



Straight Talk

From Town Staff

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Home Page – www.ci.poolesville.md.us

The Commissioners of Poolesville

October 2010

Vote on Charter Changes

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Public Hearings

Hunting Regs.

*Thank You Poolesville
Day Committee*

**Volunteer Position
Available**

Ethics Commission

**REPORT STREET
LIGHTS**

Please have the following information ready and call, or send your request via e-mail to townhall@lan2wan.com

1. Pole Number
2. Nearest Street Address
3. Nature of Problem

On November 2nd, Poolesville voters will decide whether the proposed charter changes are accepted. So what are these 24 amendments about? Out of the 24 amendments, 16 deal with general updates and housekeeping, such as, changing **(They) shall meet in a convenient place to The Commissioners shall meet in a convenient place, (Clerk and Chief Clerk) to Town Clerk, and (Supervisors) of Elections to Board of Elections.**

Another 5 proposed amendments are updates to the procedures dealing with property tax collection. The current language identifies procedures in which the Town collects the taxes. With changes in State Law, these sections no longer apply and are being removed as all administration of property tax collection is a function of the Montgomery County Government.

The following paragraphs will identify the remaining 3 amendments, which some were distorted and/or misrepresented to many of the folks who signed the referendum signature sheet.

Commissioner's Pay: Throughout Maryland's local governments, the vast majority of elected officials receive some pay anywhere from \$5,000 to \$12,000 per year for towns our size. These elected officials spend a lot of time away from their homes and families for what sometimes can be a thankless job.

Does this passage of this provision automatically grant pay without any public input? **Plain and simple no!** The vote itself to include this proposed provision barely passed with a three to two vote. For the Commissioners to implement pay, they would have to pass a detailed resolution, which is done publically and allows for public comment. Next, they would need to include this in the annual budget, which mandates a public hearing to provide for public input. Lastly, the provision was crafted in such a way that prior to receiving pay, each Commissioner would have to stand re-election.

Budget Adoption Amendment: Several years ago, to curtail fluctuations in the property tax rate, the Poolesville voters passed the following provisions:

1. Not less than one hundred and twenty (120) days prior to the beginning of the fiscal year for the Town, the Commissioners of Poolesville shall prepare and make available for public inspection a proposed budget for the coming fiscal year as well as a proposed property tax rate.
2. If the property tax revenue to be generated by applying the adopted tax rate for the next taxable year to the estimated assessment of all property in the Town is estimated to exceed the property tax revenue generated for the current taxable year by an amount in excess of seven (7) per cent thereof then, and in said event, the adopted tax rate may be subject to a referendum of the qualified voters of the Town.

So what's wrong with this? The tax limit protection is great, however, the time table of 120 days hampers obtaining accurate revenue information. The County and State, who allocate different sources of income to the Town, do not finalize their budgets until late June of each year. For us to have our budget prepared by February, does not allow adequate time to realize cuts that significantly impact our projections. This past year is a prime example. After the adoption, but prior to our budget taking effect on July 1, we received notice from both Montgomery County and the State that during their budget deliberations, they had decided to withhold over \$250,000 of expected revenue. Scrambling to close large revenue shortfalls after our most important annual planning tools is in place, results in a less than precise document for which we all strive to achieve.

Below is the language used in the proposed Charter changes, which maintains the seven (7) per cent limit safeguard, but also allows an adequate time table for the Town officials to prepare the most accurate budget document possible.

If the Commissioners determine that the property tax revenue required to fund the budget will not exceed the current property tax revenue by more than seven (7) percent, the schedule for adoption of the budget and property tax rate need not allow time for a referendum; however, in that case, the estimated property tax revenue shall not exceed the property tax revenue generated for the current taxable year by an amount in excess of seven (7) percent thereof.

Addition of the Community & Economical Development Committee: As with all Boards and Commissions that act in an advisory capacity or established by State authority (except the Ethics Commission, who are defined in the Code), they will be identified as part of the overall government structure. This Committee made up of 3 government members, 3 businesses, and 3 residents act as an advisory capacity to the Commissioners. They prepare an annual budget request for events or for projects with the Chamber of Commerce, which must be approved by the Commissioners and drafted into the annual budget.

To keep the Poolesville government as open and transparent as possible, the Commissioners are availing themselves at the October 4th and 18th meetings to discuss and/or answer questions regarding any of these proposed changes. If you are not available during these times, you may call Town Hall to schedule a time that fits your schedule or call Commissioner Kuhlman directly @ 301-972-8621.

For a complete copy of the redline version of the Proposed Charter amendments, please visit, www.ci.poolesville.md.us.

Public Hearing Notice

October 18, 2010, 7:30 PM, Poolesville Town Hall

Ordinance No. 181 - Amends Section 9(b)(3)(9) to exempt certain commercial signs on weekends from permit requirements and, to include a provision for their removal.

Ordinance No. 182 - Amends the Poolesville Code, Appendix B, title "Zoning", by adding a new Section 2.C. to address conflicts that arise between the Town of Poolesville Zoning Code and private covenants, restrictions and agreements created by deeds or other instruments.

Ordinance No. 183 - Amends the Poolesville Code, Appendix B, title "Zoning", by amending Section 3(D) to modify certain matters relating to special exceptions on residentially zoned properties, which have shared driveways.

All interested persons, their agents, or attorneys may appear before the Commissioners and testify or ask questions concerning this ordinance. Copies are available at the Town Hall or online at www.ci.poolesville.md.us.

Hunting Regulations

Please be advised, **Hunting is permissible within Town boundaries with written permission.** However, hunting is not permitted on property owned by the Town of Poolesville. All hunters must abide by the rules and regulations set forth by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

All hunters are reminded that it is unlawful to: 1) have a loaded firearm in or on a vehicle, 2) shoot on, from, or across any public road, 3) discharge a firearm within 150 yards of an occupied structure or camp without the advanced permission of the landowner or occupant. If you notice any such activity, please call DNR at 800-628-9944 or 410-356-7060.

All residents are reminded that trespassing on private property for leisure or for exercising the dog is illegal and very dangerous during the hunting season. Deer season, with a bow, begins September 15 and runs until January 31.

A Special Thanks

The Commissioners of Poolesville would like to recognize and express our appreciation to the members of the Poolesville Day Committee for their ingenuity, cooperation and passion to bring us a successful 20th Annual Poolesville Day Festival.

So if you see one of these members, remember to give them a thanks.

Brice Halbrook, Co-Chair

Bridget Burke, Co-Chair

Jim Brown, Gina Beck, Cathy & Mike Bupp,

Rande Davis, David Drury,

Faith & Skip Etheridge, Gustavo Gilardi,

Michelle Halbrook, Ray Hoewing,

Gabi Jacob, Eddie Kuhlman, Gail Lindsay Lee,

Phymeon Lyles, Victor Lundberg, Rinnie Magaha,

Dianne Rose, Richard Rose, Michael Shapiro,

Brenda Sneed, Suzanne Tallia, Theresa Yost.

Water/Sewer Emergency Contacts

- 888-607-0147
- 301-647-8239

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Poolesville, Maryland 20837**

Meeting Schedule

Commissioners: October 4 & 18

Planning Commission: October 13 & November 17

Parks Board: October 6 & November 10

Community and Economic Development: October 27



*Wade Yost
Town Manager*