



May Regular Town Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting

3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

This meeting will be hosted on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82573671277?pwd=Unl6eEJrNTVoNjFmTHIJLzViZlITdz09>

Phone: 301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 82573671277 | Passcode: 361522

Call to Order and Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Reading of Election Results - Board of Supervisors of Elections

Swearing-In of Commissioners (Thank you Clerk of the Circuit Court for administering the oaths of office)

Julia Salsich - Ward 1

John Brooks - At-Large

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes:
 - April 1, 2025: Work Session
 - April 9, 2025: Regular Town Meeting
 - April 29, 2025: Special Town Meeting
2. Approval of April Financials
3. Public Safety Report
4. Public Works Report - Oral

Commissioner Reports

5. Ward 1
6. Ward 2
7. Ward 3
8. Ward 4
9. At-Large Report

Old Business

10. Port Towns Joint Resolution 2025-01: Form A Community Development Corporation (CDC) (Commission Vote)
11. Port Towns Composting (Commission Vote)

- [12.](#) 43rd Avenue Stormwater Maintenance RFP (Commission Vote)
- 13. Street Sweeper & Public Works Equipment (Commission Discussion)
- [14.](#) 2nd Reading: Ordinance 2025-02: Adopt Budget & Levy Property Taxes FY 2025-2026 (Commission Vote)

New Business

- [15.](#) Translation Services (Commission Discussion)
- 16. Hiring Temporary Office Assistant for Admin Office (Commission Discussion)

Updates

- 17. Town Manager Update

Public Comments

Anyone seeking to speak under Public Comments must sign in prior to the end of the Town Meeting. There is a 3-minute time limit. When you come up to speak, you will need to state your name, address, what organization that you represent and your topic of concern(s).

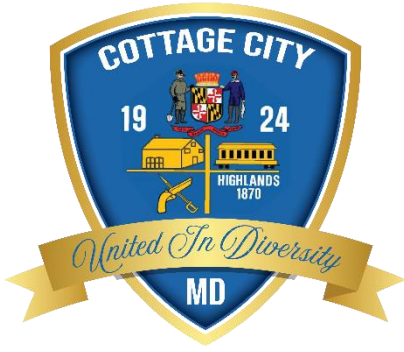
Motion To Go Into Closed Session

This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only: (1)____ "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".

The Commission plans to go into a closed session to discuss performance reviews of employees

Open Session Following Closed Session

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



April Work Session Agenda

Tuesday, April 01, 2025, at 6:30 PM

Hybrid Meeting

3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

This meeting will be hosted on Zoom

ONLY: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89670225884?pwd=eklVZW03UElvNW03TzJFcjBOTmR2Zz09>

Phone: 301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 896 7022 5884 | Passcode: 922160

Call to Order

Attendees

1. Ward 1-Commissioner Young
2. Ward 2- Commissioner Henderson
3. Ward 3- Commissioner Wheatley
4. Ward 4- Commissioner Givens
5. At-Large Report- Commissioner Brooks
6. John Hoatson-Town Manager
7. Anthony Ayers- Chief of Police
8. Todd Frankenfield- Treasurer Alta CPA Group (Via Zoom)
9. Kevin Best- Town Attorney
10. Angela Jenkins (Resident)
11. Frederick Hill (Resident)
12. Richard Anderson (Resident)
13. Demetrices Ramsey (Resident)
14. Julia Salsich (Resident)
15. Yolanda Barnett (Resident)
16. Lucia Proctor (Resident)

Review of Agenda

Swearing-In of Election Judges

1. Election 2025 Judges

Commissioner Chair Wheatley swore in the four Election Supervisors for the May 5, 2025, Election. The Election Supervisors are Angela Jenkins representing ward one, Frederick Hill representing ward two, Richard Anderson representing ward three and Demetries Ramsey representing ward four.

The Town Manager stated that three of the Election Supervisors were sitting in his office, Demetries Ramsey, Richard Anderson, and Frederick Hill. Angela Jenkins was on zoom.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley congratulated the four Election Supervisors and stated that they are now officially Election Supervisors and thanked them for their service.

The Town Manager stated that the town has Certificates of Appreciation for the four Election Supervisors and Ms. Jenkins' certificate is at the town hall and the Town Manager will make sure Ms. Jenkins will receive it. The Town Manager thanked the Election Supervisors for their service.

Proposed Town Tax Rate Schedule (CYTR)

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that next item on the agenda is the budget discussion and the proposed town tax rate schedule. Commissioner Chair Wheatley inquired if there was a document to accompany the discussion.

Mr. Frankenfield (Town Treasurer) stated no to Commissioner Chair Wheatley's question and that there was no change from the budget that was shared previously, and he will share it on the screen. Mr. Frankenfield stated that he would be discussing the constant yield rate. The constant yield rate is a mechanism that the State provides the town with to maintain revenues that are the same as the prior year and offer the citizens a lower tax rate. If revenues stay, the same tax rate goes down because assessments have gone out. Most properties are raising in value constantly. The State and the county are reassessing, and the town is subject to raise a majority of its revenue through that tax base. The town has two property tax classes, residential and commercial, approximately 66% of its tax base is residential, and a third is commercial from the budget proposal that the town has been presenting. So far, the town has constantly maintained the tax rate that was passed in fiscal year 2025. Tax rates are the same. Revenues have a small increase, and those tax rates will be 0.4538 for the residential properties and 0.6735 for the commercial properties. The majority of the expenditure in the budget has been discussed. As the budget is drafted the budget shows a deficit of \$368,000. This means that the town will be taking \$368,000 out of savings from the beginning of fiscal year 2026 until the end based on the town's current reserves. Mr. Frankenfield stated that he is estimating the town to have 1.3 million dollars at the end of fiscal year 2027. It is up to the Commissioners, Mr. Frankenfield's suggestion that the town can weather the deficit of \$368,000, and the town is still within normal accepted ratios of cash to budget coming out of fiscal year 2027. Mr. Frankenfield stated that the Commissioners definitely have the opportunity to keep the town liquid. If the town is planning on expanding. The Commission has the option to increase tax rates to decrease the budget deficit.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked Mr. Frankenfield if he could repeat his recommendations.

Mr. Frankenfield stated that his recommendation is that the town maintains the same tax rate for fiscal year 2026 that was in place for fiscal year 2025. The 0.4538 for the residential properties and 0.6735 for the commercial properties. When the town maintains tax rates, it creates a little bit of revenue for the town. By maintaining the same tax rate, it provided about \$72,000 of revenue to the town. The Commission has the opportunity to increase or decrease. Mr. Frankenfield's suggestion is for the town to maintain the same tax rates so there won't be a larger budget deficit.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked Mr. Frankenfield if he could repeat what the deficit is.

Mr. Frankenfield stated that the deficit is \$368,000. If the town has 1.5 million dollars that is being carried into the next fiscal year at the end of the next fiscal year the town will be down around 1.1 and a half, the town is taking it out of the savings account to keep funding operations next year.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked Mr. Frankenfield if this is what was done last year and the last couple of years?

Mr. Frankenfield stated that yes, the town has been, and the town has the liquidity and the reserves to keep maintaining that practice. Mr. Frankenfield stated that the Commissioners may disagree with him and want to increase the tax rates. Mr. Frankenfield stated that there is a cost to the citizens, however the town doesn't have to dip into the savings to balance the budget.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young stated that she supports what Mr. Frankenfield recommends with keeping it at the same level. Commissioner Young recommended that an explanation should be made to the residents in the newsletter because she received some complaints stating that the town is raising taxes because the state raised taxes. Commissioner Young stated that the article can help the residents understand that the raise of the taxes isn't due to the town raising taxes but through the state because it's separate from what the town is doing.

Mr. Frankenfield stated that he agrees, and another piece of the raise is the county as well, so when the residents receive their tax bills there is a piece from the town along with the county. Most residents see their assessed value, their property value goes up so unfortunately that comes with a higher tax bill.

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson stated that he agrees with the proposed methodology that Mr. Frankenfield mentioned to keep the tax rates the same.

(Commissioner Brooks asked Mr. Frankenfield if he could pull up the rates so the Commissioners can see them.)

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she agrees with Mr. Frankenfield recommendations, and she also agrees with Commissioner Young about making the residents and homeowners aware of what's happening with the tax assessments. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she also received complaints last year. Residents believed that the town had raised taxes when actually, the county assessed the resident's property value higher, which automatically made the taxes go up, and the residents just didn't understand that it wasn't the town. It was the county. Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked Mr. Frankenfield if he could work with the Town Manager and put something together so that it can be placed in the newsletter

Ward 4:

Commissioner Givens stated that everyone has a misunderstanding, based on keeping the tax rate the same. Commissioner Givens stated that he can only assume that if the constant yield rate is kept at the same cost and the constant yield is lower, then you are raising taxes. Commissioner Givens believes that's how you're able to increase the revenue by \$73,000. The constant yield is kept at a balance of zero which means you will receive no more money than what was received last year, it will be the exact same amount. That is the constant yield rate that's what it is applicable to if you choose to leave the rate where it's at, and the constant yield is lower. Essentially, you are raising taxes now and Commissioner Givens feels that the town should. Commissioner Givens agrees that the tax rate should stay the same and receive that \$73,000 revenue. Commissioner Givens just want to make sure the Commissioners don't go out there and misspeak and put themselves in a position which is not true.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she and the other Commissioners stated the same thing as Commissioner Givens.

Commissioner Givens stated that there is a difference between what the other Commissioners stated versus him. Commissioner Givens stated there's a difference between the rate and the constant yield. These are two different numbers, so the rate the current rate as it stands, Commissioner Givens thinks, Mr. Frankenfield said, 4.4 or 4.5 or 5.8 or something like that. Commissioner Givens asked, was that correct?

Mr. Frankenfield stated that it was correct.

Commissioner Givens asked Mr. Frankenfield what the constant yield is.

Mr. Frankenfield was about to state the constant yield then, Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she doesn't think Mr. Frankenfield gave the Commissioners the constant yield. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that Mr. Frankenfield just provided the Commissioners what the tax rates were going to be.

Mr. Frankenfield stated that is correct.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated again that Mr. Frankenfield didn't say the constant yield. Commissioner Givens stated that Mr. Frankenfield knows what the constant yield is, and by Mr. Frankenfield stated, Commissioner Givens stated that he doesn't even know what the constant yield rate is, but Commissioner Givens stated that he automatically knows it's lower than what the tax the current tax rate is, because Mr. Frankenfield said there was an increase in revenue of \$73,000. Commissioner Givens stated that he would imagine that it should be about 2 cents, which is not per \$100 of assessed value. Commissioner Givens stated that he could be off on that a little bit two or three cents to that effect.

Mr. Frankenfield stated that it is accurate, the State is offering the town's constant yield rate at .4186. If the town chooses to go to a constant yield rate the town will not raise any revenue, and the town's revenue will be the exact same as this year. Mr. Frankenfield stated that his recommendation is to keep the tax rates flat, so the town does generate a little bit of revenue. Mr. Frankenfield stated that mostly because of the deficit number that was discussed earlier.

Commissioner Givens stated to get clarity Commissioner Givens doesn't think it's 4 point anything. Commissioner Givens stated it's 4.1. It's either 4 or 5, because it's 45 cents per \$100 of assessed value. It's not 4 cents per 100 or 40 or 4.5 cents. It's 45 cents per \$100 of assessed value, and the continual rate is 41 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

Mr. Frankenfield stated that's correct.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked what last year's constant yield rate was?

Mr. Frankenfield stated that he thinks the town adopted the constant yield tax rate last year for residential property and the commercial - the town either kept flat or didn't adopt the constant yield, but Mr. Frankenfield stated that he can pull those up while the Commission is talking.

Commissioner Givens stated the town did the constant yield last year, because Commissioner Givens' recommendation last year was to give a slight increase, so that the town would have a gradual growing of the revenues so that it wouldn't impact any of the residents dramatically. Commissioner Givens stated what Mr. Frankenfield stated, "well yeah, I think you're going to have to raise the taxes next year". Mr. Frankenfield stated, "But this year", which was last year, Mr. Frankenfield stated he thinks the town is fine at going to constant yield. Commissioner Givens stated that was the conversation, because Commissioner Givens specifically got on the entire Commission. The entire Commission voted against Commissioner Givens. Commissioner Givens stated the town is still surviving right. The town still has money in the bank, but the town has less money. Commissioner Givens stated what the town

anticipates, what has gone into the deficit or pulled from the debt because the town hasn't backfilled a number of positions so that will reduce the amount of revenue. The amount of expenditures.

Mr. Best (Town Attorney) stated that the constant yield tax rate has changed. The law now is, if you increase your rate, your tax rate period you must go through a notice and a hearing process. The constant yield tax rate is not computed the way it was in the old days. Mr. Best stated that he thinks the town is going to have to look at that. Mr. Best stated that he believes Mr. Frankenfeld and Commissioner Givens are both wrong in what they stated because the law has changed. It was repealed and amended a year and a half ago, so Mr. Best stated that he will get back to the Commissioners about this.

Commissioner Givens stated that he just wants to make sure that the Commissioners get some clarity. Mr. Best is talking about something different than the financial aspect of it. Mr. Best is talking about the requirements as far as the notification and have a hearing. The Commission is not talking about that. The Commission is talking about numbers, money, and having increases, and having a lower constant yield. Your rate that's not going to change. Commissioner Givens wants to make sure the Commission understands.

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated respectfully, he does want to say, he thinks if the Commission is going to each Commissioner, it'd be good to get each Commissioners opinion or comment and then go to questions. Commissioner Brooks thinks one of Todd's first questions, does this deficit include the matches that the town has for grants?

Mr. Frankenfeld stated that it does include the grants and the other thing to consider is the ARPA revenue, that came in two years ago. The town is still spending this out, and Mr. Frankenfeld thinks the town has about \$90,000 in ARPA, that creates the deficit.

Commissioner Brooks stated that he thinks the only other thing he would like to ask the Town Manager to see what the business tax rates are for neighboring communities. Commissioner Brooks stated that he could be wrong just doing a little bit of research. It looks like the town is much lower, and if that's the case, Commissioner Brooks stated that he might support raising the tax yield a little bit to match what neighboring communities are charging as a constant yield tax rate.

Mr. Frankenfeld stated that he has a website link that he will share and put in the chat where the Commissioners can see all the other towns in the county, and what their tax rates are.

Commissioner Young stated that she just wanted to thank Mr. Frankenfeld and Commissioner Givens for their explanation. Commissioner Young also stated that she thinks it would be a good idea to place something in the newsletter explaining this.

Mr. Frankenfeld stated that the Commissioners are going to have three more meetings where the Commissioners will review the budget ordinance and adopt the budget on May 14th and then rates are due to the county on May 15th, so the town is on schedule. The town will adopt that into the legislation that will be introduced in the next meeting.

Commissioner Brooks stated that he wanted to ask the Commissioners if anyone would be in support of raising the business taxes, because it doesn't look like the town's taxes are comparable to other neighboring towns.

Commissioner Young stated that she would be open to it.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked Commissioner Brooks, was he saying to raise the business taxes?

Commissioner Brooks stated yes, the commercial. Commissioner Brooks stated that he is not in support of raising residential taxes, that they will raise themselves because the value of the houses has

gone up a lot over the years. Commissioner Brooks stated that he does support raising the town's business tax rates to make them more comparable with neighboring towns.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she will go through each ward and Commissioner Young has already stated that she would be in support with raising the business taxes. Commissioner Henderson was next. Henderson stated that yes, he supports raising the business taxes. Commissioner Chair Wheatley also supports raising business taxes. Commissioner Givens stated that he supports raising business taxes. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated Commissioner Brooks you received your response.

Commissioner Brooks asked Commissioner Chair Wheatley if the Commission could hear from Mr. Frankenfeld?

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated yes and after Mr. Frankenfeld speaks, the Commissioners will hear from Commissioner Young.

Mr. Frankenfeld stated that from .67 to .70 it creates another \$15,000 of revenue to the town.

Commissioner Brooks thanked Mr. Frankenfeld.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley repeated Mr. Frankenfeld's statement, raising the commercial or business tax from .67 to .70, she asked is that in cents?

Mr. Frankenfeld stated that the number is in dollars, so it's 70 cents per 100 (.70 dollars per 100).

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked how much would that yield?

