

DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY March 5, 2007

ATTENDEES:

Bill Pritchard, Chair
John Barnes
Larry Lannom
Arthur Schatzkin
Costas Toregas
Lance Hoffman, Town Council Liaison

Absent: Paul Blutter, Blaney Harper

The meeting was called to order at 7:35pm.

There were no public comments.

The minutes of the February 5, 2007 meeting were approved.

The date of the next meeting was changed from April 2 to April 9, 2007.

The Chair informed the PSC that Tracey Denning had resigned from the PSC. The Committee appreciates her work on the Town's power issues.

A draft educational brochure to educate residents about the tree ordinance was circulated by the Environment Committee for comment by all Town committees. PSC comments will be forwarded to Environment.

The Chair reported on action at last Council meeting:

- A traffic study of Chatham and Aspen was authorized
- Council referred the Town Speed Hump Policy back to PSC to develop criteria for installation
- The Town Manager will select 2-3 intersections for trial installation of crosswalks of different designs.
- The Council reduced the threshold for plowing of sidewalks from 5" to 3" of snow accumulation
- The IT Subcommittee is asked to work with the Communications Committee regarding a TOCC.net. There were concerns expressed about the Town creating such an entity.

There was initial discussion regarding a sidewalk installation policy, including: need for a requesting process; potential for residents to object to construction on their street; when in the process should the engineering study be conducted; and, financial willingness of the Town to construct a sidewalk. There was discussion about the concept of a threshold number of complaints/requests to trigger action by the Town on this or any other matter. The Sidewalks Committee will prepare a draft for discussion at the April meeting.

The Council has asked the PSC to review the Speed Hump Policy and, in particular, to develop criteria for installation. The Traffic Committee will review the policy.

Subcommittee update

Current assignments are:

Electric

John Barnes (chair)
Blaney Harper

Water

Blaney Harper (chair)
Arthur Schatzkin

Traffic

Bill Pritchard (chair)

Sidewalks

Larry Lannom (chair)
Bill Pritchard

Security

Paul Blutter (co-chair)
Arthur Schatzkin (co-chair)

IT

Costas Toregas (chair)
Larry Lannom

Reports/Planning:

Traffic:

There was discussion of a resident's request to restrict parking along the south side of Rosemary Street at the intersection with Connecticut Ave to improve traffic flow in the morning rush. Members of the PSC who drive that route had not experienced a problem and no action is to be taken at this time.

There has been a complaint about cars blocking the handicap ramp at the end of the Thornapple Path. Further information will be collected and discussed at a later meeting.

Electrical:

John Barnes drafted an educational article for the Town Forecast reporting on electrical outages and on the Town's interactions with Pepco on outages. The article has been submitted.

Lance Hoffman reported that

- The Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League is working to oppose the PEPCO rate increase unless there is improvement in service.
- The Town is considering assuming responsibility for streetlights.

Water: no report

Security: the subcommittee is planning to meet with Todd Hoffman.

Information Technology:

The IT Subcommittee of the PSC Committee of the Town of Chevy Chase (Toregas and Lannom) met with the Town Manager in his offices on February 27, 2007. He informed us of the IT infrastructure of the Town, which consists, among other resources, of the following

- top of the line PCs for employees running the latest MSoft office productivity tools
- a municipal financial package
- a GIS system based on ESRI's ArcView which can attach attribute information to its elements
- free access to broadband internet service from all three ISPs under County franchise
- an IT consultant (OLM) who provides updates, maintenance and back up services

Current priority applications are the Town web site, a listserv which is not interactive for formal Town business and announcements, and plans for an interactive forum not yet gone live. There are about 400 people subscribed to the listserv, which the town uses to send about four to five messages a month. Permit applications are an interesting application, but current requirements for physical signatures and site plans sideline exploration of IT implementation

We agreed that technology MUST be preceded by policy priorities and user need specifications. The three priority users of IT in the Town are the Staff (Todd, Ted, Andy-part time, Belinda, Larry, Dave and 2 maintenance people at the yard), the Council and the Residents. Each may have needs but these are not well known at this time. The transparency aspects of documents will continue to exert positive pressure to put more things on the Web, as will the changing Town demographics

The fact that the Town is NOT a full service government creates confusion from time to time; as a consequence, IT application discussions may be irrelevant and raise expectations unnecessarily. A good communications campaign to all residents reminding them of which functions are under Town control may be helpful.

We agreed that two important support functions of the IT Subcommittee for the Town and Manager are as follows:

1. Listen to citizen ideas or problems and advise the Town accordingly. Todd will direct residents with ideas or concerns to us for interfacing, and
2. Continuously review the outcomes / recommendations of all Town resident committees and suggest ways that IT can help accomplish their goals and aspirations

The meeting was adjourned.