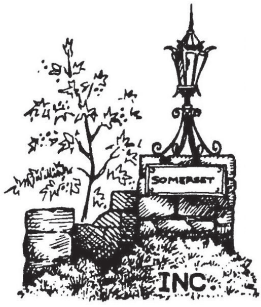


"Where People and Trees Have Deep Roots and Grow Strong"



Somerset TOWN JOURNAL



Volume 65 • No. 1

January 2020

Thank you

Thank you, residents,
for your kind and generous
donations to the holiday
fund this year!

FROM THE TOWN STAFF

Linda Williams, Enrique Cabrera,
Tomas Villanueva, Jose Castillo,
Tolbert Feather, David Cohen,
Merry Livingston, Steve Cheoung,
John Olcott

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ON MY MIND

Onward to a Greener 2020

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin, *Warwick Place*

Our municipality was founded by a group of scientists almost 114 years ago, and there is no doubt in my mind that today's residents are overwhelmingly convinced of the fact that climate change is real and poses a clear and present danger to our planet. Our quality of life is being threatened every day. It's a shame that our national leadership is constantly promoting policies, regulations, and laws that deny or even seek to repudiate these facts.

As the New Year approaches, I have been pondering all the things I want to do—and encourage others to do—so we can leave a better Earth for our children, grandchildren, and heirs. One of these things is to take a Green Pledge, in which I agree to take actions to protect the environment. (For an example of a Green Pledge, see <https://www.nyu.edu/life/sustainability/get-involved/green-grad-pledge.html>)

Here are some examples of what I'm doing to implement this pledge. Since air pollution is so destructive, I decided it was time to buy an electric car! The technology has improved a great deal and the advantages over gas-powered vehicles have increased. I also wanted to purchase something made in Detroit by union laborers. It turned out to be an easy choice because the rebate was almost \$10,000 and the tax credits close to \$2,000. I also saved money on putting a power station at my house.

Other things I am planning to do are to turn lights off more often, use less water, ride my bike more, and re-purpose and recycle food, clothes and belongings. I would also like to get an energy analysis of my house. All these little things do add up.

Furthermore, I will urge the Council to pass greener laws in Somerset, such as encouraging the use of electric equipment and installing LED lights. We also must do everything we can to show people that going green also creates jobs.

I hope that Somerset residents of all ages take a Green Pledge.

A happy and successful 2020 to all.

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New Recommendation from the Town Pool Committee Concerning Young Residents and Their Guests

By Matthew Zaft, Chair, Pool Committee, Dorset Avenue

The Pool Committee will be introducing a recommendation at the January 6, 2020 Town Council meeting to amend the Pool Rules regarding the minimum age at which a young unsupervised resident may bring a guest to the pool **and** the age of the guest. The recommendation of the Pool Committee follows. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please contact me.

Recommendation that the Town Council amend the Pool Rules to set the minimum age to bring a guest unsupervised be 11 years old and that said guest(s) also be a minimum of 11 years old.

At several meetings, the Pool Committee has addressed the subject of there not being a minimum age at which a young Town resident is able to bring a guest unsupervised. Currently, a child who has reached the age of 8 is both allowed to be at the pool unsupervised and to bring up to 20 guests, also unsupervised. These guests can be as young as 8 years old themselves.

We feel a minimum age needs to be set for both **bringing a guest** and **being a guest** without adult supervision. We debated what said age "should" be at various meetings and conferred with Town Attorney Ron Bolt (who said we are not bound by Montgomery County or MD rules on this). Additionally, Committee member **Debbie Heller**



(Falstone) surveyed other area pools to see what their policies are. Those findings are provided for your review in the appendix on the next page.

The Committee voted unanimously at our last meeting to recommend that the Council change the Pool Rules to state that a resident must be at least 11 years old in order to bring a guest unsupervised and that said guest(s) must also be at least 11 years old. Nannies, caregivers, babysitters, au pairs, etc. would be excluded from this per the prior rules regarding their status as "exempted" guests. Also, this would have no effect on the age at which a resident may go to the pool unsupervised, which would stay as 8 years old.

