

**Budgetpalooza!** | It's MCCF's Fifth Annual *Budgetpalooza!*, our yearly in-depth examination of the Montgomery County Public Schools' 2018 Budget. Sign up to present a chapter, or just attend the meeting to hear all the presentations | **P. 3**

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**TO PRINT, USE PRINT VERSION**

## of note

### Next MCFF Meeting

Monday, February 13, 2017, 7:15 p.m.  
@ the Executive Office Building in Rockville. It's the "**Budgetpalooza!**" Please note that the meeting begins 30 minutes earlier than usual. All are welcome to attend!

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### Meeting Minutes

January 9 General Meeting #882

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January 19 Executive Committee Meeting

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### Membership Application

Join or Renew Now

**SEE FORM**

## Federation Meeting 883

Monday, February 13, 2017

**NOTE CHANGE: 7:15 p.m.**

Lobby Level Auditorium  
Executive Office Building

101 Monroe Street  
Rockville, Maryland

### AGENDA

- 7:15 Call to Order/Introductions
- 7:20 Approval of Agenda
- 7:21 Announcements
- 7:23 Approval of Minutes,  
January 9 meeting **PAGE 12**
- 7:24 Treasurer's Report
- 7:25 Program: *Budgetpalooza!*
- 9:30 Committee Reports
- 9:40 Old and New Business
- 9:45 Adjournment

## About MCCF Meetings

*All monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public.* They are held on the second Monday of each month, September through June.

**NOTE CHANGE: The February meeting begins at 7:15 p.m.**

The February 13 meeting will be held in the **Lobby Level Auditorium of the Executive Office Building at 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland.** **DIRECTIONS**

Walkers can enter by buzzing security at the door. You can park for free either in the lot at E. Jefferson and Monroe Streets or in the lowest level of the EOB. Drive onto the ramp in the front of the building (ignore "permit parking only" sign), turn left at the second, lower level; use the intercom at the gate and then at the door to the elevators to gain access to the MCCF Meeting. ■

The **Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc.**, is a county-wide nonprofit educational and advocacy organization founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. Monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public (agenda and details at left).

The *Civic Federation News* is published monthly except July and August. It is emailed to delegates, associate members, news media, and local, state, and federal officials. **Recipients are encouraged to forward the *Civic Federation News* to all association members, friends, and neighbors.** Permission is granted to reproduce any article, provided that proper credit is given to the "*Civic Federation News* of the Montgomery County (Md.) Civic Federation."

### Civic Federation News

civicednews AT montgomerycivic.org

**TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, SEE PAGE 18**

## It's MCCF's Fifth Annual 'Budgetpalooza!' Examination of the MCPS Budget This Month

By Paula Bienenfeld, Education Committee Chair

The *Budgetpalooza!* is coming up and this year will be the program at our February Meeting. The Civic Federation is teaming with our colleagues at the [Parents' Coalition of Montgomery County](#) and the [Montgomery County Taxpayers League](#) for the deep dive into the proposed \$2.5-billion-plus Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Operating Budget.

**Please note this meeting will begin at 7:15 p.m.** so we have time to review the entire budget. We'll also be providing snacks as we always do at the *Budgetpalooza!*

This year Superintendent Smith is recommending an operating budget of \$2,519,848,012 for Fiscal

Year (FY) 2018. Yes, that is right. Over two-and-a-half billion dollars.

Smith is recommending an increase from FY17 of \$62,374,251, a 2.5% increase over last year. Just two years ago, the FY16 budget was \$2,318,713,430. That amount increased by over **\$139 million** in FY17, with the current Operating Budget of \$2,457,473,761. And now, we taxpayers are being asked to pony up another **\$62 million** just one short year later. So, in two years the budget has increased by more than **\$200 million**. Are we—and our children—getting what we think we're paying for? Let's find out!

All are welcome and encouraged to "take a chapter." All the chapters and appendices have been posted to [SignUpGenius.com](#).

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Operating Budget was unveiled by Superintendent Jack Smith in December. Internally, MCPS has been working on developing the budget since last fall when budget submissions were due to the MCPS Department of Management, Budget and Planning (DMBP) in September.

How is the budget put together? Once the Budget is submitted, it is reviewed internally by DMBP, the chief operating officer, the deputy superintendents, the union, representatives from the Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MC-CPTA), and the superintendent. These are the parties that are "at the table."