Mr. Frankenfeld stated that it creates another \$15,000 on top of what the original projection was.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated in addition to the \$36,000?

Mr. Frankenfeld stated that is correct.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated okay and then Commissioner Chair Wheatley moved on to Commissioner Young.

Commissioner Young stated she does support raising the business taxes, but she is curious to know about the surrounding towns and their current business tax rates.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated Mr. Frankenfeld put that information in the chat, so Commissioner Young can click on the link and view the information for the other municipalities' business tax rates.

Commissioner Brooks stated that he will keep it brief, Commissioner Brooks stated that he mentioned 0.70 he would like to go higher at .72 and Commissioner Brooks thinks that is fair only because looking at the other municipalities the town is quite behind with similar taxes.

Commissioner Givens stated that he doesn't have a problem with going up to .72 or .70, it's whatever the Commissioners decide. Commissioner Givens stated that he just wants to make sure the Commissioners are aware of what they are doing before they decide to raise the business taxes.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated there are several comments in the chat and she asked if the Town Manager could read them.

The Town Manager stated from Mr. Best prior to 2024, the local taxing authority could not set a tax rate that exceeded the constant yield tax rate until first advertising its intent to do so. Now the local taxing authority cannot set a tax rate that exceeds the current taxable years, real property tax rate until first advertising its intent to do so. In addition to publishing an advertisement, the taxing authority must place a notice on its website. If the taxing authority does not have a website, it must post a notice in a place that is easily accessible to the public.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she thinks the Commission has discussed the taxes quite a bit and as Mr. Frankenfeld has mentioned there are three more meetings to discuss it more and the Commission has some things to think about. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she appreciates Commissioner Givens and Mr. Frankenfeld for explaining the numbers. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated moving on the Commissioners have old business that needs to be discussed.

Old Business

2. Old Firehouse Project (Commission Discussion)

The Town Manager stated a discussion is needed with the Commission in a closed session regarding the old Firehouse project. The Town Manager stated that the town did get an advisory opinion back from the Architecture board. The Town Manager stated that some things need to be worked out in reference to the project that will be discussed during the closed session.

New Business

3. Resolution 2025-04: Authorizing Town Manager To Coordinate Usage of Town Bus & Van (Commission Discussion)

This resolution is to set up a policy to authorize the Town Manager to schedule the use of the town shuttle bus or van. When a request is made by an outside individual or agencies. This is something that the Town Manager knows the Commission has requested. When people need to request the bus or the van, they can do so, and the Town Manager can then make the decision.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young asked what kind of policy is going to be put in place that is different from what the town has now? Commissioner Young stated that she received a complaint from a resident who had trouble getting the bus to come pick her up from the store and she had to wait about an hour. Commissioner Young stated that if you could explain the policy and also put it in the newsletter so that residents would understand what those policies are in terms of distances and requests, and when they need to be made, and so forth. Commissioner Young thinks that would be very helpful.

The Town Manager stated that the town currently has a driver named Mr. Mayo who does the rides for the residents of the town, Mr. Mayo is available to go around a 10-mile radius around to drop people off at doctor's appointments and things of that sort. What this resolution is to allow people who want to schedule to use the bus or van. We've had requests from other municipalities to use the town shuttle bus as well as the van for different events or activities, and this now would allow the town manager to make the call. When people are asking for a reservation to use it. This spells out the policy so that everyone is clear as to how you go about reserving or requesting the bus or van.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated Commissioner Young just to be a little clear this resolution is for when requests are made outside of the town, so if an external request from another municipality, for example, when Delegate Fennell asked if the van could be used to transport residents from Colmar Manor, Bladensburg, and Cottage City up to Annapolis. So, the policy that's in place for our residents hasn't changed. This policy or resolution is for requests made outside of our town. Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked Commissioner Young if what she stated made sense to her.

Commissioner Young stated that it made sense.

Ward 2:

No comments.

Ward 3:

No comments.

Ward 4:

Commissioner Givens asked the Town Manager if the Town Manager could print him out a copy of the resolution and place it in his mailbox so that he can read over the resolution and make sure it satisfies all his concerns.

The Town manager stated that he will do it.

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated that he thinks that the resolution is great, and he doesn't think that the Town Manager should have to come to the Commission as a body for something so little as this all the time. Commissioner Brooks stated that he supports this resolution. Commissioner Brooks wants to make sure that it's a mutual benefit for the town.

The Town Manager stated that he will make sure to make a note of what Commissioner Brooks stated.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that Commissioner Brooks made a good point and whenever the Town Manager approves any outside requests that the Town Manager makes sure that whoever is requesting the use of the vehicles understands what their responsibilities are.

Commissioner Young stated that loaning the bus shouldn't unduly have a bad impact on the resident's ability to use the bus.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that the Town Manager would not forego the residents for some outside entity. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she is sure that the Town Manager would make the residents a priority in all cases.

Mr. Best stated that the policy doesn't mention anything about compensating the town in any form for loaning the bus or van to another entity. Mr. Best stated that there's not even a requirement to fill the tank back up with gas, so that might be something the Commission wants to place into this policy.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that Mr. Best made a good point, and she also agrees.

Commissioner Young stated is there something in the resolution that states the person who is requesting to utilize the van or bus needs to show that they are qualified to drive the bus or van?

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that yes, it is in the resolution.

4. Ordinance 2025-01: Establishing A Resident Only Zone Along Cottage Terrace Between 4:00 PM until 7:00 PM (Commission Discussion)

The Town Manager stated that he and the Chief of Police have been working on creating an ordinance that would establish a resident-only permit zone with Cottage Terrace between 4PM and 7PM. The Town Manager stated that what is being presented is a sample of hang tags that can be created for the zone that would allow for Cottage City police to be able to identify who should be coming through that zone between 4PM and 7PM. Also, within the packet there are several ordinances that have been written by sister municipalities regarding permit zones and what the sister municipalities have done to address the issues. The Town Manager stated that he wanted to receive the Commissions feedback on what the Commission would like to do so that an ordinance can be created and to move forward by April 9, 2025, in the next meeting.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked the Town Manager to explain again what he is requesting because she didn't understand.

The Town Manager stated that the town seems to have a traffic congestion issue, as the Commission all know, on Cottage Terrace during rush hour. The town ends up getting a huge amount of traffic coming through Cottage Terrace, and it creates congestion on 40th Avenue as well as Bunker Hill Rd and various streets within the town. The Town Manager stated that the plan would be to create a

resident permit zone it would allow for the Cottage City police to be able to police the area more efficiently, so that the police know who should not be coming through. The Town Manager stated that it would also make it easier to hand out violations for people who are continually trying to use them as a cut-through. The Town Manager stated that the Chief is on the call and maybe he would like to speak.

The Chief stated that the Town Manager pretty much summed everything up. The Chief also stated that the police just want to keep the traffic flowing smoothly, so there wouldn't be any inconvenience to the residents, and they don't have to wait in line while the other cars are being checked.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked who the permit would be for.

The Chief stated that the permit would be for the residents who use Cottage Terrace to go home.

Mr. Best stated that this is a parking permit ordinance that would allow parking on a designated street for residents of that street only. The ordinance has a provision that says that the Commission can establish these parking permit zones, or the people of a particular street can petition the Commission to establish a parking permit zone along a street or roadway or alley, so that they could exclude everyone except the residents of the abutting properties from parking using a permit hanger to park along that street. Mr. Best stated that out of the three sister municipalities he favors Edmonston because it has the simplest, and clearest. Mr. Best stated that this is a federal constitutional issue. You typically cannot exclude the public from using a parking space in the street unless you do it properly, that's why the Commission has to do this permit system via ordinance. Thank you.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she understands, but why does it just say Cottage Terrace?

Mr. Best stated that no, it's for parking along the street. It's not for travel that doesn't have any regulatory effect on people using the street for travel purposes the travel way. It's for parking along the street.

The Chief stated that the tags were supposed to say Cottage City Residents or Visitor and are not for parking. It's just a tool to recognize the residents when they are driving down Cottage Terrace and they can keep going and do not have to be stopped. The Chief stated Commissioner Wheatley you can get one of these for your car so when you come through in the evenings you won't get stopped by a police officer and they will let you keep on going because you live in the town.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked the Chief if the permit was for the local traffic coming through the town during rush hour.

The Chief stated yes not for parking.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that is why she was confused.

The Chief stated that it was his fault, he had sent it over to the Town Manager and didn't read it when the vendor had sent it back to him and the Chief forwarded it to the Town Manager.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that if a resident who does not live on Cottage Terrace, but in another part of town get this permit without the parking permit statement up there, and it just says, Cottage City 2025 resident the police would see that hanging in the car and if they are coming through during rush hour, they would wave them pass and that's all this ordinance is addressing.

The Chief stated that it is correct, and he hasn't seen an ordinance the way Mr. Best is referencing it, the Chief stated that he doesn't need the ordinance.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young wanted to clarify that it wasn't a permit and just a tool to recognize the residents when they are driving through the town so that they can get through easily.

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson stated that he likes the idea of parking, but he believes that it should be for the whole town just like Colmar Manor and Edmonston and in the future the Commissioners can look into this having bumper stickers or hanging tags.

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she does know that there is an issue with parking on certain streets in the town, Cottage Terrace is one of the streets that has a lot of congestion as far as parking. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that the town has received some complaints from residents, and they have asked the town to look into a solution. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that the Chief and others have been trying to come up with a solution or a plan.

Ward 4:

Commissioner Givens stated that he doesn't think the permits should be hangers because in some states they are giving out tickets, so he agrees with resident Yolanda Barnett about the bumper stickers or stickers inside of your car. Commissioner Givens stated that there isn't a parking problem, people just don't want others to park in front of their house and there are some streets a little bit more congested than others. Commissioner Givens stated that he can speak with Commissioner Henderson more offline if he likes.

At-Large

Commissioner Brooks stated do we need an ordinance for this, the purpose is just for identification of the residents.

The Chief stated that the town doesn't need an ordinance because the purpose is just to identify the residents.

Commissioner Brooks stated that he supports the identifiers and doesn't feel that the ordinance is necessary.

Commissioner Henderson stated that the purpose of him mentioning his earlier statements was because there are a lot of District of Columbia and Virginia tags and in the past, they were scanned so that people wouldn't be parking on the streets if they didn't have Maryland tags, now that isn't happening.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she knows about this because the previous police officers that were working in the town would come through the townhouses, and if they saw out of state tags, they were writing tickets, they can't write tickets on a private street. They started giving out warnings, and they were harassing people because they didn't have Maryland tags so at that time, they were very efficient on identifying out of state tags. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she thought it was a law.

The Chief of Police stated that he had done it twice while he was here. He gave residents 60 days to change their tags over.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she agrees with Commissioner Henderson and that the police department should be doing it more often.

The Chief of Police stated that the police officer will continue through their list.

Yolanda Barnett (Resident) wrote in the chat that the tags are not the best thing. They crack, and people won't keep them hanging. Can the residents have a permanent stick on the bumper.

Ms. Proctor (Resident) stated like on the window like when you get your oil changed.

4. Town Hall Lawn Maintenance Contracts (Commission Discussion)

The Town Manager stated that it was sent to three companies, and the town hasn't received the third one back as of yet. There is currently American Landscaping and Oak Lawn Landscaping. American Landscaping is coming in at \$17,897 and Oak Lawn Landscaping is coming in at \$14,040. The Town Manager stated that the Commission will receive the other quote that was coming from Keeping It Green Landscaping out of Washington, DC.

Ward 1:

No comment.

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson stated that he likes the Oak Lawn proposal, but he will wait for the third proposal to come in.

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she will also wait for the third proposal.

Ward 4:

No comment.

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks thanked the Town Manager for putting the proposal together and stated that he will also wait for the third proposal.

5. Using AI to Catch Up on Backlog of Meeting Minutes (Commission Discussion)

The Town Manager stated that he reached out to Escribe in reference to using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to catch up with the backlog of meeting minutes. The Town Manager stated that Escribe would be doing a demonstration for him and he emailed the Commission with some information regarding the company and the process. The Town Manager also stated that he reached out to Municode minutes, and they haven't reached back out, The Town Manager is hoping to be able to do the minutes in real time through Municode meetings.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young stated that AI can make mistakes, and she isn't sure if that's the best way to go. Commissioner Young also stated that maybe it's best to hire someone because in the past the town had someone who kept up with the minutes religiously and the town is currently understaffed right now, and the town really needs to get into hiring people who are capable and willing to do the minutes.

The Town Manager stated the good thing is that Elisabeth, who's the Temporary Office Manager, has been working diligently to work on the town's current minutes and she was able to get some of them done. The Town Manager stated that The Temporary Office Manager (Elisabeth) is working on the most recent meetings, and then also, she's going to be starting on the backlog. The Town Manager stated that Yes, we can use AI the thing with AI, which I've discussed with the Temporary Office Manager is, we would need to go back and fine tune the minutes to make sure that things are correct. The Town Manager stated to Commissioner Young, you're right because AI does put things in so it's important to make sure we go back and proof them. Watch the video, make sure that we have

everything that needs to be captured correctly. The Town Manager stated that this is something the Temporary Office Manager will do moving forward.

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson asked how much the cost would be for the town.

The Town Manager stated that he has a demonstration with the company the following day and he will find out pricing at that time.

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that Commissioner Young, you're correct. AI can make mistakes. AI can also be used as a tool to help with the backlog. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated it will need to be reviewed. Commissioner Chair Wheatley also stated that she doesn't agree with someone sitting and watching two to three hours of meetings. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that was the issue the previous Office Manager Britney Gabriel had when she was doing the minutes manually and she had to sit and physically listen to two to three hours of meetings which took time away from other duties. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she does think the AI is a good option to help get caught up and would like to see two additional proposals.

Ward 4:

Commissioner Givens stated that most people don't understand that minutes are not about word for word. Everything that was said. Minutes are about a summation of what was said in totality of the topic and conversation. So and so, Commissioner Givens just wants to make sure people understand that, also that the town is moving forward with the times and taking advantage of the technology.

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated that he thought the town purchased something to help with the meeting minutes.

The Town Manager stated that yes, he's working with Civic Plus and Municode meetings to see if they have an AI component.

Commissioner Brooks stated that if they do have it the Town wouldn't have to purchase an additional one.

6. MML Services: Goal Building, Team Building, Prioritizations, Roles & Responsibilities (Commission Discussion)

The Town Manager stated that the Maryland Municipal League (MML) does retreats now and with the upcoming election on May 5th the Town Manager suggested that MML could come in on a Saturday and assist with some team building role and responsibilities and short-term goal setting and things of that sort. The cost is \$2,500 for those with populations under 10,000 people. The services are specifically designed for those newly elected councils. The Town Manager stated that it would be a good opportunity for the Commission, it would help bring everyone together and give the Town Manager assistance in his role alongside the department heads within the town.

Ward 1:

No comment.

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson stated that it sounds like a great idea, and he thinks that bringing the Commissioners together may be worthwhile and he would like to look more into it.

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she heard about it when she attended the conference in Annapolis and from what she heard from the other municipalities the program was a great retreat. It helped them get some clear vision of where they wanted to go with projects and what they wanted to set as priorities, and it helped them. I believe, with team building, there are some other things, and prioritizing their goals for the future. Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she supports it.

Ward 4:

No comment.

At-Large:

No comment.

The Town Manager stated that the next agenda item is the addition Commissioner Givens has asked for.

Commissioner Givens stated that it's not a big deal. Commissioner Givens just wanted to inform the Commissioners that the impeller on the leaf machine needs to be replaced, and the cost is less than \$500.00 due to normal wear and tear.

Commissioner Givens stated that he forgot to mention that the town has gotten barrels in, and the town has just ordered the top. Commissioner Givens stated the Commissioners need to think if they are going to put them out black or with the Cottage City logo or some artwork. Commissioner Givens stated that doing the Cottage City Logo would be most cost-effective.

Public Comments

Anyone seeking to speak under Public Comments must sign in prior to the end of the Commission Work Session. There is a 3-minute time limit. When you come up to speak, you will need to state your name, address, what organization that you represent and your topic of concern(s).

Mr. Kopecki (Resident) asked whether it would be possible to get more than three quotes for the lawn maintenance.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that the town is only required to get three quotes.

Notice of Closed Session

Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply). This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:

(1)____ “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”; **(7)**____ “To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice”.

