



SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL

*"Where People and Trees Have
Deep Roots and Grow Strong"*



Volume 61 • No. 3

March | 2016

Date of Publication: February 29, 2016



Save The Date



Tuesday, April 5, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Join Us for the Town Election, An Art Show of
Somerset Residents, and Refreshments!**



Town Election for Mayor and Two Council Seats on April 5, 2016

By Phyllis Wiesenfelder, Chair, Board of Supervisors of Elections, Cumberland Avenue

Town residents will have an opportunity to vote for Mayor and two Town Council seats in the upcoming election on **April 5, 2016 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Somerset Town Hall**. Nominations for Mayor and the two Council seats will be accepted at the Town Council meeting scheduled for March 7, 2016. Additional nominations may be made if 20 registered voters sign a petition and it is filed with the Clerk-Treasurer not less than 21 days before the election.

The Town Charter requires its elected officials to be:

- Citizens of the United States;
- Residents of the Town of Somerset for at least 18 months preceding the election; and
- Qualified voters in the Town of Somerset and the State of Maryland.

If you are registered in Montgomery County, you are automatically registered in Somerset and can vote in the Town election. If you are not a U.S. citizen, you may vote in the Town election by filling out a voter registration form. You can register in person at the Town Hall on March 7th from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. or any Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You can also register by mail by sending a completed registration form to the Town Hall. If you would like a registration form, please call the Town Hall at **301-657-3211** or email **Rich Charnovich** at manager@townofsomerset.com. **The deadline for registering to vote is Wednesday, March 22, 2016.**

*Election for
Mayor and Two
Council Seats*



Calendar

Thursday, March 3

Town Hall Brown Bag Lunch

Sunday, March 6

Town Talk on Sustainable Landscaping

Monday, March 21

MVA Mobile Office

Don't forget to check the Town website throughout the month for an up-to-date calendar. Go to www.townofsomerset.com and click on Town Calendar.

The Preliminary Agenda for each month's Town Council meeting is posted on the Town website (www.townofsomerset.com) seven days prior to the meeting. A copy is also posted on the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch.



On My Mind

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin, Warwick Place

Winter Exercise

Even though it's just past the peak of snow and ice season, let's not forget the importance of a daily exercise routine.

While it's easy to make the weather an excuse to "do it tomorrow" — don't let that happen. Your happiness, fulfillment and longevity are all at stake.

Many of us start the new year with grandiose plans and great resolutions that by mid-February are totally compromised. That's a shame. Why not pretend that the year is beginning today and get started with some kind of activity on a regular schedule?

While each person is unique, in general a minimum of twenty minutes a day will provide a benefit, but we should all strive for more. It's also best to choose a form of exercise that you enjoy, whether it is dancing, running, swimming, or other aerobic exercise. And let's not forget strength training and yoga or pilates. And everyone needs to stretch!

An exercise routine is also easier when it is convenient, and many in Somerset are fortunate to have space and equipment at home. But it's also nice to have the socialization at a gym or a health club. We are so lucky that there are many in our vicinity, and most of them offer great classes.

We are also blessed that the County's Department of Recreation has a beautiful facility right in Friendship Heights — the Wisconsin Place Community Recreation Center at 5311 Friendship Boulevard. A number of residents go there. The Department also has a variety of programs at various locations; I urge you to go to **ActiveMONTGOMERY.org** to explore the many possibilities.

The County has some "incentive" programs including the one I am currently participating in, along with my dog Molly, called the 100 Mile Challenge. It involves the potential for weekly prizes and keeping a daily log, and this will culminate in a public event in April. Check out the website for details. And don't forget that our pets need exercise too. Believe it or not, pet obesity is a major problem in the United States.

Get Healthy Everyone!



