

**Town of Chevy Chase  
Community Relations Committee  
MINUTES  
October 21, 2009**

Ann Wild, chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:10 pm in the Town Hall.

Members present included: Ann Wild (chair), Kathy Strom (Town Council liaison), Tom Brault, Pat Ebinger, Scott Egloff, Bridget Hartman, Steve Keeble, Julie Stanish, and Cathy Wolf.

Pat Ebinger offered a motion to approve the minutes of September 2, 2009 meeting. Julie Stanish seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Centennial Supper: September 12

Kathy Strom thanked Bridget Hartman and Cathy Wolf for their efforts in making the September 12 event such a wonderful evening. Kathy stated that she has already asked Town staff to reserve the Social Hall at the Lawton Center for next year. The date is set for October 2, 2010. Bridget reported that approximately 140 Town residents attended the event that brought together Town residents of all ages. She was pleased that it drew so many individuals who had never before participated in a Town event. Bridget felt that the format worked well and should be repeated next year with only a few modifications. Bridget expressed heartfelt thanks to the Town staff for their support and especially to Belinda Wilborn who worked closely with Cathy and her.

Neighborhood Watch

Kathy Strom indicated that there would be an article in the upcoming *Forecast* and a letter from the Town thanking the Montgomery County Police Department's 2<sup>nd</sup> District. Scott Egloff reported on the Neighborhood Watch Training Program conducted by MCPD. The three sessions, which covered the basics of a Neighborhood Watch Program and provided information on auto theft prevention, window and door security and 911 emergency calls versus 311 information calls, were filmed and will be put on a DVD. They will be available on loan from the Town to residents interested in participating in the Neighborhood Watch Program but unable to attend the training sessions. Scott distributed a list of the 25 residents/families who had signed up as interested in becoming block captains. He stated that the program was still in need of volunteers. He indicated that there will be a follow-up meeting on November 3 at 7 pm at the Town Hall for those who volunteered. From that meeting a plan would be developed which would explain the specifics of the program, how it would operate, the responsibilities of the block captains, etc. The plan would be available for discussion at a future Community

Relations Committee meeting once developed and ultimately would be presented to the Council for review and approval.

#### Forecast and Other Community Newsletters

Steve Keeble distributed newsletters from other local jurisdictions at the conclusion of the September 2 meeting for review by the committee at its next meeting. There was a discussion as to whether the *Forecast* was meeting the communication needs of Town residents. Kathy Strom stated that a survey was done last year that included a question about resident satisfaction of the *Forecast*. Approximately 1/3 of the residents responded to the survey and approximately 90% expressed favorable views of the *Forecast*. Ann Wild and Kathy both mentioned improvements to the *Forecast* that came out of the Community Relations Committee discussions last year. Ann suggested looking into increasing the font size. It was agreed that it was always good to re-examine the various ways the Town communicates with its residents, but that in light of the fact that a survey had taken place last year and that changes were recently made to the *Forecast* based on discussions by the Committee Relations Committee, it was too soon to do another survey. Consensus among committee members was to re-visit conducting another broad survey next year. Such a survey would include among other things Town communication in general and the *Forecast* specifically.

#### Oktoberfest: October 17

Ann Wild reported that the October 17 Oktoberfest was a huge hit. She extended great thanks to Warren Rizzi of the Town staff whose organizational help was key to its success. Belinda Wilborn estimated that approximately 60 people attended which was amazing considering the inclement weather.

#### Manna Food Drive: Ongoing

Ann Wild reported that the Manna Food Drive continues. It received a big bump up with contributions from the Centennial Supper event. Ann felt that this was a good idea to encourage Town residents to contribute to the Manna Food Drive when participating in a Town event.

#### Proposal for Monthly Community Service Projects

Given the success of the Manna Food Drive, Ann Wild led a brief discussion on the idea of the Town's Community Relations Committee conducting monthly community service projects. Three such projects were already in the works, the Thanksgiving Family Dinner Baskets, the Winter Coat Drive and the Holiday Gift Drive. Bridget Hartman volunteered to follow up with Belinda Wilborn to come up with other projects after the first of the New Year.

#### Turkey Trot: November 1-22

Bridget Hartman reported that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Turkey Trot was taking on a new look this year. The Town and B-CC High School will be collecting Thanksgiving Family Dinner Baskets for distribution to families connected to the County's Linkages to Learning program. Residents will be able to donate gift certificates from Giant and Safeway or checks or purchase an entire meal. On November 22, families are invited to decorate boxes for the food. The month of November, the Town will also hold a coat drive coordinated with Town resident Barbara Garlock of Interfaith Works. An article in the November *Forecast* will provide greater detail.

#### Holiday Gift Drive: December 1-15

Cathy Wolf reported that plans were underway for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Holiday Gift Drive in conjunction with the Montgomery County Abused Persons Program. Town residents will be asked to purchase gifts for Montgomery County adults and children who are victims and/or witnesses of domestic violence. Put Ebinger volunteered to help with this event. A brief article will appear in the November *Forecast* and a longer, more detailed article will appear in the December *Forecast*.

#### Chevy Chase Dinner Out Club: October 29

Julie Stanish reported that the next Chevy Chase Dinner Out Club is scheduled for October 29 at 7 pm at Moongate. Moongate is offering 10% discount for this event. The October *Forecast* included details of the event. A number of residents have already signed up for the dinner.

#### Flutar Concert: November 8

Ann Wild reported that that flutist Joseph Cunliffe and guitarist Giorgia Cavallaro are performing at the Town Hall on November 8 at 4 pm.

#### Discussions and Desserts

Put Ebinger reported that she continues to work on scheduling Discussions and Desserts. She has identified two possible speakers for these events. The events would be held in the evening. Pat will report to the committee as details unfold.

#### Art Exhibit and Other Events

Ann Wild led a discussion on the possibility of holding an art exhibit of Town resident art for viewing by Town residents. It was suggested that the event be paired with a wine tasting event, similar to the very successful event that was held last year. A spring date was considered. Ann also mentioned interest in a Bake-Off. It was suggested that this might be a great idea tied to the Chili Dinner held in February. She will report to the committee as details unfold.

Revisiting the Town's History and Architectural Booklets

Kathy Strom initiated a discussion of the Town's history and architectural booklets. All agreed that updating the Town's history book was a good idea. The committee concluded that this was a multi-year project that might benefit from a sub-committee of the Community Relations Committee to tackle this worthy endeavor.

The next meeting of the Community Relations Committee is scheduled for November 18, 2009. The meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

Respectively submitted,  
Bridget Hartman