The Commission proposed to go into a closed session to discuss Old Firehouse & CCPD Matters.

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.

Motion to Adjourn the meeting

The Motion was made by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Young, Henderson, Wheatley, Givens, & Brooks. Motion Pass. No nays or abstentions.



April Regular Town Hall Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 09, 2025, at 7:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting

3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

This meeting will be hosted as Hybrid: Town Hall & Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82573671277?pwd=Unl6eEJrNTVoNjFmTHIJLzViZlITdz09>

Phone: 301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 825 7367 1277 | Passcode: 361522

Call to Order at 7:02 PM

Attendees

1. Ward 1-Commissioner Young
2. Ward 2- Commissioner Henderson
3. Ward 3- Commissioner Wheatley
4. Ward 4- Commissioner Givens
5. At-Large Report- Commissioner Brooks
6. John Hoatson-Town Manager
7. Anthony Ayers- Chief of Police (Via Zoom)
8. Todd Frankenfield- Treasurer Alta CPA Group (Via Zoom)
9. Kevin Best- Town Attorney
10. Conor Grew-Resident (Via Zoom)
11. Kaleb Berhane-Resident (Via Zoom)
12. Lucia Proctor-Resident (Via Zoom)
13. Denise Hamler-Resident
14. Josh Durant- Resident (Via Zoom)
15. Laura Guischard-Resident (Via Zoom)
16. Bill Kopecki-Resident
17. Michael Galgano-Paycom (Via Zoom)
18. Amy Sawyer (Via Zoom)

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes: March 12, 2025, Regular Town Meeting
2. Approval of Financials

Approval of Minutes for March 12, 2025, and the Financial Report for March 2025

The motion was made by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Young-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion Passes no nays or abstentions.

3. Public Safety Report

The Chief of Police stated that last month they dealt with a lot of dog complaints. One in particular was a dog that was getting out and was very playful. Residents were saying that the dog was attacking people. The Chief stated that they found out who the dog belongs to, and the dog was handed over to animal control. At this time the dog is still with animal control until the owner gets the proper paperwork and shots for the dog. The Chief stated that more problems that have come up were residents walking their dogs without leashes and not picking up behind them. The Chief and his staff went out to the residents and handed out literature on how important it is to register their dogs, keep their dogs on leashes and clean up after their dogs.

The Chief stated that they also had concerns in reference to a hate crime in the town. The Chief stated that someone sprayed graffiti paint on the sidewalk. The Chief stated that they turned it over to the Counties Homeland Security Department and they came out to complete an investigation. The Counties Department of Homeland Security hasn't given an update at the moment, but The Chief believes it might be juvenile activity while getting off the bus. The Chief stated that they put a police car over there for the meantime, and that they did canvas the area and checked with resident's ring cameras to see if anyone was walking around with spray paint. The assailant did spray paint the sidewalk and the resident's trash can. Public Works were notified, and they will be going out to get the graffiti off the sidewalk.

The Chief stated that last month they addressed the issue with cars cutting through the town. The Chief stated that they were able to speak with Waze and Waze was able to make the street a restricted street when redirecting traffic. Once that went into effect, there was a decrease in cars coming through the town. The Chief stated that they were outside redirecting traffic for the nonresidents to turn around and go back on 38th and that has been successful. The Chief stated that they will keep an eye on the traffic situation.

The Chief stated that to address the issues with visibility he met with staff, and they restructured the monthly schedule to close some gaps they were having in the evenings. The Chief stated that he was trying to request from the Commission to allow him to get three bids for a security company to come in on the early morning and late nights for visibility. The Chief stated that he did get a quote from one company for three shifts or four shifts a week. The monthly cost would be \$1,440.00, estimated annual cost of \$17,280.00. The Chief requested a vote from the Commissioners to allow him to get three bids to bring back to the Commissioners and see how feasible it would be before going into the summer months.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked the Chief to repeat his last statement.

The Chief stated that the estimate monthly cost with three or four shifts a week is \$1,440.00 monthly and the annual cost is \$17,280.00. The Chief stated that this can be paid through the money they receive for the speed cameras. The Chief stated that he can have a month-to-month contract.

Commissioner Henderson stated does any of the neighboring jurisdictions use comparable services, and if so, what agencies are they using.

The Chief stated that in Prince Georges County they use Armed Security companies throughout Prince Georges County. The ones that he is vetting are the ones that are already working with Price Georges County and small neighborhoods. The Chief stated that he doesn't see any municipalities that have unarmed security guards at the moment, but he hasn't done any research yet. The Chief stated that this is something that neighborhoods that are the size of the town and larger.

Commissioner Henderson asked, will the agency the Chief suggested patrol on the weekends?

The Chief stated that yes whatever time we give them. The Chief stated that he has adjusted the officer's schedules, and the new schedules will start in May. The Chief stated that he spoke with the Town Manager and will be meeting with him tomorrow to discuss a new schedule for the officers. The Chief stated that there are still gaps in the schedule and he is trying to fill it with overtime, but he wants to go into the summer with all the patrol shifts filled.

Commissioner Young stated that given the number of people in the police department. If the Commission is going to hold the police department responsible for the kinds of things that have been transpiring recently. Then she thinks it would make sense to have security patrol pending further investigation of the financials.

Commissioner Brooks stated that he isn't opposed to the idea of having security, but if the camera fines stop then how will the security be paid for and he doesn't want it to come out the regular budget he believes it should come out the police budget.

Mr. Frankenfield (Town Treasurer) stated that year to date the town has collected \$260,000.00 through March. Thirty thousand in speed camera revenues work. The town gets to keep the first 10% of the total town revenues and then it's direct cost of the speed camera revenue program.

Mr. Best (Town Attorney) stated that the way the statute reads for speed camera revenues. If you make a hundred thousand in speed camera revenues you're allowed to remove or minus the direct cost. Like the officers reviewing the citations cost in processing the citations. Those are direct costs. Costs for administration costs for the Ombudsman - direct costs. Once you take that cost off, you have a net speed camera revenues. You're allowed to keep and use it for public safety purposes. Only 10% of your annual budget worth of speed camera revenues. If your budget is a million dollars, you can keep potentially up to \$100,000 of speed camera revenues anything else you make above that If you have a very, robust speed camera program and you make a lot of speed camera revenues but you have a small municipal budget you have to give back everything that exceeds 10% of the net speed camera revenues. You have to give it back to the Comptroller of Maryland every year. That's the way the statute reads.

The Commission Chair asked if the Town has been doing that. Mr. Frankenfield (Town Treasurer) stated that the town hasn't hit the threshold. The Town has not collected enough revenue to break the 10% plus cost equation.

The Chief stated that the cameras went live last month (March) in reference to the fifteen-day morning period. Now like a week and a half, the cameras have been live.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked was a notice sent out to the residents in reference to the cameras going live.

The Chief stated that he believes something was sent out to the residents.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she was asking the Town Manager, she stated that a notice was supposed to be sent out to notify the residents.

The Town Manager stated that the only thing that was sent out was about making Cottage Terrace local traffic only.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she didn't have any knowledge of the cameras being live, she asked did anyone else knew that the cameras were live.

Commissioner Givens stated that he knew.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that the other four Commissioners stated no including herself and she doesn't understand why Commissioner Givens knew about it.

Commissioner Givens stated that the Chief talked about the cameras going live in a previous meeting.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she just wants to find out exactly when the cameras went live and if the Chief sent a notice out to the residents.

The Chief stated that he wasn't sure if a notice went out, but he does know that Commissioner Chair Wheatley did request for a notice to go out.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked the Chief if he prepared a notice.

The Chief stated that Commissioner Chair Wheatley told the Town Manager to do it.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she told the Town Manager to send the notice on Constant Contact once the Chief created the notice and since the Police Department is his department. She expected the Chief to write the notice. Not the Town Manager.

The Chief stated that he will prepare a notice and send it out to the residents. The Chief stated that they are still waiting for the red-light cameras. The red-light cameras have been approved they are just waiting for PEPCO to install the power for them. The polls are up, and the permits have been received.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked the Chief if he had an estimate to when the red-light cameras will be active.

The Chief stated that he doesn't have an estimate, PEPCO informed him that it has been placed in the queue to be serviced.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that once the red-light cameras are back on. The residents should be notified because the cameras have been off for over a year.

The Chief stated that he will make sure a notice is sent out to the residents. The Chief also asked if the Commission is granting him permission to get three estimates for the security companies so that he can present them next month.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley confirmed who gave authorization for the three bids, Young, Henderson and Givens. Commissioner Chair Wheatley and Commissioner Brooks did not.

The Chief stated that he would do the research and get with the town's treasurer (Mr. Frankenfield) to show the Commission that there is enough money in the budget.

Commissioner Young wanted to confirm that at the moment the Chief would be getting three estimates, and that no decision would be made at this point.

The Chief stated that yes, he will research and get three estimates.

Commissioner Givens stated that you can't complain that you don't have coverage in the town, a presence, a police presence, a security type presence within the town. then complain that you don't have the money to pay for it. You know the reality is we are down an officer, so it's either you hire another officer, whether that be part time or full time, which would cost you an exorbitant amount of money, or you consider this option, which is a cost-saving factor because you can cancel and stop at any time along the way. What they're asking for is to our benefit is the same thing that citizens are complaining about. You know the lack of seeing a presence in the town. The Chief is asking for permission to get the bids. Commissioner Givens stated that even if the Chief gets the bids, the Chief will have Commissioner Givens support, because it is about creating some type of presence in the town.

Resident Laura Gushard stated that she has a few thoughts that she would like the Commission to consider she will be asking rhetorical questions. Really, just playing devil's advocate. Here it feels very uncomfortable, not advocating for something that pertains to the residents' safety. As a citizen, however, she does have some concerns just because of the budget process that the town is going through. issues that the residents know with budgeting feel like robbing Peter to pay Paul, when the residents already know that the town is a little bit cash strapped. In fact, the speed camera revenue does go down, does the town have the option to, in fact, pull out of this contract with the Security Company, or would we be locked in with them for a certain amount of time. Resident Ms. Gushard stated that she would also ask if the town had data on what the current safety issues, and during those times, that are not currently staffed by the police department. What types of crimes are they? What days of the week. What are the hours of most concern? And if the town is seeing very and again, this feels difficult to say. But if the town is seeing very low, level crime. Is it really worth it to pay this much money on an annual basis for somebody to patrol? And would they be able to actually enforce anything in the moment if they see something happening or are they just going to in turn relay what they see in person to a police department that would have to respond in the moment. And so, I just question, you know, is the juice worth the squeeze? Yes, we all want to be safe. but I'd really love to see the data on exactly when and where and what types of things we're currently seeing. So that we know what we're trying to combat by spending this money in this way. Thank you.

The Chief stated that the town doesn't have the amount and volume of crime that other people in the area have due to the fact that we have these we call barriers. We have the train track, the river as well as the cemetery and our industrial area. So, we don't get the volume of crime that the other municipality in our area receives. But we do have crime trends that come through every so often. Our death from autos is something that occurs every so often, not all the time, but like I might get free for like a week or 2, then it's quiet for a few weeks, or maybe a month. Then all of a sudden, I might have another spirit of death from autos. We don't have any break-ins, no robberies in our town, or any major crimes, but the presence is what people want to feel safe. So that's why we're trying to go to unarmed security just to have the visibility. And when you have a car going around with their lights on it is a deterrent to keep these individuals thinking twice before they come into the town. To actually do these petty crimes. So that's what we're trying to do is try to deter this crime by having visibility and also giving peace of mind to our residents that they feel safe and secure getting out their cars at certain hours of the day. So that's what we're trying to do in reference to what you said in reference to

cost. We can't offset the speed cameras, because when we have more cameras up it will pay for a salary of an officer. As well as their equipment they use. So that's going to free up money in my budget to actually give back to town, to actually put it back into public safety to actually pay for this program. Like, I said, one of the two cameras right now, we have online is making \$30,000 a month. That's going to pay for two years just one month for this program. So, it's going to be a drop in the bucket of what we what it's going to cost to keep this up and running. Getting back to what you asked me in reference to. Can we shut this down? Yes, that's why we're going to talk to all these vendors that we are going to interview is that we want to have a month-to-month contract with them the one I spoke to already. He's wanting to give us a month to month. That means that we get long as we give them 30-day notice. We can cancel out service. So that's why I gave you the monthly estimate of how it's going to cost that, you know. If you want to stop at any time or say, let's take a break we can. I'm just trying to have something right now. That's why I want to go month to month because hopefully, we will get an officer back soon. But I need something just in case it goes further than the summer that I had those hours covered. And that's what we're trying to do. I hope I have answered all your questions.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked the Chief if unarmed security is a temporary fix until the officer that is not in service returns.

The Chief stated that it is correct.

Commissioner Young stated that she thinks Ms. Gushard made a good point and after the Commission gets the quotes back the Commission can discuss more on what the town does need and how much the town can afford. Commissioner Young stated that it would be good to get input from the residents and also the Chief to get a better understanding of what is happening in the neighborhood and what the residents would expect from the police department.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley requested that the police crime stats be placed in the monthly newsletter.

Mr. Best (Town Attorney) stated that he represents two other municipal corporations, and he's practiced municipal law for 20 years, and he's not yet seen a municipality with a police department that have security arrangements. There are numerous Homeowners Association (HOA's) that have such arrangements with security forces. No doubt. Mr. Best stated that he thinks it's a good idea and the reason why is because a lot of times when municipalities, small municipalities run speed cameras they make significant revenues and as long as they stay within the 10%, 10% rule that he spoke of their typically searching for ways, because speed camera revenues that are allowed to be kept by a municipal corporation are limited only to public safety purposes. A lot of times you search for where you're going to spend this money, particularly when you have high influx or high revenues. Coming in, as it appears, you are, with what is going online is twice your number of speed cameras, maybe not twice the number of citations, because there's less throughput on that that other state road where you have these new speed cameras. There's no limitation on red light camera revenue as it is, that goes right into your general fund. You use it for whatever purpose it can be used for public safety or other municipal matters that are in your budget. Speed camera revenues are limited to public safety, and he knows for many years Forest Heights had speed cameras on MD-210, with 90,000 vehicles a day. They were making well over a million dollars in revenue a year. They were hard pressed to find what they're going to spend on that limited security for public safety purposes. He thinks it's a good idea; also, it's a political question. It's more of a political question than it is a legal question. Mr. Best stated that you could use it for police coverage if you added a few more officers and those wages for those officers could be paid for using speed camera revenues as well. Because that's a public safety purpose.

4. **Public Works Report: Verbal**

Commissioner Givens stated that the interview process for a public works candidate has begun. Commissioner Givens also stated that standard operating procedures (SOP's) is being put in place so that when the new employee comes in everything will be done in a timely manner. Commissioner Givens stated that two poop stations have been installed, and the Town Manager and John Brooks are working on getting a grant for more poop stations. Commissioner Givens also stated that once the grant is received the Commission can circle back on having artwork on the other two stations. To utilize previous materials that the town already had Commissioner Givens added hand sanitizer to the poop stations.

Commissioner Reports

5. Ward 1:

No comment

6. Ward 2

Commissioner Henderson stated that he wanted to report violation of cars that were up on a car jack. Commissioner Henderson also stated that he was waiting for the code enforcement to come and at least give a ticket but all they did was ride past and nothing was done at all. Commissioner Henderson stated that he also noticed that people are placing their trash out early and the wind is blowing trash in the streets and in the neighbors' yards. Commissioner Henderson stated that the trash blowing up under cars and neighbors complaining is a part of code violations and no tickets or warnings are being given out. Commissioner Henderson also mentioned the people driving the scooters without stopping at the stop signs and that maybe something can be placed in the newsletter about the danger of riding through the stop signs.

7. Ward 3

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she's seen people put trash and bulk trash out earlier than they're supposed to. She also stated that she's seen the trash company pick up the trash and drop some trash in the streets and sometimes pick it up and sometimes leave it there. Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked if we could have code look into it.

8. Ward 4

No comment

At-Large

No comment

Presentation & FY 2026 Budget Items

Presentation By Paycom - Michael Galgano

Michael Galgano with Paycom stated that the main things that can help the town are with the onboarding, paid time off management, time sheets consolidating things down, making processes easier, making approvals easier and last, and most importantly, is keeping the town compliant from mostly a tax standpoint. The cost for Paycom is Annual estimate is \$11,923.08 Flat rate for forty employees. Initial setup fee is \$3,707.50 due upfront, which includes a deposit for the physical time clock.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young asked what the price difference is between PayChex vs Paycom.

