expertise was explained to us. So we didn't initiate that, but they, they were responding to some questions from residents who were crossing the street, and it was not— it was dangerous for them. And they came up with that specific plan that you see. And we did look at it, and they did invite us, and we had a meeting thanks to Mr. Conlow.

[00:40:10.06] - Speaker 13

I think that might be reasonable. The fact that we want to have more people crossing safely the street is the location where the decision was made.

[00:40:19.27] - Speaker 6

And you need to drive there in order to understand what the hell is going on here, you know, especially coming people at night. There is no yellow over the border either, so you cannot anticipate that there is a turn there.

[00:40:36.03] - Speaker 13

And certainly, if we have open space for people to walk to the other side of the street, they need to have the confidence that they can cross when they are coming. That is going to be very

dangerous. I can tell you that. And thank you, Francine, for changing the pace of our conversation, and thank you for your leadership.

[00:40:58.18] - Speaker 6

I really congratulate you for your position.

[00:41:09.29] - Speaker 14

Excuse me.

[00:41:11.25] - Speaker 4

Madam Chairwoman, thank you for the opportunity to make some, you know, some points here.

[00:41:19.20] - Speaker 14

I believe that There's only 2 people in this room that have attended more meetings at this council than I, and that's Dr. Muller and Julian, our outstanding mayor. Over the years, when they're—

[00:41:40.20] - Speaker 6

when the raises for our employees come up, the council would meet and review the reports and so forth on the various employees.

[00:41:52.05] - Speaker 7

And the council did, in my view, a good job of that. 3.5 years ago, council that was seated then, I think the only person left from that is Mr.

[00:42:03.23] - Speaker 14

Schaefer, didn't believe that the council at that time was qualified to make those decisions and spent $25,000 having a consultant review what we'd been doing for many years.

[00:42:22.14] - Speaker 7

I think it was a big waste of money.

[00:42:25.13] - Speaker 14

And for our newest member, and maybe some of you other new members that maybe haven't been involved in that process, I'll tell you what I told Mr. Schaefer and that council then. 7 people up sitting up there, between you, you have about 450 years of life experience. And if you can't figure out what's a decent raise in a respectable way for our employees, maybe you shouldn't be sitting up there. So to our newest—

[00:42:55.04] - Speaker 7

to our newest member and other members that may have—

[00:42:57.21] - Speaker 14

weren't involved in that, that's my suggestion.

[00:43:02.04] - Speaker 6

And I hope that when they got the report back 3 and a half years ago, they didn't like it.

[00:43:09.15] - Speaker 14

So they drug their feet in implementing what they pushed to have done for $25,000. They drug their feet and treated our staff very disrespectfully. And so that's what I don't want to see happen again as they're— as the consideration for raises comes around this year. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you again, Madam Chair, for allowing us to spend the time that you've absolutely given to people, because this is something new. Thank you.

[00:43:47.00] - Speaker 6

Thank you.

[00:43:50.26] - Speaker 9

Pat Donovan. Hi, Pat Donovan, 4620. I noticed in the agenda before I came up that You're going to talk about a name change for Page Park, and I would just say 2 things.

[00:44:05.25] - Speaker 6

I don't think there's any need to change the name, and I know it at the—

[00:44:11.21] - Speaker 9

not this most recent Parks and Grounds meeting, but at the one before, a couple of—

[00:44:17.14] - Speaker 6

2 or 3 weeks ago, there was a discussion about it and a proposal to name it Friendship Park.

[00:44:25.08] - Speaker 9

Maybe you discussed it after I left that meeting, but The new GEICO property is gonna be called Friendship Commons. The last thing we need is to change Page Park to Friendship Park and it's all sort of glommed together. So I wouldn't support that either. But I think there's enough to do with Page Park. Let's get it open and not worry about the name at this point would be my view. Hear, hear.

[00:44:55.22] - Speaker 1

Is there any comment on the question of the name? Is there— has there been any discussion about that in the public?

[00:45:07.22] - Speaker 3

It's interesting that, you know, certain people show up and voice their opinions here, but we also do hear opinions elsewhere. So perhaps we should forgive my newness with regard to that first meeting. It's just a discussion and a suggestion, but one person may say, I don't want to change it, I want to keep it Page, and another person says, I want to change it. So if we choose to move forward in any way, it would— we've decided that it would be through real community engagement, whether it's a survey or a contest for, you know, people to name it, and by all means, the option of keeping it as Page will be one of the options. So it was just a recognition that there's a lot of different voices and our only job here is to represent— That's true. The entire community and we're trying to do the best we can. But in recognizing that there is more than one voice, we are talking about the idea of either holding a survey or a contest. And again, there's no agenda by the council people to do one thing or the other. So I do appreciate that, and friendship is getting quite common, so I appreciate that as well.

[00:46:17.27] - Speaker 3

And it was more, you know, the idea of it was that we are trying to, I don't want to say erase the negative past, but to make it a joyous opening. Everyone wants this park open. Everyone wants it to be a great green space, and we just thought that we could, you know, make a fresh start.

Because we had heard some requests to change the name. But there is no decision made or anything, and we'll engage the community.

[00:46:46.29] - Speaker 8

Madam Chair, I reserve my comments for when the item is discussed under new business. Thank you.

[00:46:53.06] - Speaker 5

Yeah, let me just add, because you, you made a comment, get the park open. We agree with that. Any discussion about changing the name is on a completely separate track from opening the park. So one will not hold up the other. I just want to be clear on that. Okay.

[00:47:14.04] - Speaker 1

Lois, did you have anything else?

[00:47:18.05] - Speaker 10

I'm really burning over— really burning over the fact that you're going to open the park, but maybe with the fencing around the straw, that will limit that back area. Eliminate that back area where people can jump off, because I would prefer some kind of permanent fence behind those step-offs where the erosion has started with the trees, as you can see. So I don't know, I, I really, you know, you're going to open the park, you're going to open the park, but how much—

[00:47:50.19] - Speaker 6

if it's gonna—

[00:47:51.13] - Speaker 10

is it gonna really be open?

[00:47:53.09] - Speaker 6

And why not wait till the winter's over? Because, you know, with the mud and all the other stuff that comes with the plantings, you can't—

[00:48:02.14] - Speaker 10

it's kind of getting late to be planting anything, like on the—

[00:48:05.29] - Speaker 7

at 4615, next to that wall.