In This Issue

Annual Used Book Sale at B-CC on March 12th and 13th	6
A Thank You from Somerset Staff ..	6
Council Meeting Actions	7
Dolphins Summer Swim Team Season Getting Closer!	3
From the Mayor's Desk	8
General Permits	7
Get Ready for Somerset Tennis	5
Manager's Corner	4
On My Mind	2
Preliminary Agenda	10
Save the Date: Brown Bag Lunch on Thursday, March 3	3
Save the Date: Tuesday, April 5, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	1
Somerset... Naturally	5
Somerset Snowscape January 2016	9

Barbara Marenus, Editor – bmarenus@gmail.com

The **Town Journal** is the official publication of The Town of Somerset, Montgomery County, MD.

Post Office address: 4510 Cumberland Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

www.townofsomerset.com

If you prefer to receive the Journal via email, please provide your request to manager@townofsomerset.com or call the Town Hall at **301-657-3211**.

Deadline for copy and ads is the 15th of the month at 4:30 p.m.

MAYOR

Jeffrey Z. Slavin, 5706 Warwick Place
301-654-6767

Town Hall Telephone: 301-657-2229

mayor@townofsomerset.com

MEMBERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Marnie Shaul, Council Vice President
5509 Uppingham Street
301-913-5973

mshaul@townofsomerset.com

Barbara Condos, 4706 Falstone Avenue
301-656-0461

bcondos@townofsomerset.com

Dudley Fowlkes, 4904 Falstone Avenue
202-351-9398

dfowlkes@townofsomerset.com

Franny Peale, 5521 Uppingham Street
301-652-9695

fpeale@townofsomerset.com

Barbara Zeughauser, 5412 Trent Street
301-951-8560

bzeughauser@townofsomerset.com

TOWN MANAGER

Richard Charnovich

301-657-3211

manager@townofsomerset.com

TOWN ARBORIST

Tolbert Feather

town@townofsomerset.com

TOWN HALL

Open: 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Monday thru Friday

301-657-3211

Fax: 301-657-2773

TTY users call Maryland Relay

Save the Date

Brown Bag Lunch on Thursday, March 3

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin, Warwick Place



Come celebrate St. Patrick's Day early and talk about the upcoming Town election at our first quarterly Brown Bag lunch of the year on **Thursday, March 3, from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m.**

As always, members of the Council and I will host anyone from Town interested and available to discuss issues or share a story or two. It will also be a good opportunity to ask about the Town's upcoming FY 2017 budget.

Remember to bring a sandwich or dish to share—and a friend. Beverages, plates and utensils are provided. Email me at mayor@townofsomerset.com if you have any questions.



Dolphins Summer Swim Team

Dolphins Summer Swim Team Season Getting Closer!

By Nancy Jardini, Swim Team Committee Chair, Essex Avenue

Now that spring is almost here, it is time to get out the word about Somerset's swim team, the **Dolphins**. The **Dolphins** competes in the Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL) and membership is open to any Town resident, 6-18 years of age, who can pass the deep water test and is assessed by the coaches as being water safe. The team practices every afternoon after Memorial Day and each morning and afternoon after school is out. There are two meets a week from mid-June through July. All swimmers compete in Wednesday night meets. **Competitive divisional swim meets** occur every Saturday morning where the top three swimmers in each event (top six in freestyle) compete. There are social events throughout the season and at the end of the season, we celebrate with a banquet including trophies, skits, and a slide show. Our swimmers range from "just for fun" to highly competitive – everyone is welcome and everyone has a chance to participate, have fun, and be recognized.

We also sponsor the **Minis, a developmental team for little swimmers who cannot pass the deep-water test**. Mini swimmers must be between 4 and 7 years old and be able to put their face under water. They practice three days a

week after school is out. There is also one Mini meet and Mini swimmers are encouraged to attend all social events.

If your child participates on the swim team, you are required to volunteer. It takes at least 20 volunteers to run a home swim meet. We will send out volunteer options for sign-up, but if you do not volunteer you will be assigned. You don't have to attend in person and can send a grandma, babysitter or friend but if your child is swimming you should expect to have a job.

