

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



Somerset TOWN JOURNAL



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June 2023



News Splash: 2023 Somerset Pool Olympics Coming in June

By Russell Green, Member, Pool Committee,
Cumberland Avenue

[Cue the fanfare! Pan across the Somerset Pool entrance!
Cut to the Goodyear Blimp camera over the pool!]

The 2023 Summer Olympics is coming to Somerset on Sunday, June 25, 2:00-5:00 p.m. After much negotiation and very little bribery, Somerset's very own pool was selected from among an international set of aquatic centers to host this major event. The key to clinching this honor was that the Somerset "Olympic Committee" offered to staff the entire event, including providing its own Olympians! And the real Olympics offered to have nothing to do with it.

With events for all ages to compete or participate, the entire Town is invited to become an Olympian on June 25. The Somerset Pool Olympics will have all kinds of races, games for younger kids, diving (yes, a belly flop contest!), synchronized swimming, an obstacle course, and a bouncy castle, among many other elements. There will be judges and prizes and music, even a comedic emcee. Residents who are not typically competitive swimmers are particularly encouraged to join, as there will be an event for almost everyone.

This will require a good amount of help to pull off (comparable to a swim meet, but without the experienced

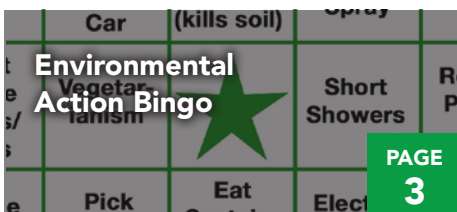
leadership or well-oiled organization) so please stay tuned to the Town Announcements for requests to volunteer. There will also be signups for the different events to help gauge interest and plan the afternoon. Finally, television broadcasting rights are also still available; bids accepted at Town Hall.

After the Olympics, the pool will be open late—one of the beloved "Late Night Swims" of the summer—and we expect to have a food truck (more details to follow), so Somerset Olympians can stay on to celebrate their Olympic glory.

Tentative Schedule of Events

TIME	EVENT	TARGET GROUP
2:00-2:45pm	Synchronized Swimming	Everybody
	Cannonball Contest	Everybody
	Obstacle Course	Under 10
	Tread Contest	Everybody
	Baby Bounce	Parents & little ones
2:45-4:15pm	Races and Relays	Everybody
4:15-5:00pm	Ping Pong Ball Grab	Under 10
	Duck Push	Little ones
	Diving/flipping events	Everybody
	Coin Drop	Under 9
	Belly Flop Contest	Everybody

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JUNE 2023

TOWN CALENDAR

MONDAY, JUNE 5

Town Council Meeting
7:00 p.m., Town Hall (in person)
and via Zoom^{o*}

MONDAY, JUNE 12

Pool Committee Meeting
7:30 p.m., via Zoom

SATURDAY, JUNE 17

Extended Pool Hours
begin

Pool opens at 10:00 a.m.
through August 27

MONDAY, JUNE 19

Town Hall Closed in
observance of Juneteenth
holiday

TUESDAY, JUNE 20

Town Council Work Session
5:30 p.m., Town Hall (in person)
and via Zoom^{o*}

^oThe Town Council has instituted "hybrid" meetings starting in September 2022, to allow residents to attend both in-person at the Town Hall, or to continue to participate via Zoom.

*Login information for Zoom meetings will be sent via email the week prior to the meeting. Residents may also email **town@townofsomerset.com** for login and dial-in information.

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Monday thru Friday
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TTY users call Maryland Relay

SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL

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

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

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

POST OFFICE ADDRESS:

4510 Cumberland Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

www.townofsomerset.com

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 301-717-8083 (2/23)

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 301-717-8083 (2/23)

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.



Environmental Action Bingo

This month we are playing BINGO together! Below is the BINGO board for you to review and consider which of the 24 environmental actions you have completed or are about to complete in the near future.