[00:48:11.13] - Speaker 10

So I wish you could hold off till spring and get it open when the plantings are in. But that's your job, not mine.

[00:48:21.29] - Speaker 1

Thank you. Village Manager's report is next.

[00:48:34.27] - Speaker 7

Just a few items. Uh, first of all, we're happy to announce we have the electric vehicle charging station up and running behind the house that the Village owns at 4602 North Park. There's a small lot back there and there's an EV station that technically can handle 2 cars at once. It's a single station with 2 pumps, and I understand you have to download an app and then it'll show you where to go. We are— we've ordered a sign. We don't have it in place yet. We're going to have a sign that restricts parking there to only while charging, which is a standard sign that's in place in other stations. This coming Monday, the 16th of November, it's 7 PM, we're going to have an emergency preparedness program here at the Village Center. We encourage residents to attend. It's going to be the County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness will be here to provide tips and guidance on how to prepare for emergencies. So we are putting out some communications on that. And speaking of communications, we encourage all residents to sign up for the alert system that we have. It's called Regroup. And it's the main way that we push out notices and alerts to the residents, whether it be programming at the center, council meetings, committee meetings, sector plan-related issues, development issues, all the things that are going on, we're pushing out to the residents with this one tool.

[00:50:06.07] - Speaker 7

And you can choose between email, text, and phone calls. And you can sign up for whichever type of announcements you want, and you can make modifications at any time. But we're having a lot of success reaching residents, but there's still a lot of folks here that have not signed up. So we're going to continue to put out reminders and encouragement for people to sign up for this system. Thank you.

[00:50:30.23] - Speaker 1

Yeah, Julian, how many folks have signed up?

[00:50:36.01] - Speaker 7

Just about 1,000, which is 20% of our total population. It's a lot, it's a lot higher than the old-fashioned email network that we used to have. So we are— we've had some good response to it.

[00:50:50.22] - Speaker 1

Yeah, I, I hope more people sign up, and I thank you for reminding folks that they should. It is true that you can get either a text or a phone call or an email, all 3, or just one. So that's completely up to you how you want to get your messages. But especially now with the development issues and our need to convey information to folks and in general to let them know not only about the programming but whether we have any surveys or JotForm letters that we might want to encourage people to sign to elected officials, send to elected officials. It is such a handy method for the community to mobilize on issues that are of common importance. And I see that we have some— I know we have some new residents here tonight. And Nancy, if you haven't signed up yet, It's an easy thing to do, and I really appreciate everyone who does. So thanks very much, Julian, for reminding us. Al?

[00:52:06.13] - Speaker 8

Thank you, Madam Chair. Julian, I would urge you not to presume the 1,000 people are all from the Village. Quite the opposite. I think a large plurality, perhaps even a majority of those people or from elsewhere. We get people all the time that come to our various conferences, lectures, movies, committee meetings. The current events that I co-chair has maybe 30 or 40% of its very large membership people come from the District of Columbia, Somerset, Chevy Chase, People that come to events here sign up because they need even more than our residents to know what's going on. And this is something, Madam Chair, when you have county council members that come down here, remind them we're not just taxpayers to the county. We provide services to their constituents. And many of them don't even live here. And we don't charge people for coming to all these things, these wonderful things. No other community that I know of has something like this. None. And we should be proud of that. And if the chair of the Park and Planning Board thinks we are a village that's deteriorating, he needs to come down here and see where a lot of people are using our center.

[00:53:41.21] - Speaker 8

that don't live here and are delighted to see what a community has done. We built this place and we staff it and we're proud of it. And maybe Park and Planning isn't proud of it, but if we had a chance, I think we would vote them all out of office. Right on.

[00:53:59.08] - Speaker 1

Thank you, Al. I agree with your sentiments. Anything else, Julian?

[00:54:11.15] - Speaker 7

No, I was just asking you to please turn your microphone on. Thank you.

[00:54:16.06] - Speaker 3

Could I ask Julian one question? Will the, will the charging stations be available for people outside of Friendship Heights, or do you have to be a resident?

[00:54:27.05] - Speaker 7

No, they're available to the general public. Yep.

[00:54:30.28] - Speaker 9

And are you going to put an announcement in Yes.

[00:54:35.23] - Speaker 1

Yes. Thanks. We hear now from our mayor, Rory Shafer. Thank you.

[00:54:40.24] - Speaker 5

Thanks. So, well, we're running a little behind, so I'll try to edit this. But I wanted to use my time to comment on some of the questions and comments made at prior meetings. With regard to the charging stations, we've had a lot of conversations about who can use it, and if we find that it's being excessively used by people not of the village. We, we have options like you buy a sticker and we patrol and only people with the sticker, and it creates some revenue. It sort of has the people using it paying towards it. So we are, we are going to monitor the usage and, and see what happens. Some of the other questions raised last month, there was a suggestion that we consider revising the bylaws That request didn't come with any actual bylaws they wanted to

see changed, but I will comment that we, we don't revise bylaws on a schedule. It's an ongoing process. In fact, Mr. Pestrunk, who made that suggestion, during the last council proposed changing 20 bylaws. Some were administrative, some were very substantial, but the council took those up and, and made the decision. We made some changes.

[00:55:52.21] - Speaker 5

Thank you. During this council, Councilmember Muller proposed adding a bylaw. We took that up and voted on that. So there's no— we're always open to tweaking bylaws, hearing suggestions. I will point out, though, that revising bylaws requires a 2/3 majority, which for us is 5 votes. And it's 5 votes of the full council. So if we don't have a quorum, or if we barely have a quorum, it's still 5 votes. And there was also a suggestion that we consider becoming a municipality, and that's something that gets mentioned from time to time. I don't think any council member has actually proposed that for 10 years, 20 years. It's quite a long time. But I, I have had those discussions with, with people. It's not something that I would try to move at this point because it's my understanding that To do that, you need a couple of things which are not very likely to happen. You need approval by the state legislature. Is it county or state? Okay. County legislature, which I've been told is not very likely. You also need a supermajority of residents to vote in favor. Is it 2/3 or 3/4?

[00:57:08.17] - Speaker 7

You need a certain percentage to sign a petition to initiate the process. I think it's 25%. And then there's a vote. And then the county council has to allow the citizens here to have a referendum. Right. So the council has to approve a vote here, and then it's a simple majority vote. Oh, simple. But that's— If you're allowed to have a vote.