Continued on page 4

JANUARY CALENDAR

MONDAY, JANUARY 6

Town Council Meeting
Town Hall at 7:30 p.m.

MONDAY, JANUARY 20

MVA Mobile Office 10:00
a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Friendship Heights

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11

Last Drop-Off Day for B-CC
Used Book Sale
B-CC High School Main Entrance

New Recommendation from the Town Pool Committee Concerning Young Residents and Their Guests

Appendix

WILDWOOD POOL, BETHESDA, MD (<https://wildwoodpool.com/pool-info/pool-rules-regulations>)

- Children under age 10 must be continuously accompanied by an adult or responsible youth of at least 16 years of age, especially while swimming in the pool.
- Children under 12 will not be permitted to enter or remain at the pool after 6:00 pm unless accompanied by a responsible adult.
- Guests will be admitted when accompanied by an active member upon presentation of a guest pass. Guest fees are \$5 per person. A Guest is limited to 7 visits per summer.
- Members under the age of 16 may only bring 2 guests at a time.

SPRING RIDGE POOL, FREDERICK, MD (springridgeonline.com/community-pool-rules)

- No children under the age of fourteen (14) are allowed in the pool area without being accompanied by a member over the age of sixteen (16) with a valid pool I.D. OR a guest(s) over the age of sixteen (16), except children thirteen (13) years of age that have a signed parental consent form on file at the Management Office. Children thirteen (13) of age with a parental consent form will be issued a special pool pass or a special marking will be made on their regular pass. This privilege will be revoked should the child be suspended from the pool OR it is found that the contact information provided is not correct. Children age thirteen (13) or younger can only bring guests age sixteen (16) or older.
- Children ages fourteen (14) and fifteen (15) can bring one (1) guest their same age or can bring guests age sixteen (16) or older.

FOUNTAIN SPRING SWIM CLUB, BEL AIR, MD (<https://fountaingreenswimclub.org/pool-rules-and-policies>)

- Members 12 years of age and younger are allowed to be accompanied at the pool with a guest that is at least 16 years old.
- Members that are 13 years old and older are allowed to bring guests that are 13 years of age and older.
- Guest must be accompanied by a member. Guests are not allowed at the facility if the member is not present.
- The member is responsible for the conduct of their guests and will be held responsible for the guest's actions.
- All guests are required to use a guest pass and follow the pool rules and policies.

LAKE LINGANORE POOL, NEW MARKET, MD (https://www.lakelinganore.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Pool_RulesRegs_2017.pdf)

- Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by a parent or responsible person 16 years old or older. In addition, children under 7 years old must be accompanied by a parent or responsible person, in a swim suit at all times including in the water, on the deck, and in the restroom. While in the water, the parent or responsible person must remain within arms reach of the child. Any child who cannot swim the length of the pool or requires a flotation device (acceptable list follows) must be under close and constant supervision by parent or responsible person in order to assure the child's safety.

NORTHWOOD SWIM CLUB, HAGERSTOWN, MD (<http://www.northwoodpool.com/members/club-rules>)

- All guests must be registered at the front desk. The member registering the guest(s) must remain on the Club premises with his/her guest(s) as long as the guest(s) stay(s). The adult member shall be responsible for the guest(s) and his/her behavior. A Guest Form must be filled out to track guests to a member's membership (this includes ALL parties as well).

- **Minors under age 13 by December 1 of the current year may not register guests without the express written permission of an adult member of the same membership, which written permission shall be retained by the Club.**

LITTLE FALLS, BETHESDA, MD (<https://littlefallsswimmingclub.com/about/rules-and-regulations>)

- **Children ages 7 – 9 must be supervised by someone age 14 or older who must accompany and remain with the child at all times, unless:**
- The parent or guardian has completed the Unattended Children form; and
- The child has passed the 2019 tadpole test administered by a Club lifeguard.
- Children over the age of 10 who have passed the 2019 tadpole test may come to the pool without supervision.
- All Guests using the pool, regardless of age, may be asked to take a lifeguard-administered swim test before using the pool. If a Guest opts out of the test, s/he may not use the main pool or diving well. The Club may from time to time administer additional swimming proficiency tests to ensure the safety of swimmers.