If your household has completed a vertical column, a horizontal row, or a diagonal through the STAR, then YOU HAVE BINGO! It is also possible to complete BINGO in multiple ways – for example, by completing both a diagonal and a vertical row.

Winners are in Two Categories:

1. Most BINGOs (most rows, columns, diagonals completed) – the top 10 finishers will each be awarded a jar of Somerset Honey (bees are to be installed this month in our Town apiary, so it will take approx. 9 months for delivery!)
2. Most Environmental Actions (most boxes completed) – the top 10 finishers with the most actions (from 1 to 24 maximum) will also receive a free jar of Somerset Honey.

Good Luck! And please send your results (Your name, address, and both the number of BINGOs completed and the number of Environmental Actions) to

[tos.environmentcommittee@](mailto:tos.environmentcommittee@gmail.com)

[gmail.com](mailto:tos.environmentcommittee@gmail.com). We will announce the

winner in one month's time (see an upcoming issue of the *Town Journal*).

Environmental Action B I N G O				
LED Lights in House	Mow Every Two Weeks	Vegetable Garden	Bike and Public Transport	Solar Panels/ Renewable Energy
Compost	Electric or Hybrid Car	Don't Blow Grass (kills soil)	No Mosquito Spray	Cloth Napkins
Plant Native Plants/ Trees	Vegetarianism	★	Short Showers	Reduce Plastic Use
In-Line Water Heater	Pick Up Litter	Eat Sustainable Fish (Cod)	Electric Induction Stove	Climate Strike/ Action
Support Local Farms	Environmt Justice Action	Charity to Environmt Orgs	No Salt on Sidewalks (sand ok)	Heat Pumps

Pool Update



Pool News: By the time you read this, we will be swimming!

By Matthew Zaft, Chair, Pool Committee, Dorset Avenue

A very HUGE thank you to **Town Manager Matt Trollinger**, **Town Administrative Assistant Linda Williams**, and the American Pools staff for the incredible job they did getting the pool open! Here are things to know:

- The Pool isn't just for swimming! In an effort to make the Pool even more fun for everyone, not just those who want to swim, there are many dryland games/activities at the Pool this summer. Most people know about the ping pong table, but we also have a corn hole set, several chess and checkers sets (kept in the guard room, just ask), and, new this year, giant Jenga and giant Connect 4! Thank you to **Joey Wender** (Warwick) for the ideas and researching the best ones to get!
- Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 10 for the second installment of our new annual tradition: the *Somerset Parents, Alumni, Fans, and Coaches Swim Off!* The event will take place at 11:30 a.m., and all are welcome whether to swim or cheer. Look out for a sign-up genius and please encourage former residents to come back and join us!
- *Town Olympics* are coming! Also mark your calendars now for Sunday, June 25 for the first installment of what will hopefully be another annual tradition: the *Somerset Olympics*! Stay tuned for more information from our amazingly dedicated Somerset "Olympic Committee" (SOC) Chairs **Walt Whalen** (Trent) and **Russell Green** (Cumberland) who are putting an immense amount of time, effort, and thought into the event.
- Pool Hours:
 - When Montgomery County Schools are in session:
 - Monday – Thursday: 1:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 - Friday: 1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
 - Saturday: 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
 - Sunday: 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 - When Montgomery County Schools are not in session: 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. every day
- We will have three Late Night Swims this year, when the Pool will stay open an extra hour until 10:00 p.m.! The dates are: Sunday, June 25, Saturday, July 8, and Saturday, August 25.
- Food Trucks, Food Trucks, and more Food Trucks!!! Thank you to **Josh Rosenthal** (River) for arranging the following schedule of food trucks coming to the Pool this summer:
 - Wednesday, June 14 (Dolphins' Home B Meet): **Astro Doughnuts and Fried Chicken** @ 5:00 p.m.
 - Wednesday, July 5 (Dolphins' Home B Meet): **Timber Pizza** @ 5:00 p.m.
 - Saturday, July 8 (Late Night Swim): **Halal Grill** @ 5:00 p.m.
 - Wednesday, July 19 (Dolphins' Home B Meet): **ROCKLANDS Barbeque** @ 5:00 p.m.
 - Saturday, August 26 (Late Night Swim): **Pepe** @ 5:00 p.m.
- Thank you (yes, I am a broken record) to **Jake** and **Max Adamovich** (Uppingham) and **Janet McGhee** (Surrey) who have volunteered to pick up items that have outstayed their welcome in the Pool's lost and found. Continuing a tradition set by **Barbara Condos** (Falstone) and **Barbara Zeughauser** (Trent), they will be donating unclaimed items to local shelters.
- Morning (Early Bird Swim) sign-ups were a giant success! We had 32 people sign up for Early Bird Swim this summer, a record. Thank you again to Matt Trollinger for making the process seamless!
- As a reminder, all residents and guests need to ensure they are informed of and agree to abide by all aspects of the pool rules. The rules are available on the Town's website. Additionally, it is the responsibility of residents (and their guests) to clean the grills and grill area after usage. Grills must be off and cleaned 15 minutes prior to closing.
- Please also see my article from the March *Town Journal* (<https://bit.ly/435k8EW>) for important information about Lap Lanes and dates the pool closes early/opens late. [Editor's note: This URL may change when Somerset changes to its new website in June]
- Finally, for now, have I mentioned no glass, no glass, no glass!!!