The [budget is online here](#).

**MORE**

## Budgetpalooza!, cont.

If you are a member of the PTA at your school, please be aware that the only members of the public that have access to the "secret table" at which the budget is discussed is the PTA. So, you have added responsibility for this budget, which affects every resident of our county. Each school has a representative at MCCPTA. Instead of testifying before council that MCPS "needs more money," please take the responsibility to ask your MCCPTA school representative specific questions about the budget and the proposals. Read the budget. \$2.6 Billion is a lot of money, and it's all public money. Every penny.

The current FY17 budget is \$2.4 Billion, about half of our entire county budget. All our re-

**FIFTH ANNUAL  
BUDGETPALOOZA!  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2017  
7:15 P.M. AT THE MONTHLY  
MCCF GENERAL MEETING**

maining needs, including first responders, the health and welfare of our indigent and most needy, fire, police, libraries, parks, roads, everything else, is the remaining half of our annual budget. The county council has the fiduciary responsibility to approve the MCPS budget.

Public hearings before the BOE took place on January 5th and 11th, 2017, with BOE work sessions that followed on January 17th and 19th. The BOE takes action on the

proposed FY18 Operating Budget at their meeting on February 14th, 2017, just the day after the MCCF *Budgetpalooza!*

And that's where we step in, to do the deep dive that the BOE refuses to do. The Civic Federation believes that our public schools are important to the quality of life in the county; and furthermore, that the enormous budget, about half of our entire county budget, requires close and constant review. So, as we've done in the past five years, we're taking on that challenge again. We can't do it without you!

So please sign up to take one chapter or appendix, review it, and present it at our Fifth Annual ***Budgetpalooza!*** **Be a good citizen. Because this is what citizens do. ■**

## Part 3 in a Series: More on Wireless Facility Applications: The Rights to the Site

*[This is the third article in a series on the County's cell tower facility application approval process.]*

*By Sue Present, Hillandale*

The [December News](#) discussed proposed ZTA 16-05, which, if passed, would have set new physical standards for “small cell” towers, particularly in the public rights-of-way (PROWs), and would have established them as “limited uses,” eligible to bypass the conditional use review process in residentially zoned areas. Last month's Newsletter followed with a discussion of the review process for wireless facilities, and focused on the conditional use review process. [Current FCC Rules/Orders constrain local government regulatory authority over public rights-of way (PROWs). However, in response to a [Petition filed by](#)

[Mobilitie](#), the FCC is seeking [public comments on whether to order new rules to further streamline small cell deployments](#) and further restrict local government review processes and fees. The deadline for comments has been extended until March 8, 2017.] To grasp the full picture of the review process for wireless facilities, it is important to note that, before any conditional use petition, technical application, or construction permit request may be submitted, a telecom must first have rights to the site.

Historically, wireless applications in Montgomery County have most often involved macro-size facilities: cell towers constructed on land, and wireless antennas attached to cell towers, large buildings, or other structures such as water towers. Telecoms usually do not

own the land or non-tower structures where they seek to site their facilities, so they must acquire the necessary rights. [As reported in [last month's News](#), in 2012, practices were aligned to require cell towers proposed at public schools to go through the same zoning reviews as cell towers proposed at other residential properties. However, controversy continues regarding review practices for cell towers proposed at school sites because, among other things, technical applications have been allowed to proceed through reviews without the telecoms first acquiring and producing formal authorization (leases or other land rights document) from the landowner (Board of Education).]

Generally, the rights to site these

[MORE](#)

## Wireless Facility, cont.

facilities (including related equipment) get conveyed through leases—often very long-term leases—granting the telecoms the rights to land, structures, or space owned by someone else and authorizing the attachment of the wireless facilities.

Recently, the telecom industry has been directing more interest toward installing distributed antenna systems (DAS) networks and “small cell” facilities in the PROWs. At the County Council's September 12, 2016, Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee worksession, staff reported that it had already received a record number of technical applications for these wireless installations in the PROWs, and that it anticipated receiving an estimated 700 applications within the fiscal year.