MERRIMACK, BETHESDA, MD (<https://www.merrimackpool.org/rules-and-regulations>)

- Children 8 and older are allowed to come to the pool unescorted by an adult upon passing a swimming test given by a member of the pool staff.

- Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult for admission to the pool area. The adult must remain during the entire time they are in the pool area. An adult is defined as a person at least 6 years old.
- All guests must be accompanied by and remain with a member once checked in to enter the pool for the day.
- First-time guests are required to read the Pool Rules when they come to the pool. Members are expected to inform guests of the pool rules and regulations and to be responsible for their compliance.

BANNOCKBURN, BETHESDA, MD (<https://bannockburnpool.com/about/bannockburn-swim-club-operating-rules>)

- Children under eight years of age must be accompanied and supervised by a person 16 years of age or older. Unaccompanied children between the ages of eight and 13 will only be admitted to the pool if they have passed the Basic Swimming Test.

MOHICAN, BETHESDA, MD (<https://www.mohicanpool.org/about/pool-rules>)

- Children under 8 years old will be admitted to the pool grounds only when they are accompanied by a responsible person at least 16 years old.
- Children 8 through 12 will be admitted to the pool grounds unaccompanied by a responsible person only after the child has passed the Basic Swim Test.
- Children over 13 years old will be admitted to the pool grounds unaccompanied.



A Commitment to Trees

Somerset is a "Tree City USA," designated by the Arbor Day Foundation, and whether we think about it often, or not at all, our experience of living in Somerset is deeply influenced by our tree-lined streets, our 17 acres of green space and our many beautiful, well-maintained yards and gardens. Tree removal by homeowners has become a contentious issue over the last several years and we believe some of the confusion and angst could be alleviated with a clear new policy related to the requirement for a homeowner to replant when a tree is removed (currently, and perhaps unfortunately, termed "reforestation").

There is more to it than clarifying the existing Town Code. The Town has benefitted from the canopy of trees that beautify, protect, and shade our neighborhood, but in recent years we have experienced an unprecedented loss of trees. There are many reasons – the WSSC stream project, Pepco constraints, construction, an aging tree population, and what we perceive to be an ineffective policy to encourage the replacement of trees. The Parks and Natural Resources Committee (PNRC) has begun to explore changes to the Town Code in which we introduce the expectation of "a tree for a tree." We think that minor change can go a long way to helping reforestation while also stopping annual successive tree removals that sidestep our current rule. It aligns us with other jurisdictions and is simple to understand. Without this encouragement and foresight, we fear that decades from now our Town will look very different. You can already feel the difference between our streets with canopy and those without. Ultimately, we want to preserve our Town as a unique place to live and we believe our collective tree population contributes significantly to that end.

The Committee recognizes that emergency and safety concerns arise from time to time, but we respectfully suggest the following new policy. When a Somerset citizen wishes to remove a tree, for that permit to be granted, he or she will provide a plan for that tree's replacement.

If the homeowner does not provide a plan to replace a tree that is removed (within a reasonable timeframe) with his or her request for any tree removal, he or she will need to request a waiver or exception from the Town Council.

We understand we cannot imagine every eventuality and we believe there will be, on occasion, valid reasons not to replace a tree, so the waiver process should allow for those discussions to happen. To summarize:

- Any construction-related tree removal will continue to require Council approval. This is the current policy.
- The removal of any tree, even a single tree, will require a replacement/reforestation plan. That would be new policy. Currently a reforestation plan is not required unless removing three or more trees.
- There is a strong preference that a canopy tree replace a canopy tree, but this will not be a requirement. The Council and homeowner will confer with the Town Arborist to choose tree(s) that is/are in keeping with the tree being removed, the current conditions, and the future needs of the property owner (new consideration).
- The definition of a tree remains 4" diameter at chest height (the existing definition).

