



**Meeting of the Town Council**  
**Monday, September 14, 2026; 7:30 p.m.**  
Online by Zoom Videoconference  
Access information below  
Approved October 19, 2026

## Minutes

All documents for this meeting (referring to PDF) may be obtained until at least July 1, 2027, at the following link: [Agenda and Agenda Documents for the Town Council meeting 091426](#)

### MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

**Call to Order:** Mayor Compton called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. A quorum was present. Georgette Cole, Planning Commission chair, was also present.

#### **Approval of the Agenda (PDF)** (Compton):

Mayor Compton reported that the safety and security presentation with Officer Romano, Item 5, had to be deferred until November.

Action: Vote: 6-0, Agenda approved as amended.

#### **Public Hearing Ordinance 2026-12 “Ordinance 2026-12” Authorizing a Driveway Access to Easement to Owners of 503 McCauley.**

- No testimony offered.

#### **Approval of the Minutes**

The August Minutes were incomplete and were deferred to September.

#### **Public Appearances**

Jill Bloom addressed the Mayor and Council regarding keeping the brick wall at 406 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

*Written testimony is attached to the PDF form of these Minutes.*

- Adam Eig conveyed his interest in exploring a security camera system for Washington Grove due to his concerns for growing security issues and threats.  
*Written testimony is attached to the PDF form of these Minutes.*
- Val Bloom supported keeping the brick wall at 406 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- William Earl spoke in support of Adam Eig’s discussion for increased security within the Grove to avoid becoming a soft target.
- Nan Aitel-Thompson spoke to the absence of letters to the Mayor and Council on the Town website. She also suggested the brick wall at 406 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue served to divert stormwater. Mayor Compton provided a brief explanation.

#### **Treasurer’s Report (PDF)** (Moyer)

Jean provided a brief update to the September budget report.

Peter Nagrod moved to accept the Treasurer’s report. Mary Warfield seconded.

Action: Vote 6-0, Treasurer’s Report accepted.

## Mayor's Report

- a. *Kudos:*
  - *To the Recreation Committee Labor Day organizers, volunteers, and participants* for a weekend of competitions, sport, food and fun! A special nod to Gold Medal leaders Renee Moloznik and Peggy Booher for managing the team and for arranging near perfect weather.
  - *To Tom Laws and crew* for cleanly extracting the fallen tree in Maple Lake in time for the Labor Day weekend fun.
- b. *Proposed Waiver of Certain Zoning Requirements Based on Historic Preservation Criteria:* **(PDF)** Draft Ordinance 2026-13 is awaiting review by the Town Attorney
- c. *Amendment to the Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance:* The Town Attorney is reviewing the draft zoning text amendment (Ordinance 2026-14) from the Planning Commission to adopt State-mandated ADU requirements. **(PDFs)**
- d. *SWIM Project:* Status of work **(Photos)**. Due to a resident complaint to Montgomery County, DPS issued a stop work order pending issuance of a DPS Sediment Control Permit. Applications for permits, now required, have been submitted to the County and State.
- e. *503 McCauley driveway:* Per the proposed Settlement Agreement in Ordinance 2026-12, a new gravel driveway across Lot 1 has been installed and the adjacent Fifth and Sixth Avenue walkways have been restored to grass. **(Photos)**
- f. *Washington Grove Connector:* MCDOT is holding a virtual public hearing on the 95% complete plans for the shared use pathway. More information [may be found here](#).
- g. *Bluestoberfest 2026:* this annual (18<sup>th</sup>) musical gathering of family and friends to celebrate the autumn season is happening Saturday, September 19, 6:00p -10:00p at the Gazebo.
- h. *Washington Grove Fall Arts and Crafts Festival:* A family-friendly festival of food and vendors outside McCathran Hall on Saturday September 26, 10:00a - 4:00p
- i. *Washington Grove Cares "All About Arthritis":* presented by Dr. Nick Patrone on September 27, 3:00p in McCathran Hall.
- j. *Woods Committee Fall volunteer event:* to spread wood chips along walking trails. Scheduled for Saturday October 10, 10:00a - 12:00p. Meet at the Maintenance Shed.