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.



Stroke & Technique Program (hopefully) Free to All at the Pool!

By Matthew Zaft, Chair, Pool Committee, Dorset Avenue

New this year, once Montgomery County Schools are out of session, we will be offering Stroke and Technique swim classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **HOPEFULLY FREE OF CHARGE** (the Pool Committee unanimously voted to allocate some funds from their previously approved/allotted summer programming budget to cover the cost so this program could be free to all this summer as we gauge demand. At their May meeting, the Town Council voted to approve this and formerly voted to allocate the funds from the Pool Committee's budget to cover the cost. However, the item has been placed again on the June Council meeting agenda and the Council, in opposition to the strong, unanimous recommendation from the Pool Committee, is considering implementing a fee).

This is for all ages (ages 10 and up) and skill levels, but one must have passed the deep-water test (i.e., you must be able to tread water for one minute and swim two consecutive lengths of the pool unassisted and without stopping). This program will provide residents with both instruction and honing of their swim technique as well as a formalized workout from Dolphin's Head Coach Roger Dent. There is no long-term commitment, but residents will need to sign up through MemberSplash.

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

[Editor's note: At a special Council meeting on May 15, the Council passed a \$5.00 fee that will likely be reconsidered at the June Council meeting]

Water Aerobics Class Begins Monday June 5 at 1:30 P.M.

By Lucy Freeman, Falstone Avenue

Water aerobics classes begin Monday, June 5 and will meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, for two weeks at 1:30 p.m. After school gets out on June 16, water aerobics will meet at 10:30 a.m. through Friday, August 25. The last two weeks, ending Friday September 8, water aerobics will meet at 1:30. The classes are 50 minutes long.

This year, the fee will be \$8.00. **All participants must have money in their pool account and register on**

MemberSplash for each session. At the Town Hall, Linda and Matt are happy to help anyone, everyone, with the MemberSplash registration.

Water aerobics is great exercise and lots of fun. This is a drop-in program – just sign up and give it a try!

Please email me at **dorset4708@yahoo.com** or call at 301-654-8115 with any questions.

SAVE THE DATE for the next Somerset Sunday!

Film: Title to be announced,
appropriate for older
teens and adults

Where: Town Hall

When: Sunday,
June 11, 2023, evening

(exact time to be announced)



Sponsored by the Somerset Equity and Inclusion Committee



From Your Town Council

Town Government: Town Council Processes and the Importance of Civility

By Steve Surko, Council President, Uppingham Street

Somerset is a nice place to live. We are a small town, with a very small permanent staff and a modest annual budget of roughly \$2M+. Our Town relies upon a dedicated network of volunteers to serve on committees and the Council to help keep Somerset special. And I am honored to serve as your Council President.