We welcome your input on this idea and look forward to constructive conversation about this consideration for the new Code.





Somerset Residents Recommend...

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Over the past few months, the Journal has contained a new monthly feature, *Somerset Residents Recommend*. Residents have written about the Newseum, local restaurants, and Glenstone museum. **We are eager to continue this monthly column but we need our readers to contribute articles.**

Please consider sharing information on your favorite places or things to do. Articles should be approximately 300 words long, and photos are always welcome. Contact Journal editors **Barbara Marenus** (bmarenus@gmail.com) or **Mary Wisniewski** (mary.p.wisniewski@gmail.com)

Exploring Glenstone— A Unique Museum Experience

By **Cinzia Furlanetto**, *Dorset Avenue*

Glenstone is an indoor-outdoor museum in Potomac, Maryland where art, architecture and landscape are intertwined in what can be defined as a holistic experience for the visitor. The museum opened in 2006 and in 2018 unveiled extensive new additions. I went to Glenstone this past November with my friend and neighbor, **Robin Orsek** (Dorset). It took us twenty minutes to drive there and as soon as we parked the car and started walking to the first building, we felt as if we were entering a special dimension.

Glenstone's architecture was designed in response to the natural landscape of 230 acres of land in the Potomac River Valley. The landscaping was designed to complement and frame the architecture and artworks. Paths and trails, well indicated on the museum map, take visitors to outdoor sculptures, pavilions and to a cozy restaurant and smaller café.

As we walked on the main path, we were surrounded by beautiful golden perennial meadows. On the left, sitting on a hill, we recognized Jeff Koons's organic sculpture, *Split-Rocker*, made with thousands of living plants and flowers. While approaching the pavilions, we looked down from a banister to discover Michael Heizer's sculpture *Compression Line*. Heizer was one of the pioneers of the



Land Art movement in the 60s. There is a large concave metal structure almost completely underground which seems to be under such pressure from the soil that the two sides touch in one point.

Recalling the towers of the medieval town of San Gimignano in Italy, the pavilions are built around a water court and are placed on the cardinal points in order to let the light fill in different rooms as the sun moves during the day. Made of concrete and glass, they inspire a sense of permanence and the ethereal at the same time.

Continued on page 8

Exploring Glenstone—A Unique Museum Experience



Located inside the pavilions is a collection of post WWII art works that comprises the core of the museum. Among the artists hosted are: Giacometti, Gober, Gorky, Haring, Jasper, Pollock, and Warhol. It is important to give yourself plenty of time to tour the pavilions since there are so many pieces to enjoy. Also, there are fantastic guides ready to listen to your opinions and to provide helpful information.

The Café restaurant has an interesting but limited menu. It is minimalist and cozy at the same time, with large windows facing the woods. We loved the salad and the soup. Just a few steps away, for coffee and a muffin, you can try the Patio restaurant. Sitting there outside in the sun is beautiful

since it overlooks the forest. In both places, gratuities are included and visitors do not need to leave a tip. En route to the Patio, stop and enter Richard Serra's sculpture *Sylvester*. Yes, enter! An expert in manipulating steel in order to produce fluid forms, Serra waterproofed this steel spiral which is 13 feet tall and takes you to the center cutting a piece of blue out the sky just for you.

A few feet away is the Gallery where Glenstone houses its temporary exhibitions. It was designed with the purpose of being a flexible space easily adapted to artists' needs. Also, behind the Gallery, do not miss a wonderful marble sculpture called *Untitled*, by Felix Gonzalez-Torres.

If you still have some energy left, refer to the map and take a look at the other outdoor sculptures. There is also an impressive Environmental Center, a 7,200-square-foot building that embodies the latest thinking in sustainability. The Center is open Thursdays through Sundays from noon to 4 p.m. and is a self-guided experience. Glenstone associates and experts will also offer regular programming for visitors interested in learning more about sustainability practices.

Robin and I did not explore the trails this time, but we agreed to come back soon. When leaving, we felt that we had spent more than three hours in a special state of mind totally immersed in this uniquely serene and contemplative environment.