[00:57:24.28] - Speaker 5

But it's the petition, then the approval, and then the— Right. Right. So we did many years ago have a vote on that. It did not pass, although times are very different. But one of the things that I think also makes it problematic is we became a municipality One of the consequences is we would have expanded taxing authority. And in this economy, in this political environment, I don't think it's something most people would support. It's not something that I would support. So I'm not going to move that forward. If any other councilmember would like to put that on the agenda, they're welcome to do it. And the other thing I wanted to follow up on, because we had a very impassioned comments last month about Page Park. And, and I know, uh, we say very often that we understand what people are going through, we agree with it, but it's more than that. And I wanted to share a statistic. Out of the 8 people appointed or elected to this council, 7 of us

began serving on the council after March of 2023, which is when the county issued a stop work order. on the park.

[00:58:35.11] - Speaker 5

So out of the 8 people who joined the council this term, 7 of us had absolutely no role in selecting the design, selecting the vendor, the failure to work with Department of Permitting Services, oversight of the vendor, oversight of the council, failure to— for the contract to have a legal review, and the list goes on. But the point is, when I say that we are just as frustrated as people, it's because we are, because we weren't sitting here when those things were done, and we feel just as disappointed and just as let down. And we've been very public, this council in particular, because I don't think we made enough progress during the last council, about owning the mistakes that were made, talking about them publicly. We've done it many times. We've talked about the procedures we've put in place. to prevent it from happening again, hiring a project manager, which we've done for the Red House, which is why the preventable mistakes made on Page Park have not been made with the Red House. We have a contracts policy which we've passed. We have more transparency. We have our project manager come to every Parks and Grounds meeting and council meeting, and not only do we ask questions, the public can ask questions, and I hope people Take note of the fact we do not edit those questions.

[00:59:58.15] - Speaker 5

We do not filter them. Those questions are asked directly. So I just want to point out that it's a— it is a very frustrating situation, and it's taken a while because it's not a question of just fixing things. Lots of things had to be undone to be redone. The parts of the park had to be redesigned. Putting in a stormwater system in a design is not that hard. Right. Doing it after the park's built is very difficult. And those are the things we face, but they take time, and there's an approval process which you're following, and we're trying as hard as we can to, to get this done. Thank you.

[01:00:40.24] - Speaker 1

Yes, Hal?

[01:00:41.11] - Speaker 8

Yes, I have a few questions for the mayor. How do we know for the charging station Who may be abusing it?

[01:00:51.02] - Speaker 5

Well, I think we're first going to monitor how much it's used, and it's not that hard to— we could even ask the people in the Artist House to help, or we can walk there and see if a car parks there and is there too long.

[01:01:02.10] - Speaker 8

But you seem to imply that we know who it was that might be using it all the time.

[01:01:08.17] - Speaker 5

No, no, I think the idea is to see how much it's used, and if we find that people are not able to use it, then we could easily start putting in limits to— to limit it to village residents.

[01:01:22.08] - Speaker 8

But how do we know? Well, whoever is using it is from the village or not.

[01:01:27.07] - Speaker 5

Well, as I said, the first thing, if we go there most of the time and no car is there, it doesn't matter. If we start to see that there is a problem, then we—

[01:01:36.25] - Speaker 8

How do we know which cars are of residents in the village? I'm not suggesting that we have to know that, but—

[01:01:45.08] - Speaker 5

No, I think, as I said, we're going to see if there's a— it's available most of the time. And if it's not, we don't need to see who is using it. We can just go right to having a sticker that is only sold to village residents. And that's how we would know.

[01:02:04.04] - Speaker 8

I didn't understand that. But you You also made a question— I thought the mayor's announcements are what's happening, not his personal opinion, that you are certainly entitled to. Yes. Municipality, I'm a little bit more of an expert on that, I think, than most of the people at this table. How does becoming a municipality, if we were to do that, give us more taxing

authority? It's the charter that gives us taxing authority, and we presently have up to 40 cents. The charter, when it's written, can do whatever, whatever we say, and the people can decide if they like that authority. But a municipality does not have automatically more taxing authority. Some municipalities have zoning authority. The last time we tried to become a municipality, we specifically said we do not want that because we knew the county would be against it. And by the way, the reason for 95% of the people who weren't here when that vote was taken, the reason it didn't pass was because one person in Willard Towers, where you live, who owned Willard Towers, Mr. Poland, stood down in the lobby because that was a polling place and told his residents, all renters, that if that bill passed, if that referendum passed and we became a municipality, he would convert the rental building to a condominium.

[01:03:39.11] - Speaker 8

And that building with its— how many? 500, 400 people that were able to vote, voted overwhelmingly, as they were entitled to, with the owner of their building. essentially threatening them against it. So you are entitled to your opinion, but I, I don't think it's fair to use this stage to make announcements that are giving your opinions. You're the mayor and you're supposed to represent all the people.

[01:04:10.22] - Speaker 1

Yes, excuse me, I, I just want to intervene for a moment. Uh, the mayor has latitude to talk about the history of a particular issue and to express his opinion on that issue, just like we all do here. And there is nothing wrong with Mayor Shafer making the comments that he did. And we've allowed you, sir, to make many different comments, and we don't keep you from saying what you believe about different issues, including the history of those issues. Well, if you would like, if you would like I myself would like to understand a little bit better what the process is for becoming a municipality. So if you'd be so kind, Julian, as not today, but to send us a, you know, a list of the points that the actions we would need to undertake, I would appreciate it.

[01:05:13.15] - Speaker 5

Yeah, and let me respond to Councilmember Muller's remarks. Yes. First of all, I was responding to a specific comment that was made at the last council meeting. It wasn't some random thought I wanted to express. Regarding the tax rate, I will check. It's my understanding that as a municipality there are additional taxes we can implement, but I will check on that. And if you think it's something we should move forward on, As you know, I do not edit or veto any requests to put items on the agenda. So if you would like to see it on the agenda and make a proposal, you're free to do it.

[01:05:48.12] - Speaker 8

I haven't suggested— I'm now going to call on—

[01:05:50.09] - Speaker 1

excuse me, sir. I'm now going to call on Julie. She had her hand up next.

[01:05:56.02] - Speaker 3

Yeah. I just wanted to thank everyone for being patient. I do appreciate what Roy said earlier that some of us are new to to this role. We are volunteers, we are part of the community, and we are interested in making it better, but some of us do need the background information. So in addition, Julian, to looking up what it takes to become a municipality, I would appreciate knowing what is required of a municipality, especially when it comes to what we're responsible for, whether that's police, fire, I mean, I just don't know, including safety, but also then paying elected officials versus having voluntary. But I just— you know, Al, I know you know, but I do not. So I would appreciate your understanding.