For those who might want to know how the Council functions, I'd like to provide a brief summary along with some of my observations.

The Council holds a regular open meeting on the first Monday of every month. To prepare for this meeting, the Council holds a regular work session two weeks prior. Work sessions are open to the public, but participation is restricted. This is an opportunity for the Council to dig into policy issues, sometimes over multiple work sessions, and assess the readiness of proposals to advance to a formal Council Meeting. I am a big supporter of our committees, and the Council regularly requests and considers committee proposals and positions. To allow more time for the Council and residents to discuss subjects of interest, the Council identifies some items for the Consent Agenda of the Council Meeting. These are generally non-controversial administrative items such as the naming of committee members. The Mayor and I generally review the work session results the following week and develop the agenda for the next Council Meeting. Any two Council Members can add a topic to the agenda.

Some recent issues with plans for the pool this summer garnered attention and merit exploration of our governance process. At the end of a long Council Meeting on May 1, the Council considered pool program fees, lap lane rules, and a Stroke & Technique Clinic Pilot. Several

residents expressed their desire for the Water Aerobics fee to be restored to \$8/session. But with little discussion, the Council approved all items as presented (including a Water Aerobics fee of \$10/session). In hindsight, the Council should have discussed this material at the previous work session. Recognizing that my fellow Council Members may have wished to discuss pool program fees further, I worked with the Mayor to reintroduce the agenda item as part of a Council Meeting portion of the work session on May 15. This would enable the Council to designate June as LGBTQ Pride Month and update pool program fees before the pool season got underway. On May 15, the Council heard from more residents supporting a reduced Water Aerobics fee and the Town Manager explained that an \$8/session fee would essentially cover direct expenses if participation remains the same as last year. I then suggested that it seemed fair for there to be a fee for the Stroke & Technique Clinic. After some discussion, the Council agreed 4-1 to reduce the Water Aerobics fee to \$8/session and impose a Clinic fee of \$5/session. Feedback clarified that the Pool Committee had considered this and intended to use a portion of its regular program budget to fund the first summer of the Clinic as a pilot. Accordingly, I have worked with the Pool Committee Chair and Mayor to make the Clinic Pilot fees an agenda item at our next Council Meeting on June 5.

From my perspective, these pool issues simply reflect the reality of a small group of dedicated volunteers providing governance for Somerset on an incredibly broad range of topics. I was surprised and saddened to receive emails referring to my leadership as "undemocratic," manipulative, and "effectively corruption." We may disagree on the merits of any given topic, but I implore folks to employ civility in our discussions.

Please Report Streetlight Problems to Pepco

"[W]e should press Pepco to do a better job of maintaining whatever lights we have."

—Environment Committee Co-Chair Mike Hill,
Town Journal, November 2009

<https://bit.ly/3MuGnxw>

"Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose"—the more things change, the more they stay the same.

—Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr (1849)

After a resident posted concerns on a private listserv recently about the lack of lighting on Dorset Avenue, I walked to Dorset and found that between Wisconsin Avenue and Deal Place, two streetlights were completely non-functioning. An additional two lights were dim because the lenses are obscured by what appear to be burn marks or debris.

