



October 2025 Regular Town Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at 7:00 PM

Virtual and In-Person Meeting

3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

This meeting was hosted on Zoom and at Cottage City Town Hall:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/S2O4TFWB5WXAagimZLIH2X_kGGmdb2fRInbe-2CdtcyEXImOzDD0g_g5xd_8Wa0q.xDWlWqlCvyyDfz5P?startTime=1759964946000

Phone: 301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 852 7787 5063 | Passcode: L@?f9P2A

Call to Order at 7:00 PM

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. Todd Frankenfield, Alta CPA Group, Treasurer
8. Robin Barnhart, CPJ
9. Brandon Freeman, CPJ

Agenda

1. Call to Order and Recital of the Pledge of Allegiance (01:00)

Not heard owing to technical issues.

2. Review of Town Financial Report (11:30)

Financial reports look good for the first quarter of the fiscal year.

Commissioner Brooks proposed a motion for approval of the town financial report. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

3. Public Safety Report (13:00)

Acting Chief David Thompson presented the September monthly crime statistics. 70 calls for service, no major incidents.

Question from Commissioner Givens on the red-light camera revenue. Information will come later.

4. Commissioner Reports (17:23)

Ward 1 – Commissioner Salsich – Comment about CDC which will be addressed later.

Ward 2 – Commissioner Henderson – Question on vehicles that do not have Maryland license plates. Acting Chief Thompson will need to report back. Currently there is no fine for not having Maryland license plates on vehicles. Discussion on what can be done, and what enforcement options already exist.

Ward 3 – Commissioner Wheatley - Nothing to report

Ward 4 – Commissioner Givens - Nothing to report

At-Large – Commissioner Brooks - Nothing to report

5. Ratify the Resignation of Police/Code-Compliance Officer (28:26)

Commissioner Brooks proposed a motion to accept the resignation of Officer Aaron Perez, effective September 19, 2025. Commissioner Givens seconded the motion. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

6. Emergency Ordinance 2025-02 (30:13)

Emergency Ordinance Number 2025-02, an emergency ordinance of the Town of Cottage City amending Chapter 9, Traffic and Vehicles of the Code of the Town of Cottage City, amending Sections 9 through 15, speed monitoring system penalties, use and revenue. To change or establish certain speed camera fines to be based on a graduated scale, depending on the excessiveness of the speeding involved as permitted by statute, and generally relating to automated traffic enforcement systems and traffic and vehicles. This emergency ordinance right now establishes the fines that are going to be imposed.

The new proposed fee structure agreed to by the Commissioners is:

- 12 to 15 miles per hour over posted speed limit - \$40 fine
- 16 to 19 miles per hour over posted speed limit - \$70 fine
- 20 to 29 miles per hour over posted speed limit - \$100 fine
- 30 to 39 miles per hour over posted speed limit - \$200 fine
- 40 miles per hour over posted speed limit or more - \$300 fine

Commissioner Brooks proposed a motion to move forward with Emergency Motion 2025-02. Commissioner Givens seconded the motion. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

7. Resolution 2025-09 (32:49)

Resolution 2025-09 is a resolution of the Commissioners of Cottage City, Maryland, approving the timeline, eligibility, application requirements, and selection process for the annual Cottage City Scholarship. The timeline indicates that the scholarship application form would be available in the beginning of May of each year and shall be submitted no later than June 30 of each year. Scholarship recipient shall be decided upon at the July Town Meeting.

Applicants must have resided in Cottage City for at least a year and have graduated from high school and must be planning on continuing their education. All applicants must submit a

completed application form along with the following documents: transcripts of Scholastic Record; one letter of recommendation from a teacher, coach, employer, or community leader addressing the applicant's character, academic potential, and civic interest; proof of residency, utility bill or driver's license; and proof of high school completion, unless indicated on the transcript. They must also write a 300-to-500-word essay responding to the following prompt. Why is municipal government important, and how has my experience in Cottage City influenced this interest?

The Commissioners will then review the complete applications and rank the applicants. Once ranked, the Commission will award 75% of available award funding to the first place, 15% to second place, and 10% to third place. Commissioners also have the option to not award funding and roll it over to the next year's scholarship fund.

Commissioner Brooks proposed a motion to move forward with Resolution 2025-09. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

Commissioner Givens endorsed giving an additional award to last year's second and third place winners and there was unanimous consent.

8. 43rd Street Construction Update (54:19)

Robin Barnhart and Brandon Freeman of CPJ presented on the 43rd Avenue project, the final phase of the overall drainage work CPJ have done. Slope in alley needs either rip rap stone or vegetation to prevent runoff. Riprap is approximately \$20,000 and a new proposal needs to come from CPJ on how much the vegetation would cost.

There may be some CDBG funding remaining that can be used to drain the end of Bunker Hill Road where water backs up. It was proposed that if the cost of that project comes in at less than the remaining amount in the CDBG grant that the Town Manager be authorized to spend it on the Bunker Hill Road mitigation.

Commissioner Brooks proposed a motion rejecting the ADA ramp addendum, modifying the riprap stone proposal to vegetation, and authorizing the Town Manager to move forward with potential Bunker Hill mitigation if it comes in under budget. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

9. New Business Order 2025-03 (1:39:35)

New ordinance 2025-03 regarding street sweeping protocol and enforcement procedures to notify residents streets are being swept and be able to enforce car movement as needed. Frequency is about once a month except during leaf season which will be approximately once a week. Some discussion about the parking fee structure. Vote to be held in November.

