



# TOWN OF COLMAR MANOR

*A Port Towns Community*  
3701 Lawrence Street  
Colmar Manor, Maryland 20722

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**Town Meeting Minutes**  
**November 29, 2022, 7 PM**  
**Meeting ID: 826 7950 6698 Passcode: 3611**

**Call to Order**

Mayor Casanas called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

**Mayor Statement**

I would like to ask for a moment of silence for the victims of the Colorado Springs Nightclub shooting. In 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King said: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial 'outside agitator' idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds."

At the nightclub there were people who put their lives on the line and stood up to the gunman and stopped him from taking more innocent lives, for this I am grateful. I am proud and admire those with the courage to do the right thing.

**Introduction of Special Legal Counsel**

Mayor Casanas introduced Ms. Elissa Levan as the special legal counsel and noted that she was contracted with to help us review the petition. Elissa Levan is one of the principals with Levan Ruff LLC. Levan Ruff works with many municipalities throughout Maryland.

**Town Administrator Report**

Mr. Holcomb presented a history of the Charter Amendment Resolution process and his findings. He stated that the petitions were insufficient in the number of signatures needed to place the issue before the town for a referendum. The petitions needed 20% of the town's registered voters, which is 149 signatures. The petitioners submitted 143.

He further noted that the petition form itself was found to be unsatisfactory and did not properly state the purpose of the Charter Amendment Resolution's purpose.

**Mayor's Closing Statement**

Mayor Casanas closed with the following statement: "I want to again thank everyone who has been involved in making our town more inclusive of all the residents who call Colmar Manor home - because it is our home. Thank you to Trent from Casa de MD, Morena Zelaya of CHISPA, Sara Campos who has bravely on many occasions provided testimony on why voting is important to her and her family. To Jackie, Senora Ana, Shelby, Sal, Phil, Pat Pat, Maya, Amy, and Adam all of the community members who have been working on this for the past two years. I was not the person who initiated this so I stand on the shoulders of giants.

I also want to obviously give a huge thank you to Council Members Melinda and Maliek. Thank you for having the courage and conviction to do what is just for everyone who calls Colmar Manor home and who have been calling Colmar Manor home for decades. I'm looking forward to Melinda's mom being able to vote for her daughter and Maliek for your grandmother's voting.

I know this has been a difficult conversation to have. Thank you to those who took the time to research the topic, to speak to others, to empathize, and make this educated leap of faith in supporting this new initiative. The mechanism to do this has been made possible through the state of Maryland - it makes me proud to call MD home. And for the petitioners, thank you for being active and for bringing up important questions that will help in the implementation of this voter expansion.

We will have continued conversations about this to plan for the future. More importantly, I think we need to have discussions to bridge areas of divide in our community. When I describe Colmar Manor, I talk about how this town went from a predominantly white town, to a sunset town and how it transformed into a primarily black community, and how it has shifted yet again and is now a black and Hispanic community. When people see the makeup of our council, I often get remarks about how wonderfully diverse our community is, a microcosm of America. This is a huge source of pride for me. But this doesn't mean we don't struggle to overcome cultural barriers. I see this as an opportunity to become better neighbors and better-elected officials. So, I ask now for your help in uniting our community.”

**Adjournment**

Mayor Casanas adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM.

**Submitted,  
Greg Holcomb**