



**MEETING OF
UNIVERSITY PARK MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL**

**UNIVERSITY PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
4315 UNDERWOOD STREET**

**7:30 PM
November 17, 2014
MINUTES**

AN EXECUTIVE SESSION WAS CALLED AT 7 P.M. TO CONSULT WITH COUNSEL TO OBTAIN LEGAL ADVICE RE: A MARYLAND PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT REQUEST.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Carey at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Mr. Thompson, Mr. Gekas, Mr. Hess, Ms. Verrill, Ms. Sorensen, Mr. Alvarez, Mr. Cron (arrived at 9:25 p.m.)
Absent: None
Excused: None

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Mr. Gekas.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by: Mr. Alvarez
Yea: 6

Seconded by: Mr. Thompson
Nay: 0 **Abstain:** 0

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Residents said that they were very happy with the newsletter and the editors and do not see any reason to make any changes.

5. PERMITS

**A. PERMIT REQUEST TO INSTALL A SHED
(David Caskey and Mary Engler) Ward 5**

Motion: To approve the request for a Building Permit to install an 8' x 12' x 9'7" shed located at Lot 8, Block E at 6800 Pineway.

Moved by: Ms. Sorensen
Yea: 6

Seconded by: Mr. Thompson
Nay: 0 **Abstain:** 0

**B. PERMIT REQUEST TO ADD A DECK WITH STEPS
(Jennifer Parker and Ken Schoendorf) Ward 4**

Motion: To approve the request for a Building Permit to add a 19'6" x 21' open deck with steps located at Lot 5, Block 24 at 4323 Woodberry Street.

Moved by: Ms. Verrill
Yea: 6

Seconded by: Mr. Gekas
Nay: 0 **Abstain:** 0

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION 2014-R-11 IN HONOR OF DELEGATE ERIC OLSON

Motion: To approve Resolution 2014-R-11 thanking outgoing Prince George's County Council Member Eric Olson for his service.

Moved by: Mr. Hess
Yea: 6

Seconded by: Ms. Verrill
Nay: 0 **Abstain:** 0

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *November 3, 2014*

Moved by: Mr. Alvarez
Yea:

Seconded by: Mr. Thompson
Nay: **Abstain:**

Motion: To table for the earliest consideration of text.

Moved by: Ms. Sorensen
Yea: 6

Seconded by: Mr. Thompson
Nay: 0 **Abstain:** 0

8. DEPARTMENT AND COUNCIL REPORTS

A. MAYOR'S REPORT ~ *Mayor Len Carey*

- In reference to the Riverdale Park storm water drainage, the hired consultant reviewed all of the information that Cafritz provided and stated that additional information was needed. Mayor Carey stated that the Council will not be asked to make any decisions until all of the information is provided.
- The Mayor is in contact with Riverdale Park Station about placement of a signal light at Van Buren and Rt. 1
- Mayor Carey has been in touch with the Washington Gas Light Company regarding service replacement in six University Park homes.
- An update on the WSSC paving agreement was distributed; the Town is inclined to accept it.
- A 7-Eleven is being proposed at the corner of Sheridan Street and Rt. 1 in the Town of Riverdale Park.
- The congregation of Riverdale Presbyterian Church has agreed to sell to Word of God Baptist Church. Closing is projected for the end of December or early January.
- The Anacostia Watershed Society will give an update of their projects at the December 1 Council Meeting.
- University Park was honored as a Smart Energy Community at the Prince Georges County Municipal Association (PGCMA) Meeting in Hyattsville. Mayor Carey attended this meeting where he accepted the plaque.
- The Mayor will propose the following three people to the University Park Ethics Commission: John Shoaff, Constance Belfiore, and Arthur Leaderman. Council will vote on these appointments on December 1, 2014.

B. COUNCIL REPORTS

None

C. REPORT FROM THE TOWN ATTORNEY ~ *Suellen Ferguson*

- Ms. Ferguson is still waiting for a response from the Board of Education on the counter offer made on the University Park Elementary School fence issue.
- The Comcast merger with Time Warner has been delayed until January 2015.

D. REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK ~ *Tracey Toscano*

- The PGCMA Legislative Dinner will be held at the Newton White Mansion. Council Members interested in attending should notify Ms. Toscano.
- The Town shuttle bus is currently being repaired.
- Attended the Green Team Maryland Certified Summit.

E. REPORT ON POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES ~ *Chief Wynnyk*

Distributed the September and October Crime Reports.

- Attended a Chiefs Round Table regarding the Ferguson incident (a copy of the report is available by request).