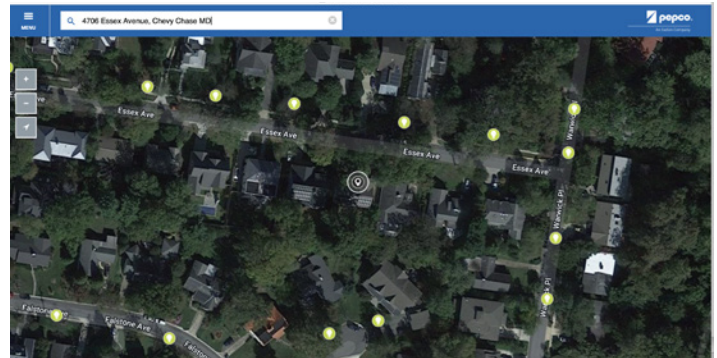
That night I reported the four malfunctioning lights to Pepco. Since then, Pepco has repaired the two non-functioning lights. As this issue of the *Journal* goes to press, Pepco has yet to repair the other two lights (which were dim or had obscured lenses). Unfortunately, sometimes Pepco does not repair lights properly the first time. However, once repaired, the lights can be expected to last many years. (The LED streetlights that Somerset will be installing can last 10-15 years.)

Reporting streetlight problems on Pepco's website is easy.

Taking the initiative to report malfunctioning streetlights directly to Pepco helps ensure that lights get repaired quickly and enhances our neighbors' feelings of safety. The same reporting process we use for our current streetlights will also apply to our new LED lights, after they have been installed.

Once you are on Pepco's website (<https://bit.ly/43f0Pch>), use your cursor to drag the map to Somerset and then zoom in. Or you can enter the light's pole number, or the address of a nearby house in the search box at the top of the window. (see screenshot). Once you have zoomed in sufficiently, the individual streetlights will be displayed. Click on the problem light, and you will see a menu with

choices for the reason you are reporting it (light out, light dim, light cycling on and off, etc.) Fill in your name, email, and phone number (Pepco has never called me) and submit the report.



Screenshot of Pepco streetlight reporting page, zoomed in on a house address

You can also call Pepco at 1-877-737-2662 to report a streetlight problem. You can also call the Town Hall to report the problem.

For lights that are out, Pepco generally makes repairs within two days. For lights that are dim, cycling on and off (lights are supposed to stay on all night), have pieces that are falling off, or have lenses that are cracked or obscured by debris, Pepco takes longer.

Pepco isn't perfect (for example, lights may not be correctly repaired the first time). But if they are unaware of problems, they cannot fix them at all. If we want to make sure that our streetlights are functional, then it is up to us to let Pepco know when they are not.



Pepco repaired this light, in the 5400 block of Trent Street, last fall.

Outside our Gates: Upcoming Events in Friendship Heights and Bethesda

Compiled by Leslie Caplan, Town Journal Editor, Essex Avenue

Friendship Heights

The Friendship Heights Alliance organizes several events that Somerset residents may find to be of interest. Their calendar includes:

THE COLLECTION SPRING FILM SERIES: TOP GUN MAVERICK

- The last event of the May film series. Bring chairs or a blanket.
- Where :The Collection at Chevy Chase: 5471 Wisconsin Ave.
- When: May 27, 7 :00-9:00 pm

CARPE LIBRUM POP-UP USED BOOKSTORE

Organized by Turning the Page, a nonprofit organization that engages public school families for student success (see <https://turningthepage.org>). You may purchase a book or donate a book and know that you are contributing to a worthwhile cause.

- Where: 5221 Wisconsin Avenue NW
- When: Wednesday — Friday, 11:30 am to 6:30 pm
Saturday — Sunday, 12 pm to 5 pm
(May and June)

THE SHOPS AT WISCONSIN PLACE CONCERT SERIES

- Al fresco concerts, various styles.
- Where: The Shops at Wisconsin Place, 5310 Wisconsin Avenue, on the plaza
- When: Thursday evenings, 5:00-7:00 pm
 - Thursday, June 1: The Flying Ivories (dueling pianos)
 - Thursday, June 8: Al Fresco (Jazz, Latin, pop)
 - Thursday, June 15: Rockville Brass Band
 - Thursday, June 22: Grove Spot Band (Motown Hits)
 - Thursday, June 29: Bumper Jackson (Americana)

FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS NEIGHBORS NETWORK (FHNN) FUNDRAISER

FHNN is a local nonprofit that supports seniors living in and around Friendship Heights as they age in place (<https://bit.ly/3WISFws>). Speakers at the fundraiser to include Marc Korman (Maryland House Majority Leader) and Andrew Friedson (Montgomery County Council Vice President.)

