



## Commission Work Session Minutes

Tuesday, February 04, 2025, at 6:30 PM

Hybrid Meeting

3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

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**This meeting will be Hybrid: Insert link here:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89670225884?pwd=eklVZW03UElvNW03TzJFcjBOTmR2Zz09>

**Phone: 301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 896 7022 5884 | Passcode: 922160**

### **Call to Order 6:37 PM (19:55)**

### **Roll Call (20:25)**

- 1.) Commissioner Chair Wheatley
- 2.) Ward 1-Commissioner Young
- 3.) Ward 2- Commissioner Henderson
- 4.) Ward 3- Commissioner Wheatley
- 5.) Ward 4- Commissioner Givens
- 6.) At-Large Report- Commissioner Brooks

### **Attendees:**

- 1.) John Hoatson-Town Manager
- 2.) Chief Anthony Ayers
- 3.) Todd Frankenfield- Alta CPA Group
- 4.) Kevin Best-Attorney

### **Review of Agenda (22:54)**

**Budget Listening Session 7:00 PM until 7:30 PM - Each resident wishing to comment will have 5 minutes.**

**We want to hear from residents regarding the FY 2026 Budget.**

### **Business:**

1. **Resolution 2025-02: Town of Cottage City Organizational Chart (Commission Discussion)**  
**(23:10)**

Resolution 2025-02 is the town's organizational chart; it will allow the Commissioners to reflect on the structure of the town. The chart shows the offices, departments, and positions as outlined in the organizational chart. This will be helpful as the budget season is approaching and it will be placed into the budget book. The purpose of the chart is to show the hierarchy and structure of the town.

**2. Resolution 2025-03: Essential Staffing (Commission Discussion)**

Resolution 2025-03: Essential Staffing establishes staffing during times of inclement weather. When there is snow accumulation above three inches, all Cottage City Police & Public Works employees shall report to the town for duty unless excused in writing by the Town Manager. The Town Manager & the Chief of Police will work together to make sure the schedules are modified and that the needs of the town are satisfied. The purpose of this is so that the staff can understand that they are required to attend work under these conditions. This will allow the staff to know if they are the essential staff.

**3. Commission Priorities & Goals (Commission Discussion)**

Commissioner's Priorities & goals: Commissioner Brooks stated that he would like to see more traffic calming measures. Commissioner Chair Wheately stated that the town would like to purchase the stop signs with the flashing lights and put more speed bumps in the town. Traffic common devices and use some ARPA funds of \$5,000.00 to do street murals to help calm the traffic. Commissioner Givens stated that he would like to have reinstitution of the Police patrols at the bus stops. Not for them to sit at each bus stop but patrol in a certain pattern through the various bus stops. Street sweeping and trash and treats where the residents walk their dogs, they will pick up the trash and then they can receive the treats. Commissioner Chair Wheately stated that she would like to have an emergency plan put in place for the town. Commissioner Chair Wheately stated that she would like to see the bridge completed, also that the permits be in place so that the redlight camera system can be back up and working. Commissioner Brooks stated that Commissioner Gives was going to install a local traffic only sign at some point; also, that he would like to see the stop sign camera on Bunker Hill and 40<sup>th</sup>. Chief Ayers stated that someone is supposed to be coming out to fix the wiring on the stop sign and he will notify the commissioners once it has been fixed. Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked Chief Ayers also to investigate the speed monitors that are in the town like the one on Bunker Hill not too far from the towers. Chief Ayers stated that they took those down because the town is trying to get money to invest in the solar panel devices. Chief Ayers stated that they are working on trying to get that placed in this coming year's budget.

**4. Strategic Planning Gateway Development Authority Project (Commission Discussion)**

Strategic Planning Gateway Development Authority Project is a part of the brand-new gateway development authority that's just been created. Commissioner Chair Wheatley attended their meeting recently, and she and the Town Manager are working together to create a strategic plan for the Town of Cottage City. Commissioner Chair Wheately stated that this is the project that Senator Augustine put in place; the budget for the program is 500,000.00. There are six municipalities that are participating, three of the port towns. Bladensburg, Colmar Mannor, Cottage City, North Brentwood, Brentwood and Mt. Rainer. Each municipality will get some of the funds. Ronald Hopkins which is the president of the board is also the project manager. The project is for five years so there is an opportunity for some of the residents of Cottage City to run for the board because the membership is for one year. Part of being a part of this project is that the Town of Cottage City must provide a strategic plan so they can understand how the town will participate. The Gateway Development Authority is a project that helps local artists, and businesses with community development. Community enhancements, beautifications, really to make the community more attractive and draw in more business and to assist with small businesses. If the town doesn't participate, they will take the money back. Commissioner Young stated that something can be placed in the newsletter asking people for ideas and suggestions, also letting them know that this is on the horizon.