The Town Manager stated that the cost thus far for PayChex was \$7,855.00 for only 7 months and he will get the total cost and present it later.

Mr. Frankenfield (Town Treasurer) stated that the cost for Paychex is \$9,000.00 a year.

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson asked who Paycom local clients are and if there are any additional fees if a check needs to be reissued or canceled.

Mr. Galgano (Paycom) stated that he can send the Town Manager (John) a list of the municipalities that Paycom works with, and he can get it to Commissioner Henderson if that works for him also that there wouldn't be any additional fees associated with a reissued or canceled check.

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley inquired about the pricing for Paycom vs PayChex.

Ward 4:

No comment

Ward 5:

No comment

The Town Manager asked Mr. Galgano with Paycom if it is possible to have a lower cost or reduce some of the fees.

Mr. Galgano (Paycom) stated that the numbers aren't set in stone him and the Town Manager (John) can discuss some other options to lower the cost.

Commercial Tax Rate Discussion

Mr. Frankenfield (Town Treasurer) stated that he wanted to land at a consensus on how he should proceed with the commercial tax rate for the fiscal year 2026

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young stated that she doesn't have a suggestion for the tax rate

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson stated that he agrees with Commissioner Brooks for either .70 or .72.

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she would like .70 but if everyone wants .72, she's fine with that, the Commission just needs to raise it.

Ward 4:

Commissioner Givens stated that he is fine with it being raised to .72.

Ward 5:

Commissioner Brooks stated that he would like to go with .72.

The Commissioners came to a consensus about the tax rate of .72.

Public Comment: Budget

Denise Hamler (Resident) stated that she has a lot of questions regarding the budget, but she can sit down with the Town Manager (John) and discuss them. Ms. Hamler was curious about the police budget and why it's so high. Ms. Hamler stated that looking at other municipalities, she thinks we should also see the cost. The town is spending a lot of money for police, and now she understands that the town doesn't have either one or 2 officers. As a citizen when you see that price tag, you kind of scratch your head and go. Well, what is the town paying for? And she just loves the chief, and loves all the officers, but she does think that the town should be asking some questions. \$433,000 for the

police department of the town budget for a tiny town. This is not to insinuate that the town doesn't have wonderful police and a wonderful community, but that's a lot of money, and the town doesn't have at least one or 2 officers. Ms. Hamler stated that was her first point and her second point is the grant money. Ms. Hamler stated that it's really hard to tell what actual money is coming in and where that money is going. In some ways she would like to see a separate budget just looking at the Grants these grants came in. This is what the town spent it on, because once it's buried in the budget, and the income and the expenses. It's like the red-light camera is the same way. What's the money that comes in? And she learned so much just being at the meeting tonight. The red-light cameras, the speed cameras bring in so much money. But then the town has to pay its vendors, and then the town has to pay the county the State. So, to Ms. Hamler it seems like the town needs to really look at all of that before the town can make some of the decisions. Ms. Hamler also stated that it would be nice to know or have a breakdown showing if the town is in great shape or bad shape, if a presentation could be made explaining the process of the budget to the citizens so they all can understand. Thank you.

Amy Sawyer (Resident) stated that she would really like to see some money go towards translation services. 60% of the community speaks a language other than English. The minority majority of those folks speaks Spanish. There are a bunch of folks who are French speakers and ASL speakers, but the majority of the town folks are Spanish speakers. That's more than half of the community. Ms. Sawyer understand that the town does translate in the newsletter and a few other things into Spanish, but it's really difficult for folks to participate in the town meetings when the meeting material is not in Spanish. It's really difficult for folks to participate, and you know, comment. If they can't speak the language that they are most comfortable with. I would ask that as part of a budget, item, that the town look into what it would cost to translate all of the materials into Spanish. Just so we can incorporate everybody who is part of our community. As part of that Ms. Sawyer would ask that the town start distributing the information for town meetings. All of the meetings, multiple days before they're actually happening, the town tends to get the meeting agenda and the packet of information. Maybe 36 hrs., or 24 hrs. before the meeting is held. It's hard to read that information, to digest that information, and then you know, come, be able to come up with a logical and coherent comment for the Council, if residents were able to get all of that information published 36 hrs. in advance, or 48 hrs. in advance. That would be a huge help. Thank you.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she agrees with Ms. Sawyer, and she believes the Town Manager is working on a new system regarding the minutes and the packages getting out sooner.

The Town Manager stated that the material for the meetings will actually get out a lot faster. Right before the work session the packets will be out a week in advance, and then, right after the work session is completed the agenda will be prepared, and then by Friday, before the weekend you will have the packet. The residents will have the entire weekend to review the packet and go through it, and then by the meeting the following Wednesday, the residents will have time to make questions and comments. The Town Manager stated that he will provide three quotes for the translation services.

Old Business

Resolution 2025-04: Authorizing Town Manager to Coordinate Usage of Town Shuttle Bus / Van (Commission Vote)

Commissioner Henderson stated that the order of the documents needs to be updated.

Motion to Approve 13. Resolution 2025-04: Authorizing Town Manager to Coordinate Usage of Town Shuttle Bus/ Van

The motion was made by Commissioner Brooks and second by Commissioner Henderson. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Young-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion Passes no nays or abstentions.

Town Hall Lawn Maintenance Contracts (Commission Vote)

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young asked what the Commission knows about the company Shamrock. Commissioner Young also requested that Shamrock not use the product roundup.

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson asked if Shamrock provides for the insects and diseases and will that be an additional charge. Commissioner Henderson stated that he thinks the Commissioners need to look a little bit more into Shamrock before making a final decision.

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley originally recused herself from the discussion and vote. Since Shamrock is the current landscaper for Hamlet Park. She did not take part in the discussion about Shamrock. She did vote later after the commissioners finished their discussion.

Ward 4:

Commissioner Givens stated that Shamrock does cut the Hamlet Park grass and Commissioner Chair Wheatley was not the one who asked Shamrock to place a bid. Commissioner Givens asked Shamrock to submit a bid. Commissioner Givens stated that he has seen Shamrock out there and the company is super-efficient. Commission Chair Wheatley didn't know Commissioner Givens asked them for a bid.

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated that he agrees to move forward with Shamrock for the pricing and the town can continue to use American Landscaping for other services.

Denise Hamler (Resident) stated that in terms of the pesticides and the herbicides that were mentioned in the email that Amy Sawyer sent to her Ms. Sawyer was asking for the green team to take a look at and work with the town and maybe adopt a greener alternative. Ms. Hamler is willing to put that on the agenda for the green team and then make any recommendations back to the Commission in a timely fashion. Ms. Hamler isn't sure if it would be enough time to do something within the next couple of months. Ms. Hamler also discussed the mosquito abatement survey, and she will be talking about that at her next Green Team meeting with the Town Manager (John) and then presenting something hopefully to the Commissioners next month.

The Town Manager stated that he wanted to let Ms. Hamler know that there were quite a lot of surveys back from the mosquito springs so he will follow up with Ms. Hamler about the presentation with the Green Team on Tuesday night.

Amy Sawyer (Resident) stated that it is worth it for the town to waste tax dollars on lawn services and what type of pesticides and the herbicides will the Shamrock company will be using on the lawn and sidewalks.

Motion to Approve Lawn Maintenance Contractor Shamrock

Commissioner Brooks stated that he made the motion contingent upon updating the contract with the information of not using the older product of Roundup.

The motion was made by Commissioner Brooks and second by Commissioner Givens. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Young-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion Passes no nays or abstentions.

Damaged Trash Shed (Commission Discussion)

Town Manager stated that Commissioner Givens has provided us with a laundry list of construction materials, as we know under the current administration the cost of building materials may be rising. The Town Manager asked Commissioner Givens to comment on the items for the damaged trash shed.

Commissioner Givens stated that he would like to receive permission to authorize and purchase the necessary rebuilding materials. The trash shed needs to be a little bit larger four feet longer, which can be done all under \$2,000.00.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked Commissioner Givens by expanding the trash shed will he need to take out a tree?

Commissioner Givens stated that he will not have to remove a tree. The rear will go four feet back.

Commissioner Young asked how is the trash shed damaged?

Commissioner Givens stated that the trash shed is old, and it hasn't been repaired in years, the slats are coming off and the town is picking up trash every Thursday. There are a number of trash cans in there and the town needs to ensure that they're housed properly and stay away from the rodents and the animals.

Ward 2:

No comment

Ward 3:

No comment

Ward 4:

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated that he appreciates Commissioner Givens taking the time out to fix the damaged trash shed.

Commissioner Givens stated that he needs the Commission to give consensus that The Town Manager (John) the authorization to make the purchase since its over \$1,000.00 purchasing power.

Commissioner Brooks made amended motion to move forward with purchasing the materials for the trash collection area roughly, in the amount of \$1,372.46, not to exceed \$1,700.

Motion to authorize purchase for the damaged shed materials

The motion was made by Commissioner Brooks and second by Commissioner Henderson. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Young-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion Passes no nays or abstentions.

New Business

Resolution 2025-05: Elected Official Protocol (Commission Discussion & Vote)

The Town Manager stated that the Resolution 2025-05: Elected Official Protocol is a policy in place that will protect the town regarding any kind of confidential information and disclosure.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young stated that she really cannot go along with this. There're so many terms here that are either not defined at all or adequately, and it also goes in a direction of the kind of secrecy that goes against the public interest. From Commissioner Young's standpoint the words personal or sensitive are not defined. Any other matter that could conceivably be deemed confidential or privileged under any law or rule. Conceivably, Commissioner Young means, all you have to do is watch TV to see what kinds of things can conceivably be considered. This, that, or the other thing to say that it's intended to have the broadest meaning as permitted by law or any applicable rules. Again, so much of this is undefined and open-ended, and subject to real abuse. Then in the last section as part of this confidentiality policy or protocol. Each Commissioner and appointed official shall not forward or share town emails to their private email accounts, private electronic devices or private email accounts of another party. Commissioner Young stated that she is sure that was directed at her. Commissioner Young stated that it doesn't make any sense there are plenty of times when you might want to forward a private email either to your home email for any number of reasons or to someone else, and Commissioner Young thinks this is ill-conceived, and also leads to a police State mentality. Commissioner Young thinks the Commissioners work for the people of Cottage City, and to adopt something like this would serve to keep information from the citizens here. It's just not good on so many levels.

Ward 2:

No comment

Ward 3:

No comment

Ward 4:

No comment

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated that he was going to respond to Commissioner Young's comments. Commissioner Brooks stated that no matter where there's confidential information the Commissioners do serve the residents of this town. The Commissioners are bound to confidentiality when it comes to personnel matters. When Commissioner Young says these things like the other Commissioners are trying to hide or keep secrets from the residents, the other Commissioners are not trying to hide or be secret. The Commissioners know their responsibility as a Commissioner, and they cannot divulge this information to the public. Commissioner Young, you know that Commissioner Brooks would love to share all this stuff, good, bad, ugly or in between. The Commission knows that it is the Commissioners' responsibility when they sit on this Commission that they have to be confidential. When Commissioner Brooks goes to work, Commissioner Brooks knows that personnel matter, confidential matters can't be shared with his colleagues when it's convenient to him. or when his viewpoint comes across. Commissioner Brooks is just simply responding to Commissioner Young. Commissioner Young knows

that there are matters that the Commission has to keep confidential sharing emails. Commissioner Brooks doesn't know of any workplace where it's okay to take a confidential email and then share it too their personal email so that you can then move it on to other things. If Commissioner Young is going to say these things to try to incite things, be honest with it. Commissioner Young knows that she needs to maintain confidentiality in some matters, not all things. The Commission keeps some things in public. The Commission keeps some things in closed sessions, and those things in closed sessions are confidential.

Commissioner Young stated that she worked at the nuclear regulatory commission. There were very specific laws and rules over which things were confidential. This is not specific. It's very, very open-ended and it's not defined very well and any personal or sensitive. What's sensitive? Something might be sensitive to Commissioner Brooks and not sensitive to Commissioner Young. This is not how laws are done where things are made confidential. It's any other matter that could conceivably be deemed confidential or privileged under any law or rule. The open-endedness of this is just way beyond the way any statute or rule should be written, and then to say that no Commissioner where appointed officials should forward or share town emails to their private email accounts. Commissioner Young stated that she hasn't forwarded anything that was officially confidential mentioned. But Commissioner Young won't go any further into that she does think the point is that this is so broadly written that it could be misused, and the Commission could have their own little trump town right here. If the Commission start to enforce something like this. Commissioner Young stated that she would like to hear the comments from the public.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she would like to hear from the town attorney.

Mr. Best (town attorney) stated that he thinks it's a reasonable policy. Mr. Best stated that the document may need to have some adjustments of the language used in the document. A lot of this language was written by the Baltimore city solicitor's office. A lot of this was plagiarized from the largest municipal corporation of the State of Maryland, which has platoon of lawyers to serve in the office of law of the city. Yes, Mr. Best was pressed to vet this. A platoon of lawyers serves in the law office of the city. And for Number 6 it probably should say, not share confidential town emails. In line with what Commissioner Brooks said. You all have a fiduciary duty to protect and deny from disclosure confidential information that, if leaked. were shared outside a closed session or outside the internal use of the town that could damage the town. For example, if Mr. Best prepared a memo of law, or prepared a brief on pending litigation and it gets leaked out and shared, that can cause considerable damage. Mr. Best doesn't think anyone questions that the Commissioners have a fiduciary duty to protect and not to share confidential information. All this is really doing is articulate that and you can read for yourself in the Maryland Public Information Act, Manual, put together by the Attorney General of the State of Maryland. Numerous references to information that cannot be disclosed or should not be disclosed. If you're getting into discussions about personnel and health issues definitely should not be something that could be leaked or shared. And it's not uncommon this day and age. In the years when email 1st came out it was practicing where municipal officials would use their private email accounts to also communicate with their constituents, etc. But that's been shut down. Basically, all local governments require employees and officials to only use their business email accounts to transact that. So that because you're all little mini records custodians under the record under the Maryland Public Information Act and so, you have a duty to keep all that information in a central location since you are provided. Mr. Best believes the Commissioners are provided with laptops, and email accounts that are town email accounts, it's best that you do not blend those with other accounts or share those with other accounts. And it's not. It's a very common policy these days for local governments.

Commissioner Young stated that I think you're conceding that this could be better written, more narrowly written.

Mr. Best stated that he is sure that Commissioner Young can find him, and so he's suggesting that that be done after.

Commissioner Young stated that she wasn't finished. Commissioner Young suggests that the Commissioners do that after hearing all the comments about this, because this is so broadly written that it could really be misused and abused.

Mr. Best stated that he doesn't consider it egregiously overwritten. Mr. Best does concede there might be a few words that could be wordsmith to be tightened up, but all in all, if this was passed, as is, Mr. Best thinks it would be better than not having a policy on it.

Commissioner Young stated the town has gotten by all these years without one before.

Mr. Best stated, as is the case in many small towns in Maryland. A lot of small towns, or even medium-sized, have a paucity of policies and laws that quite frankly can get them in trouble.

Commissioner Brooks stated, could you remind us of who wrote this?

Mr. Best stated that it was the City Solicitor of Baltimore City, that office.

Commissioner Young stated that she thinks the Commission needs to hear from other people, but she does think that it needs to be written much more narrowly if it's going to be passed.