For more information, or to purchase tickets (\$25.00 before June 9, \$30 after); tax-deductible), go to: <https://www.fhneighbors.org/fundraiser>

- Where: Friendship Heights Village Center
- When: June 11, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

For more information, please consult the Friendship Heights Alliance website, <https://friendshipheights.com> .

Bethesda

These events are organized by the Bethesda Urban Partnership (<https://www.bethesda.org>). The calendar includes:

FRIDAY NIGHT STREETERY CONCERTS

Outdoor live music

- Where: Norfolk Avenue Streeterly (corner of Norfolk Avenue and St. Elmo Avenue)
- When: 6:00 pm
 - May 26: Ocho de Bastos
 - June 2: Patrick Alban
 - June 9: Jill Fulton Band
 - June 16: The 19th Street Band
 - June 23: Vi-Kings
 - June 30: La Unica

CONCERTS FOR KIDS

Outdoor live music for kids

- Where: Norfolk Avenue Streeterly (corner of Norfolk Avenue and St. Elmo Avenue)
- When: 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 pm
 - June 30: The Grandsons, Jr.

BETHESDA PAINTING AWARDS

Annual art competition, honoring painters from Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

- Where: Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite E
- When June 8-July 2

For more information about Bethesda events (including outdoor movies, which will begin in July), please consult the Bethesda Urban Partnership website, <https://www.bethesda.org> .



SOMERSET TENNIS ROUND ROBIN

ALL WELCOME

WHEN: Sunday June 11, at 3:00 p.m.

WHERE: SomersetTennis Courts.

RSVP to carrie.wofford@gmail.com
so we have a headcount.

GENERAL PERMITS

BUILDING PERMITS

4900 Cumberland Avenue

- 3-month extension for building addition permit

4523 Dorset Avenue

- Building permit for rear addition

4816 Essex Avenue

- Building permit (variance) for addition of HVAC unit on side yard of house

4806 Grantham

- Building permit for second story addition

FENCE PERMITS

- 5602 Surrey Street
- 4716 Essex Avenue
- 4802 Falstone Avenue
- 4921 Essex Avenue
- 5519 and 5521 Uppingham Street

DUMPSTER PERMITS

- 4807 Essex Avenue

TREE REMOVAL PERMITS

4805 Grantham Avenue

- Black Locust (18") – Tree is 75% dead and is hazardous.

4709 Dorset Avenue

- Norway Spruce (20") = Tree is dead.



Report from the Mayor

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin

What's Up This Month...

- During the recent Somerset election, 61% of voters supported the non-binding resolution to lower the voting age in Somerset elections to 16. Accordingly, the Town Council will now consider introducing a corresponding amendment to the Town's Charter at the June Council meeting. After that, it will be important for citizens to send letters to the Council, stating their support for such a historic and progressive measure. Upon passage, it is anticipated that this will lead to a lifetime of voting and engagement in public policy for our young people. While I was originally wary of this "advisory process," I was delighted with the high level of interest by our citizens and the increased turnout. It might be a good idea for future Councils to put such questions on the ballot. This could enhance the value of democracy among Somerset residents.
- The Council has once again designated June as LGBTQ+ Pride month and the Pride flag will be flown at Town Hall. Additionally, our Equity and Inclusion Committee will be asked to identify other constituency groups whom Somerset could appropriately recognize in the future.
- It's already graduation time and I know that many households have school graduates at all levels, from elementary to professional school, and even beyond. Because there is so much interest, I want to encourage both the students and their parents to let us know so we can make mention of these accomplishments in this Journal and at our July 4 celebration.
- At the end of this month, several Town elected officials, as well as the Town Manager, will be attending the annual Maryland Municipal League Convention in Ocean City. There, we will be networking with our peers, and learning best practices along with legislative priorities. This year I had the privilege of chairing a Bylaws Review Committee for the League and will look forward to our recommended amendments being passed during the proceedings.