Many Somerset parents work year-round to ensure a successful swim season. From maintaining the budget and presenting it to the Town, meeting weekly with the League, organizing meet operations, hiring and managing coaches or planning to feed the masses at concessions, this group works hard to make it all run smoothly.

Please take a look at our website at www.somersetswimteam.org to learn more about our team, our schedule, and the many Somerset parents who assist the team. These are the people who you can contact with questions.

Also, please be on the lookout in coming weeks for coaching solicitations and spirit wear orders. This year we will be offering custom silicone caps, baseball caps, visors, sweatshirts and towels! Registration announcements will be coming out after spring break!

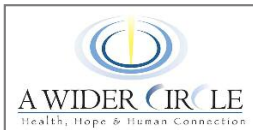


Town Website

Just a friendly reminder to visit the newly revamped Town website at townofsomerset.com

Spring Bulk Collection Date

Please note that the **Town's spring bulk refuse collection** is tentatively scheduled for **Monday, May 2, 2016**. The Council will confirm the date at the March 7, 2016 Council meeting. We will again be striving to partner with A Wider Circle the weekend before the collection.



FY17 Budget and 5-Year Fiscal Plan

In the next few months, Town officials will be working on the FY17 budget and 5-year fiscal plan. There is a public work session scheduled for March 10, 2016 at 12:00 p.m. in the Town Hall. Any interested member of the public is invited to attend and listen to the discussion. The current schedule for the 1 year budget and 5 year plan is that they both will be introduced/presented at the April 4, 2016 Town Council Meeting.

Tennis Court Nova Probounce Installation

We are close to finalizing a contract with Bishop Tennis for the resurfacing of the tennis courts in May of 2016, as was approved in the fall of 2015. We are hoping to have a final agreement in place by the March 7 Council Meeting.



WSSC Project in ESA Area

WSSC and its consultant are scheduled to be in attendance at the March 7, 2016 Council Meeting to further discuss the sewer rehabilitation project it needs to complete. O'Brien and Gere was in attendance at the January and February Council meetings to provide an update and to explain their latest alternatives memo which can be located on the Town website.

Town Code and Charter Update Ongoing

Town officials continue to meet on the Code and Charter update project. There are two meetings scheduled in March, with the dates and details being published each week on the email blast notices. This project will likely last until the end of 2016 and possibly beyond.



School Bus Safety Reminder from Somerset PTA

Hello Somerset Families: Cars on the road around our school are passing school buses. This is very dangerous and carries a heavy fine and penalty. Please keep everyone safe and do not pass a school bus – buses from Somerset, Westland, BCC, the Center at Chevy Chase Elementary, and Rock Creek Forest all pick up and drop off around Somerset in the same time window. If you need a rule reminder, or know someone who does, please visit the Montgomery County Police website concerning school bus safety at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/POL/bussafety.html>

Smoke Alarm Installation Program

Did you know Montgomery County Fire and Rescue service has a program for smoke alarms in your home? Details can be found on the Fire and Rescue Service website at <http://www.weblinks2z.com/mcfrs/firesafety/default.aspx>



Montgomery County
Smoke Alarm Program

Somerset . . . Naturally

(An occasional post from the Parks & Natural Resources Committee about Nature in Somerset)

Save the Date

Bring Your Friends and Neighbors to the Town Talk on Sustainable Landscaping, Sunday, March 6 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.



“The front lines of the battle for nature are not in the Amazon rain forest or the Alaskan wilderness; the front lines are our backyards, medians, parking lots, and elementary school . . . This book is dedicated to anyone who can influence a small patch of land.”

— From the Introduction of *Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes*

By Paige Whitley, Member, Parks & Natural Resources Committee, Cumberland Avenue

The Parks and Natural Resources Committee is once again sponsoring a Town Talk on Sustainable Landscaping for the Town of Somerset on **Sunday, March 6, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.** Our featured speaker will be Thomas Rainer. A resident of Arlington, VA, and a landscape architect and educator, Rainer is a self-described horticultural futurist. He has designed landscapes for the United States Capitol grounds, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and the New York Botanical Garden. He has been featured in a range of publications including the *New York Times*, *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, and *Home & Design*. (To view his own modest Arlington home garden, see this link: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/21/garden/hell-try-anything.html?_r=0.)