## Administrative Matters

### **Request for Food Trucks at the Haunted Gazebo Event (PDF)** (Compton)

Mayor Compton reviewed the Council policy adopted in Resolution 2025-07 "Establishing Rules For Events And Recreational Activities That Use Public Facilities" and lauded the thorough request submitted to the Council by the Recreation Committee. Peter Nagrod moved to approve the request for the food trucks. Nick Patrone seconded.

Action: Vote: 6-0, approved.

### **Requests for Repair or Maintenance of Town Property (PDF)** (Compton)

Mayor Compton announced that Town Administrator Anna Burke has created an online form for Requests for maintenance that will populate a spreadsheet and enable her to distribute responsibility for action on each Request and to track progress on resolving them. The form will be available on the website.

**Proposal to Enact Rules for the Uses of the East and West Woods (PDF) (Compton)**

The recent camping activity in the West Woods drew attention to the need to formalize rules for the use of the Town's woods. The Woods Committee will propose such rules for adoption, based on draft Resolution 2021-11 that was never adopted.

**Request From the Owner of 406 Fifth Avenue to Resole Encroachments (PDFs) (Compton)**

Mayor Compton provided some background regarding the encroachment issues for this property. Mary Warfield introduced a motion to resolve the 406 Fifth Avenue encroachments on Town land. Peter Nagrod seconded.

Georgette Cole, as Chair of the Planning Commission, advised the Council that residents selling their property should have non-complying encroachments on Town land resolved by the Council prior to sale. Property sale is considered by the Planning Commission as a triggering event for addressing these concerns.

To allow for public input on the motion, Mary Warfield moved to defer further action to the October Council meeting. Nick Patrone seconded.

Action: Vote: 6-0, approved.

**McCathran Hall piano tuning (Grisham, Compton)**

Kriss Grisham advised that the piano in McCathran Hall should be considered part of Hall facility rental, and that it should be tuned annually, starting now. Noting that this would add another expense to having the Hall available for rental, he moved to conduct a reevaluation of the rental structure for McCathran Hall. Mary Warfield seconded.

Action: Vote: 6-0, approved.

**Traffic Safety proposals (Grisham)**

- Kriss Grisham reported a resident request for a new stop sign to improve safety for walkers and bicycles entering the Chestnut Road intersection on Brown Street from the Commercial Corner. Peter Nagrod made a motion to approve placement of a new sign for pedestrian awareness. Mary Warfield seconded.

Action: Vote: 6-0, approved.

- Councilor Grisham also reported that data obtained from the radar speed sign on Chestnut Road supports installation of new speed hump. Mary Warfield made a motion to install a new speed hump, of the type currently on Grove Road at Oak Street, to be located on Chestnut Road near the speed camera sign.

Action: Vote deferred to the October council meeting to allow for public comment.

Unfinished Business**Ordinance 2026-12 "Authorizing a Driveway Access Easement to the Owners of 503 McCauley (PDFs) (Compton)**

Mayor Compton reported that the provided Settlement Agreement and Easement document have been signed by the owners of 503 McCauley and will be held pending enactment of the Ordinance.

Peter Nagrod moved to approve Ordinance 2026-12. Nick Patrone seconded.

Action: Vote: 6-0, approved. Notice will be published in a Grove Alert and the required 30-day effective date will be October 14.

New Business**Bid Response to 2026 Washington Grove Playground Renovation and Modernization RFP (PDF) (Oscar Ramos, Chair Playground Committee, Patrone)**

He reported that the Playground Committee was underwhelmed by the two bids submitted. Among other criteria, the two designs did not aesthetically match the Grove "look". The Playground Committee now

proposes to implement a more staged and systematic plan to implement the playground comprehensive plan.

A phased approach to renovation and installation was proposed with the Town to manage site preparation including necessary drainage improvements, and the Playground Committee to manage phased equipment purchase and installation, and renovation of selected existing equipment. A new RFP for equipment in one or two zones was suggested.

Mary Warfield made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Playground Committee. Nick Patrone seconded. Mayor Compton strongly suggests having a site plan be completed. The question was called following extended discussion.