And What Happened Last Month:

- Congratulations to the newly re-elected Council Members. In particular, I want to point out **Council Member Debbie Heller's** (Falstone) outstanding role as Council liaison to the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights, **Council Member Shannon Rovak's** (Cumberland) outstanding role as the Town's representative to the Friendship Heights Transportation Management District Advisory Committee and **Council Member Kabir Kumar's** (Surrey) outstanding role as the Council liaison to the Budget Committee.



Manager's Corner

By Matt Trollinger, *Town Manager*

June marks the final month of the Town's fiscal year, and we have several important projects that will be underway as the year "ends" and a "new one" begins.

Streetlight Replacement

As you will see in the draft agenda, the Council will make a decision on whether to move forward on the proposal with Pepco to replace streetlights throughout the Town with high-efficiency LED bulbs. This project has been in the works for many years. In essence, the Town will pay the upfront cost for the upgrade of streetlights, which will cost, in total, roughly \$215,000. In turn, the Town will cut its monthly \$2,500 streetlight utility bill in half. The LED bulbs have various other benefits to Town residents, including better focusing of lights, greater reliability, and a reduction in the overall consumption of power, making them more environmentally friendly.

We currently have pilot lights set up in various spots throughout Town to consider several different options.

- Corner of Dorset Avenue and Warwick Place: 150w
- Corner of Cumberland Avenue and Surrey Street: 100w
- Streetlight at 4823 Dorset Avenue: 70w
- Streetlight at 5707 Surrey Street: 50w

In general, higher wattages are used at intersections so there is greater visibility in all directions. For instance, Montgomery County recommends 100w at intersections and 70w at straightaways in residential areas. However, the Town can make its own decisions about what is best. There are safety, financial, and aesthetic variables to consider in the lighting selection. Please feel free to reach out to me at manager@townofsomerset.com if you would like to share your opinions on the lights. Your comments will be shared with the Council when they make the ultimate decision at the June Council meeting.

Sidewalk Repairs

Starting the week of June 12, AB Veirs & Sons will be performing some concrete repairs throughout Town to areas of the sidewalk that have been identified as potential tripping hazards and areas for improvement. In addition to fixing tripping hazards, we will be bringing four intersections in Town into ADA compliance:

- Essex Avenue and Surrey Street
- Surrey Street and Falstone Avenue
- Surrey Street and Greystone Street
- Greystone Street and Uppingham Street

Keep in mind: this work is just to fix some of our most noticeable areas, and the intersections above are not the only areas that need attention and need improvement. However, there are other complicating factors in other areas around Town, including slope, curb height, and road conditions, which will be better handled as part of the Town's more comprehensive roadway and walkway master plan, which will be carried out by Dewberry Consultants this summer. It will be a multi-year process to repave our streets and improve the sidewalk infrastructure all throughout Town.

That being said, if you notice a major tripping hazard, please let us know at the Town Hall so we can try and take care of it as best we can – even if it is a temporary solution. Your safety is of the utmost importance!

Pool Renovations

This is another topic that has been discussed for several years. The Council will be considering a proposal from American Pools at the June Council meeting to do extensive repairs at the Town Pool. While the pool itself does not need to be repaired – other than new plastering and lights – the entirety of the pool deck will be torn out and re-poured. So, we will have brand new concrete decking, along with new pipes underneath the pool. This is also an opportunity to upgrade some of our essential equipment, including ladders, the diving board, lifeguard stands, and water fountains. Much of this equipment is the original from the pool's installation in 1970, and in the past years, there has been more and more cracking in the deck and small leaks in the pipes. Despite the high cost, taking care of this work now will save the Town in the long run, and ensure that the Somerset Pool stays a first-rate asset for the Town and residents.