Recently Rainer has co-authored the book *Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes* with Claudia West. According to Timber Press, “This groundbreaking guide presents a powerful alternative to traditional horticulture: designed plantings that function like naturally occurring plant communities. Thomas Rainer and Claudia West, two leading voices in ecological landscape design, reveal how plants fit together in nature and how to use this knowledge to create landscapes that are resilient, beautiful, and diverse. As practical as it is inspiring, *Planting*

in a Post-Wild World is an optimistic manifesto pointing the way to the future of planting design.”

In addition to Thomas Rainer, we will hear about recent Montgomery County Rainscapes projects completed in Somerset, and we will learn about driveway options that solve water run-off problems.

Come and learn how we can influence our own small patches of ground. Copies of the book will be available for sale.

Get Ready for Somerset Tennis

By Frank Joseph, Chair, Tennis Committee, Warwick Place



It's time to get the racquet restrung, buy new tennis balls and check out your gear. Spring is just around the corner, and so is tennis in Somerset.

This is a special year. The courts are to be completely resurfaced for the first time in nearly 20 years. Resurfacing is scheduled to take place during May, and we will have spanking new courts sometime in June.

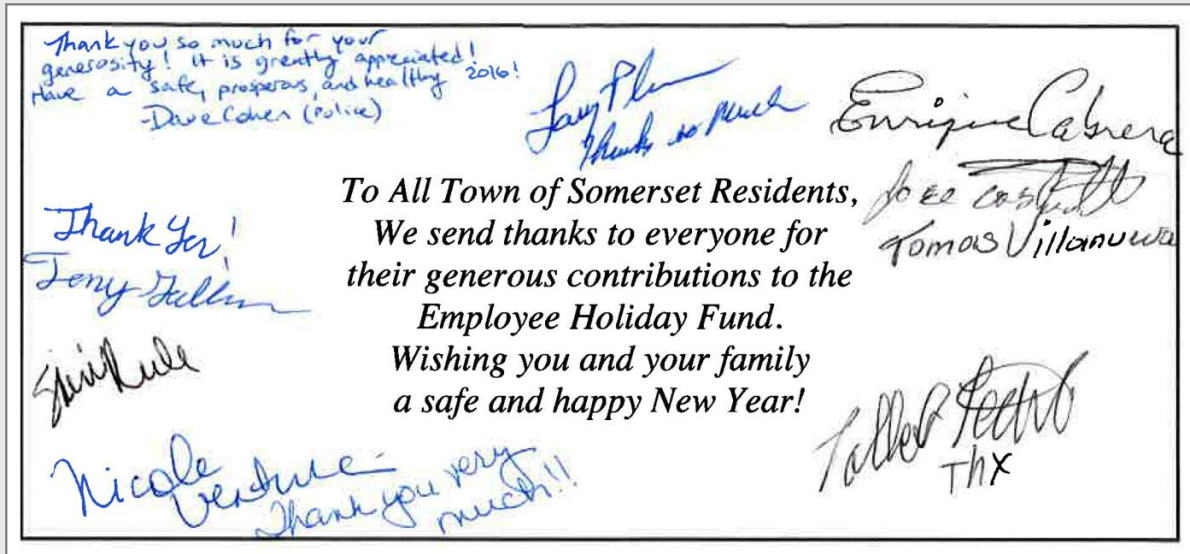
During the 4-6 weeks of the renovation, our courts will be closed but you'll still be able to play. We have arranged court privileges at the nearby Somerset House condominiums. Details are being worked out and will be provided when available.

And when the renovation is complete, plan on celebrating at a Town tennis party! There'll be food and fun for kids and grownups alike, as well as introductory clinics with pro Dara Mirala. The date and time will be announced later.

