



Minutes of 88th Annual Town Meeting
May 11, 2024
Approved May 10, 2025

Call to Order: Mayor John Compton welcomed everyone and called the 88th Annual Town Meeting by ZOOM Videoconference to order at 8:09 p.m. There were over 50 resident voters in attendance. (75 estimated).

Rules of Order: Mayor Compton explained that Robert's Rules of Order would be used. He explained how to be recognized to speak, and how voting would be conducted.

Invocation: Resident Craig English gave the Invocation and sang the song "Lean on Me".

Approval of Agenda: Eva Patrone moved to approve the agenda and Peter Nagrod seconded.
Action: Approved (by a unanimous show of hands).

Approval of Previous Town Meeting Minutes (May 13, 2023): Mary Warfield moved (Eva Patrone seconded) to approve the Town Meeting Minutes from May 13, 2023. Approved as
Action: Approved (by a unanimous show of hands).

State of the Town Report: Mayor Compton began his State of the Town report with thanks to Town Clerk Kathy Lehman, Treasurer Jean Moyer, Archivist Pat Patula, Technology Guru Marilynn Frey, and Webmaster Christine Dibble. He then thanked all the Committee Chairs by name for their leadership. He emphasized the continuing success of the Grove's volunteer culture, and the critical importance of our resident volunteers who act as "Town Staff".

He highlighted the following items:

- Our great 150th Celebration events put together by many volunteers. Thank you!!
- Bond Funding (\$250,000) allocated to the Town by the State for Stormwater Management.
- First year successes for the Town's Renewable Energy Conversion Rewards Program for buying electric cars and converting to renewable home energy systems.
- Progress with Pepco to establish a cost and process for purchasing our streetlights.
- Elimination of fees for resident P.O. Boxes. After a couple of hiccups everything should be OK now.
- Town Council approval of the Planning Commission's ordinance enabling Accessory Dwelling Units in the Grove. We look forward to working with Montgomery County.
- Completion and distribution of the Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance RFP, a project to mitigate damage and flooding in part of residential Washington Grove and reducing drainage into the West Woods.

In looking ahead, Mayor Compton mentioned the following:

- Awarding the Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance contract by the end of the calendar year.

- Partnering with Montgomery County Green Bank to develop engineering options for addressing stormwater damage in the West Woods, and to examine climate resilience strategies for the town.
- Extending the Renewable Energy Conversion Rewards Program for another year.
- Working with MCDOT to engineer Washington Grove Connector Shared Use Path and obtain approval for construction.
- Working with the owner to bring a proposal for renovation of the Commercial Corner to the Town.
- Technology to make possible a hybrid in-person and virtual 2025 Annual Town Meeting.

Mayor Compton opened the floor for questions. There were none.

Stormwater Management: Patty Klein gave a power point presentation about Stormwater Management and Mitigation (SWIM). Patty explained the evaluation of our problem areas by Soltesz noting drainage from Towne Crest erosion of the gully along the Maple Lake fence line. She thanked those who helped with the Whetstone Spring restoration, and noted that Maple Spring restoration may be addressed next.

Sustainability and Washington Grove: Paul Patrone, with bob Booher, presented the evaluation of the Grove's carbon footprint by the Sustainability Committee, planned approaches for meeting goals by 2030, and progress. They reviewed the pilot year of the Renewable Energy Conversion Rebate Program, reporting two successful rebate applications, with as many as eleven conversions anticipated in the coming year.

Volunteer of the Year Award: Mayor Compton awarded the Volunteer of the Year award to three volunteers this year.

- 1) *Christine Dibble* for her creative work improving the Town website. Her commitment and time spent is so very appreciated. She has made the website attractive, useful, easier to use, and up to date, while also expanding content. A fantastic job, Christine has also identified further improvements the Town will consider in the future.
- 2) *Meredith Horan* for her tremendous work initially drawing attention to the 150th Anniversary, and especially in making it happen. Thanks to her for being organizer, recruiter, motivator, and cheerleader!
- 3) *Audrey Maskery* for her vigilance in speaking for the trees. Audrey's exercises experienced judgement, a thoughtful approach to tree maintenance and removal, responsible oversight of contractor work, expert advice on planting replacement trees. Her time hard work on the Town's behalf is recognized and applauded.

Action on FY 2025 Budget and Tax Rates: Mayor Compton explained the proposed constant-yield tax rate. A reduced Dwelling Tax was presented that included a refund due to over-collection last year.

Tom Land moved to adopt the budget as presented, but with the removal of \$6,000.00 for DEI training. Charlie Challstrom stated the motion was out of order, that there was no second, and there was no time for evaluation of the budget adjustment. There was additional discussion about the process.

Rob Gilmore strongly opposed the first motion and moved to postpone it indefinitely (Eva Patrone seconded). It was again pointed out that a second was needed for the first motion, whereupon Tom Land withdrew his motion, but suggested the Town Council review approval of spending on DEI training at their meeting.

Rob Gilmore went on to move to approve the Budget and Tax rates as presented (Charlie Challstrom seconded). Further discussion addressed clarifying the budget process and the DEI training line item. Charlie Challstrom called the question. The vote to approve the budget and tax rate was taken.

Action: Approved (by a large majority in a show of hands).

Historic Preservation Commission Report and Award: Chair Bob Booher reviewed the HPC’S contributions to the 150th celebration, noting the History Walk and site markings for vanished historic town buildings, mentioned Montgomery County registration of the stalagmite quarries, the historic building in the Commercial Corner. He welcomed the two new members of the Commission (Bill Earl, Samantha Suzich)

Bob announced the 2025 Preservation Award was being awarded to 102 Center Street (Phillip and Lynn Mento) and explained their thoughtful renovation.

Planning Commission: Georgette Cole noted the coming and going of Commission members, reviewed the new Ordinance permitting ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Unit) and how it differs from the Montgomery County ordinance. She mentioned that changes to zoning of the Commercial Corner would be discussed in FY25.

Peter Nagrod took over and explained some of the recent and proposed changes for the Commercial Corner zone, including removal of the dumpster enclosure, new welcome signage, improved crosswalks, and goals for future renovations of the property.

Discussion of Town Council Reports: There were no questions. It was moved and seconded to approve the Council Reports for posting on the website.

Action: Town Council Reports posting approved (by a unanimous show of hands).

New Business: There was none.

Election Results: Chair of the Board of Supervisors of Elections, Nick Suzich, thanked all who have and will serve. He gave the election results.

Mayor:	John Compton	elected - 122 votes
	Joli McCathran	2 votes
	Christine Dibble	2 votes
	Robert Johnson	2 votes
Council:	Barbara Raimondo	elected - 119 votes (3-year term)
	Kriss Grisham	elected - 95 votes (3-year term)
	Phillip Mento	49 votes

Mayor Compton thanked everyone for attending the meeting and all those who served on our Committees, Commissions, and other groups.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Kathryn L. Lehman, Town Clerk