



THE FOREST HILL COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes

February 23, 2021

Online Zoom Meeting

Members & Representatives in Attendance

Elena Skittle-Watson – Board Member, Acting chair

Thom Ellenbecker - Secretary

Cathy Ohler – Board Member

Nancy Reynolds – Board Member

Daniel Sekowsky – Board Member

Larry Richardson – Policy Director for Office of the County Executive Barry Glassman

Carl Brooks – Captain, Northern Precinct, Harford County Sheriff's Office

Chad Shrodes – Harford County Councilman

Aurora Kahoe – Legislative Aide to Councilman Shrodes

Minutes

Meeting was called to order by acting-Chairperson Elena Skittle-Watson at 7:04 pm.

January minutes accepted.

A crime report for Forest Hill was presented by Captain Brooks for the period of Jan/Feb 2020 versus 2021.

- Call volumes remain low on all measures of burglaries, theft an crime.
- Distraction burglaries where a person poses as a utility worker to gain entry and distract the occupant while another person enters and burgles the residence has been occurring lately in Harford County including as far north as Bel Air.
- Unemployment benefits claim fraud is also on the uptick with 100+ cases of criminals stealing the identities of county workers to make benefits claims.

County Council – A proposal for medium scale solar panel sites being allowed in rural residential properties is before the council. Chad Shrodes confirmed he is in opposition to this measure.

Guest Speaker: Eddie Hopkins – Director of Harford County Emergency Services

- Situational awareness: Forest Hill has areas of flooding risk, storm debris risk, has a nearby man-made earthen dam and is just outside the immediate evacuation envelope of a nuclear power station
- Community Disaster Planning: Know your community, networking resources, community notifications and information sharing.
- COVID Pandemic -> Emergency services has played a resource management role, assuring availability of backup freezers and places for vaccine distribution.
- Emergency services is responsible for 911 services for the entire county with primary dispatch occurring out of the new building in Hickory dispatching fire, local police, sheriff's and state police in this area. Uses shared radio systems for all services across

the state to call in other resources. First questions are important to get the right services rolling but 911 technicians then use computer-driven scripts to help coordinate local aid in the first minutes of the response until help arrives but know that help is already rolling as you stay on the line with them. 911 is set up to get text messages and soon will be upgraded to see pictures and videos but voice calls are preferred.

- Emergency services also provides resource management for any variety emergency needs. For instance tables, chairs and water for when victims were being interviewed at the Rite-aid shooting.
- Emergency services also includes special rescue and extraction capabilities for the county to support local fire / ems companies.
- Volunteers are needed on an ongoing basis for area fire companies and EMS. Volunteer training and certification is no different than standards for full-time professionals and these are paid positions. Tuition reimbursement programs are available.

Other updates from officials:

- Larry Richardson: What's going on in the state legislature and what is being watched out of concern that costs will fall to the counties to fund (few avenues for counties if not covered by state funding).
 - 18 bills on 911 services in this session, of note is senate bill 389 looking to fix reimbursement for EMS responses for Medicaid. Current rules are \$0 reimbursement if no transport and \$100 if transport.
 - Senate bill 824 is looking to help expand broadband through a joint trenching fee for telecom providers that, as roads are paved and expanded, would cover costs for laying broadband cables at that time that can be used for expanding service in rural communities.
 - Senate bill 486 is a Maryland Essential Workers Protection act proposing hazard pay for employees who are essential workers. \$8M/year
 - House bill 612 – Eliminates tax on unemployment benefits (\$6.6M/year)
 - Transportation Priority Letter approved – includes Grafton shop & Hwy 23 which moved up one in priority.
 - Tollgate road and Bynum Run / Hickory Ridge improvements are funded for this year.
 - School board bill – House waiting for senate version.
 - Police reform – cautious optimism that the worst bills won't happen but increased liabilities from these bills will fall to taxpayers as HarCo is self-insured.
- Other updates and upcoming notes:
 - Senior Tax Credit Applications due April 1st
 - Virtual agriculture event from The Grove March 20th.
 - 20% of Harford County has been vaccinated.
 - Requesting the state to add Ripkin Stadium as a Mass vaccination site.
 - It is now coyote mating season – watch pets when you let them out.

Meeting adjourned by Chairperson Bernie Schweigman at 7:58 PM

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 7pm – virtual meeting.

Respectfully Submitted, Thom Ellenbecker

The Forest Hill Community Advisory Board is a forum for the area residents to inform the Office of the County Executive on matters of interest and/or concern within the Forest Hill community. This Board will host regularly scheduled public meetings that educate attending residents on local government services, plans and initiatives, along with various state agencies and other organizations. All meetings are open to the public. Resident involvement is critical to the success of this community board!

Forest Hill Community Advisory Board Members:

Bernard Schweigman II - Chairperson
Thom Ellenbecker - Secretary
Catherine Ohler
Nancy Reynolds
Elena Skittle-Watson
Daniel Sekowski
Steven Davids

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