[01:06:41.09] - Speaker 1

That's a good question. Okay, I, I would like to go on to the next point.

[01:06:45.07] - Speaker 8

Well, the comments have been made, and I think the mayor is entitled to his opinion, but opinions are not necessarily facts. And what I was trying to do was to correct him constructively. because he was not correct in his knowledge of how we become a municipality. Thank you, Al. I agree with Julie that we can get full information, but I would hope that the people will understand that some of that information that I give is accurate. At least some of it is accurate, and not to discount it just because it's coming from someone that you don't always agree Did anyone else have their hand up?

[01:07:24.11] - Speaker 1

No. In terms of the political environment, this is— we're now dealing with the sector plan for Friendship Heights, and this is not, certainly not the time I personally would think would be the best time to suggest to the County Council that we want to become a municipality. But we'll— I

agree. You agree. So, okay. The next— are you finished? Thank you. We'll have the Treasurer's Report.

[01:07:57.07] - Speaker 2

Okay, thank you. So in October, we got our first major inflow of property tax revenues, $414,000. There's one slight problem, the total amount. We received so far this year, $490,000 for the first 4 months, is 12% lower than the amount we received for the same period last year. So I don't think this is a big surprise. Property taxes were reassessed last year, and it appears that the assessment reflects a general decline we've seen in property values in the village over the last 2 to 3 years. Thank you. In addition to property taxes, we are awaiting the first major inflow of income tax revenues later this month. Our budget forecast suggests income taxes are likely to decline by 14% compared to last year, and we will know more about that later in the month. But the bottom line here is that we are looking at the possibility of a pretty significant decrease in total revenues, which is based on a very preliminary forecast. We'll know more later this month and in coming months. But revenues could come in as much as 11% lower than last year. The good news is the total expenditures through October are up only 4.5% compared to last year, and that's down significantly from the 10% that was estimated in our approved budget.

[01:09:30.14] - Speaker 2

So we're on the right track on the expenditure side. But bottom line here is if these trends hold, we're likely facing a deficit this year and a much tighter budget going into next year. And the Finance Committee is actively looking into options for potential expenditure reductions to help us balance the budget this year and next. I say expenditure reductions, managing our expenditures to help us balance the budget. On the capital side, we spent $271,000 through the first 4 months of the year, and $126,000 of that was in October alone. We've made— we're making significant progress on major projects including Page Park, Red House, and Village Center improvements and waterproofing. Our reserve balance totals approximately $4.6 million as of the end of October. That's up more than $100,000 from last month. And it is bolstered in large part by the surplus that we— $93,000 surplus in October, which is partly based on the inflow of property tax revenues I noted earlier. So that is my finance report. Thank you.

[01:10:47.25] - Speaker 8

Thank you, John. You said it was down 10 or 11%. How many thousand And how many thousand dollars was that, roughly?

[01:11:01.20] - Speaker 2

You know what, I don't have that right on the top of my head. I'm sorry. But let me— hold on a second.

[01:11:10.27] - Speaker 8

And we'll get 1 or 2 more large payments from the state over the course of the year? That's only the—

[01:11:19.25] - Speaker 2

Well, especially on the— mostly on the income tax side. I think a big tranche of the property taxes has now come in. And the current forecast for total revenues is that compared to last year, we're down about $40,000.

[01:11:41.27] - Speaker 8

Okay, thank you. Yeah.

[01:11:45.14] - Speaker 2

Thank you very much. Okay.

[01:11:49.04] - Speaker 1

Okay. Next we have committee reports. I'm supposed to talk about the Advisory Committee on Development. We continue to work on plans for interacting with the County Council concerning the updated sector plan that we expect the planning board to present in the beginning of the term for the new council. The new council has been voted. They were voted in on Election Day. They— the inauguration for the new council and for the county executive is on December 7th. And I will be personally attending that. Tickets available to the public if anyone else wants to go. You can just look it up and it's free. It's up at Strathmore Hall. There is, with regard to the sector plan, a desire for us to be prepared to deal with the county council, which has to approve the sector plan, and our issues. Yes. For those of you who are new, or whether or not the County Council will ultimately go along with the Planning Board and approve 2 additional— at least 2, if not 3 additional high-rise buildings along North Park. Even as I say it, given the fact that North Park is a connecting street, a neighborhood connecting street that is fairly narrow and less than a tenth of a mile long.

[01:13:37.28] - Speaker 1

The idea that we can squeeze 3 more high-rises in, in what is the densest census-designated residential area in the country makes very little sense to me. But we'll have to see what the, uh, the council says about it. We are going to be meeting with various newly elected members of the council and offering them tours of the village so that they can see for themselves. And these tours are with the cooperation of volunteers in the community, not only just at the street level but also from people's apartments so that they can see what the view is. And it's a very different view than what you get from the street. So that's where we are with regard to the Advisory Committee on Development. We also had a meeting of the Public Safety Committee, and one of the things that we talked about was right now we have a contract with the Montgomery County Police Department in which— and they do this in different places around the county. If you have additional money that you want to expend on traffic patrols, additional police officers in the community for traffic patrols, those officers can be made available. It's a volunteer officer, and then we pay them a certain amount of money that we agreed to in advance, and they patrol for us on— in— while they're in off-duty status.

[01:15:31.19] - Speaker 1

Right now we have a contract to have about 40 hours of work done by off-duty police officers during the course of the week, and we're talking about cutting that down. We had Lieutenant Ari Elkin there to talk to us about it. He feels that the chief benefit for the police being present is to be a deterrent to traffic violations, and that people have come to expect seeing a police car in different locations throughout the village. But he also believes that that deterrent factor could still be achieved with possibly fewer hours. So that is something that the safety committee will continue to be discussing, and it reflects the issues that we have with regard to the budget. Um, John, I forget exactly how much the contract costs, and I apologize for not remembering. It's about $180,000, is that what you said, Julian? Yeah, can you—

[01:16:46.28] - Speaker 7

Yeah, it's actually a little more than that because the, the, the contract for the officers themselves is about $180,000, and then, and then there's the administrative fee to Lieutenant Elkin, which is—

[01:16:57.03] - Speaker 1

I'm sorry, I'm not hearing you.