Please note that you must display a 2016 tennis card when you play on Somerset courts. Get yours now! You can do this in one of three ways: contact the Town Hall at 301-657-3211, email clerk@townofsomerset.com, or complete the form online at <https://md-somerset.civicplus.com/FormCenter/EPayments-Form-5/Paying-Tennis-Court-Fees-Online-39>. Pending Council approval on March 7, the 2016-17 tennis card fee will be \$25 for the whole family.

Spring clinics start in mid-March! Contact pro Dara Mirala for information at DaraMirala@outlook.com. Other questions? Please contact me at 301-656-8753 or at keycom@verizon.net.

A Thank You from Somerset Staff

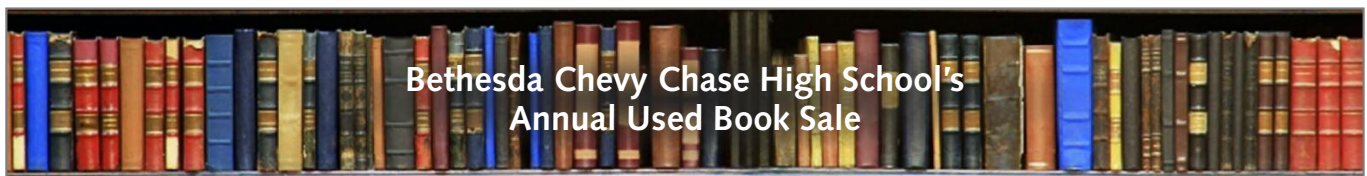


Annual Used Book Sale at B-CC on March 12th and 13th

By Joyce Somsak, Trent Court

Please mark your calendars for the annual Bethesda Chevy Chase High School's used book sale which will be held on **Saturday, March 12th and Sunday, March 13th, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** both days.

This is one of the area's largest used book sales, offering thousands of books and DVDs, carefully sorted and categorized for shoppers' convenience. The sale will offer hardbound and softbound books, fiction and non-fiction, children's/teens/ and young adult books, cookbooks and nutrition books, politics and history books, beautiful coffee table books, and many, many more! Proceeds from the sale support BCC students in their academic and community activities.



Council Meeting Actions

The Town Council met in regular session on February 1, 2016. The Town Council took the following actions:

1. Approval of the December 7, 2015 Council Meeting Minutes.
2. Approval of the Mayor's nomination of Jennifer Marron to serve on the Town Parks and Natural Resources Committee for a term ending 12/31/18.
3. Approval of the Mayor's nomination of Carrie Wofford to serve on the Town Tennis Committee for a term ending 12/31/16.
4. Approval of the Mayor's nomination of Robin Orseck to serve on the Board of Supervisor of Elections for a term ending 12/31/18.
5. Approval to re-appoint Dr. Alexis Carmer to serve as the Pool Committee Chairwoman for calendar year 2016.
6. Approval to move the July regular Council Meeting date to July 5, 2016.
7. Approval to move the September regular Council Meeting date to September 6, 2016.
8. Approval to move the October regular Council Meeting date to October 4, 2016.
9. Approval of a final pool contract with Community Pools for the 2016 pool season.
10. Approval of a \$10,000 one-time grant to the Somerset Foundation for the Somerset Field Campaign.
11. Mayor Slavin presented his monthly report. Town Manager Charnovich presented the January Financial Report. Ed Mulheron, from Mulheron Tree Experts, was in attendance at the meeting to provide a winter season update including discussion of the efforts during the January 22, 2016 significant snow storm. O'Brien and Gere, consultant for WSSC, was in attendance to provide an update on alternatives for the proposed sewer rehabilitation project proposed on Town Parkland. Various Town residents commented on the proposed options. A copy of their written report can be located on the Town website. Council Member Condos, Council Member Peale and Town Manager Charnovich provided an update on the Town Code and Charter project with our consultant, General Code.