These included applications from Mobilitie to erect 70-foot “small-cell” monopoles in the PROWs. Proposed facilities are intended to “densify” or enhance existing wireless services, and to speculate for future wireless opportunities. However, **the massive influx of wireless applications does not focus on the service needs of approximately one-third of Montgomery County's territory that has inadequate connectivity or none at all.** [This territory is primarily within the Agricultural Reserve. Perhaps Montgomery County needs an innovative program aimed at correcting ongoing connectivity disparities. The County has proven itself to be a bold trailblazer, having established the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program. That required housing developers to contribute to correcting dispari-

ties in the housing supply. When it was created, the MPDU program required developers to either provide affordable units in their new housing developments or to pay fees to support the acquisition/development of affordable housing. This highly successful MPDU model might translate to the establishment of a new County program, one that would (with the State's blessing) require the industry to support Countywide connectivity and emergency support services.]

Montgomery County does not lease or rent its PROWs to telecoms. Instead, the County enters into a contract (agreement) with each telecom that grants the telecom non-exclusive rights called a “franchise.” The franchise agreement circumscribes the telecom's occupancy for installing/attaching facilities within the grounds and space of

[MORE](#)

## Wireless Facility, cont.

the PROWs. Franchise agreements are approved by Council resolution. Technically, the Council must not approve a franchise agreement until provisions in Section 49-20 of the County Code have been met, including providing public notice and public hearings on any property owner's or taxpayer's timely objections to the proposed franchise. In practice, however, many proposed franchise agreements slide through the approval process without public detection or much information. Unlike the public notice requirements for a conditional use petition, which were mentioned in last month's newsletter, **no signage at the proposed site of occupancy and planned installation is required for a franchise application.** In-

**MORE**

## Mobilitie Puzzler

This is an actual notice that was published in *The Montgomery County Sentinel* and deemed legally sufficient by the County Attorney's office.

Test your skills. Circle each of the following components that the notice was required to meet, per Montgomery County Code 49-20(a):

- 1) The location
- 2) The character
- 3) The extent of the use of the right-of-way
- 4) The cash compensation the County will receive, if any
- 5) The essential terms of the proposed franchise.

If you get stumped, you can always contact Clifford Royalty at the phone number in the notice [240.777.6739] or at [clifford.royalty@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:clifford.royalty@montgomerycountymd.gov).

### NOTICE

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

*Proposed Award by  
Montgomery County, Maryland  
of Non-Exclusive Franchise to  
Mobilitie, LLC*

Mobilitie, LLC (Mobilitie) has submitted an application for a non-exclusive franchise in Montgomery County, Maryland to attach, install, operate, construct and maintain telecommunications facilities within the Public Rights-of-Way throughout the County for the purpose of operating its telecommunications system.

Mobilitie has proposed to pay Montgomery County's reasonable expenses relating to the preparation, issuance, implementation and administration of this Agreement, not to exceed two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) in the aggregate. Mobilitie has proposed to collect and remit to the County any applicable Users Tax that is collected from subscribers. The proposed term of the franchise agreement is fifteen (15) years.

Any objection to the proposed granting of the franchise by the County must be filed, in writing, with the County Executive by the close of business on August 30, 2015 at the Executive Office Building, 2nd Floor, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, Maryland 20850. Copies of the proposed franchise agreement are available at the Office of the County Attorney, 101 Monroe Street, 3rd Floor, Rockville, Maryland 20850. For further information, contact Clifford L. Royalty at 240-777-6739.

## Wireless Facility, cont.

stead, public notice must be effected through publication in a newspaper of general circulation, in the issues of three consecutive weeks. Notices get buried among the various legal notices in *The Washington Examiner* or *The Montgomery County Sentinel*. The County Attorney's Office approves these public notices as legally sufficient, and, in the past, has done so despite content that has been arguably vague and obscure to the point that affected property owners could easily miss information that would identify adverse impacts and trigger objectors' timely requests for a hearing. (Play the Mobilitie Puzzler on the previous page; test your own skills at ferreting out the information in a public notice for a wireless franchise.)