The museum has announced that it will continue to offer guaranteed entry to visitors who arrive using the Montgomery County Ride-On bus. This initiative was launched as a test in January to encourage visitors to use public transportation and to reduce the museum's carbon footprint. All visitors to Glenstone must be 12 or older and all minors (ages 12–17) must be accompanied by an adult at all times. For additional information, take a look at Glenstone's website at <https://www.glenstone.org>.

Somerset's 2019 Annual Holiday Staff Luncheon

Somerset employees gathered on December 12th for a holiday celebration and received gifts of appreciation from the Town.





Living the Blue Zone Life

In 2004 author Dan Buettner teamed up with *National Geographic* and the world's top longevity researchers to identify pockets around the world where people live measurably longer and better. These pockets were named "Blue Zones." They found areas where people reached the age of 100 at rates 10 times greater than in the U.S. with many living beyond 100. Five Blue Zones were identified: Okinawa, Japan; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Sardinia, Italy; Ikaria, Greece; and Loma Linda, California.

These populations don't share common genetics but their lifestyles do reflect many of the same values. Buettner found the following common denominators:

- physical activity and movement throughout the day
- taking a daily "happy hour" which might include reading or taking a short nap
- living with purpose – know why you get up in the morning
- eating a mostly plant based diet
- portion control when eating
- putting loved ones first
- having a strong faith-based belief system
- curating your social network

In 2019, Dan Buettner published *The Blue Zones Kitchen* featuring a compilation of recipes adapted from the groups he studied. Recently on the "Today Show" Buettner described his visits to a Southwestern Florida community where local volunteers joined small groups and committed to having at least five potluck meals together over 3 months where they cooked from the *Blue Zones Kitchen*. In addition to sharing food, they all benefitted from the shared company and many went on to change their eating habits and to develop new social connections.

Since the mission of the Somerset Wellness Committee is to build community around topics of health and wellness I'd like to suggest those interested join me in starting a Blue Zone group to talk about the book and share our thoughts. I'd also like to plan some potluck meals from this cookbook which I have on order.

Anyone who is interested in brainstorming this and other wellness ideas please let me know. Our first meeting will be in February.



HEALTHY EATING
ACTIVE LIVING
CITIES
CAMPAIGN



All About People

By Eugene Tillman, *Warwick Place*

Greetings to all as we near the end of the holiday season. This will be short column reporting on the arrival of a new family and the significant achievement of a former resident.

Just days before Thanksgiving, **Atsuko Horiguchi** and **Ivar Anderson** moved into their brand new house on Essex along with their two children, **Sophie** (17) and **Nicholas** (15). After residing in AU Park for 18 years, the family took up temporary quarters in Bethesda for 19 months during their home construction. Like others, they were attracted to Somerset's community feel and verdant streets which were reminiscent of the town outside Oslo, Norway where Ivar grew up. The construction project went smoothly and produced an ongoing friendship with the architect and the builder — who are married. Born in Japan, Atsuko spent time growing up there as well as in Brazil and the U.S. She worked at the World Bank for 26 years handling projects

in international finance across the globe. She currently has her own business which provides corporate facilitation and leadership coaching. Ivar grew up in Norway and has worked in development finance at the World Bank since 1990. His group secures funding from governments and oversees the strategies put in place to advance the funders' goals. The family loves a wide range of outdoor activities. They have a boat they sail on the Chesapeake Bay and spend summers in Norway where they kayak, water ski, hike, and cliff jump!

Marisa Bartning was recently named in Fortune's "40 under 40" list of the most influential young people in business. She is the Director of Marketing and led the launch in 2018 of Bubly, a PepsiCo subsidiary in the sparkling water space. Marisa and her parents (**Delores** and **Alex**) lived on Surrey until a few years ago.

Somerset's Helping Hand Is Just an Email or Phone Call Away



If you need a ride, someone to pick up some groceries or a prescription, a ride to the Metro, or even if you just want to get to a friend's house, please contact **Somerset Helping Hand**. We have a list of 30 Somerset volunteers who can help.