Josh Durant (Resident) stated that he strongly disagrees with the resolution. Mr. Durrant stated as Commissioner Young mentioned, Mr. Durrant feels that the Commission should take exception to you, point one for any other manner that would any other matter that would be confidential or privileged under any law or rule. The term confidential information tends to have the broadest possible meaning as permitted by law, or any applicable rules. Mr. Durrant would ask the Commission to strike that entirely from any future resolution. Mr. Durrant thinks that way too broad, and Mr. Durrant thinks it would allow the Commission to potentially or the town to potentially deem information confidential after the fact. Mr. Durrant thinks any definition of confidential information should be narrowly tailored, and Mr. Durrant doesn't disagree with the 1st 3 points. Mr. Durrant thinks that the language is way too broad, too vague and irresponsible. Mr. Durrant thinks if the town wants to designate information confidential, they should do it proactively at the time of creation and give a reason why that information is to be confidential. Mr. Durrant thinks the town already operates too much in closed session and in secret, and Mr. Durrant thinks this would be a bad idea. Mr. Durrant also wanted to point out from this resolution what the enforcement mechanism would be, If a commissioner were to violate this resolution with the town, sue them. That would seem to be the only recourse for a Commissioner. Obviously, if this is for an appointed position, then, you know this. This policy could be made a requirement for employment, but for an elected Commissioner, what would be the Enforcement mechanism if they violated it. Mr. Durrant doesn't think it's clear at all. Mr. Durrant stated if the Commissioners were to take this policy, Mr. Durrant thinks that the elected official party should be removed from the whole resolution, and have it only applied to appointed officials, but also point 5, says each Commissioner and appointed official shall sign an agreement. If a newly elected Commissioner refuses to sign an agreement, what are the consequences? Would they be removed from their office? Would the town not share confidential information with them that is necessary for the Commissioner to perform their duties. What are the consequences? Then also, in regard to point 6 and the use of private electronic devices. Mr. Durrant is not quite sure what the Commission

currently does, but as Mr. Durrant reads this, no Commissioner would be able to check their email on any personal phone or personal computer, because Mr. Durrant is not quite sure of the email system that is used by the town. But Mr. Durrant is pretty sure it uses either Pop Protocol or the Imap Protocol which makes a copy of their email to that device each time it is checked. Every time you check an email on your personal phone, you are sharing a copy to that phone. It would basically ban commissioners from checking their town email on their personal devices. Mr. Durrant would like to hear more about the consequences for violating this. Mr. Durrant strongly opposes this resolution as drafted, and Mr. Durrant thinks it needs to be narrowed and information specifically defined, and, as Mr. Best mentioned a moment ago, the Commission already, as a committee.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that Mr. Durrant audio went out also he went over his three minutes, the Commission is clear on how Mr. Durrant feels about the resolution. The Commission will move on to the next public comment. Please remember you have three minutes, and that the Commission wants to get to as many people as possible. So next is Amy Sawyer.

Amy Sawyer (Resident) yielded the floor to resident Kaleb Berhane.

Kaleb Berhane (Resident) stated why is the resolution necessary when the town is governed by the Maryland's Public Information Act (MPIA). Mr. Berhane stated that there are no carved requests of records for whistleblowers and as previously stated it seems overly broad in terms of what's covered as confidential information. The previous Commission and the attorney gave examples of What would be deemed confidential something that's a personnel record personnel discussion, deliberative or privileged. why not be explicit and say explicitly, personnel records deliver materials, privileged records, as opposed to saying something broad, and, you know, making like omnibus statements in regard to everything conceivable. That's the first issue the other issues are in paragraph five where it says it has not engaged in any practice or entered into any past or ongoing agreement that would be considered a conflict of interest with this agreement. It's not clear to Mr. Berhane whether past actions count and if the resolution is retractive and if any new Commissioner has to then attest to. You know whatever past actions to fulfill the requirements. There's a lot of like ambiguous and problematic language that Mr. Berhane hopes can be vetted. Why is this necessary when that mechanism already exists? And Mr. Berhane is not an attorney, so this is more of a curiosity question, why does the town need to put this explicitly and codify something like this when something when something already exists that covers this information? Thank you.

Amy Sawyer (Resident) stated that she is very concerned about this issue that's being discussed about having discussions in private. Ms. Sawyer would like to notify the entire Council and Kevin Best (Town Attorney), and John Hoatson (Town Manager), Town Administrator, that Ms. Sawyer has written and submitted a letter to the Attorney General's office. Ms. Sawyer is asking the Attorney General to investigate the actions of the Town Council around all of the meetings that the town has had that are private. Specifically, the ward to appointment, that even though town had it, it should've been a special election. The Commission had a closed session to eliminate the Public Works Department. The Commission had three closed sessions without public summaries. And then today the discussion about the broad and unclear confidentiality policy. Ms. Sawyer stated that she will let that go, as that.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley thanked Ms. Sawyer for her comment and asked Mr. Best if he could respond to Mr. Berhane's question.

Mr. Best stated that this was written and essentially plagiarized in a large degree from the Baltimore City solicitor, some of the language could be tightened up. One of the questions that was asked was how would this be enforced against an elected official? In a couple of ways One. The town could censure the elected officials, they violate the policy they could also seek. Assuming the agreement is

signed by the elected official. They could seek injunctive relief in the court to enforce it. It's not a strongly toothed tiger for elected officials for appointed officials. It's another story. They're subject to discipline. Elected officials not so much. Some towns do have sanctions and fines in addition to censure that applies to elected officials. That's something the town could add to its rules for the conduct of meetings or its code. But right now, it's not strong in terms of an elected official. Mr. Best stated that the structure of government comparing Cottage City to Chevrolet or many other towns is like comparing apples to oranges. The town has a Commission form of government, and the town basically makes essentially all the administrative and administrative slash executive and legislative decisions, where in many other towns, the governing body doesn't get down in the weeds and makes a lot of the decisions. Furthermore, Mr. Best urges Miss Sawyer to read the Open Meetings Act Manual. Mr. Best doesn't think Ms. Sawyer quite understands that there are 14 exceptions to the requirement to have public meetings that allow for closure of meetings. And so, there's quite a bit of leeway for towns and cities. When you're talking about personnel issues, you're talking about confidential issues. You're talking about contracts, certain contract issues dealing with bids that you can close the session. There is a great deal of decisions made, particularly personnel, while in a closed session. But it's permissible. Could Mr. Berhane or Mr. Durrant feed me the questions one at a time?

Mr. Berhane (Resident) stated that the town is governed by the PIA as a municipality, why does the town need the policy?

Mr. Best stated that MPIOA doesn't curtail or regulate an elected municipal official from storage of emails on private accounts. It probably relates to it and talks about it, but it doesn't mandate it one way or the other. If a town wants to expressly, explicitly regulate that behavior amongst its elected officials, it needs to do that by its own policy.

Mr. Berhane (Resident) stated what is considered confidential.

Mr. Best stated that the Maryland Public Information Act Manual and the Open Meetings Act Manual do a very good job of defining what is confidential. If there needs to be more clarity for that Mr. Best stated that he can put that into this, however, there the scope of what's confidential is even broader than what those two manuals define because of the fiduciary duty. Elected officials have anything discussed in a closed session is considered confidential. There are a lot of things that get discussed in a closed session. They're not going to be in one of the formal definitions found in the Pia Manual or the Open Meetings Act Manual. Mr. Best thinks that's why this seems very broad now, in terms of whistleblowers. There's a lot of information that's passed and shared in a closed session. It's not going to meet one of these formal definitions in the PA Manual or the Open Meetings Act Manual as far as whistleblowers there's Federal whistleblower laws, but the town is not governed by the Federal Government. The town is a creature of the State totally subservient to the General Assembly, the Constitution of Maryland. Of course we're limited in what we do by the Federal Constitution. There is no statute that Mr. Best knows of that would circumvent the fiduciary duty of a local municipal official to hold confidence that they receive about personnel issues, no matter what venue that's discussed before them, whether it's confidential information that they have a duty not to disclose from a closed session that's duly closed in accordance with the 14 exceptions allowed under the Open Meetings Act. If there is some whistleblower law, or one does come along. Certainly, if it's passed by the General Assembly, it would preempt and supersede anything in this policy. Mr. Best doesn't believe that to be the case now. Mr. Best stated that he rather sees that this policy is in place rather than having no policy at all.

Mr. Berhane (Resident) stated is there a way to include language that the towns defer to the PIA or the open manuals If there's any discrepancy or contention.

Mr. Best stated that he sees Mr. Berhane's point and if he knows the Commissioners who are the principal and the Town Manager who Mr. Best gets marching orders with as a gateway, and of course the Commission is my client. If the Commission wants Mr. Best to make the resolution document better and understandable for laypeople to read. Mr. Best will be glad to do so. Mr. Best was pressed to review and prepare this, but again it was based on a document already vetted by another municipal corporation. Thank you.

Commissioner Young stated that anything that's said in the closed session, however, the thing that was discussed in the closed session in question, she could actually argue, should not have been in the closed session because it didn't involve anything that was really confidential. Commissioner Young stated that Mr. Best is saying anything that's said in a closed session. If it's not legitimately required to be in a closed session, it should not be the basis for making it private. There needs to be some legal justification for something being limited to a closed session. The thing in question here' Commissioner Young doesn't think it was. Commissioner Young stated that Commissioner Young stated that she was previously employee of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Commissioner Chair Wheatley still works there. There are different categories of information there. There's classified information. There's safeguards information. And there's sensitive, unclassified, non-safeguards, information called Sensitive Unclassified Non safeguards Information (SUNSI). Its information that's not just publicly available encompasses a wide variety of categories, personnel, privacy, attorney-client privilege confidential source, etc. This goes way beyond that, and the last section itself goes way beyond that. The wording that was used goes beyond that. Commissioner Young thinks that she was very conscious of the different levels of sensitive information and her colleagues were checking things. Commissioner Young stated that she thinks the Commission and herself need to look at themselves a little bit. Just because something's in a closed session that doesn't mean that it was legitimately there. Commissioner Young stated that she would be really interested in seeing what Mr. Best drafts next time around, because Commissioner Young does think this is just way too broad. Although actually lately Commissioner Young mentioned trump before, actually, lately, things have gotten out that shouldn't have gotten out the idea of a governmental entity being overly secretive about the information that it that is open to the public is not one that is generally looked upon favorably. There are all kinds of governments that we've known of over time, and even in the present that don't really represent governments of the people by the people for the people, and Commissioner Young thinks we need to in your rewriting. It would be good if you took that into account. This is not just the things that you referred to John Brooks. This is something that I've been very closely aware of, and that I'm very disturbed about the wording of this, and I would really hope that the next time around you could come back with something that is much more narrowly and appropriately written. that you'll reconsider saying anything said in a closed session. If it's inappropriately put in a closed session. That shouldn't be the standard. So, I'll let it go with that, and I'll be interested to see what you come back with.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that the Commissioners have heard from Commissioner Young and the residents, and the Commission is clear that they need to adjust some of the language on the resolution document.

Mr. Best stated as an elected official. Your principal is the Commission and the Commission rules by majority, majority rules. If that Commission elects to go in the closed session and discusses something that was not appropriate foreclosure of a meeting. Then Commissioner Young is still not at liberty to disclose that closed session on it, because I mean. you're still subordinate to the decision of the majority of the Commission. And so, I would tread lightly on that, because I would say, typically 10%, 20% of what's discussed in a closed session. You know, bleeds into other the law, and what confines discussion to legislative versus administrative versus pre-decisional, there's always overlap and vagueness. But if the Commission, as a whole, decides to go into closed session. you can't just pick and

choose when you're going to abide by its wishes to close, and by closing the body is saying, what were discussing here stays in here. It's confidential. And so that's the problem. It's a matter of being subordinate to as opposed to perfection.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that conversation will be tabled and move on to the next agenda item. Thank you.

Sale of Used Public Works Equipment (Commission Discussion & Vote)

Commissioner Givens stated that the items listed, snowplow, truck, salt spreader, and electric buggies the town is looking to deadline some of them because they aren't utilizing them. There have been replacements for these items with newer and more efficient equipment. The items can be sold on Facebook Marketplace and if that becomes too cumbersome the town can take them to the county and put them through the county auction. The county would take a portion, and the town would have the remaining.

Ward 1:

No comment

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson inquired about the buggies and what condition they are in.

Commissioner Givens stated that one of them had issue while using it during the wintertime and taking off.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked, "are they electrical vehicles"?

Commissioner Givens stated yes, they were obtained through a grant, and he asked Mr. Best if it would be possible to sell them. Mr. Best expounded to say that at some juncture they've reached their service life, and you have the ability that you've gotten the use out of them, and you know, would satisfy the Grant once, and we bought those buggies. The other buggies can be used, and the other one can be sold

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she doesn't have an issue with getting rid of the salt spreader, snowplow and she asked what was wrong with the truck?

Commissioner Givens stated there are two other trucks and it's reached its life. The Town Manager asked if the town isn't utilizing it, why is it needed. There are things that are needed in the public works department. This would assist with offsetting the cost.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley inquired on what two trucks there were currently in the town hall.

Commissioner Givens replied that there is a White truck and the F 450 State Body truck with lift bed.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley inquired about the usage of the White truck.

Commissioner Givens stated that the white truck is to be used during the winter months and the electric buggies are to be used during the summer months.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she likes the two electrical buggies and prefers to keep those, however she doesn't mind getting rid of the salt spreader, snowplow and older model truck.

Ward 4:

Commented during the other wards.

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated that he doesn't mind getting rid of things that aren't working because the town is paying insurance for these items. The white truck shouldn't be for special events because it's a work truck it's meant to be used for that. Commissioner Brooks stated that he supports getting rid of all the items including the electric buggies.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that Commissioner Givens has his consensus.

Commissioner Givens stated that he would like to hear from Commissioner Young and Commissioner Henderson on the electric buggies.

Commissioner Young stated that she doesn't have an opinion it's whatever Commissioner Givens would like to do.

Commissioner Henderson stated that if one buggy was giving Commissioner Givens an issue than keep the best one out of the two. Commissioner Henderson also stated that he would prefer to have an inventory.

Commissioner Givens stated that the Town Manager is working on getting an inventory together. The items previously mentioned are reasonable items that Commissioner Givens would concede to getting rid of, and the other items are still in operational use for the town.

18. CCPD Patrolling (Commission Discussion)

Updates

Town Manager Update

The Town Manager mentioned that the upcoming elections on Monday May 5, 2025, and polls will open up from 2:00 PM-8:00 PM at the Town Hall. There are two candidates running, Julia Salsich and John Brooks. There will be a candidate meet and greet on Wednesday April 30, 2025, from 6:30 PM-8:00 PM. The Town Manager also wanted to remind the residents that the town will be hosting an Arbor day event, planting a tree that has been donated through Tree City, USA. The event will take place on Friday April 18, 2025, at the Town Hall. The Town Manager also mentioned the Easter extravaganza event that would be put forth by the Cottage City Police Department and the town which will be located at the Cottage City Park off Bunker Hill from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM Saturday April 19, 2025.

Commissioner Brooks stated that on April 23, 2025, there will be the first Wine Down Wednesday and it will be at 6:30 PM at the Cottage City Gazebos in Town Hall. Commissioner Brooks stated that everyone is welcome to bring your own drinks, bring your own food. The dates are April 23rd, May 21st, June 18th, July 16th, and August 20th.

The Town Manager stated that there was a Cottage City Planning meeting and there will be another meeting April 24, 2025, at 6:30 PM- 8:00 PM and the town is looking for volunteers to get involved for Cottage City Day. There was a survey placed on constant contact, and it will be sent out again and the town would love everyone's feedback.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley asked if the Cottage City Day meeting can be hybrid?

The Town Manager stated that the meeting could be hybrid.

Public Comments

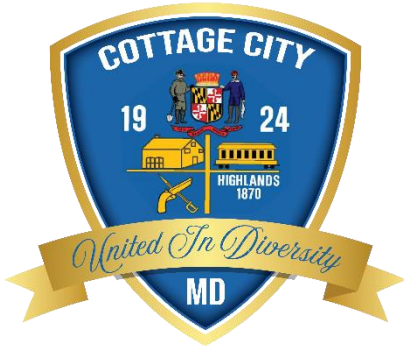
Anyone seeking to speak under Public Comments must sign in prior to the end of the Town Meeting. There is a 3-minute time limit. When you come up to speak, you will need to state your name, address, what organization that you represent and your topic of concern(s).

Adjournment

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.

Motion to Adjourn the meeting at 10:37 PM

The motion was made by Commissioner Brook and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Young-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye & Brooks-Aye. Motion Passes no nays or abstentions.



Special Town Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Hybrid Meeting

3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

This meeting will be hosted on Zoom Only:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85612982514?pwd=bRTNFBpibpp26NenwDNuDgdTHmcwEz.1>

Phone: 301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 856 1298 2514 | Passcode: 139686

Call to Order at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees

1. Ward 1-Commissioner Young
2. Ward 2- Commissioner Henderson
3. Ward 3- Commissioner Wheatley
4. Ward 4- Commissioner Givens
5. At-Large Report- Commissioner Brooks
6. John Hoatson-Town Manager
7. Kevin Best- Town Attorney

Review of the Agenda

Business

1. Motion To Suspend The Rules To Vote In A Special Town Meeting (Commission Vote)

Motion

The motion was made by Commissioner Givens and seconded by Commissioner Brooks. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Young, Henderson, Wheatley, Givens, & Brooks. Motion Pass. No nays or abstentions.