If there have been no timely

requests for hearings from eligible objectors following the public notice, as is the norm, then the franchise agreement ends up comingled with various other items on the Council's consent agenda for reading and passage. **A franchise agreement generally receives no public hearing, no Council Committee review, and no Council discussion.**

Commercial wireless telecoms, of course, do reap financial benefit from the PROWs that they occupy. But the County does not collect franchise fees from the telecoms. The franchise agreements indicate that "no compensation shall be collected or paid" (though they do specify prospective future compensation). [The State has long authorized Verizon, the incumbent telephone service provider (ILEC), with rights to occupy PROWs without paying franchise

fees to the County. In response to court rulings, the County has ceased collecting franchise fees, which could be construed as providing unfair advantage to the ILEC over its telecom competitors.] In a further twist of irony, abutting residential property owners, who suffer the visual, economic, and sometimes other adverse impacts from the wireless facilities, receive no compensation for their losses and, by law, are required to mow or otherwise maintain the landscaping of the (more cluttered) PROWs grounds.

[Read Previous Parts:

■ *December—Council Proposal to Eliminate Public Notice, Hearings for Cell Towers in Residential Zones*

■ *January—County Changes in Regulatory Reviews for Cell Towers*

■ *Next Month—The Tower Committee: What it Does and Doesn't Do]* ■

**NEXT**

## MCCF Supports Bill to Establish Inspectors General in Bi-County Agencies

Representatives of the Montgomery County Civic Federation recently presented testimony to the Mont. Co. State Delegation in support of a bill to establish Offices of Inspectors General in the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

At a meeting of the State Delegation on January 27, 2017, MCCF 1st Vice President Alan Bowser and Member-at-Large Harriet Quinn expressed support for legislation (MC 110-17 WSSC & MNCPPC Inspector General) proposed by Maryland State Delegate Ben Kramer (D-Montgomery) that would require the two bi-County agencies to set up new transparency and accountability mechanisms. This legislative initiative is based on a proposal by

the Civic Federation presented at an August 2016 MCCF meeting with representatives of the State Delegation.

Also testifying in support of the proposed legislation were Joan Fidler, President of the Mont. Co. Taxpayers League, and Erin Yeagley, Sr. Field Rep. and Political Liaison for United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1994 Municipal and County Government Employees Organization (MCGEO).

Bowser said that MCCF strongly believes in transparency and the accountability of governmental entities on all levels, noting that the organization supports an expansive Open Meetings Act, the use of audio and video technology to disseminate public proceedings, a strong Public Information Act—with teeth, and

independent inspectors general in large governmental bodies.

He said that, with WSSC's fiscal year 2017 (FY17) operating and capital budget of \$1.4 billion and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's Operating and Capital Budgets for fiscal year 2017 of \$382.6 million, hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are expended to provide critical services to nearly two million people combined, in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties.

"These residents, your constituents, deserve to know that their tax dollars are being spent wisely and that there are safeguards to ensure their proper use," said Bowser. "The establishment of Offices of the Inspector General in these agencies

MORE

## Inspectors General, cont.

is an important step in increasing transparency and accountability in government."

As proposed in this Bill, the Inspectors General will be able to investigate mismanagement, misconduct, fraud, waste, and abuse in both of the bi-County commissions, providing an important level of accountability and transparency to the operations of these two unique agencies. With its subpoena power, the Inspectors General will have the legal ability to obtain testimony and documents relevant to its inquiries. The required annual audit will provide valuable information to the public and elected officials about the use of the Commission's funds and the efficiency of its activities.

"We believe that the residents of both Montgomery and Prince

George's Counties will welcome this legislation as a positive step forward to help make government more responsive to its citizens," concluded Bowser in his testimony. "This is smart, common sense, good govern-

ment legislation. Guarding against mismanagement, misconduct, fraud, waste, and abuse, increasing and improving transparency and accountability—these are goals that we share with our public officials." ■

## Streetlight Repair Requires Much More Than a Call to 311

*By Louis Wilen, Utilities Committee Chair*

It's a basic government function, but keeping the streetlights on in Montgomery County is sometimes a complex process that often requires lots of citizen involvement.

In Montgomery County, streetlights are operated and maintained by at least six different agencies.

■ In the central and lower county, lights on wooden poles are maintained by Pepco (a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation).

■ In select upcounty areas, lights

on wooden poles are maintained by First Energy (formerly Potomac Edison, formerly Allegany Power).

■ Lights on fiberglass poles and aluminum poles are maintained by Montgomery County in most residential and commercial areas.

■ Lights along interstate highways are maintained by the State Highway Administration.

■ Lights along the ICC (MD 200) and other toll roads are maintained by the Maryland Transportation Authority.