[01:17:00.01] - Speaker 7

The contract cost is about $180,000, but then you have to add the fee for Lieutenant Elkin as the program manager, which is about $10,000 a year, $9,600. So it's about $190,000 is the total currently.

[01:17:21.20] - Speaker 1

Okay, so that's something that we'll be discussing and coming back at maybe the next council meeting. And now, uh, if—

[01:17:34.22] - Speaker 8

yes, uh, Officer Elkin actually indicated that he was more concerned with getting his officers a higher hourly rate, and he would be very comfortable having his administrative fee lowered. Yes, nice.

[01:17:52.16] - Speaker 1

Yes, that was very nice of him. Yes, he feels that we do need to pay the officers a higher—slightly higher salary than they're making now per hour. And the thing with the officers in Montgomery County is they have an awful lot of overtime that they're required to participate in because, you know, the county is short of officers. And it was very interesting. Not at this meeting, but I've heard him talk before about the fact that because we don't pay the officers countywide as much as they can make in some of the other counties in the state, we're losing out to new candidates to other jurisdictions. We are now at the point where we probably have. to pay an additional sum, an hourly rate of closer to $90 an hour or $85 an hour than what we're currently paying, which is $80 an hour. And the other thing he mentioned to us is that officers travel from a far distance as a general rule, and it takes them on average an hour each way, sometimes more than that, for them to get to these shifts. But he feels very comfortable with the officers that he has.

[01:19:23.14] - Speaker 1

He supervises them, so he feels very comfortable about the officers who are working here. And as a New Yorker, I'm always happy to see a police car at the ready, so I don't have any issue with that. But we may need to cut back a bit on the hours that we're contracting for. Any other comments on that? Okay. Julie, if you would talk about the Parks and Grounds Committee, please.

[01:19:57.19] - Speaker 3

Sure. So we've touched on a couple of the events, but I did want to mention that similar to other decisions or conversations with regard to Page Park. We went over at the last meeting a diagram. The diagram was purely because at the prior meeting there were a lot of elements that people had suggested. So the question was put to Jim as to whether which one of these elements could be included in the play area. So we continued that discussion. No decisions have been made with regard to any step down toward the back area. Concern for conservation. No decisions have made, though there's general consensus that we'd like some benches. So we're still working with Jim to find out what can be done. But I will remind everyone that the goal is more trees, more bushes, green space, and something that is pleasant to be in and without doing damage. So I think we're well aligned. We continue to discuss those elements, but our next. Step on in that regard is to get actual plans, because right now we just had some sort of AI versions of what is possible. But we're moving forward. No decisions have been made.

[01:21:06.22] - Speaker 3

And we did note the ongoing dog concerns and the concerns for the conservation. So we are well aware and appreciate everyone bringing those to our attention. The other thing that I wanted to mention is with regard to the Red House. There's still an ongoing discussion as to what the plaque or signage will look like on the Red House. I believe that we are moving rapidly towards an amicable solution for all the parties. So what we did is we looked at multiple different sizes of signage that could be posted on the house, and I even pushed it a little further before I came. So as a group and with the community present, we decided that the largest sign we could possibly get to include some information to represent both of the people, the gentleman who built the house and then the Estrada family who lived there for many years and helped to restore and maintain the house. So right now we're looking at, I think the maximum you can do is 30 inches high and 24 inches wide because it has to be placed where in relation to a door where you can read it, and that would allow for roughly 40 words per contributor.

[01:22:19.10] - Speaker 3

So from the builder side, Mr. Pyle, and then from Mrs. Estrada's family to recognize her contribution to this home. There is a much smaller part that recognizes why the village purchased the property, because we recognize its, its significance in the area. And then at the At the meeting, a citizen who happens to be, I think he's a public art expert. I was super happy to have him. I hope he continues to participate. He's the one that suggested rather than try to cram in, or maybe it was someone else actually, rather than try to cram in all of the information about the Red House, its historic significance or what it did that we have at the bottom, Please find more information in the Village website. And then we're going to have a dedicated page at the Village website that allows citizens to read more if they'd like to know more about the history

of the house. So it appears as though we're moving towards a solution, which is a large sign to commemorate both of their contributions to the house. And oh, there was also a discussion that because the steps up to the house restricts ADA individuals who are entering to read the sign, that we are going to have a similar sign placed on the back where the wheelchair lift is placed so that regardless of where you enter the building, you'll be able to get the same information.

[01:23:51.12] - Speaker 8

Thank you. Madam Chair? Yes. Yeah, I respectfully disagree that that was decided. It certainly was discussed. And there were people that felt 2 plaques would be better than one. But I remain thinking in agreement that there should be a large plaque, but I don't agree it should be one in the front and one in the back. I think the people that are using the establishment will not be using it throughout the day. Whereas if the plaque, as originally discussed, was on a large stake or something that could hold a large sign, there is room at the right of the house. So people walking up the sidewalk at any time of day, whether the establishment was open or not, on holidays or not, could read the plaque. and they wouldn't have to go to the back if they were disabled and they could read it in the front. I think that's still open for discussion. It was discussed, but the fact that nothing was voted on by the committee means nothing is recommended from the committee to the council, and the council has the final voice on this. And I think we just received some additional options from the Estrada family.

[01:25:21.13] - Speaker 8

I've not gone over those with anyone, but basically a larger plaque that the committee seemed in agreement with that would cover historical aspects of the house plus something of note of both families. was what the original draft plaque said, so I'm perfectly comfortable with that. I don't think we, we need to start from scratch.

[01:25:57.29] - Speaker 1

Thank you. There is no old business scheduled for today. New business, I turn it over to the mayor.

[01:26:10.24] - Speaker 5

Thank you. So we, as has been mentioned, have been discussing the possibility of changing the name for Page Park. Somebody in their comments at the council meeting last month made that suggestion. There are a few reasons for considering doing that. One is the stigma that has now been attached to the name of the park, it really— sometimes I'll meet people, all they know about us is that, oh, you're the people that built the park without the permit. So that would be

one reason. The second reason is there is a growing trend to name parks not after people, but after locations, after municipalities, to give them more generic names because of the inherent issues that— naturally flow from naming the park after anybody. And the third reason, and to me the most important reason, is how the park got its current name in the first place. It was previously known as Cleo Tavani Park, who was instrumental in getting the park built. And then very abruptly in 1993, with no public discussion, no public input, It was placed on an agenda meeting and it passed with a 4-3 vote. There was a subsequent petition with over 300 signatures to ask the council to change the name, which was ignored.