Send an email to HHSomerset@gmail.com or call **Barbara Zeughauser** at 301-951-8560, **Kathleen Kenyon** at 301-656-8581 or **Jim Berry** at 301-656-6089.

If you would like to add your name to the volunteer list, please send an email to HHSomerset@gmail.com.

From the Mayor's Desk

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin



I want to thank the many residents who gave generously to the Town's Holiday Fund to benefit our hard-working Town employees, donated to the Toys for Tots drive so that underprivileged children could share in our good fortunes, and contributed to the food drive so that the less fortunate among us would have something to eat during the winter cold. I hope that many of you will continue to engage with Manna Food Center during the coming year. For more information, go to www.mannafood.org.

Each December, I ask residents whether our U.S. mail service has been satisfactory for the last twelve months—especially since in the recent past we have received a number of complaints, and requested and received Congressional help. Accordingly, I would like to encourage anyone with a concern about the mail service to write to me or the Town Manager so that we can bring any issues to the attention of our Congressman, Jamie Raskin, and his expert staff. Service will only improve if we know about problems.

Earlier this month, **Council President Marnie Shaul** (Uppingham), **Council Member Barbara Zeughauser** (Trent), several staff, a few active Town residents, and I attended the annual Committee for Montgomery breakfast at the Conference Center on the Rockville Pike. The Committee is a unique organization that represents and lobbies for our County's interests in Annapolis, particularly in the areas of transportation and education funding. It is comprised of a coalition of folks from the private sector, business, labor, nonprofits, civic associations and local elected officials. Our Somerset group had a table and we "met and greeted" with many people we will be working with in the upcoming session in Annapolis. Check out the Committee's website at www.committeeformontgomery.org.



Manager's Corner

By Matt Trollinger, *Town Manager*

Another year in the books! Auld Lang Syne choruses are in the air, and New Year's resolutions are fresh on people's minds. For the Town, the new year means a couple of things as well. The first is that it is **tax season**:

Filling out 502 Tax Form

Revenues received through our residents' paid income taxes are a main source of Town revenues. The Town needs your help to ensure that all income tax revenue due to the Town arrives here. In order for the state of Maryland to return this revenue, your political subdivision needs to be entered on Maryland Form 502.

Maryland Form 502 now requests a 4-digit Political Subdivision Code as well as the Maryland Political Subdivision. **The 4-digit Code for the Town of Somerset is 1610.** If filing electronically, there is a character limit, therefore, you may have to enter simply «Somerset» for Maryland Political Subdivision.

City or Town _____ State _____ ZIP Code +4 _____

REQUIRED: Maryland Physical address as of December 31, 2018 or last day of the taxable year for fiscal year taxpayers. See Instruction 6. Part-year residents see Instruction 26.

1610 4 Digit Political Subdivision Code (See Instruction 6)

Town of Somerset Maryland Political Subdivision (See Instruction 6)

Your Address Here

Maryland Physical Address Line 1 (Street No. and Street Name) (No PO Box)

Maryland Physical Address Line 2 (Apt No., Suite No., Floor No.) (No PO Box)

Chevy Chase MD 20815-5165 Montgomery County

City State ZIP Code +4 Maryland County

1. ☐ Single (If you can be claimed on another person's tax return) 4. ☐ Head of household

Upcoming Budget Discussions

The new calendar year also means we will soon enter budget season – the Town has a fiscal year of July–June, so January marks the halfway point in the Town's fiscal year. We now start to have a better idea of what revenues and expenses will look like, and we start to plan for the next budget year. Remember that residents have a stake in the Town government. I think I can speak for not just myself and the Town staff, but also the Mayor and Council when I say that resident input and feedback are vitally important to the process of setting priorities for the Town government. The government represents your taxpayer dollars at work, and we all want to ensure that it is serving you well.

Snow Management

Finally, being in the heart of winter, the new year is also when snow removal services become a Town focus. We are fortunate to have Mulheron Tree Experts providing our

plowing, shoveling, and street treatment services again this year; although this will be my first time working with them in this capacity, I know that they have a very strong reputation, and are experienced in keeping the Town safe during the winter season.