10. Public Works (1:52:21)

Public Works assessment of the town is forthcoming. See-Click-Fix app is forthcoming, should be available within the month. Kudos to Jorge for doing a great job.

11. Resolution 2025-10 (1:55:57)

Town of Cottage City Resolution 2025-10, a resolution of the Cottage City Commission amending the Town of Cottage City Employee Handbook Policy and Procedures Manual to change the timing of pay for employees serving in an acting capacity. This will be incorporated into the employee handbook which should be ready by the end of 2025. Discussion continued about the amount of time that it should take to give someone in an acting role the full pay of the role they're acting in and how much that increase would be.

Commissioner Brooks proposed a motion for approval of Resolution 2025-10 and changing the time for increased pay to start from 30 days to 45 days, and noting that increased pay should be 50% of the difference between their current salary and the person previously in the role's salary. Commissioner Givens seconded the motion. **Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.**

12. Leaf Proposal from American Landscaping (2:24:43)

American Landscaping put forth two proposals for leaf removal and snow removal. Leaf removal to be \$4768 per visit and three visits for the season. Snow removal for 2025-26 winter season would be \$2152. If accumulation exceeds 5 inches then additional fees may apply. These prices are the same as last winter.

Current leaf machine has impeller damage and to fix it would cost \$1,985.

Commissioner Givens proposed a motion to purchase new impeller from ODB for \$1,985. Commissioner Henderson seconded the motion. **Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.**

13. Snowplow/salt spreader pickup truck (2:39:00)

Commissioner Givens proposed a motion to sell the gray 2004 snowplow/salt spreader pickup truck for no less than \$3,500. Commissioner Brooks seconded the motion. **Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.**

14. Salt Spreader (2:45:00)

Commissioner Givens proposed a motion to purchase a Salt Dogg salt spreader for the price of \$5,391. Commissioner Brooks seconded the motion. **Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.**

15. Police Vehicle 127 (2:53:00)

Police vehicle 127 is at Prince George's County Fleet and needs \$4,325.77 in repairs. Suggested that the car be taken to a local mechanic to compare prices.

16. Code Compliance Officer vs Public Works person (2:58:33)

Suggestion to hire part-time Public Works person to help seasonally and tabling a code compliance officer. Code compliance officer would be seasonal during the summer.

Commissioner Givens proposed a motion to hire a seasonal worker for four months for 25 hours a week at a pay rate of \$18-22/hour. Commissioner Brooks seconded. **Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.**

17. Police Chief review panel (3:10:18)

Need two town residents for the review panel.

Commissioner Brooks proposed a motion to include Tom Campos and Shonda Gililand as the mains, with Keisha Barrett as an alternate, and including a person from Legit Insurance to help advise. Commissioner Givens seconded. **Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.**

18. ICMA Conference (3:15:22)

Discussion as to whether or not to send the Town Manager to the ICMA Conference. It was decided that yes, he should go.

19. Logo Design for CDC (3:18:27)

Discussion on logo design proposed by Colmar Manor for the Port Towns Community Development Commission. Commission prefers the one with sails (#40).

20. Appointment to BCCE Port Towns Board (3:21:24)

Discussion as to what resident should serve on the BCCE Port Towns board.

Commissioner Salsich proposed that Karina Young should serve on the BCCE Port Towns Board. Commissioner Brooks seconded. **Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.**

21. Thanksgiving Share Food (3:23:26)

Discussion as to what should be purchased for the November Share Food program giveaway. The final decision was to get 20 extra Thanksgiving dinners on top of the standard 50 value packages.

22. Legislative Survey (3:34:51)

Legislative survey is due October 12. Progress has stalled on the pedestrian bridge on Bladensburg Road; it is still in the design phase and construction is not yet funded. Commission needs to decide on legislative priorities for the upcoming year. Suggestions include the bridge, having two conductors on the trains, changing the law so that stop sign cameras can be installed more than a mile from a school.

23. Fall Conference (3:43:33)

Should office manager go? Decision was made to close town hall for training.

Commissioner Salsich proposed that Karina Young should serve on the BCCE Port Towns Board. Commissioner Brooks seconded. **Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.**

24. Public Comments (3:48:32)

Amy Sawyer read a letter into the record expressing frustration with the lack of transparency from the Commission regarding personnel issues and with the lack of outreach to the Spanish-speaking community. She also commented that it was difficult to log into meetings.

The Commission responded that the accusations were unfounded.

25. Move to a Closed Session (4:01:25)

Closed session proposed to be able to discuss personnel matters under Article 3-305B, to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction, any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals, to consult with attorney to obtain legal advice, and with staff or consultants or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

The motion to move to a closed session was made at 11:11 PM by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. Salsich-aye, Henderson-aye, Wheatley-aye, Givens-aye, Brooks-aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

NOTE TO JOHN: At 4:11:30 the mic becomes unmuted and the recording becomes audible. Discussion of personnel matters is audible. May want to edit the audio file and transcript to remove this information.

26. Report from Closed Session (4:26:57)

Commission did discuss personnel matter involving hiring one part-time employee, Esteban Hernandez for \$27/hour for 30 hours/week. The Commission also discussed litigation with a contractor who has not fulfilled their obligation to the town.

27. Adjournment (4:28:40)

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

The motion to adjourn was made at 11:37 PM by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, and Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.