[01:27:44.00] - Speaker 5

And I think it's appropriate in light of the fact that there never was any buy-in in the first place for this name to at least have a discussion about changing the name. So I am going to— and we agreed at the Parks and Grounds Committee meeting, I think 2 meetings ago, and it was a vote. And so I'm going to make a motion, and it is to solicit community input about renaming William Tyler Page Park. So we are not making any recommendations at this point. We're just sort of asking— the Parks and Grounds Committee is asking for council approval to just get input about a name change. So that's my motion. Second. Okay.

[01:28:35.05] - Speaker 1

Discussion? Is there any discussion? I second.

[01:28:47.04] - Speaker 8

I think it's important for people to focus on 2 words. The words are process and transparency. The, the project that you're hearing about has been proposed by the mayor. He was the one that brought it up in July, I believe, at the Parks and Grounds Committee. It was not voted on. The minutes for that meeting are not available. The chair never released them. The meetings from all the Parks and Grounds Committee from February to presently have not been approved. This does not reflect on the newest chair, Dr. Anderson, who just inherited this. But it is a fact that it's hard to know exactly what went on as far as transparency and process when minutes are not approved. I know that our secretary, Mr. Basil, keeps the minutes very much up to date for the council. And committees, if there are minutes, I think should be kept up. So let me just go through, and I know this is going to be tedious, but this is what transparency looks like. The mayor introduced the possibility at a Parks and Grounds meeting in July. There was no vote. There was no recommendation to the full council. Subsequently, the matter was referred to the Community Advisory Committee, a group of people who are volunteers as we are, and they listened.

[01:30:56.08] - Speaker 8

I go to those meetings and essentially act as liaison, so if they have questions about what council is doing, They wanted to know about the naming of the park, the original naming of the park. And I related to them. I used not a newspaper article, but I used minutes from the 1993 public meeting that was advertised, despite what the mayor has told us tonight. They— discussed and did not go any further. The mayor apparently asked them to consider it again, and they made no recommendations at all. So in September, in September, the council, this council, was sent an email from the mayor indicating what he'd like the agenda to be. which is his duty, and he mentioned a number of items including name change. The agenda is not supposed to serve as a discussion point, but Mayor Shafer indicated at the last Parks and Grounds meeting, the July meeting, we discussed possibly renaming Page Park. He then listed the arguments in favor of that. He didn't indicate the arguments against that. I was at that meeting. I was invited to speak, and I did indicate what the arguments against it were. And I'll repeat it now.

[01:32:42.28] - Speaker 8

The argument number one is that Mr. Page had nothing to do with delay of the park. Mr. Page was one of the most respected people in the village. He was on the original village council. It was called a committee in 1914. Mayor Shafer questioned my knowledge of that, just as he questioned my knowledge about the rules of smoking. I'm not going to go through all the places that that is a fact, not my opinion. But the first history of the village, 1959, written by the son of the founder of the village, Mark Shoemaker, lists the original members of the village committee. And Mr. Page was one of them. Subsequently, he did become chairman. That is in the diary, a 3-page book from Ann Shirey, who was essentially one of the people that lived here for— 40 or 50 years. So the questions that Mr. Shafer had when I responded were, first of all, Mayor Shafer chided me for sending back a reply to him and to the other council members. He pointed out that our attorney does not want us discussing things in emails, and he's perfectly right. But discussing means, as mayor, you don't send an agenda item with the positive reasons for doing something and not listing the other side.

[01:34:21.19] - Speaker 8

The mayor, in drawing up an agenda, I think typically is supposed to be neutral and then expresses his opinion, just as I do at this meeting. I pointed this out Mayor Shafer then responded to me the next day or the day after, and he said— I'll read from the memo, he's—

email he sent me. He said, number one, number one— Listen to me. I'm sorry, I have the floor, Madam Chair.

[01:34:48.01] - Speaker 1

I know you have the floor, but I am missing the point that you are trying to make, and I've been listening to you.

[01:34:55.04] - Speaker 8

Yes, be patient just a little while longer. He said, hey, I cannot find documentation about Mr. Page's service on the Friendship Council? Well, look it up in Wikipedia. And when researching the park, he indicated— this is Mr. Schaefer— without public input or discussion, you chaired the council at this time, and this shows lack of process and transparency. Those 2 words I told you to look at before. The lack of process and the lack of transparency is the part of the mayor, because the minutes of that meeting, which he didn't refer to and which I'm sure he did not tell our newest council member, the minutes, our minutes of October 1993 read Dr. Muller gave background information. He stated that a meeting was held with legal counsel, and our legal counsel in executive session indicated that we had 4 choices because there was a report from our landscape people, our award-winning landscape people, that damage had been done to the park, $700 to $800, by Ms. Tavani. I don't know what you're talking about. Someone who I had wanted to have the honor of having the park named after her. We had worked together. She was a friend.

[01:36:26.13] - Speaker 8

Okay. Our lawyer indicated— I'm asking you, sir.

[01:36:29.29] - Speaker 1

I'm asking you. Excuse me. Seems to me that what you were saying is that you do not want to vote for solicitation of input by the public on— No. What I am saying— That is what I'm hearing from you.

[01:36:48.29] - Speaker 8

Well, let me finish. Finish, please.

[01:36:51.10] - Speaker 1

Synthesize.

[01:36:52.03] - Speaker 8

Mayor Schaefer indicated that there was no public input or discussion. I'm telling you from the minutes, from the minutes of 1993, there was, there was public input, and people were allowed by the chairman, myself, to open the floor for testimony. Each person was allowed 2 minutes. Several people were recognized. Following the speakers, Ms. Tavani read something. There was lots of discussion. The minutes reflect that. To say that there was no public input or discussion is not true. And to then say I chaired the council at that time, and therefore the lack of process and transparency is another reason to discuss whether the current name has public support. There was public discussion. There was openness. And to single me out indicates that one of the main motives was to essentially change something that I had worked on to try to prevent someone who was a friend of being sued or, or, or worse. And I'm proud of taking the deciding vote.

[01:38:07.04] - Speaker 1

Yeah. Al. I think there's been a lot of discussion about the possibility of changing the name. It has nothing to do with what occurred in 1993.

[01:38:21.03] - Speaker 8

But that's what he based it on.