Aside from the streets, several residents have inquired about the **bridge near the Town pool**, with concerns about **water pooling** and the **bridge getting slick**. I urge everyone to please be careful when crossing the bridge — the bridge can be quite slick on the wood surface. You may notice in other areas signs at bridges that say, "Caution: bridge freezes before road." The same principle applies here. Take small steps, walk slowly, and watch where you're going.

The Town is taking some steps to help mitigate the issue. First, we have placed sand bins at the bridge to be able to spread sand at areas where ice may form. Second, we have contracted with Mulheron Tree Experts to paint a walkway on the bridge. Mixed in the paint will be Skid Tex, a non-slip grainy additive for paint. This is not meant to solve the problem, but is a first step to at least reduce the slipperiness. We understand, however, that this does not solve the issue of water pooling.

On that front, we have been in contact with County bridge inspectors and the bridge installers to investigate the best ways of handling the pooling. We are getting a proposal to raise the ground-level railing beams an inch or so to allow pooling water to slide off the edges of the pool. Other, more comprehensive solutions may also be pursued.

We are not pursuing drilling holes in the bridge again. I understand that this helped drain water in the past, however, that has been highly discouraged by all engineers we have spoken to because of the damage it does to the bridge, and the negative impacts it may have on the structural integrity of the bridge and its lifespan.

Personal Musings

As of this writing, I am getting ready to head to sunny Southern California for a holiday trip. My girlfriend's family always has a party celebrating their Mexican heritage right around the holiday season in which everyone gathers together to reconnect, exchange gifts, and make homemade tamales. The party is aptly named "*Tamales*"

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Manager's Corner

and it is a blast! Four generations all celebrate together, and it is a great tradition with the oldest generation passing on family recipes, babies running around, and adult cousins, aunts, and uncles eating, drinking, and enjoying general merriment. Normally the party is the weekend before, the weekend before Christmas – last year, for example, it was December 15. But the way the calendar worked out this year it is the Saturday right before Christmas, so we will be staying through the holiday. So, while I won't get a white Christmas this year, I'll have plenty of salted rims and margaritas on the rocks to try and make up for it!

Another thing I am excited for is the new *Star Wars* movie, which comes out December 20. I grew up as a big *Star Wars* "nerd," and watched the old VCR tapes frequently as a kid. I was beyond excited when the "prequel" trilogy first came out, and though I was slightly disappointed with them at the time, I have come to appreciate them more,

the older I get. And though some people take issue with the sequels so far, I have found them to be very enjoyable: funny, action-packed, with a good amount of nostalgia and homage to the older movies, and yet still new and exciting. The *Star Wars* theme and the opening crawl always bring a smile to my face.

I wanted to also take this opportunity to thank everyone who was able to contribute to the Town's holiday fund – as I mentioned in the Friday announcements on 12/14, I did not personally take part, but I know that the contributions were very much appreciated by Linda, the maintenance staff, and the police officers, and is well-deserved for all their hard work.

One last note: I hope everyone has/had a wonderful holiday season, and wish you all a happy, healthy New Year. Onwards and upwards in 2020!



Council Meeting Actions

The own Council met in regular session on December 2, 2019, and took the following actions:

1. Approved minutes from Council meeting held on November 4, 2019.
2. Approved Tennis Rules amendments, as recommended by Tennis Committee.
3. Approved Resolution 19-12-01 to Approve Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Debris Management.
4. Approved Resolution 19-12-02 to Approve Investment Policy for the Town of Somerset.
5. Approved payments to Balodemas Architects for Town Hall Renovation Project Management in the amount of \$6,360; and change order #23 in the amount of \$2,214.50 for shelving units.
6. Approved amendment to FY2020 Budget by reallocating \$40,000 from line item 77000 – Wynne Case to line items 67105 – Town Hall Renovation/Improvement and 67105-1 – Project Manager.
7. Denied amendment to existing building permit at 4709 Dorset Ave. to include fence on property.
8. Approved removal of two Town trees, located at 4608 Dorset Ave. and 5816 Surrey St., respectively, as recommended by Town Arborist.
9. Approved fee schedule as presented at 11/4/2019 Council meeting, and in December Somerset Journal.