MORE

**Streetlight Repair, cont.**

And, finally, lights that in town-house communities are usually maintained by the respective HOA, even though the poles are often identical to county-maintained lights.

Each of the aforementioned organizations has its own streetlight outage reporting system. The appropriate outage reporting system can be found by using Google or by calling 311. You'll need the pole number and street name or specific location description to report an outage.

All of the agencies that operate street lights rely on residents to report outages. While some of the agencies have periodic "relamping" programs, typically at five- to 10-year intervals, none of the agencies (with the possible exception of some HOAs) have people who routinely drive around and check for streetlight outages.

When Montgomery County receives an outage report about a county-maintained streetlight, its technicians normally repair the light within about three weeks. However, about 15 percent of the reported outages (based on data collected from the Montgomery County streetlight reporting system) are caused by a "no voltage" condition. A "no voltage" condition means that Pepco or First Energy power cables have failed, and when that happens, the county reports the problem to Pepco or First Energy. Montgomery County also advises residents that the outage has been reported to Pepco by displaying "reported to Pepco" on the online streetlight outage map.

According to Dan Sanayi, Chief of Design and Operations at the Montgomery County



DOT, Pepco's "service standard" for repairing "no voltage" conditions is 15 days. However, for many months now, Pepco has been taking more than two months to repair "no voltage" failures after the County has reported the failure to Pepco. When this issue was mentioned to Montgomery County DOT Director Al Roshdieh at a recent Civic Federation meeting, Mr. Roshdieh stated that he meets with Pepco executives regularly but that the County does not control Pepco.

So who does control Pepco, and what can a resident do if a streetlight outage takes more than about three weeks to repair? The agency that monitors Pepco is the

MORE

**Streetlight Repair, cont.**

Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC). Montgomery County has never submitted a formal complaint to the PSC about Pepco's slow response to repairing "no voltage" conditions involving street lights.

Any resident can submit a complaint to the PSC, and that's exactly what it takes sometimes when extended streetlight outages are caused by Pepco problems. As an example, five streetlights in an Olney neighborhood were out for more than two months even after the County reported a "no voltage" condition to Pepco. Calls to a County Council member's chief of staff resulted in statements of support and a bit of prodding of DOT officials, but no resolution.

A formal complaint was then submitted online to the PSC by a

local resident. Within one day of receiving the complaint from the PSC, Pepco representatives contacted the complainant to verify the exact locations of the outages (even though Pepco had already received reports of the outage locations directly from the county). Within two more days, all of the Pepco cable failures had been repaired and the street lights were back in operation.

What can we conclude from this? First, residents must actively report streetlight outages to the responsible agency or broken streetlights will stay broken. Second, when a streetlight outage drags on after the County reports the problem to Pepco or First Energy (as shown on the online streetlight outage reporting map), an effective way to get the problem fixed is by submitting a complaint, online, to the Public Service Commission on its [dedicated complaint webpage](#). ■

**Minutes of the January 9th, 2017, Meeting #882**

*By Bailey Condrey, 2nd Vice President*

**Call to Order:** 1st Vice President Alan Bowser called the 882nd session to order at 7:57 p.m. Introductions followed.

**Agenda:** It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

■ Jim Zepp is recuperating and is making great progress. Lots of helping hands have been there, but more are still needed.

■ The Nominating Cmte. and Awards Dinner are looking for volunteers.

■ 350MoCo, a grassroots organization fighting for local solutions to the

MORE

## January Minutes, cont.

climate crisis, is joining the MCCF.

■ Storm Water Partners has announced that Kaitlin Wall has taken over from Diane Cameron.

**Minutes:** It was moved and seconded to approve the **minutes of the December 12th general meeting as they appeared in the newsletter**. The minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Jerry Garson's distributed report showed the balance of money in the MCCF account and net expenditures over income for the past month.

### COMMUNITY HERO AWARD

Alan Bowser presented a Community Hero Award to Anita Powell, President of the Lincoln Park Historical Foundation, for her many

years of outstanding leadership and service as a Communities of Color Advocate. The LPHF is located in Rockville.