Commissioner Brooks stated that speaking with the community would be nice and seeing local sculptures would be nice and artwork. Commissioner Brooks stated that 38<sup>th</sup> and Bladensburg property is vacant, and it would be nice for development.

**5. Job Description: DPW (Commission Discussion)**

With the resignation of the employees the Town Manager is looking for a skilled laborer for the Public Works Department. The various duties consist of pulling trash maintaining the different task in Town Hall. Commissioner Givens stated that the position is a skilled set, the town needs a skilled laborer or handyman. An employee that is willing to be trained has a CDL license, and someone who is self-motivated. They will need to take a skills test and will also be on a probation period to make sure the person is consistent. Commissioner Young asked how the financing is different from the previous wherein employees were laid off and hours were cut. Commissioner Givens stated that there were funding issues and HR issues that couldn't be discussed in an open session. Commissioner Young inquired about what is going to be done in reference to code enforcement. Commissioner Givens stated that the police department is taking care of that. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that for the skilled laborer the pay will need to be set at a specific amount to have a skilled laborer. A discussion was had in reference to the pay for the position. The results were \$24.00-\$28.00 an hour Full time position.

Motion to suspend the rules to make a vote during the open session about the pay rate for the public works position.

**Motion (02:21:24)**

**The motion was made by Commissioner Givens and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. Vote 5-5 Young, Henderson, Wheatley, Givens & Brooks. Motion Passes no nays or abstentions.**

**The rules were suspended so that a vote could be made in reference to the public works skilled laborer position to be posted on all social media, indeed, and all other appropriate locations.**

**Motion (02:22:25)**

**The motion was made by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Givens. Vote 5-5 Young, Henderson, Wheatley, Givens & Brooks. Motion Passes no nays or abstentions.**

**6. Speed Bump 41st Avenue and Parkwood (Commission Discussion)**

Jeff Wilkinson has reached out and he's having problems with people running the stop signs at 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Parkwood. There was an incident where some children were almost hit by vehicles running the stop sign. Mr. Wilkinson would like to discuss putting up a speed bump or anything that can prevent people from running the stop signs and would like to hear from the Commission on this point. Commissioner Givens stated that the quick short-term solution is to get the speed cameras out there and the long term is for him to get a petition started to get speed bumps placed on the street.

**7. Black History Month Celebrations (Commission Discussion)**

Black history program that is taking place February 22<sup>nd</sup> at Town Hall. The performers and catering have been secured. The Town Manager is also working on donations.

**Updates**

**8. American Landscaping Maintenance Agreement (Commission Discussion)**

American Landscaping Maintenance Agreement total \$17,897.00 if the Commission decides to go with the company. This will be for all ground maintenance: the grass mowing, the weekly wedding and edging for all the summer and spring months. Commissioner Gives recommended getting a couple more bids.

### **Public Comments**

Anyone seeking to speak under Public Comments must sign in prior to the end of the Board Work Session. There is a 3-minute time limit. When you come up to speak, you will need to state your name, address, what organization that you represent and your topic of concern(s).

### **9. Motion To Suspend the Rules to Go into A Closed Session (Commissioner Vote)**

#### **Motion To Go into Closed Session: (02:45:20)**

This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only: (1)\_\_\_ “To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals”; (7)\_\_\_ “To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice”.

The Commission plans to go into a closed session to discuss code compliance and grant expenditures with employees and the commission.

All meetings are subject to closure pursuant to the Maryland Open Meetings Act: Pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article Section 10-508(a), the Council by majority vote may retire to executive or closed session at any time during the meeting. Should the Commission retire to executive or closed sessions the Chair will announce the reasons, and a report will be issued at a future meeting disclosing the reasons for such closed session.

#### **Motion (02:45:20)**

**The motion was made by Commissioner Givens and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. Vote 5-5 Young, Henderson, Wheatley, Givens, & Brooks. Motion Pass no nays or abstentions.**