2. Little Library Locations (Commission Discussion)

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that the Community Garden requested to build two little libraries using the ARPA funds. The location of the little libraries would be one at the Community Garden and the second one near the top lot.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young stated no discussion, and she thinks it's a good idea, as long as good books are placed in the little libraries.

Ward 2:

Commissioner Henderson stated no discussion, he thinks it's a good idea.

Ward 3:

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated no discussion, and she supports the little libraries.

Ward 4:

Commissioner Givens stated no discussion, and he supports the little libraries.

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated no discussion, and he supports the little libraries.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley told the Town Manager that he has a consensus from the five Commissioners and the Commissioners approve the request.

The Town Manager stated that he will let the Community Garden members know.

3. **Approval of Emergency Ordinance: 2025-01: An Emergency Ordinance Amending Chapter 15 (Public Ethics Ordinance), Section 15-6 (Disclosure & Use Of Confidential Information) Of The Code Of The Town Of Cottage City (Commission Vote)**

The Town Manager stated that this is an emergency ordinance to address the confidentiality that the Commission has been addressing. The town 1st off did it as a resolution and now the town has moved it into an emergency ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is to address some issues that the Commission and Town Manager have been having with confidentiality and the leaking of some things. The Commissioners and Town Manager have been trying to address it by now, having it as an emergency ordinance. The Town Manager read the ordinance into the record.

Ward 1:

Commissioner Young stated that some of the items in the ordinance she didn't agree with and that she believes it needs to be removed from the ordinance.

Ward 2:

No comments.

Ward 3:

No comments.

Ward 4:

Commissioner Givens stated that the Town manager is the custodian of records on behalf of the town. That's why the Commission consulted with that person. However, if there's any ambiguity in the Commissions consultation the Commissioners do have the right, as it states, simply in the written phrase, there to consult with the town attorney.

At-Large:

Commissioner Brooks stated that he has no objections and would Commissioner Chair Wheatley entertain a motion.

Commissioner Chair Wheatley stated that she would entertain a motion.

Motion

The motion was made by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Givens. Young- Nay, Henderson- Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, & Brooks-Aye.

Motion Passes with 4-Ayes and 1-Nay, there were no abstentions.

Adjournment

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.

Motion to Adjourn the meeting

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

The motion was made by Commissioner Givens and seconded by Commissioner Brooks. There was a unanimous vote by the Commissioners. Young, Henderson, Wheatley, Givens, & Brooks. Motion Pass. No nays or abstentions.

Town of Cottage City

Item # 2.

Balance Sheet As of April 30, 2025

	TOTAL	
	AS OF APR 30, 2025	AS OF APR 30, 2024 (PY)
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts		
1009 Truist Savings x1643	303,168.55	648,868.44
1010 Savings - Capital One	5,191.53	5,187.95
1014 US Bank x5954	12,800.00	13,325.00
1015 Petty Cash Fund	466.03	466.03
1055 Savings - PNC	740,647.39	707,515.77
1060 Truist MM x4603	101,956.99	101,946.81
1061 Truist Operating Checking x1118	548,218.38	260,932.42
1062 Truist Public Fund Checking x6369	163.46	1,343.42
1063 Truist Public Fund Checking x0549 (deleted)	0.00	1,310.52
1065 Capital One CD	98,967.97	98,967.97
1072 Bill.com Money Out Clearing	1,864.00	1,160.67
1100 Truist - ARPA x0408 (deleted)	0.00	268,245.03
Total Bank Accounts	\$1,813,444.30	\$2,109,270.03
Accounts Receivable	\$80,965.77	\$76,106.22
Other Current Assets	\$66,260.00	\$63,329.40
Total Current Assets	\$1,960,670.07	\$2,248,705.65
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,960,670.07	\$2,248,705.65
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$1,960,670.07	\$2,248,705.65

Town of Cottage City

Item # 2.

Budget vs. Actuals: FY25

July 2024 - April 2025

	TOTAL	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Income		
4000 Operating Revenue		
4005 Real Estate Taxes - Residential	438,717.85	430,069.00
4006 Real Estate Taxes - Commercial	328,110.36	339,519.00
4015 Personal Property Taxes	51,868.75	40,000.00
4025 Income Tax	81,722.41	105,000.00
4030 Highway User Tax	37,741.56	54,311.00
4035 Fines & Forfeitures	37,504.17	4,000.00
4040 Red Light Camera Fines	32,231.19	300,000.00
4041 Speed Camera Fines	279,481.96	245,000.00
4055 Franchise Fees (Cable TV)	12,449.99	18,000.00
4065 Licenses - Town	4,149.09	6,000.00
4075 Permits		1,000.00
4080 County Disposal Rebate		3,440.00
4085 Police Aid	26,868.00	26,550.00
4095 Interest Income	26,900.20	10,000.00
4100 Public Works - Abatements		2,000.00
4102 Town Hall Rental	1,050.00	1,800.00
4106 Solar Renewable Energy Credits		6,075.00
4107.1 Donations	2,100.00	3,000.00
4200 Miscellaneous	3,449.85	
Total 4000 Operating Revenue	1,364,345.38	1,595,764.00
4106.5 Grant Revenue		
41040 Bond Bill		500,000.00
4109 Maryland Heritage Authority (MHAA)		45,000.00
4110 Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)		100,000.00
4112 PD Accountability Program	11,250.39	
4114 First Responder Camp/Community	15,578.07	10,500.00
4120 CDBG Grant - Infrastructure	355,756.51	753,225.00
4130 Cable - PEG - Broadcast Equip.	3,619.50	10,570.00
4135 Community Parks & Playgrounds	200.00	
4140 CB Trust - Urban Tree Grant	2,255.00	
4141 MD DHCH - NED Grant		185,000.00
4144 Fed-Stormwater		670,000.00
4146 Community Engagement and Outreach Initiative	18,105.40	35,000.00
Total 4106.5 Grant Revenue	406,764.87	2,309,295.00
4201 Appropriated from Fund Balance		1,730,000.00
4202 Appropriated from Fund Balance ARPA		254,000.00
Uncategorized Income		
Total Income	\$1,771,110.25	\$5,889,059.00
GROSS PROFIT	\$1,771,110.25	\$5,889,059.00
Expenses		
5000 General Government		

Town of Cottage City

Item # 2.

Budget vs. Actuals: FY25

July 2024 - April 2025

	TOTAL	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET
5005 Salaries	89,983.15	140,000.00
5006 Overtime		2,500.00
5010 Commissioner Salaries	27,817.22	31,400.00
Total 5005 Salaries	117,800.37	173,900.00
5007 Temp Services	31,129.98	
5015 Payroll Taxes	8,969.10	11,200.00
5020 Life Insurance	1,113.33	4,000.00
5025 Health Insurance	6,384.56	24,000.00
5030 Retirement Benefits		7,000.00
5035 Workers Comp Ins.	20,819.64	1,700.00
5040 Audit Fee	14,144.30	12,000.00
5045 Bus Service	1,100.00	13,000.00
5065 Community Enhancement		
5065.3 End Time Harvest Ministries	2,000.00	2,000.00
5065.4 Cottage City Scholarship		2,500.00
5065.5 Anacostia Watershed Donation		1,000.00
5065.6 Contribution to ATHA		1,000.00
5065.7 Fire Dept. Donation		1,000.00
5065.71 Green Team	362.86	1,200.00
5065.73 Food Pantry		5,000.00
5065.9 Summer Camp		900.00
Total 5065 Community Enhancement	2,362.86	14,600.00
5070 Community Garden	5,040.04	3,500.00
5085 Contractual Services (Accounting Fees)	37,061.61	34,000.00
5086 Cell Phone	232.61	1,000.00
5087 Codification Services	995.00	2,000.00
5090 Election Expenses		1,200.00
5100 Insurance - Gen. & Public Offic	2,596.00	4,000.00
5105 Insurance - Town Hall		1,000.00
5107 IT Support	17,780.70	12,000.00
5115 Legal Fees	22,332.00	66,000.00
5120 Miscellaneous	2,298.05	1,500.00
5125 Membership Dues	2,440.71	2,400.00
5130 Commissioner Municipal Convention & Conf.	2,613.49	14,700.00
5135 Office Expense	24,978.13	26,000.00
5140 Printing & Legal Ads	2,083.96	1,000.00
5150 Special Events	394.51	
5150.1 Arts & Education		2,500.00
5150.10 Port Towns Meeting		300.00
5150.11 Adult Mixer	630.33	500.00
5150.12 English Classes		2,000.00
5150.13 Black History Month	1,452.11	800.00
5150.14 Hispanic Heritage Month		800.00

Town of Cottage City

Item # 2.

Budget vs. Actuals: FY25

July 2024 - April 2025

	TOTAL	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET
5150.15 Woman's History Month		800.00
5150.16 Native American Heritage Event	114.00	600.00
5150.18 Port Towns Legislative Dinner		300.00
5150.19 PGCMA - Town Sponsored Mtg		100.00
5150.2 Easter Egg Hunt	509.59	800.00
5150.20 PGEMW - Town Sponsored Mtg		100.00
5150.22 Juneteenth		300.00
5150.3 Cottage City Day	17,907.09	12,000.00
5150.4 Halloween	425.95	750.00
5150.5 Breakfast with Santa	1,341.56	1,400.00
5150.55 July 4th Event		300.00
5150.6 Community Block Parties		1,000.00
5150.7 Refreshments	2,018.43	1,000.00
5150.8 Senior Harvest Dinner	735.18	500.00
5150.81 Seniors Camp		500.00
5150.9 Winter Employee Appreciation		2,000.00
Total 5150 Special Events	25,528.75	29,350.00
5160 Town Communications	6,763.78	8,000.00
5165 Town Hall Maintenance & Repairs	10,120.17	12,000.00
5170 Town Hall Utilities	33,590.24	21,500.00
5175 Staff Training	1,424.52	4,000.00
5180 Treasurer's Bond		175.00
5190 Bank Fees	500.93	
5196 Website Hosting	11,949.20	5,200.00
Total 5000 General Government	414,154.03	511,925.00
5200 Public Works		
5205 Salaries	81,492.75	200,000.00
5206 Overtime	287.28	5,000.00
Total 5205 Salaries	81,780.03	205,000.00
5210 Payroll Taxes	6,607.70	16,000.00
5211 Health Insurance	9,490.71	10,500.00
5212 Life Insurance	1,345.67	1,450.00
5213 Retirement Benefits		10,500.00
5215 Workers Comp Ins.	8,501.40	22,000.00
5230 Equipment Maint & Operating Exp	12,760.05	20,000.00
5232 Gasoline	3,456.09	8,000.00
5235 Highway Lighting	9,567.14	24,000.00
5237 MML & Training Expenses	6,970.90	2,000.00
5240 Abatements		2,000.00
5241 Cell Phone	3,562.88	500.00
5260 Roadway/Sidewalk Const. Maint. & Supplies	24,132.28	7,500.00
5271 Maintenance	27,182.97	15,000.00
5272 Tree Maintenance	4,929.48	10,000.00

Town of Cottage City

Item # 2.

Budget vs. Actuals: FY25

July 2024 - April 2025

	TOTAL	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET
5280 Uniforms		800.00
5285 Vehicle Insurance	4,500.00	3,500.00
5287 Truck Maintenance	9,494.85	5,000.00
5305 Dumping Fees	20.00	2,400.00
5315 Mosquito Control	299.41	2,300.00
5320 Waste Collection & Disposal	52,640.96	118,100.00
5322 Code Software		3,500.00
Total 5200 Public Works	267,242.52	490,050.00
5400 Police Department		
5405 Salaries	288,773.51	366,000.00
5406 Overtime	261.77	10,000.00
Total 5405 Salaries	289,035.28	376,000.00
5415 Payroll Taxes	17,630.56	32,495.00
5420 Life Insurance	6,242.13	4,500.00
5425 Health Insurance	33,777.94	41,000.00
5430 Retirement		17,500.00
5435 Workers Comp Ins.	30,760.96	28,000.00
5440 Applicant Screening & Shots		1,000.00
5445 Auto Insurance	25,151.00	20,000.00
5478 Legal		3,000.00
5485 National Night Out	328.25	1,000.00
5490 Office Expense & Operating Cost	18,332.59	12,000.00
5495 Police Liability Insurance	11,500.00	11,500.00
5500 Police Supplies	200.60	2,000.00
5505 Training	2,813.91	6,000.00
5506 Training - Police Chief	2,468.45	6,000.00
5515 Uniforms & Accessories	2,712.52	12,000.00
5520 Vehicle Operation & Maintenance	5,336.48	15,000.00
5525 Gasoline - PD	14,925.98	21,500.00
5534 Police Community Outreach	3,945.90	8,000.00
5537 Lexipol Law Enforcement	2,742.10	4,413.00
5538 Police Explorer Program	1,262.92	5,000.00
5539 SilverTrac	2,835.00	2,160.00
5540 Axion Tasers	3,689.14	10,000.00
5541 In Car Camera Upgrades	2,310.42	2,700.00
5542 Lefta System		2,200.00
5543 Obvio		8,500.00
5555 Expenses to Speed Camera Program		-180,700.00
5560 Red Light Camera Program		152,000.00
5600 Speed Camera		
5600.1 Salaries		107,000.00
5600.2 Benefits		26,400.00
5600.3 Other Costs		35,200.00

Town of Cottage City

Item # 2.

Budget vs. Actuals: FY25

July 2024 - April 2025

	TOTAL	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET
5600.4 Vehicles		12,100.00
5600.5 Speed Camera Vendor Fees		98,000.00
Total 5600 Speed Camera		278,700.00
Total 5400 Police Department	478,002.13	903,468.00
6000 Grant Expenditures		
6002 MD DHCD - NED Grant		185,000.00
6006 DHCD - Community Surveillance Project	11,889.25	
6010 CDBG Grant - Infrastructure	303,314.03	753,225.00
6014 First Responder Camp/Community	2,537.88	10,500.00
6016 Maryland Heritage Authority (MHAA)		90,000.00
6017 Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)		100,000.00
6018 Community Engagement and Outreach Initiative	16,627.13	35,000.00
6021 Cable - PEG - Broadcast Equip	11,111.82	10,570.00
6044 Fed-Stormwater	925.00	670,000.00
6052 Bond Bill Expenses Firehouse	29,200.00	500,000.00
6054 ARPA Grant Expense	56,268.69	
6054.1 Family Relief Program	23,686.66	30,000.00
6054.15 ARPA Food Bank	12,731.84	15,000.00
6054.7 Grant Writer Salary	50,924.92	65,000.00
6054.8 Grant Writer Fringe	12,589.36	24,250.00
Total 6054 ARPA Grant Expense	156,201.47	134,250.00
Total 6000 Grant Expenditures	531,806.58	2,488,545.00
6500 Capital Outlays		
6501 General Government Capital Outlays		
6505 Capital Equipment		11,000.00
6507 Town Hall Improvements		26,000.00
6511 Maryland Heritage Authority Match (MHAA)		90,000.00
6512 Maryland Historical Trust Match (MHT)		100,000.00
Total 6501 General Government Capital Outlays		227,000.00
6600 Public Works Capital Outlays		
6606 Facility Maintenance	2,661.61	7,500.00
6607 PW New Equipment		11,000.00
6615 Street Maintenance	401.03	12,500.00
Total 6600 Public Works Capital Outlays	3,062.64	31,000.00
6700 Police Capital Outlays		
6701 Capital Outlays - Police Dept	23,055.90	18,200.00
Total 6700 Police Capital Outlays	23,055.90	18,200.00
Total 6500 Capital Outlays	26,118.54	276,200.00
Total Expenses	\$1,717,323.80	\$4,670,188.00
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$53,786.45	\$1,218,871.00
NET INCOME	\$53,786.45	\$1,218,871.00

Town of Cottage City

Item # 2.