General Permits



Tree Removal Permits

5806 Warwick Place, 1 Ornamental Pear
5405 Surrey Street, 1 Pin Oak and 1 Holly



By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin

While I hope that the snow season has now passed, I want to publicly thank our snow removal contractor Ed Mulheron for his company's incredible efforts during the snowzilla last month and its aftermaths. Having personally received a multitude of compliments, I think Somerset was the envy of everyone in Metro DC! As a reminder, during snowstorms, when you have specific problems or concerns, you are welcome to call/text me on **202-549-2299** 24 hours a day. Since I can't be all over town during the snows it is extremely helpful to have eyes and ears in every neighborhood. Additionally, when we have snow, please remember that all are still required to pick up dog poop from their animals. It seems that there are more violators of this County and Town law when there is snow on the ground.

On another matter, please understand that the Somerset listserv is private and independent (although "endorsed" by the Town government), and thereby provides an opportunity for residents to endorse commercial ventures and make political statements. However, I do want to urge everyone again that **when you have specific questions about service or policy** PLEASE contact the Town Manager at manager@townofsomerset.com, the Council at council@townofsomerset.com or me at mayor@townofsomerset.com. Failure to do so can create unnecessary delays in response!

Earlier this month, I was in Annapolis attending the yearly Maryland Mayors Association meeting on the Town's behalf. Among the highlights were a legislative briefing from the Maryland Municipal League (MML) staff, a presentation from the Governor's office, and a workshop featuring two State Cabinet secretaries. This conference is always a great opportunity to learn about new ideas and practices from my fellow mayors. I am honored to continue as the elected Treasurer of this group.

Several weeks ago, I appeared before the County Council to read the Town Council's outstanding testimony on the proposed new Westbard Sector Plan, an issue I know is being followed by many residents. A copy of the plan is available at the Town Hall and it is not too late to convey your individual opinions to the County Council.

Please know that when a loved one passes on, the Council, Staff and I are ready to be of assistance to your household or family. Among other things, we can help publicize memorial services, contact neighbors, and provide space in the Town Journal for obituaries. We are sorry when you have a loss, and we can assist in lessening burdens wherever possible.

Earlier this month, I had the privilege of attending, along with about twenty other elected and appointed officials from across the State, a second all-day class on the important issue of transparency in government, sponsored by the MML and the University of Maryland. I learned a lot of the subtleties of this relevant topic and I am pleased to report that Somerset is far ahead of other municipalities in ensuring that we have an extremely open government and share as much information as possible.

In last month's Town Journal I wrote about the recent loss of one of my father figures, retired NBC Sportscaster Jim Simpson. What I failed to mention was that "Senor" Simpson was also a member of the Somerset "Alumni Association," as he and his late wife, Sara, wife and five children lived on Greystone Street for a number of years in the 1960's and he was even a former Somerset Elementary School parent.

Editor's Note:

Due to a lack of "local" news this month, the *All About People* column does not appear in this month's Journal. Please be sure to email Alan Dock at alandock@hotmail.com with your news for inclusion in next month's Journal.



Snowscape January 2016



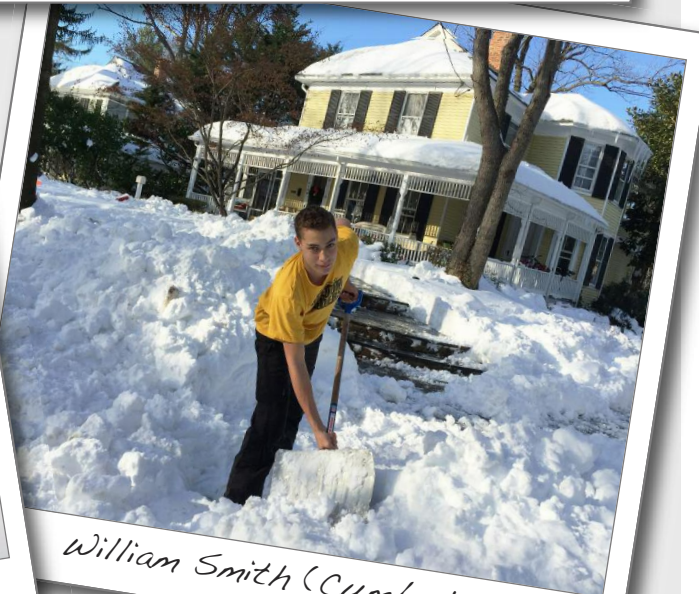
Gabriel Regan (Surrey)



Snow, Snow go away . . .