[01:38:23.03] - Speaker 1

No, that is not— I was also at that meeting.

[01:38:28.10] - Speaker 8

Excuse me, but he did— that's exactly what happened.

[01:38:32.25] - Speaker 1

No, no. At the end of the meeting, there was— because there was a lot of discussion about what we should do, and at the end of the meeting, my recollection is that we agreed that we should put it to the community to see what they thought about the name. So it is perfectly— and there was no one who dissented from that. And now I'm turning it over to the chair. Thank you.

[01:39:00.13] - Speaker 3

That is a correct recollection, and I— we do need to approve the minutes. I can't vote and approve the past minutes, but I'll bring them to the next meeting so that we can do that. Okay. But I want to remind everyone that the purpose here is to represent the community and not to let our personal views or personal agendas determine how we bring things forward. I believe that in the spirit of transparency and serving a larger community, that the motion, which is what we did all agree on at the last Parks and Grounds meeting—

[01:39:35.02] - Speaker 5

Excuse me, we did not all agree on it.

[01:39:38.03] - Speaker 3

We voted.

[01:39:38.17] - Speaker 8

You never took a vote. You never took a vote.

[01:39:41.14] - Speaker 1

She did take a vote. She did take a vote. And I was there, and I did not vote because I'm not a member of the committee, but I sat there and I saw the vote.

[01:39:51.04] - Speaker 8

There was never a vote on sending something out to the community. There was.

[01:39:54.24] - Speaker 3

There was.

[01:39:55.25] - Speaker 6

There was. There was.

[01:39:57.06] - Speaker 3

It was to select—

[01:39:58.04] - Speaker 1

We now have 4 members of the council who were at the meeting and recall that there was.

[01:40:04.02] - Speaker 3

So again, there is no agenda. There shouldn't be one from you to maintain a certain name, and there shouldn't be one from the mayor to demand a name change. And the purpose of this motion is very clearly a recognition, which Roy did recognize during the last meeting, that he agreed that we should solicit input from the community. So in the spirit of transparency and allowing the community voice to come forward, and I do think that— Really quick. Despite the history, there is an opportunity to change the current view of what has happened at the park. Now, I will say that There is a question, as always, on timing. I feel like emotions keep getting high because everyone thinks something is imminently going to happen and change immediately, permanently. There is no imminent need to change the name of the park. We do want to solicit feedback to find out. It could be that a name changes in the future. People haven't even seen this beautiful park. I'm hoping that when it's reopened, it's beautiful. and flowering and green, and perhaps that will inspire our community to rename it with a name that everybody is behind and feels fresh and new.

[01:41:16.28] - Speaker 3

But we're not going to influence or tell anyone to do that.

[01:41:20.16] - Speaker 8

Mr. Page had nothing to do with these delays. Mr. Page was a historic figure. And talking about timing, talking about timing, Francine is working her heart out to try and get the County Council to listen to us. This is the worst possible time to convince them that we're going to go back and discuss something that happened 33 years ago. And, and this gets back— this gets back to media. Thank you. This is going to be a stain, more of a stain than anything else. I know this community better than the 2 people that are pushing for this. I know the same people, some of them that signed petition, are going to still find an excuse to, to have a vote again. What is a vote going to accomplish?

[01:42:11.15] - Speaker 1

The, the question is whether or not the community would like to see the name changed, and if so, to what, or should the name be retained. That is the only issue that Why is he coming up after 33 years? Because of the things that have happened in the last several years.

[01:42:37.09] - Speaker 8

It had nothing to do with Mr. Page. It had to do with a lot of delays and frustrations that we all had.

[01:42:43.24] - Speaker 1

You may recall, Al, that at that same meeting, I too said that I didn't see any reason to change the Right.

[01:42:52.22] - Speaker 8

So why are you changing your mind now?

[01:42:54.22] - Speaker 1

I am, but I did understand that there are reasons to ask the community what they think about the name.

[01:43:05.15] - Speaker 8

Why are there reasons? Dr. Anderson said that there were, I believe she said there were 2 people that expressed— well, where do Did these people just come up to you or were you polling people? Roy, I don't think that that—

[01:43:21.15] - Speaker 3

It's a very simple motion.

[01:43:22.28] - Speaker 1

Or were they just anonymous people?

[01:43:25.00] - Speaker 3

We can debate it again for the rest of the evening.

[01:43:28.17] - Speaker 1

And this is the discussion.

[01:43:30.01] - Speaker 3

That's not the point. The point is the motion on the table. I can call the question.

[01:43:33.11] - Speaker 5

Then that's a vote.

[01:43:34.16] - Speaker 1

Okay. All right. Yes.

[01:43:36.26] - Speaker 5

And I'm not going to respond to the multiple mischaracterizations.

[01:43:41.10] - Speaker 8

Oh, you always say that, Roy. You're the one that You're misspeaking. You said there was no discussion. You said there was no discussion in 1993. There was discussion. There was public discussion. You said that. You made that point. Well, he's calling me a liar. He's not. He is calling me a liar.

[01:43:59.01] - Speaker 1

He's not calling you a liar. Oh, for goodness' sake. I'm going to call the question now.

[01:44:05.00] - Speaker 8

Look, fine. He's doing worse than that. He said there was no discussion. He said there was no public input. He said there was no public input. You shared the council. That's what he is blaming me for what happened. He is saying that, and I supported that process. That has nothing to do with it. That is exactly what he said in an email to me, that lack of process and transparency which I caused. He singled me out. He can give that to you.

[01:44:36.13] - Speaker 1

That's not what I wrote you.

[01:44:39.02] - Speaker 8

It is. I'm not going to forget this.

[01:44:41.29] - Speaker 5

Yes.

[01:44:43.05] - Speaker 8

You want to just listen to this hornswoggle, go ahead. This is going to cause a chasm in the council, an unnecessary controversy. It won't. It will.

[01:44:56.04] - Speaker 1

You choose to respond to it as you wish.

[01:44:59.07] - Speaker 8

I will.

[01:45:01.15] - Speaker 1

And you certainly have created a chasm now by instead of just— By not agreeing with you?

[01:45:06.23] - Speaker 8

By not agreeing with this? No, not at all.

[01:45:09.02] - Speaker 1

But by not just simply understanding that this is about the current state of play with the park.

[01:45:16.16] - Speaker 8

It's— there's nothing about Mr. Page that has to do with any of these delays. And it has nothing— It has completely to do with what the mayor wants to do. Because of whatever reason, he's going back 33 years.

