

CAMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS

BOARD MEETINGS:

**Are held virtually or in person at the discretion of the CAN President
CAN Board Meetings are open to the public**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

Are held virtually or in person at the discretion of the CAN President

* * * * *

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

April 13, 2022

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Chuck McFadden (President), Roman Jesien (Vice President), Tom Puglisi (Secretary), Jane Weeks (Treasurer), Andre Duerinckx, Mary Ellen Jesien, Rick Klepfer, Susan Olsen, Sharon Smith, Dave Thatcher, and Judd Vickers.

Board Members Not Present: Brad Rice.

Members Present: Twenty-two (22) members signed the attendance sheet.

Guests Present: Stephen Rideout and Ward 1 City Council Commissioner Brian Roche.

- 1. Opening Comments.** CAN President Chuck McFadden convened the meeting at 6:30 pm in public meeting room of the Dorchester County Public Library, 303 Gay Street, Cambridge, MD 21613. Chuck welcomed everyone and those present introduced themselves.
- 2. Proposed Bylaws Changes.** CAN Secretary Tom Puglisi summarized the proposed Bylaws changes, including
 - a. Article III, Section 2 (individual, household, and organizational membership)
 - b. Article IV Section 1 (minimum of 9 and maximum of 12 Board Members) and Section 4 (in-person, hybrid, and virtual meetings)
 - c. Article V (duties of officers)
 - d. Article VIII, Section 2 (Executive Committee)
 - e. Article XV (donations to external organizations)

Tom Puglisi made a motion to approve the proposed Bylaws changed, seconded by Roman Jesien. Approved by unanimous voice vote of the Members present.

3. Election of Board Members. CAN Vice President Roman Jesien introduced the candidates nominated for 2022-2024 terms:

- a. Chuck McFadden (President)
- b. Jane Weeks (Treasurer)
- c. Mary Ellen Jesien (Member at Large)
- d. Dave Thatcher (Member at Large)
- e. Judd Vickers (Member at Large)
- f. Susan Olsen (Member at Large)
- g. Brad Rice (Member at Large)

Roman Jesien made a motion to approve the nominated candidates, seconded by Tom Puglisi. Approved by unanimous voice vote of the Members present.

4. Treasurer's Report. CAN Treasurer Jane Weeks reported that there is currently \$3370.67 in CAN's treasury. Steve Rideout made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report, seconded by Tom Puglisi. Approved by unanimous voice vote of the Members present.

5. Secretary's Report. CAN Secretary Tom Puglisi reported that CAN membership now exceeds 375 individuals. Sharon Smith made a motion to approve the Secretary's report, seconded by Chuck McFadden. Approved by unanimous voice vote of the Members present.

6. Furniture Moving. Steve Rideout reported that several CAN members participated last week in moving a house full of donated furniture to residents of the Greenwood Avenue community.

7. County Council Referendum Petition. Stephen Rideout described the two petitions being circulated by Dorchester Citizens for Better Government that would address:

- a. Transparency and full disclosure by (i) mandating that County Council meetings be broadcast live on Cable TV or live streamed on the internet, and (ii) requiring the Council to provide the public with documents supporting agenda items prior to its meetings. (Charter Section 606)
- b. Abnormal turnover in key personnel by (i) specifying the role of the County Manager in hiring and firing, (ii) requiring a formal process for hiring and terminating the County Manager, (iii) prohibiting any Council member from individually directing that an action be taken by the County Manager without the concurrence of the full Council; and (v) prohibiting a Council Member from assuming the role of County Manager or Acting County Manager during the member's term of office plus two years thereafter. (Charter Sections 405 and 406)

Steve indicated that approximately 5000 signatures are needed for each petition in order to bring these items to a referendum of County voters. Signatures will be solicited at a number of events throughout the County.

- 8. Ward 1 City Council Commissioner Brian Roche.** CAN President Chuck McFadden welcomed Ward 1 City Council Commissioner Brian Roche. Commissioner Roche addressed the following issues in response to questions from attendees.
- a. **New City Manager.** Mr. Thomas Carroll of Silverton, Ohio has been hired as Cambridge City Manager. Mr. Carroll has a track record with a racially mixed community, neighborhood revitalization, community embraced land banking, and financing improvement districts. He is highly experienced in setting goals, issuing clear directions, and aligning the budget to the City's goals. Mr. Carroll has written several articles on executive management in government and will help Cambridge move from a small-town government micro-managed by Council members to modern, professional executive government management. Commissioner Roche indicated that the Acting City Manager has educated the Council about the need for a strong City Manager without interference from the Mayor and Council. Mr. Carroll begins work in Cambridge on April 20 and will live in the City
 - b. **Capital Improvement.** Commissioner Roche stated that Cambridge needs to have an ongoing capital improvement program with budgets to include items such as sidewalks, heavy equipment, water and sewer infrastructure, and the marina.
 - c. **Sewer System.** Commissioner Roche indicated that water and sewer problems in Cambridge are serious and need to be addressed. The Maryland Department of the Environment has fined Cambridge tens of thousands of dollars because of sewage spills. The City Council has approved funding for the pumping station to be cleaned out and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds will be used for upgrading the pumping station and sewer system. Cambridge received a total of \$6M in ARPA funds last year and will receive another allocation of funds in July.
 - d. **River Level Rise and Floods Mitigation.** Commissioner Roche noted that his constituents have expressed serious concerns about the proposal to build a 7-foot berm from Water Street to Great Marsh Park for flood mitigation. He will not support this plan as proposed but hopes that a more balanced solution is developed. He suggested that one problem is that river inlets have been covered over by development and water has not been properly redirected. Mr. Rideout spoke out forcefully in support of the proposed berm
 - e. **Proposal to Eliminate Position of Mayor.** Commissioner Roche indicated that Council members observed that city management seemed to work well without a mayor and questioned whether having a mayor had the effect of undermining the City Manager. He suggested that most citizen input in support of retaining the position of mayor came from people who had been or aspired to be mayor. The Council recognizes that the City Charter requires that a mayoral election be held promptly following a vacancy. However, the County Board of Elections has informed the City that it is not able to hold such an election, so a private vendor will have to be engaged to hold the election. Any change to the position of mayor would require changing the City Charter and would not take effect until the current mayoral term ends.

- f. **Crime.** Commissioner Roche acknowledge that the Police Department has many vacant positions and that other police forces on the Eastern Shore are luring officers away from Cambridge. Salaries for Cambridge police officers have been increased, bonuses have been provided, and property tax incentive have been approved, but the loss of officers has continued. This is a significant problem that needs to be addressed but an effective solution has eluded us far.
- g. **Housing.** Commissioner Roche observed that many of the City's problems seem to be tied to poverty and substandard housing. We need to institute housing inspections and implement enforcement actions that are effective. The method of simply responding to complaints is not working. Proposed solutions need to be funded and implemented. We need the City Manager to implement the executive process to budget, fund, and implement effective solutions.
- h. **Sailwinds Waterfront.** Commissioner Roche stated that everything related to the Sailwinds waterfront development area has been transferred to Cambridge Waterfront Development, Inc. (CWDI) and big picture goals have been identified. An effective permanent Director has been hired, money has obtained to begin demolition of the hospital, and trees have been categorized for preservation. Project branding is underway and identification of interested developers will begin soon. Incremental development within the overall plan will be allowed to take place so development can begin sooner rather than later.

Chuck thanked Commissioner Roche for his participation tonight and for his service on the City Council

9. **Adjournment.** Tom Puglisi made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Andre Duerinckx. The motion was adopted unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.