A Backyard Winter Wonderland



William Smith (Cumberland)

(Photos are in color in the online Journal)

Preliminary Agenda

Regular Somerset Town Council Meeting

Somerset Town Hall, Monday, March 7, 2016–7:30 p.m.

The Somerset Town Council will meet in regular session on Monday, March 7, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at the Somerset Town Hall. Agenda updates are posted on the Town website: www.townofsomerset.com

Council Work Session – 7:00 p.m.

Council Meeting Convenes – 7:30 p.m.

Comments: Public Comment Period – 7:30 p.m.*

CONSENT

1. **Motion:** To consider approval of the January 4, 2016 Council Meeting Minutes.
2. **Motion:** To consider approval of the February 1, 2016 Council Meeting Minutes.
3. **Motion:** To consider approval of the spring bulk refuse collection date of May 2, 2016.
4. **Motion:** To consider approval of a 2016 Arbor Day Proclamation.

NON-CONSENT

1. **Public Hearing:** The Board of Supervisors of Elections will receive nominations for 1 Mayor and 2 Council positions for 2-year terms. The election will be on April 5, 2016 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. – 7:35 p.m.
2. **Introduction:** Douglas E. Lohmeyer, P.E., Plan Reviewer, and Wayne C. Fowler, Code Enforcement Officer – 7:40 p.m.
3. **Discussion:** Town Manager's February Financial Report – 7:45 p.m.
4. **Discussion:** Somerset Dolphins 2016 Swim Team budget – 7:50 p.m.
5. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To approve the deferral of the Mayor's 5 Year budget plan to April 4, 2016 to be presented along with the FY'17 Budget – 7:55 p.m.
6. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval of a building permit application submitted by Shelton and Rory Zuckerman, 4911 Dorset Avenue to enclose the porch in the right side yard – 8:00 p.m.
7. **Public Hearing:** To discuss a permit request submitted by the WSSC to complete a pipe rehabilitation project in Town parkland adjacent to Wisconsin Avenue – 8:05 p.m.
8. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval of a final contract with Bishop Tennis to complete tennis court resurfacing commencing in May of 2016 – 8:40 p.m.
9. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider bid received from Next Day Blinds to install blinds in the Town Council meeting room – 9:00 p.m.



Council Members: Barbara Zeughauser, Franny Peale, Dudley Fowlkes, Marnie Shaul, Barbara Condos

continued on page 11

Preliminary Agenda from page 10

10. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval adoption of a Resolution adopting the amended and restated ICMA-RC Governmental Money Purchase Plan & Trust Document – 9:05 p.m.
11. **Discussion:** General Code Update – 9:10 p.m.
12. **Discussion:** Mayor's Report – 9:15 p.m.
13. **Adjourn:** – 9:20 p.m.

Key

Public Hearing Item: Agenda item where public comment is permitted.

Discussion Item: Agenda item limited to discussion among the Council, Mayor and Town Staff.

Motion Item: Agenda item requesting action, limited to Council discussion.

Comments: Opinions and Questions from Town residents.

* Residents who wish to be present for a particular Agenda item are advised to arrive 20 minutes ahead of the item's scheduled discussion time since discussions sometimes run ahead of schedule.

This is a preliminary Agenda prepared to meet the Journal press deadline, which typically is two to three weeks prior to the next Town Council meeting. During this period, there will likely be changes to the timing of items, and some items may be added or deleted. Please contact Rich Charnovich at Town Hall if you are interested in what has been added, or consult the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch or the Town website/email blasts for the most up-to-date Agenda.