



Work Session Minutes

Tuesday, July 01, 2025 at 6:30 PM

3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

This meeting will be hosted on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81879198682?pwd=laTbjobtQrTambWGkYe9qLIYKTCqjv.1>

Phone: 301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 818 7919 8682 | Passcode: 856695

Call to Order at 6:32pm

Attendees:

1. Ward 1 – Commissioner Salsich
2. Ward 2 – Commissioner Henderson
3. Ward 3 – Commissioner Wheatley
4. Ward 4 – Commissioner Givens
5. At-Large – Commissioner Brooks
6. John Hoatson – Town Manager
7. Laura Guischarde – resident
8. David Jamison – ALTA CPA Group

Review of Agenda

Business

1. **Resolution 2025-05: Mid-Year Budget Amendments (Commission Discussion)**
Mr. Hoatson reviewed the mid-year budget adjustment resolution to account for the garden's ARPA Funds that were not allocated properly. Todd Frankenfield, the Town Treasurer, provided the amounts of \$20,000 for the ARPA Resident Tree Program and \$59,000 for ARPA Grant Expense for a total of \$79,000.

Commissioner Wheatley inquired what the \$59,000 was specifically for, however there was no further information available for that line item. Mr. Hoatson will follow up with Mr. Frankenfield to determine the correct amounts and present an updated document to the commissioners for a vote at the July regular meeting.
2. **Tree Trimming & Removal (Commission Discussion)**
There is a large pine tree on town property between Town Hall and a resident's home on 40th Avenue. The tree is leaning and has limbs hanging over the home next door. Mr. Hoatson obtained a quote from American Landscaping for either pruning (\$873.00) or tree removal (\$1,795.00).

Ward 1: Commissioner Salsich agrees to cut it down.

Ward 2: Commissioner Henderson agrees to cut the tree down and replant something in its place.

Ward 3: Commissioner Wheatley is fine with cutting it down but would like to plant something in its place.

Ward 4: Commissioner Givens questions if it is leaning. He does not dispute that it hangs over the resident's home. He will look at it tomorrow.

At-Large: Commissioner Brooks prefers cutting the tree down because the cost is not that high and to prevent it from becoming a liability. He proposes using money from the CB Trust funds to pay for this work and re-planting something later as a Green Team project.

3. Cottage City Day (Commission Discussion)

Mr. Hoatson presented an idea to host Cottage City Day as a block party on 40th Avenue in the area surrounding Town Hall, in an effort to bring community together with the center of Cottage City as the focal point.

Ward 1: Commissioner Salsich thinks it could be a fun idea and supports it.

Ward 2: Commissioner Henderson states we have people coming from the outside to Cottage City Day and he wonders if there is enough room and a place for the children. He needs more time to think about it.

Ward 3: Commissioner Wheatley also needs more time to think about it. She questions if there is enough space, as it is one of our biggest events. She states it's a tradition to have it at the park. Ms. Wheatley stated that the vehicles would have to be moved from the parking lot and the grass is not that much space and is on a slope. We usually put our seniors in a tent; they like to have their space. She questions if the food trucks would go on the street. She stated we usually have a stage.

Ward 4: Commissioner Givens stated that's a horrible idea. He states the park does not have electrical and water, but with the aging population, it is smoking burning hot in front of the town hall. The park provides a breeze and shade cover. He anticipates a water slide in the park. He states that instead of inconveniencing Anne Rivera, who likes it, you are inconveniencing a street of people who need to be catered to. He states he wants Cottage City Day to grow. It is a major thing with the heat.

At-Large: Commissioner Brooks asked Mr. Hoatson to listen to the feedback and trusts him to plan a good Cottage City Day.

Mr. Hoatson proposed putting together a schematic to help the commissioners see the vision. He stated that air conditioning is available to seniors in the meeting room so they wouldn't be out in the hot heat, in addition to having indoor plumbing and not needing to rent port-a-potties.

4. MML Fall Conference (Commission Discussion)

The conference is October 12-14 in western MD at Wisp Lodge. While Wisp Lodge is already sold out for the conference, the Town was able to put rooms on hold to ensure there is space for the commissioners who choose to attend. These rooms are not yet paid for, so we will need to confirm which commissioners plan to go. Commissioner discussion about who would like to attend:

Ward 1: Commissioner Salsich needs to think about it and is undecided. She enjoyed the summer conference.

Ward 2: Commissioner Henderson is very interested in attending.

Ward 3: Commissioner Wheatley would like to attend. She stated that the fall conference is really good and is the better conference; the attendance is smaller, the training is very good, and core and elective classes are offered for the Academy of Excellence participants. She stated that the fall conference is the first conference of the FY26 budget.

Ward 4: Commissioner Givens will not attend. He advised that the funds should be verified in the budget. Mr. Hoatson will confirm the budget with Mr. Frankenfield.

At-Large: Commissioner Brooks would like to attend since he wasn't able to make it to the summer conference.

Mr. Hoatson advised the commissioners that he will have the SFMS contract for the 43rd Avenue work ready for a vote next week. He also announced that there is a red, white, and blue ice cream social event tomorrow 6-8pm before the Bladensburg fireworks on the Cottage City side of the trail.

Commissioner Givens purchased ceiling fans and wants to see if the Town wants to purchase them from him for the gazebos. He sent a text to the commissioners.

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).

Commissioner Wheatley asked if there were public comments; there were none on the phone or in chat.

Adjournment

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 session the Chair will announce the reasons and a report will be issued at a future meeting disclosing the reasons for such closed session.

Commissioner Brooks made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:04pm and was seconded by Commissioner Henderson. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Salsich -

Aye, Henderson - Aye, Wheatley - Aye, Givens – Aye, and Brooks - Aye. Motion passes, no nays or abstentions.