[01:45:29.04] - Speaker 1

He has told you what his reason is.

[01:45:32.01] - Speaker 8

And the email says it better than what he's told you publicly. The email clearly says he wants to be responsible.

[01:45:38.19] - Speaker 3

If we're going to debate emails, I am requesting publicly a copy of everything you just referred to. None of us can respond to an email that you are self-selecting what you read to us. If you would copy everything that That is currently in the stack.

[01:45:52.18] - Speaker 8

Well, the mayor didn't want me to share my opinion with the rest of you. He said very clearly, just send your comments to me. That's my point. That is my point. He doesn't want to share. He's—

[01:46:06.12] - Speaker 1

Is there any more discussion from other members of the council now? Did you want to say something, Vic?

[01:46:17.03] - Speaker 15

I think Al makes excellent points, um, and with all due respect to the mayor, when you presented this, you did present it as being in favor of, of changing the name.

[01:46:28.19] - Speaker 6

You didn't present it as a neutral thing at all. Wow.

[01:46:32.17] - Speaker 8

Let's change that.

[01:46:33.17] - Speaker 5

I'm allowed to advocate for a position, but this motion is not advocate— it's— can I read?

[01:46:40.08] - Speaker 1

Yes.

[01:46:40.21] - Speaker 5

Can we vote, or are you, are you Can you repeat the motion, please? Well, I want to let Councilman— okay, the motion is to solicit community input about renaming William Tyler Page Park. And there was a motion and a second.

[01:47:00.10] - Speaker 8

Now you need discussion.

[01:47:01.24] - Speaker 1

I'd like— is there anyone else? We had discussion before the motion. Anyone else All those in favor of the motion say aye. Aye. All those opposed? 1, 2, and 1 abstention. 4 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention. The motion carries. All right. There are so many things we can talk about, and this is one of them. The next thing is discussion of— on the plaque for the Red House. We had that discussion, did we not? We did. Yes. So we're done with that for now. We need to do more on the wording of the plaque itself. Um, a charter for the Parks and Grounds Committee.

[01:48:05.19] - Speaker 5

Yeah, I, I will make this very brief because we did not vote on this issue at the Parks and Grounds Committee meeting, so I'll just introduce it, but there's no vote. Um, in 2025, the Parks and Grounds Committee passed a charter for the committee. Prior to 2025, there was no charter, no other council committee, as best as we can tell, has ever had a charter. The bylaws do not require or even recommend a charter for council committees. And for a number of reasons which I won't get into here, it's become extremely problematic. And I am— and I'll give you what I'm advocating— to recommend rescinding that charter. But again, that will be on the agenda for Parks and Grounds Committee meeting, and the Parks and Grounds Committee meeting will will hopefully vote a recommendation, uh, up or down. Thank you.

[01:49:00.18] - Speaker 8

Mr. Mayor, are you saying that no other committee has a charter?

[01:49:04.06] - Speaker 5

I'm not aware that any other council committee has a—

[01:49:08.04] - Speaker 8

Does any other committee have a charter?

[01:49:10.26] - Speaker 5

Council committee which are specifically addressed in our bylaws. That's what we are discussing here.

[01:49:17.13] - Speaker 8

And what specifically is the matter with this particular charter?

[01:49:20.04] - Speaker 5

Well, again, we're I'm not presenting it for a vote, so there's no point in having a comprehensive discussion. I'm just introducing the topic.

[01:49:28.24] - Speaker 1

He's letting the public know.

[01:49:38.22] - Speaker 4

In the interest of having the facts straight, there are at least 2 other committees of the council that have charters. The Development Committee and the Environment and Culture—

[01:49:53.15] - Speaker 5

Those are not council committees. Those are resident committees.

[01:49:56.14] - Speaker 4

Those are committees that the council has approved.

[01:50:00.09] - Speaker 5

They are not council committees.

[01:50:01.26] - Speaker 4

They are. You can— you can argue about the interpretation, Mr. Mayor, but they are committees that were— that have a charter. That were discussed at council that represent information that gets presented to the council.

[01:50:24.16] - Speaker 8

And the Development Committee is chaired by Francine.

[01:50:28.08] - Speaker 1

Thank you.

[01:50:28.25] - Speaker 8

By a council member.

[01:50:30.11] - Speaker 1

Thank you.

[01:50:33.15] - Speaker 8

You don't even know the own— your own committees.

[01:50:37.03] - Speaker 1

It doesn't matter. Whether or not there are other committees that have a charter, what matters— thank you— what matters is whether or not there will be a discussion in the future about whether this committee, Parks and Grounds Committee, should have a charter.

[01:50:54.08] - Speaker 4

What matters is that the information that the council receives is correct. That's my point.

[01:50:58.25] - Speaker 1

Well, and you, and you gave us your view, and the mayor explained why he sees it differently. That is an honest disagreement of opinion. That is all we have here among people of goodwill. Thank you for the information you provided. Thank you for explaining why you saw it differently. Now, now we are moving on to the last thing on the agenda at 8:20, which is the nomination of Roberta Linker for Shuttle Bus Advisory Committee.

[01:51:34.29] - Speaker 5

Okay, so hopefully we could end on a positive note we all agree on. One of our resident committees is the Shuttle Committee, and there— for anyone else who may be interested, there are spots open. They are volunteers. They've been very, very helpful. It's a committee that we formed for this council. And Roberta Linker is a long-term resident of the village. She is a daily shuttle rider. I've been talking to her, and I am very happy to nominate her to serve on the committee. And I shared her nomination with the chair of the committee, and he supports her nomination.

[01:52:19.17] - Speaker 8

I'll second.

[01:52:21.02] - Speaker 5

You don't need a second.

[01:52:22.16] - Speaker 8

Oh, never mind.

[01:52:25.28] - Speaker 1

And now we take a vote. Any discussion? Take a vote. All in favor say aye. Aye. Any opposed? I hear no opposition. The motion carries unanimously. I think we've come to the end of our business. I would like to say that I think there are many important important issues facing the village. And I would hope that as we go forward in other meetings, we keep our minds focused on the things that really pertain to the health and well-being, quality of life, and property in the village, and don't get distracted by matters that should really be handled, in my opinion, in a more collegial way. So with that, is there a motion to adjourn? So moved. A second? Second. All in favor? Aye. Thank you. The meeting is adjourned.