Budget vs. Actuals: FY25

July 2024 - April 2025

COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Monthly Report



April, 2025

“To Protect and Serve”

CHIEF OF POLICE

COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Calls Handled

April

911 Disconnect	22
Accident	2
Added Information	1
Assault Combined	1
Assist Fire EMS	2
Break In Report	2
CDS Complaint	1
Check Welfare	3
Check Welfare Combined	2
Disorderly	4
Domestic	1
Domestic Standby	1
Hit And Run	1
Loud Music Complaint	4
Misc Police Incident	6
Noise Complaint	1
Premise Check	1
Property Damage	1
Residential Alarm	1
Suspicious Auto	2
Suspicious Occ Auto	4
Suspicious Person	2
Theft From Auto	1
Theft Report	6
Threats Complaint	2
Traffic Assignment	1
Traffic Complaint	1
Trespassing Complaint	1
Unknown Trouble	6
Vandalism	6
Vehicle Accident Combined	1
Total	90

COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

COMPLAINTS/CRISIS HANDLED

Theft From Auto Incidents

Incident 1:

The Cottage City Police Department received a report regarding a suspect operating a black Jeep Compass. The individual was observed exiting the vehicle and unlawfully entering multiple parked vehicles within the Town. The suspect was seen removing items from these vehicles before fleeing the area in the same black Jeep Compass.

Incident 2:

The Cottage City Police Department received a report of a suspect observed walking along Parkwood Street, looking into parked vehicles. The individual was seen entering one of the vehicles and removing items. The suspect was later picked up by an unidentified vehicle and fled the area.

CCPD Response:

The Cottage City Police Department has distributed Crime Watch Information to alert residents about recent incidents and to remind them to remove all valuables from their vehicles, ensure vehicles are locked, and promptly report any suspicious activity.

The Department is actively collaborating with investigators from the Prince George's County Police Department and neighboring municipal police agencies in efforts to identify and apprehend the individuals responsible for a series of vehicle break-ins occurring throughout northern Prince George's County.

Preliminary findings indicate that an organized group is traveling through local communities in stolen vehicles and targeting unattended vehicles. The suspects are described as young males, believed to be in their late teens to early twenties.

COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

PROJECTS

COMPLETED EVENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS PREPARATION

April Events:

- Easter Extravaganza (April 19, 2025)
- Anacostia Watershed Society Clean-Up Day (April 26, 2025)

May Events:

- No Events at this time.

TRAINING

- CCPD Training (April 3, 2025)
 - o Chief A. Ayers
 - o Sgt. M. Hayes
 - o Cpl. D. Thompson
 - o Pfc. N. Moreno
 - o Pfc. A. Perez
- MML Chiefs Conference and Training (April 22 - 26, 2025)
 - o Chief A. Ayers

UPCOMING TRAINING

- o No Training

CCPD EXPLORERS

Meetings and training during the month.



Bladensburg Colmar Manor Cottage City Edmonston

Joint Resolution No. 2025-01

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE MAYORS AND COMMISSION CHAIR, COUNCILS, AND COMMISSION OF THE PORT TOWNS OF BLADENSBURG, COLMAR MANOR, COTTAGE CITY, AND EDMONSTON TO FORM A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CDC) AND ESTABLISH A GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

WHEREAS, the Towns of Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Edmonston (hereinafter referred to as the "Port Towns") recognize the importance of regional collaboration to drive economic development, infrastructure investment, and community enhancement; and

WHEREAS, the Port Towns seek to establish a Community Development Corporation (CDC) to enhance economic growth, cooperatively build infrastructure, preserve cultural and historical character, promote environmental sustainability, and improve the quality of life for all residents within the Port Towns communities; and

WHEREAS, the Port Towns have previously resolved to work jointly on the formation of a CDC, and the final trade name of the organization will be determined by a vote of the governing board upon establishment; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Towns of Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Edmonston formally support the creation of a new Community Development Corporation and agree to the following governance structure and key operational principles:

Board Membership and Governance Structure:

1. **Membership:** The initial Board of Directors shall consist of nine (9) members. Each Town shall appoint two (2) representatives to the Board, with at least one elected official from the respective Council or Commission. Appointments shall be submitted in writing to the Board Chair.
2. **At-Large Member:** One (1) at-large member shall be appointed on a rotating basis for a two-year term. This individual shall represent a local business or business association and be selected by a majority vote of the Board.

3. **Ex-Officio Members:** The Town Administrators and/or Town Managers shall serve as ex-officio officers, providing advisory and operational support.
4. **Board Chair:** The Board of Directors shall select a Chair by majority vote to serve a two-year term. The position may rotate, or the Board may determine an alternate process.
5. **Attendance Requirements:** Members must attend at least 50% of the meetings annually. If a Board member exceeds 50% unexcused absences, the Board shall consult with the appointing Town regarding reappointment.

Committee Structure:

The Board shall establish committees composed of Board members and appointed community stakeholders to focus on key development areas. The core committees shall include:

- **Economic Development and Redevelopment**
- **Infrastructure and Sustainability**
- **Community Engagement and Quality of Life**
- **Tourism, Historic Sites, and Community Assets**

The Board may create additional special committees as needed through a majority vote.

Meetings and Reporting:

- The Board shall convene at least four (4) times yearly.
- An end-of-year report, summarizing accomplishments, financial status, and strategic updates, shall be submitted to each Town by March 30th of the following calendar year.

Funding and Financial Support:

1. **Town Contributions:** Each participating Town shall contribute at least 20% of the total annual expenses or an equal share of the organization's operational costs.
2. **Grants and External Funding:** The CDC shall serve as a collaborative entity to pursue grant funding and leverage financial resources for community capacity-building and infrastructure improvements.

Strategic Development and Economic Growth Initiatives:

- The CDC shall actively promote economic development opportunities across the Port Towns region.
- To foster business growth and community revitalization.
- The organization shall seek partnerships with economic development entities, such as Main Street programs and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs).

Bylaws Development:

- The Board shall draft and adopt formal bylaws within 180 days of the CDC's formation.
- Finalized bylaws shall be distributed to all member Towns upon adoption.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Port Towns of Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Edmonston are committed to fostering economic prosperity, sustainable development, and enhanced community collaboration through the formation of this Community Development Corporation.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 14th day of May, 2025, by the Mayors, Chair of the Commission, Councils and Commission of the Port Towns.

WITNESS:

ATTEST

Town Clerk, Town of Bladensburg

Takisha James, Mayor
Town of Bladensburg

Town Clerk, Town of Colmar Manor

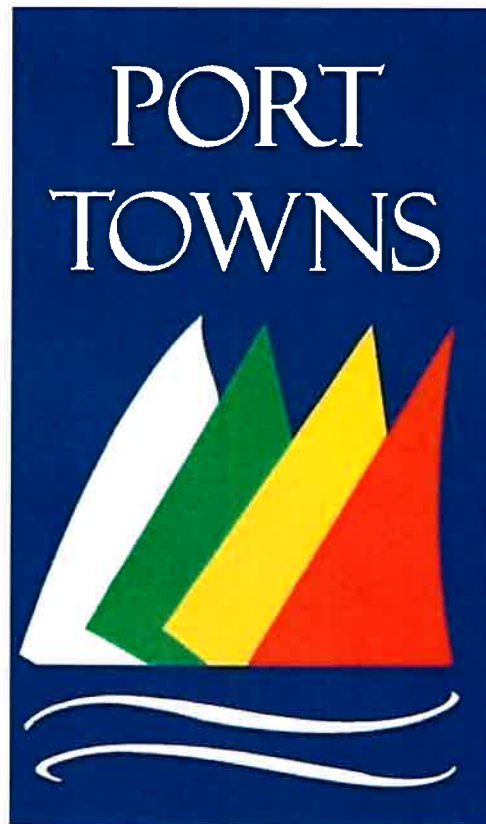
Monica Casanas, Mayor
Town of Colmar Manor

Town Manager, Town of Cottage City

Wanda Wheatley, Commissioner Chair
Town of Cottage City

Town Clerk, Town of Edmonston

Tracy R. Gant, Mayor
Town of Edmonston



Composting Information

The Grant is to the Town of Edmonston from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) Agriculture and Innovation Production. The grant was for \$279,030. Partners include Eco City Farms and Compost Crew. The project has expanded to Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, and Cottage City. Cheverly would be the 5th community. The program runs through November 30, 2025, and includes the cost to pick up food compost door-to-door for 150 customers. Bins and bags are provided as part of the grant

Goals and Objectives: For the Town of Edmonston, the over-arching goal of this project is to bring us one step closer to our journey to become Maryland's greenest and most sustainable, near[1]zero-waste climate smart community, where residents live in peace and harmony while protecting and preserving our natural environment. As a largely low to moderate historically-underserved community of color, it is important to us to demonstrate that historically underserved and vulnerable communities, with a long history of flooding and suffering related environmental disasters, can become diligent and exemplary stewards of the environment. As our Mayor Gant proudly proclaims, "thanks to our vigilance and mutual support, our small town demonstrates that we can accomplish challenging green goals with grace and ease." The objectives of our project are many. Our project will simultaneously:

- Strengthen the Town and County's capacity to manage and process local food waste cleanly and efficiently;
- Expand the growth of a decentralized, right-scaled distributive composting system around the Capital Beltway to service the composting needs of urban farmers and gardeners;
- Generate food-production quality compost on-farm/gardens where it is needed;
- Increase access to compost for the new agricultural producers at the Watkins Incubator farm and adjacent Community Gardens;
- Reduce reliance on, and curtail the use of, non-organic fertilizers for local food production;
- Improve the quality of the soil (and the food production of healthy food) at the Watkins incubator farm for its 9-10 new farmers;
- Support the growth and development of Compost Crew, a community-serving entrepreneurial food scrap waste-management business in the Metro DC area;
- Increase rainwater absorption on farm through the judicious use of compost for water and soil management;
- Divert Edmonston's residential/commercial food scraps from landfills to produce an agricultural-quality soil conditioner;
- Increase the composting skills, knowledge and production of historically under-served and under-resourced farmers and their likelihood of succeeding in their new farm businesses;

USDA-NRCS-NHQ-CFWR-22-NOFO0001179-Composting & Food-Waste Recovery Pilot for the Town of Edmonston, MD Page # 5

- Educate the Town and County community about food-waste reduction, food scrap and yard waste recycling, and climate-smart municipal strategies;
- Make fighting climate change at the community-level a desirable and credible goal, especially for underserved and vulnerable communities of color.

3) Procedures and Work Plan

a) Planned Procedure and Activities: Collection Compost Crew will operate the food scrap collection process for the Town of Edmonston. They will work with the Town and ECO to set the rules, design and operate the program and advise on the development and distribution of the educational/outreach materials and strategy. To minimize plastic waste of any kind, paper bags will be used in the collection process, similar to the Town's recycling program. The number of participants involved will be phased in to reach 45% participation in the final phase. CC will provide residents in the

Town of Edmonston with the convenience of a curbside food scraps collection service, apartment building food scraps drop-off sites as well as two Town drop-off food scraps options to maximize participation and increase food waste diversion rates. ECO's Edmonston farm will be one such option. Compost Crew (CC) will onboard and manage the collection of food scraps and approved waste organics from the Town of Edmonston. CC will deliver an agreed upon number of bins and paper bags to the Town, where the participants will pick up their allocated materials. (All bins have a secure closing mechanism making them more secure than ordinary trash bins.) CC will collaborate with Edmonston and ECO to create and apply an educational sticker to each bin indicating the partnership and explaining what can go into the bin. CC also will provide digital resources to the Town that spell out best practices and suggested direction on the Town's outreach and education. The Town assumes responsibility for generating all resident education materials. All materials will be bilingual and designed for door to door as well as social media distribution. CC assumes responsibility for the once-per-week food scraps collection for all participants, which will occur on the same day every week, unless otherwise communicated. Compost Crew then will take the Town's waste organics to the incubator farm's Compost Outpost to be processed weekly. Compost Crew will manage participant customer service and handle the onboarding for new participants, as well as any cancellations. Once secured, the Town will own and manage the bins and paper bag distribution. Curbside: Each curbside pick-up resident will receive a 7-gallon bin and a bundle of paper bags. The participants use the paper bag to gather food scraps before putting it into their collection bins, to help prevent the collection bins from getting too messy. The participant will put the bin out on their curb as they would any trash or recycling container the night before collection. CC will empty the contents of their bin into its truck and leave the empty bin on the curb for the participant to gather (and clean as needed) later that day. The collection service will be provided in a phased approach to maximize interest and participation with the goal of achieving a 45% participation rate by the end of year two. Collection service will commence after the Compost Outpost has been constructed, which is estimated to be complete in six months, by August 2023. Initial participation is set at 50 homes for curbside collection the first six months. It will then expand to 100 homes for the following six months, and finish with servicing 150 homes for the last six months for a total period of 18 months. Apartment dwellers: The Town includes 8 apartment buildings (for a total of 156 units). We will include residents of these buildings in the food scrap collection project, in a phased in manner. We USDA-NRCS-NHQ-CFWR-22-NOFO0001179-Composting & Food-Waste Recovery Pilot for the Town of Edmonston, MD Page # 6 start with two buildings, which receive a 65-gallon bin each, along with a bundle of paper bags. Residents from the complex will be able to empty their food scraps into paper bags before dropping them into the apartment drop-off bin. The apartment drop-off bin will be accessible at times and a location convenient for apartment staff handlers. CC will empty the contents of the bins into its truck at a location and time that is convenient for the CC truck to access. The apartment building partners will eventually receive one 65-gallon bin per building, starting with two buildings the first six months, then adding an additional three buildings every six months thereafter, for a total period of 18 months

From: Dan Israel
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2025 1:07 PM
To: Rod Barnes
Cc: Kristie Blumer
Subject: Monthly collection costs

Hi Rod,

Per your request, we have been working on determining the price for curbside food scraps collection beyond the current grant period. With the current number of participating homes, it would likely be cost prohibitive, but we are hopeful that with the addition of Cheverly and Cottage City we can get to (or close to) 220 homes participating.

Our pricing includes a couple of assumptions that are worth calling out:

- 1) There are 220 participating homes. Fewer homes would increase the per home cost.
- 2) To help keep the costs lower, Compost Crew is willing to purchase the shipping containers used for the Compost Outpost from the Town of Edmonston -- and the proceeds would be put towards defraying the costs of the residents' composting over the next 2-3 years.

With that in mind, here are a couple of pricing options:

- With the cost savings from selling the shipping containers spread over two years, the monthly per home cost would be \$27.82.
- With the cost savings spread over three years, the monthly per home cost would be \$30.00.

Note that of the monthly cost, the Town(s) may choose to have the residents cover a portion. For example, in the City of Falls Church residents pay \$8.00 per month to participate in curbside composting and the City covers the balance.

Please let us know what questions you have.

Thank you,
Dan





RFP # CC-2025-01

**TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY
43RD AVENUE MAINTENANCE PROJECT,
FISCAL YEAR 2025**

**Town of Cottage City
3820 40th Avenue
Cottage City, Maryland 20722**



Request for Proposals Town of Cottage City Stormwater Management RFP # CC-2025-01

Project Overview: The Town of Cottage City invites the submittal of responses to this Request for Proposals (RFP) from qualified Contractor(s) interested in providing bids for a maintenance project.

Scope of Project: This RFP is for a 3-month contract for a maintenance project within the Town of Cottage City. This project must be completed by **September 15, 2025**, due to funding deadlines. Town Elected Officials will participate in the process of selecting the appropriate contractor. (See document (Specifications Ver. 3.0 (March 2020) and bid sheet) prepared by CPJ, Civil Engineers)

Confidentiality: Vendors must treat any designated documents and information provided by the Town as confidential. The Town will treat all proposals received and the information contained therein as confidential until a negotiated contract is executed, or all proposals are rejected.

Public Statement: No vendor shall make any public statement about this RFP without prior written consent from the Town.

General Conditions: The following general conditions apply:

- The Town may not necessarily accept the lowest cost proposal but will strive to select the best and most responsive proposal.
- The Town may cancel this RFP or amend its contents at any time before acceptance of a proposal.
- If no proposal is acceptable, then the Town may either re-issue the request for proposal or negotiate with one or more vendors for a satisfactory offer.
- The award of a proposal shall not be deemed final unless and until a contract is successfully negotiated and approved by Town.
- The project is funded with CDBG dollars and the contract will be subject to applicable Federal requirements and County environmental review.



- This project is subject to Davis-Bacon wage requirements.