F. REPORT ON THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ~ *Michael Beall*

Distributed the Public Works Report, November 17, 2014.

G. REPORT OF THE TOWN TREASURER ~ *Dan Baden*

Distributed the October Treasurer's Report

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

- **Q.** What are the zoning laws in University Park? What if someone wanted to put a 7-Eleven where the school is?
A. University Park is zoned R-55 which is single family homes, commercial entities are excluded from that. There are a few non-commercial entities, which are allowed by special exception such as Churches, schools and small doctor offices.

10. COUNCIL WORK SESSION

- A.** The Council will enter a Work Session by 8:30 p.m. to discuss the report of the Council Committee on Policy, Rules, and Municipal Structure Re: the University Park Town Newsletter.

Motion: To recess the Legislative Session and convene a Council Work Session to discuss the report of the Council Committee on Policy, Rules and Municipal Structure in regard to the University Park Town Newsletter.

Moved by: Ms. Sorensen

Yea: 6

Seconded by: Mr. Thompson

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

The Committee report is available on the Town Website at <http://www.upmd.org/docs/11-749->

[1412283547.pdf](#).

The Council Work Session will be open and the public is welcome to observe and listen to the Council discussion. Council will consider the recommendations after public comment at a regular meeting to be announced.

Questions/Issues

6. What is the oversight of the Editor(s)?

Committee recommendation: The expectation would be that--in the Town Ordinance that references independent contractor arrangements--the Newsletter Editor would be incorporated in that part of the Ordinance. The Editors shall report directly to the Town's Mayor. The Editor will meet periodically with the Mayor, the Council and the Newsletter Review Board.

- What is being proposed is nothing different from what is being done in the past.
- The current Editor, in the past, had regular contact with Council members, Chairs of various committees as well as with the Mayor.
- Mayor Carey suggested there should be editorial guidance. The Council should periodically check to see if the editorial guidance needs to be tweaked.
- It was clarified that there would be no change to the substance of the newsletter.

7. What editorial guidance is provided (what is in the newsletter, and what is not)

Newsletter Committees recommendation:

- All content in the newsletter including content received from Town employees or elected officials must be attributed.
- Content must not be argumentative.
- An author or source of content must not represent the views or the feelings of others.
- No paid advertising or advertising for a commercial, for-profit, religious or political purpose allowed.
- No regular or reoccurring article or column may be added to the newsletter without permission from the Town.

The recommendation from the Committee was that these guidelines be established by Council action and subject to review by Council action.

a. How is editorial guidance established?

Newsletter Committees recommendation: By Resolution.

- Resolution is a perfect way to go and adopting guidelines is a good idea.

b. How is editorial guidance interpreted and applied?

Newsletter Committees recommendation: Ms. Sorensen stated that this would require getting into a discussion first about a Newsletter Review Board.

- Mayor Carey said that he thinks that editorial guidance should be interpreted and applied by the Editors.
- The Newsletter Review Board would serve as a dispute resolution mechanism.
- Recommendation for a change: The Editor will be expected to follow the Associated Press Style Book and is **encouraged** to review edits with those submitting content. **Require** rather than **encourage**.
- When changes are made prior to author approval, this can result in editorial error. A process should be encouraged to reduce this.
- Think about differentiating between things that are coming in as calendar advertisements or coming in from people outside, and other things that are in attributed columns generally seen in the newsletter.

8. How are disagreements over application of editorial guidance resolved?

a. What is the default prior to publication?

Ms. Sorensen said this should be between the Editor and the author.

9. Is there a newsletter review board?

Newsletter Committees recommendation: There should be some type of dispute resolution mechanism. The mechanism proposed by the committee was a Newsletter Review Board, which consisted of the Mayor, a member of the Town Council and a Town resident, and that the scope was limited to review of the newsletter against the editorial guidelines. The recommendation of the committee was that the members of that board would make a decision and if there was a majority of the members of that board who made a decision about how the content should be changed, the content would be changed in accordance with the instructions from that board. If there was not agreement on the part of the two board members as to whether content was in accordance to editorial guidelines the recommendation of the committee was that the Editor send the newsletter to the printer as is or modify it to address as best the Editor's concerns expressed by the board member.

The committee divided equally, as to whether it is an automatic review or a triggered review.

- The review board should be used as needed.
- Would be a smoother process for a monthly review and would not place the Editors in an awkward position.
- The more people who look at the newsletter, it will take longer.
- Concern with a conflict of interest if a Town resident who is not an elected official is on the board.

11. ADJOURNMENT by consent at 10:00 p.m.