### PROGRAM

The January program focused on the **Community Tool Kit** as developed by the Bethesda Chevy Chase Regional Services Center in 2010. It was then adapted for the Mid-county. The information was presented by Danila Sheveiko and Paula Bienenfeld. They went through the Tool Kit, covering topics such as:

■ Getting to know your community (organizing around issues and ways to improve formal associations around positive issues such as snow removal);

■ Sustaining membership in the absence of issues (Purple Line, Tree Planting, Greening a Local School, Partner with Local Schools, Happy

Hours, Next-door Neighbors, etc.);

■ Developing leadership

■ Keeping the membership interested via a newsletter (tout accomplishments), listservs, Facebook, yard sales, and block parties;

■ Reaching non-English speakers;

■ Budgets and fundraising (example of KHCA raised money to fight CostCo);

■ Running meetings;

■ Brainstorming;

■ Conflict resolution;

■ Online list of all civic associations in the County;

■ Tenant associations can also do this (CAs can parallel HOAs/both can serve a neighborhood or overlap);

■ Charging dues or not;

■ Advertising in a newsletter;

■ Setting up a website;

■ Becoming a tax-exempt corpora-

MORE

## January Minutes, cont.

tion (costs \$170 or \$270);

■ Meeting the needs of young people (social information sharing);

■ Actionable group efforts in common (i.e., solar panel connection, etc.);

■ Polling vs. voting (surveying membership for important official positions); and

■ Insurance options. (County may require liability insurance if CA holds events at county facilities. Could MCCF act as umbrella organization for CAs to get better insurance rates?)

MCCF will add a link to the Community Toolkit on its website.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Planning and Land Use

■ Harriet Quinn reported that cell towers in residential areas remain

contentious and an FCC case has been opened by one of the applicants Mobilite. (See story on [page 5](#).)

■ The proposal to eliminate the Office of the People's Counsel from the County Code may go to Committee in March. MCCF was instrumental in establishment of the Office in the 1990s.

■ New ZTA on height limits of accessory structures is under consideration.

■ The Coalition of Bethesda Area Residents has raised a number of issues with the Bethesda Master Plan including staging, unreliability of traffic and transit data, lack of parks, better compatibility on development's edge with residential neighborhoods. The Coalition will join the MCCF.

#### Environment

■ Costco will file another appeal.

■ A follow-up letter will be sent to Roger Berliner regarding the IGCC. *Environment and Education*

■ The costs for synthetic turf should be examined as we explore the county budget at the upcoming BudgetPalooza.

■ Fossil fuel divestment has been discussed by the ExComm and at two general meetings. Concerns about Bill 44-16 and FF divestment generally. Bailey Condrey was asked to investigate the level of fossil fuel industry investment in sustainable energy technologies.

#### Legislation

■ Md. Gen. Assembly begins the 2017 session on January 16. Prioritization and letters to the delegation will be discussed during February.

■ State Budget Deficit is 3%. There are issues related to transportation,

MORE

## January Minutes, cont.

full funding for capital budget for schools, Corridor Cities Transitway, EPA-NEPA changes, fracking.

■ Jhanelle Wilkins is the new delegate for District 20.

### Education

■ Paula Bienenfeld reported on the MCPS BudgetPalooza where MCCF will examine closely the MCPS Budget.

### Public Finance

■ The County Executive will present his budget on March 15. He has already submitted an Amendment to the CIP Budget that includes an additional \$40 million for BRT, \$55 million for a new pool in Silver Spring, \$47 million for development in White Oak, and \$22 million for Marriott.

### Public Utilities

■ Chair Louis Wilen reported numerous problems with the Washington Gas billing system that has not been updated in 40 years.

### Transportation

■ Chair Jerry Garson reported on winter snow removal. County has website where complaints can be lodged about lack of service. New warnings will also be posted there when minor snow is expected with falling temperatures.

■ He then reported on Ride-On extra service, WMATA, the fact that CSX has rejected positive train control, widening proposals for 1-270; and the fact that highway brine is 27% NaCl and 73% H<sub>2</sub>O.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m. ■

## Minutes of the January 19 Executive Committee Mtg.

*By Alan Bowser, 1st Vice President and Acting Secretary*

The meeting was held at the Mid County Recreation Center, 2004 Queensguard Road in Silver Spring.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by 1st Vice President Alan Bowser. Members Present: Paula Bienenfeld, Jacquie Bokow, Alan Bowser, Jerry Garson, Harriet Quinn, and Louis Wilem. Also attending: Peggy Dennis. There was a quorum.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jerry Garson presented the January report of the Treasurer.