GENERAL PERMITS

- Tree Removal at 4809 Grantham Avenue
- Fence construction at 5701 Warwick Place
- Fence construction at 5510 Greystone Street
- Water Connection at 4712 Essex Avenue

CLASSIFIED ADS

BOZEMAN, MONTANA: Awesome Every Season! Ski Big Sky & the Bridgers! Fly fishing. Trail rides. White-water rafting. Hiking/ biking everywhere. Enjoy our 4-bedroom home on 20 acres with spectacular 360-degree vistas. Four-night minimum stay. Just four miles to downtown Bozeman. Contact **Birdie Pieczenik** at SRPVacationHomes@gmail.com or 301-652-1207.

PARIS, FRANCE: Picturesque Day and Nite! And more affordable than ever! Enjoy our one-bedroom apartment in the 2nd arrondissement — the heart of historic Paris. Walk to the Louvre, the Pompidou Center, the Seine and two Metro stops. Four-night minimum stay. Contact **Birdie Pieczenik** at SRPVacationHomes@gmail.com or 301-652-1207.

LIFESTYLE AND WELLNESS COACHING: Would you like to get unstuck and upgrade your lifestyle and wellness habits? Small changes can make a lasting difference. If you are curious to see if coaching is right for you contact Certified Wellness Coach **Diane Horn** RDH CHHC at 301-654-0310 or diane.b.horn@gmail.com.

Ads are printed as a courtesy to Town residents. The Town makes no representations as to quality, safety or otherwise regarding the goods and services advertised. Readers should make their own inquiries. To place an ad, submit typed or neatly printed copy to the Clerk-Treasurer. Ads must include a Somerset phone number. Price: \$5 per advertisement per issue. Check or exact change. Fifty word limit per advertisement.

Preliminary Agenda

Regular Somerset Town Council Meeting

Somerset Town Hall, January 6, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

The Somerset Town Council will meet in regular session on January 6, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. at the Somerset Town Hall. Agenda updates are posted on the Town website: www.townofsomerset.com.

- **Municipal Orientation** – 6:00 p.m.
- **Council Work Session**–7:00 p.m.
- **Council Meeting Convenes**–7:30 p.m.
- **Comments: Public Comment Period**–7:30 p.m.*



Council Members (l to r): Morris Panner, Marnie Shaul, Franny Peale, Barbara Zeughauser, Stephen Surko

CONSENT

1. **Motion:** To approve minutes from Council meeting held on November 4, 2019.

NON-CONSENT

2. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To Discuss Town Hall construction project, and consider approval of change order in the amount of \$345 to move the meeting room alarm strobe; furniture order in the amount of \$19,086.69; and installation of meeting room lighting design not to exceed \$21,000 – 7:36 p.m.
3. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval of Pool Management Contract (firm selection to be determined – staff is reviewing bids at time of publication) – 7:50 p.m.
4. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider reformatting of pool rules and amendment raising the age required to bring a guest from 8 years old to 11, as recommended by the Town Pool Committee – 8:00 p.m.
5. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider demolition and new home construction permit application submitted by Megan Spellacy at 5508 Uppingham Street – 8:15 p.m.
6. **Discussion:** To consider dates for 2020 Town calendar of events – 9:00 p.m.
7. **Discussion:** Building Administrator Report – 9:15 p.m.
8. **Discussion:** Town Manager August Administrative and Fiscal Reports – 9:25 p.m.
9. **Discussion:** Mayor's Report – 9:35 p.m.
10. **Adjourn:** 9:40 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 Matt Trollinger 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 blast for the most up-to-date Agenda.

The Mayor and Town Council may entertain a motion during the open meeting to close a portion of the meeting, in accordance with Section 3-305(b)(1)(7) of the Open Meetings Act (Maryland Code, General Provisions Article), to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

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.