Compensation: Each applicant must state the compensation that will be required for the services of the applicant and must specify the minimum time increments for billing. Itemized bills, including the subject matter, date, time, and description of service shall be submitted monthly. Billing for services shall be explained in detail, including all support services and costs incurred.

Submission Requirements: Each bidder will provide a title page (project title, proposer's contact information, & total costs of proposal) and Engineer's Cost Estimate for: Cottage City 43rd Avenue Maintenance Project - Bid Sheet.

Insurance: The bidder must obtain at its own cost and expense and keep in force and effect during the term of the contract, including all extensions and renewals, the insurance specified below, with an insurance company licensed or qualified to do business in the state of Maryland. A certificate of insurance must be submitted to the Town prior to the commencement of any work under the contract and prior to any contract modification extending the term of the contract as evidence of compliance with this provision. The Town of Cottage City must be named as an additional insured on all liability policies. A minimum of thirty (30) days written notice to the Town of cancellation or material change in any of the policies is required. In no event may the insurance coverage be less than that shown below, unless the requirements of this section are waived, in whole or in part, in writing by the Town Manager.

Coverage Amount or Limits: Workers Compensation: Bodily injury by Accident (each) \$100,000, Disease (policy limits) \$500,000, Disease (each employee), \$100,000. Commercial General Liability: \$500,000 (Minimum combined single limit for bodily injury and property damage per occurrence, including contractual liability, premises and operations, and independent contractors.) Minimum Automobile Liability (Including owned, hired, and non-owned automobiles): Bodily injury, each person \$250,000, Bodily injury, each occurrence \$500,000, Property damage, each occurrence \$300,000. Professional Liability: \$1,000,000 for errors, omissions, and negligent acts, per claim and Aggregate, Professional



Liability (for professional services contracts): \$1,000,000.00 (For errors, omission, and negligent acts, per claim and Aggregate, with one-year discovery period and a maximum deductible of \$25,000).

Traffic & Pedestrian Safety: The Contractor will provide barriers, warnings signs and alternative pedestrian access around active work zones where applicable.

Client References: Each bidder-applicant and each subcontractor (if applicable) shall have performed similar work for a minimum period of five (5) years. Each applicant and each subcontractor (if applicable) must provide a minimum of three (3) clients and references that can substantiate past work performance and experience in the type of work required for this contract. For each reference provide company name, contact name, email addresses, phone numbers, and description of work performed. The Town may make such investigations as it deems necessary to determine the ability of the bidder to perform the work.

Rejection of Submissions: The Town reserves the right to do the following: reject any or all submissions, waive informalities and irregularities in the submissions received, and accept any portion of any submission if deemed in the best interest of the Town.

Incurring Cost: The Town will not be liable for any cost incurred by entities or proposers prior to executing a contract or purchase order.

Anti-Lobbying Provision: Vendors must indicate through written promise within the proposal cover letter that Proposer's officers, employees, agents, consultants, or lobbyists will not attempt to lobby or influence a vote or recommendation related to the Vendor's proposal submitted in response to this RFP; directly or indirectly, through any contact with Town Commissioner or other Town officials between the date that the request is sent out and the date the contract resulting here from is awarded by the Board of Town



Commissioners. Such behavior may be an immediate cause for rejection of the Vendor's proposal.

Point of Contact: John Hoatson, Town Manager, can be reached at 240-544-8725 or Email: Townmanager@cottagecitymd.gov with any questions.

Question Deadline: If you have questions, please submit them by **May 23, 2025**

Submission Deadline: Responses to this RFP are to be submitted **NO LATER THAN Friday, June 13, 2025**, at 3 p.m.

By Mail: Town of Cottage City, 3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

By Email: townmanager@cottagecitymd.gov

In-Person: Cottage City Town Hall, 3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

Selection Process and Criteria: Town Elected Officials will participate in the process of selecting the appropriate firm.

Thank you for your interest in this Request for Proposals for the Town of Cottage City.

ORDINANCE 2025-02

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COTTAGE CITY COMMISSION TO ADOPT A BUDGET AND LEVY PROPERTY TAXES FOR THE 2025-2026 FISCAL YEAR

WHEREAS, Sections 38, 39, and 40 of the Charter of Cottage City requires the Cottage City Commission to adopt an annual budget containing anticipated revenues and appropriations for public purposes; and

WHEREAS, each fiscal year of the Town commences on July 1 and ends by the following June 30, pursuant to Section 38 of the Charter of the Town; and

WHEREAS, Section 39 of said Chapter, requires that before adopting the budget the Commission shall hold a public hearing thereon after two weeks' notice thereof in some newspaper or newspapers having general circulation within the municipality; and

WHEREAS, Section 46 of the Cottage City Charter provides that the Budget Ordinance shall constitute the tax levy for the fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the Cottage City Commission enacted Ordinance 2016-06 on October 12, 2016, thereby amending the Code of the Town of Cottage City by adding Chapter 13 (Assessments and Taxation), Article 1 (Property Classification) by creating, defining, and designating certain tax classifications for residential and commercial real property situated within the Town and subject to municipal taxation, and generally relating to municipal taxation; and

WHEREAS, after several special meetings, the Commission has prepared a budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, containing anticipated revenues and proposed expenditures; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Cottage City Budget as developed by the Commission and staff, is indicated herein below; and

WHEREAS, the current Real Property Tax Rates for the Town of Cottage City were set for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, at the rate of \$0.4538 for Noncommercial Real Property, and at the rate of \$0.6735 for Commercial Real Property; and

WHEREAS, according to the State Department of Assessments and Taxation, the Town's real property net assessable base for Noncommercial Real Property and Commercial Real Property for Fiscal Year 2026 will be \$102,744,895 and \$55,845,402 respectively, and the constant yield tax rates (CYTR's) for the two classes of real property according to SDAT's certifications are \$0.4186 (noncommercial) and \$0.6158 (commercial) respectively; and

WHEREAS, Charter, Section 39 prescribes that before adopting the budget the Commission shall hold a public hearing thereon after two weeks' notice thereof in some newspaper or newspapers having general circulation within the municipality, and the Commission may insert new items or may increase or decrease the items of the budget; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 15 of the Town Charter, in cases of emergency, as determined by the Commission, the provision that an ordinance must be passed not less than six (6) nor more than sixty (60) days after the meeting at which it was introduced may be suspended by the affirmative votes of four members of the commission; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 5-205 of the LG Art. of Md. Ann. Code, a municipality may spend money for a purpose different from the purpose for which the money was appropriated or spend money not appropriated at the time of the annual levy if approved by a two-thirds vote of all the individuals elected to the legislative body; and

WHEREAS, the Cottage City Commission finds that it is more efficient and cost-effective to maintain a supplemental, detailed, line-item budget for the day-to-day management of the finances of the Town while adopting into law before the new fiscal year, as an emergency or regular measure adopted at just one or two meetings, the formal budget having the consolidated or major line items as stated herein below; and

WHEREAS, the Cottage City Commission has deemed it appropriate to adopt this budget ordinance after its introduction at a subsequent town meeting such that it will take effect upon the commencement of the next fiscal year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COTTAGE CITY COMMISSION, in special or regular session assembled, that the Town of Cottage City Budget containing anticipated revenues and proposed expenditures as indicated below, are hereby adopted for fiscal year 2026, beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.

Section 1. The Fiscal Year 2026 Budget shall be divided into the following major anticipated revenue funds or groups having the estimated amounts as indicated below:

<u>REVENUE SOURCE</u>	<u>PROPOSED BUDGET</u> <u>AMOUNT</u>
Taxes	\$1,013,344
Intergovernmental	\$80,861
Fines, Charges & Misc. Fees	\$358,000
Grants	\$1,911,385
Other	\$54,800
Appropriated from Fund Balance	\$1,710,545
Total Revenues:	\$5,128,935

Section 2. The total of the anticipated revenues and any estimated fund balance available for expenditure during the fiscal year within each of the aforesaid categories of the FY 2026 Budget Ordinance shall equal or exceed the total of the proposed expenditures within the following general classification of expenditure or major appropriations having the amounts as indicated below:

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>PROPOSED BUDGET</u> <u>AMOUNT</u>
General Government	\$ 522,870
Public Works	\$ 297,749
Police Department	\$ 655,747
Grant Expenditures	\$2,084,730
Capital Outlays	\$227,200
Fund Balance to Next Year	\$1,340,639
Total Expenditures:	\$5,128,935

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the Cottage City Real Property Tax (Noncommercial Real Property) for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, shall be at the rate of \$0.4538 per \$100.00 of assessed real property value, and such tax is hereby levied on all real property located in Cottage City that is subject to municipal taxation.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the Cottage City Real Property Tax (Commercial Real Property) for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, shall be at the rate of \$0.7200 per \$100.00 of assessed real property value, and such tax is hereby levied on all real property located in Cottage City that is subject to municipal taxation.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the Cottage City Business Personal Property Tax for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, shall be at the rate of \$1.35 per \$100.00 of assessed property value, and such tax is hereby levied on all personal and operating property located in Cottage City that is subject to municipal taxation.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that notwithstanding this budget ordinance, the FY 2026 Budget may be presented and discussed in further detail by enumerating additional sub-categories or detailed items pertaining to either revenues or expenditures as deemed necessary and expedient by the Cottage City Commission (the "Detailed Budget"), and although not considered incorporated by reference or formally part of this FY 2026 Budget Ordinance, the Detailed Budget, unless subsequently modified by the Commission, shall reflect the various items discussed therein and shall remain substantially uniform throughout the fiscal year having essentially the same format and items as presented to the Commissioners at the Town meeting wherein the FY 2026 Budget was approved.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that all budget amendments transferring monies between major revenue funds, line items, classifications and/or major appropriations as reflected in this FY 2026 Budget Ordinance shall be submitted to the Cottage City Commission for approval, from time to time, by ordinance, and minor budget changes or amendments, however, occurring within certain specified sub-categories or the various detailed items not reflected herein above but shown in the Detailed Budget, shall be approved from time to time by the Town Manager subject to review and approval by the Cottage City Commission as recorded in the journal of its proceedings.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that the Town Manager shall give notice of the making of the levies and budget approval by posting a notice thereof in some public place or places in the Town.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED AND ENACTED, that a fair summary of this ordinance shall be published at least once within ten days after the date of passage in a newspaper or newspapers having general circulation in the Town.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED AND ENACTED, that the Commissioner-Chairman shall be authorized to sign this Ordinance on behalf of the Commission, and that this Ordinance shall not be codified.

INTRODUCED by the Commission of Cottage City at a Town meeting on the 6th day of May 2025, at which meeting copies were available to the public for inspection.

HAVING BEEN INTRODUCED AND HAVING BEEN READ as an ordinance and passed by a yea and nay vote of the Cottage City Commission with the affirmative votes of four members elected to the legislative body as indicated below at a Public Meeting of the Town of Cottage City held on the 14th day of May 2025, at approximately 7 o'clock p.m., in the Town Hall in Cottage City, Maryland.

ATTEST:

TOWN OF COTTAGE CITY, MARYLAND

John Hoatson, Town Manager

By: _____
Wanda Wheatley, Commission-Chair

CERTIFICATION

I, HEREBY CERTIFY, as the duly appointed Town Manager of the Town of Cottage City, Maryland, that on the 14th day of May 2025 with _____Aye votes and ____Nay votes, the aforesaid Ordinance 2025-02 passed.

John Hoatson, Town Manager

Phone/Video On-Demand Remote Interpretation Account Terms & Conditions

All over-the-phone interpretation and video remote interpretation services provided by LinguaLinx Language Solutions, Inc. are subject to these conditions, and completion of this form implies acceptance of these terms.

LinguaLinx will provide on-demand over-the-phone (OPI) and video remote (VRI) interpretation services for the client, as requested, and pay all costs associated with this service, except for the per minute usage fees outlined below.

LinguaLinx will invoice the client once per month with **Net 30** terms. There are no setup fees or annual maintenance fees. All calls are billed in one minute increments rounded to the nearest minute. Per minute usage rates below:

On-demand Interpretation (Phone) - Price per Minute (all languages): \$1.40
On-demand Interpretation (Video Remote) - \$1.95 per Minute (all spoken languages)
On-demand Interpretation (American Sign Language) - Price per Minute: \$2.50

LinguaLinx issues invoices for interpretation accounts in excel file format via email, along with a .pdf summary of charges, unless otherwise specified by our client. Each emailed invoice will contain a secure link through which the client can opt to pay directly via credit card or bank transfer.

LinguaLinx will assess overdue account charges of one and one-half percent (1.5%) per month on any overdue balance. Failure to remit payment on an overdue balance may result in the suspension of service line availability until the account is brought current with payment. Unpaid invoices aging over sixty (60) days and accrued finance charges may be reported to a credit bureau and/or subject to collections.

This agreement is month-to-month, commencing upon LinguaLinx approval, and may be canceled by either party with 30 days express written notice.

Interpreter Solicitation. The client is expressly forbidden from soliciting LinguaLinx-contracted interpreters and employees without the express written consent of LinguaLinx, Inc.

Use of Customer Code I Service Line Access Information is the sole responsibility of the client.

Dissemination of this information among authorized users is the sole responsibility of the client to track and manage. LinguaLinx does not adjust monthly invoices for charges the client claims were made by "unauthorized" users. LinguaLinx will only provide account access information to the Account Contact named on page 1 of this agreement.

We are very happy to serve you as your On-demand Interpretation Service provider. Please contact our Interpretation Team at interp@LinguaLinx.com with any questions about our services.

Cancellation Policy: Pre-scheduled phone interpretation appointments canceled with less than 12 hours' notice will be billed for thirty (30) minutes.

Please Initial Here to Acknowledge
Price per Minute rates (listed above)

Interpretation and Translation Services - NASPO Signup

Your Organization's Name

Your Primary Point of Contact Name

Phone (Work)

Phone (Cell)

Email

Organization Address

City

State

ZIP

Billing Contact Name (if different)

Billing Phone

Billing Email

Billing Address (if different)

Billing City

State

PO Box

ZIP

Help us better serve you

Your top languages:

Your hours and days of operation:



Optional: Custom Data Gathering for Telephonic Interpretation

For every call made to an interpreter, you can collect additional data for reporting or billing purposes. It will be requested by your caller before connecting to the interpreter.

This custom data will be included on your invoice and call detail records. Describe the type of data you intend to collect -- common uses include employee ID, cost center, location code, etc. **Describe your custom numbers below:**

Custom number 1 description:

Customer number 2 description:

PRICING INFORMATION

I (name), authorize you to bill (Organization) for the charges generated by interpretation services under Net 30 payment terms. Please mark the box for which services and pricing model you would like to activate for your interpretation account.

OVER THE PHONE INTERPRETATION (OPI) and VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETATION (VRI)

- ☐ OPI charges **\$0.54 per minute** for SPANISH and **\$0.64 per minute** for all OTHER languages. Domestic third party dials charged +\$0.00 per minute to rate. Each call has one minute minimum billed in six-second increments. Setup of the account includes toll-free number, access code, and custom data collection (if applicable), and web portal access to retrieve electronic invoices.
- ☐ VRI charges **\$1.59 per minute** for ASL-VRI, **\$1.25 per minute** for Spanish VRI, and **\$1.49 per minute** for all other VRI languages. VRI sessions are billed in one-minute increments.
- ☐ On-Site Interpretation (OSI) supporting American Sign Language (ASL) - N/A

Optional Equipment:

- ☐ Dual-Handset phones - **\$150.00 per phone**
- ☐ Y-cable and additional handset - **\$35.00 each**

TRANSLATION SERVICES

- ☐ \$0.12 per word for SPANISH. \$0.17 per word for common languages; \$0.19 per word for all other languages. Minimum charge \$40.00. Desktop publishing \$35.00 per hour.

Services Agreement Terms & Conditions

Global Interpreting Network Inc. will bill for charges generated for above services monthly. Invoices shall be submitted via email to above listed billing email address. NET30 payment terms. 3% late fee to be added upon late payment. Additional services not covered in the Services Agreement such as Transcription, Localization, 3rd party international calls, hard copy invoicing and reporting are gladly offered under amended or separate agreements or quotes. Please feel free to contact our sales department if you are interested in adding any of these services.

If not completing via DocuSign, please sign and return agreement to clientservices@globalinterpreting.com

Name (Printed)

Date

Authorized Signature