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## Jan. ExComm Minutes, cont.

### ISSUES DISCUSSED

Committee members agreed to consider the Federation's continuing membership in the Committee for Montgomery at a future meeting. Paula Bienenfeld suggested a meeting with CFM President/Chair Jonathan Sachs about the Federation's participation.

### Upcoming Programs

■ An analysis of the proposed budget of the Montgomery County Public School system, the "Budgetpalooza," will be the focus of the February General Meeting, February 13, 2017 at 7 pm in the Executive Office Building. Paula Bienenfeld is organizing the program which will feature a chapter by chapter analysis of the proposed FY18 MCPS budget.

■ The March program will focus

on transparency and accountability issues. The April program will focus on an analysis of the County Executive's proposal operating budget.

### Community Hero Awards

■ It was decided that there should be no community hero for the February meeting as it will have a sole focus on the education budget. Recommendations were made for several future awards.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Awards

■ Paula Bienenfeld reported that there were new volunteers for the Awards Committee and that the deadline for nominations would be on or about April 27, 2017. There were several suggestions regarding nominations. A date for the annual Awards Reception was tentatively set for Thursday, June 8, 2017.

### Nominations

■ Paula Bienenfeld reported on the MCCF nominations process.

### Education

■ There was no report from the Education Committee. The next General Meeting would be dedicated to the discussion of MCPS issues (i.e., the annual *Budgetpalooza!*).

### Planning and Land Use

■ Harriet Quinn reported on Council action regarding the Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan and the Bethesda Master Plan. She also noted community concerns about the placement of new cell towers throughout the County.

### Public Safety

■ There was no report from the Public Safety Committee.

MORE

## Jan. ExComm Minutes, cont.

### Legislation

Members noted recent changes in leadership posts in the Maryland General Assembly.

Members also discussed plans to review and comment on State and local bills of interest to the Federation. A spreadsheet will be created to note bills of interest. Committee chairs will contact the appropriate State legislators recommending support or opposition.

The Executive Committee voted to send a communication to the Montgomery County State Delegation in support of Delegate Ben's Kramer's local bill to establish an Office of Inspector General in the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

### Transportation

Jerry Garson reported on recent developments regarding a proposed Bus Rapid Transit System in Montgomery County.

Harriet Quinn discussed the recent draft of the **MDOT US 29 BRT Corridor Study Report** (CSR) for the US 29 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.

Peggy Dennis updated the Committee on several Countywide bicycle transportation issues, including the plans for improved bicycle infrastructure in the Bethesda area.

### Environment

There was not a report from the Environment Committee

### Public Finance

Harriet Quinn reported on the County Executive's recent Budget Town Hall in the White Oak area of Silver Spring.

### Public Utilities

Louis Willem reported on his success contacting the media and the Maryland Public Safety Commission to repair streetlight outages in the Olney Area. He also discussed his recent work analyzing the State and County Homeowners Tax Credit.

### By-Laws

Alan Bowser proposed a meeting of the ad hoc By-Laws Committee to consider changes in the Federation's by-laws.

### OLD BUSINESS

**2017 Awards Program:** The proposed date for the 2017 Awards Reception is Thursday, June 8, 2017, at McGinty's Public House.

**Fossil Fuel Divestment Resolution Status:** A draft Resolution will be prepared for consideration by

MORE

## Jan. ExComm Minutes, cont.

MCCF delegates.

**Incorporation and Insuring Your CA Follow Up:** Alan Bowser suggested that there should be a brief presentation to the membership about the pros and cons of incorporating a civic association and the value of D&O insurance for civic groups.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Membership Issues:** It was suggested that there should be a special meeting of the Executive Committee to consider ways to increase Civic Federation membership.

**Newsletter deadline and articles:** The deadline for articles for the February newsletter is Thursday, January 26, 2017.

The next General Meeting will be Monday, February 13, 2017, in the Auditorium of the Executive Office

Building, Rockville, Maryland.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be Thursday, February 16, 2017.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. ■

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Montgomery County Civic Federation

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**Submit contributions for the next issue by the 26th of the current month.** Send to CFN at [civicfednews AT montgomerycivic.org](mailto:civicfednews@montgomerycivic.org).

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