*Action: Vote: 4-2, approved the Playground Committee plans to develop a new RFP and to move forward with site preparation using the advice of former Maintenance Supervisor Steve Werts and RJ Landscaping. Steve Werts also volunteered to draft a simplified site plan.*

**Resolution 2026-14 “Guidelines for the Use of Triggering Events to Reclaim Town Land for Private Encroachment” (PDF)** (Compton, Nagrod)

Peter Nagrod moved introduction of Resolution 2026-14 “Guidelines for the Use of Triggering Events to Reclaim Town Land for Private Encroachment.” Mayor Compton updates to the draft resolution.

*Action: Discussion was deferred pending review by the Town Attorney, and to provide for public comment.*

**Proposal for Municipal Leaf Composting year 4**

Mary Warfield moved to approve the Sustainability Committee request to continue the leaf composting program, as well as adding additional collection equipment. John Porter seconded.

*Action: Vote: 6-0, approved.*

**Other Regular Business**

**Town Council Reports (PDF) – of note:**

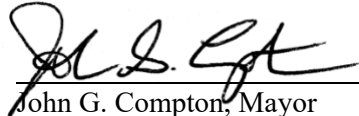
- a. *Lighting Committee (Porter):* Rebar and concrete will be used to stabilize the bollard lights at the town hall, and they will be moved to the opposite side of the path out of the way of the mowers.
- b. *McCathran Hall (Grisham):* Our elevator passed annual inspection, but we were advised it may not pass the more extensive 5yr inspection due in 2030. A replacement elevator may need to be considered and budgeted for.
- c. *Maintenance (Nagrod):* Circle drainage issues are being investigated to develop a fix.
- d. *Sustainability (Warfield):* A Fall Incentive Workshop focusing on the financial benefits of energy upgrades has been tentatively planned.
- e. *Lake (Warfield):* The Lake Rules and Regulations are being reviewed for updating.

**Next Meeting:**

The regular hybrid Town Council meeting on Monday, October 12, 2026, at 7:00p

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Submitted by

  
John G. Compton, Mayor

September 11, 2026

To the Mayor, Town Council, and Planning Commission of Washington Grove:

The Planning Commission has proposed that the brick wall on the Acorn Lane side of my house at 406 5th Ave. be removed when I sell my well-loved home of 37 years, because the wall is a “non-complying structure.” The Town government has established a public comment period on the Planning Commission’s proposal. These are my comments.

The wall, which is on town property, is an asset to my property and the prospective new owners, and it does not benefit the town or its residents to remove the wall:

The wall holds back run-off from Acorn Lane. My patio and the entrance to my home sit below street level. During and after a big rain, water pools on my patio where the wall opening is. I’m afraid that removing the wall will allow much more run-off to come onto my property or even my home. If the wall is removed, I’m not sure how to mitigate the run-off and I don’t believe it would be a good use of money to install some other water management infrastructure.

The wall provides a measure of privacy for my small lot. We sit out on the patio to enjoy the company of friends, the weather, and the wildlife, including the hummingbirds that visit my feeder in summer. The wall gives definition to my lot and provides a buffer to the roadway.

The houses in Washington Grove, and especially the older homes, comprise a unique, charismatic neighborhood. Their uniqueness should be preserved if doing so does no harm to our neighbors, the buildings, or the surroundings. We are not a conforming, cookie cutter type of town, rather, we take pride in our uniqueness. It should be celebrated, not homogenized.

I was advised that if the wall is removed, a new parking space could be added. My view, and the view of many close neighbors along Acorn Lane, is that we do not have a parking shortage that necessitates an additional parking space.

I have heard it is difficult to plow the section of Acorn Lane by my house because the pavement is narrow, and if the wall is removed, the plowable surface could be expanded. Regardless, snow removal has always been accomplished by the town and contractors. There are many sections of road in town the same width or narrower, where snow removal also has been successful.

Finally, I believe that town resources could be used in more meaningful ways than removing a brick wall that has been in place for more than 50 years. I cannot see how removing the wall makes the Grove a better place, and would hate to explain to prospective owners that the wall they see will be gone by the time they move in. Thanks for your consideration.

Jill Bloom, 406 5th Ave.

To the Washington Grove Town Councilors and Mayor,

In light of the recent criminal activity in the Grove, I urge you to take real and substantive action to deter this ongoing threat to our community.

I have researched security camera systems for the Grove and found a great solution. Of note: criminals do not like to be on camera. Also, just in case it could be called in to question: I have no financial interest in or ability to profit from this system.

This system addresses privacy concerns while also deterring criminals, and potentially providing actionable information for authorities. The cost to cover every point of entry in the Grove is between 1 and 2 years of limited time, single officer overnight patrols, while providing 24/7/365 coverage and deterrence.

I consulted with a technical solutions provider that works in environments where maintaining data security is essential, called Legionarius. The proposed system is entirely offline, so the data is never on the internet. The encrypted data is transmitted wirelessly, in bursts, in intervals we define, not continuously, so real time data is never available in the system as proposed (although, if desired, there could be an option for real-time data). The system includes a high-resolution camera with excellent low light image quality, which is connected to an offline, automated intelligence system that identifies and sorts license plates, vehicle makes, and vehicle colors to assist with identifying vehicles we may be looking for at certain times. Note that this system does not include facial recognition software.

As designed, I envision the system with two computers at a 'home base' – which I presume would be the town hall. The primary computer would be the computer which receives and processes the data and sends it to an offline backup system. A second computer would serve as the review computer when we need to look at something. It would be able to access and review all the data – both the organized and sorted data and the raw footage, but it would not be able to delete or edit data.

The upfront cost for the first camera, including all the custom software and associated hardware, customized computers, basic backup drives, etc., is approx. \$25K and includes everything except the camera system mount – there is so much variability there.

Additional cameras can be added at a per unit cost of around 5k-9k/unit depending on camera and lens, not including mount.

Mounting options are many, and can have legal requirements, but I envision this first camera as being mobile, on a trailer (there are ways to make these trailers very secure/immovable). We would either buy or copy and fabricate ourselves the design of other trailers used for this purpose. The camera would be mounted on a very high pole that would be too high for anyone to tamper with. There are many options for power, but I like the idea of solar plus battery. A cold snap with snow in winter would define ultimate power needs there – but a little generator support from a house could also supplement in extreme circumstances.

Whether this system or a different path is determined to be the best solution, I believe that our community has become a consistent target for certain criminals, I worry that delay and inaction will label us as a soft target and cause the problem to get worse. Please lead us quickly to a logical solution with objective evidence that whatever is chosen will help solve our worsening problem. Thank you for the opportunity to address you.

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### **Legionarius Description of Secure Camera System:**

#### **Autonomous, Air-Gapped Municipal Surveillance** **Military-Grade Privacy and Resilience for Municipal Security**

Drawing on our proven pedigree of developing bespoke, off-the-grid Vector mesh networking solutions for the Air Force, we are now adapting this battle-tested architecture to deliver highly secure, completely autonomous video surveillance for local municipalities.

Standard commercial security systems rely heavily on continuous internet connections and third-party cloud servers, exposing towns to data breaches, subscription fees, and complete system failure during network outages. We are proposing a fundamentally different approach: a 100% offline, air-gapped surveillance network.

#### **The Pilot Solution**

For this pilot, we will deploy a single, ultra-high-resolution 4K edge camera capable of natively capturing vehicles and license plates. Instead of streaming vulnerable data across the internet, the system utilizes military-derived "Store-and-Forward" Delay-Tolerant Networking. The camera securely records and encrypts the video locally at the deployment site. At user-defined intervals (such as hourly, daily, or based on your specific operational needs), the system autonomously wakes up and transmits the encrypted file across a private, invisible 60GHz wireless bridge to a receiving unit up to 3 miles away.

Once the data reaches your localized headquarters, it is processed entirely offline using advanced Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) software.

**Key Benefits:**

- Absolute Privacy: Zero internet connectivity and zero cloud dependencies. Your town's data never leaves your physical control.
- Unhackable Infrastructure: By utilizing encrypted, directional wireless mesh technology and air-gapped servers, the system is immune to standard cyberattacks.
- Automated Intelligence: The offline ALPR software can automatically scan the batched video files, cataloging plates, vehicle makes, and colors without requiring human monitoring.
- Battle-Tested Reliability: Built on the same principles we use to guarantee data delivery for the military in highly disruptive environments.

Adam Eig

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