Annual Thanks and Congratulations

I wanted to take a quick moment to thank the Mayor and Council for considering my reappointment to serve again as the Town Manager for the upcoming year. It is hard to believe that I've now been here in Somerset for four

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Manager's Corner

years, and I look forward to the fifth year being a fruitful and exciting one that helps set the Town up for many more years of success. I am especially proud to serve the Town because of you, the residents. During the recent Town election, it was pretty remarkable to see the turnout and enthusiasm, and lively debate about the referendum. Somerset is lucky to have so many passionate people living in the Town, including all of those who serve on

the various Town committees and boards. I look forward to working with and for you all in the year ahead. Finally, congratulations to Council Members Heller, Kumar, and Rovak on their reelections. They all deserve our thanks for their willingness to put in the time, thought, and effort it takes to serve on the Council and represent the Town in issues that it faces.



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 202-368-9986 **Kathleen Kenyon** at 301-651-0758 or **Jim Berry** at 240-994-3939.

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

Council Meeting Actions

The following actions were taken by the Somerset Town Council at its monthly meeting, held May 1, 2023 (unless date is otherwise provided)

- Approved Somerset Dolphins Swim Team Schedule and Annual Plan
- Approved the appointment of **Kelly Swain** (Trent) to serve on the Parks and Natural Resources Committee (term ending 2024)
- Approved a three-month permit extension, requested by **Monica Gomez** and **Guillermo Israilevich**, to the existing permit for the construction of a side addition to the home located on the property at 4900 Cumberland Avenue
- Approved a building permit application, submitted by **Marika and Michael Meyer**, for the demolition and construction of a rear addition on the house located on the property at 4523 Dorset Avenue
- Approved a building permit application submitted by **James Gillis** and **Alison Hooker** for the demolition of an accessory building for the property located at 4816 Essex Avenue. The applicant was granted variances of 3.9' and 6.3' for the placement of an HVAC unit in the side yard of the property
- Approved a building permit application, submitted by Rockledge Capital, LLC, for the demolition of a first-floor sunroom and the construction of a 122 sq. ft. second-story addition for the property located at 4806 Grantham Avenue
- Approved the removal of the following Town trees, at the recommendation of the Town Arborist:
 - 5524 Warwick Place – Pin Oak 36"
 - 5601 Warwick Place – Pin Oak 22"
- Approved the Spring Tree Planting List, as recommended by the Town Arborist. The Arborist is proposing the following trees to be planted:
 - 4510 Cumberland Avenue (in Capello Park) – American Beech
 - 4510 Cumberland Avenue (between Town Hall and garage) – American Beech
 - 4812 Essex Avenue – White Fringe Tree
 - 4812 Essex Avenue – White Fringe Tree
 - 4900 Falstone Avenue – White Dogwood
 - 4900 Falstone Avenue – White Dogwood
 - 5505 Greystone Street – Red Maple
 - 5404 Surrey Street – White Oak
 - 5604 Warwick Place – Redbud
- Adopted an Ordinance adopting the FY24 Budget and Tax Rate
- Adopted the 2023 Pool Rules
- Adopted the following Pool Fee Schedule
 - Guest Fee: \$4
 - Water Aerobics: \$10/class (amended to \$8 on May 15)
 - Early Morning Swim: \$100
 - Stroke & Technique Pilot: \$0 (amended to \$5 on May 15)
- Adopted a Resolution declaring June as LGBTQ Pride Month, and to hang the rainbow flag at the Town Hall through the month of June. (Adopted May 15)



For Your Reference

TOWN OF SOMERSET COMMITTEES AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

COMMITTEE	CHAIR
Audit	Chuck Edson (Surrey)
Budget	Ann Kelly Bolten (Cumberland)
Communications	Leslie Caplan (Essex)
Environment	Barton Rubenstein (Dorset)
Equity & Inclusion	Atsuko Horiguchi (Essex)
History & Archives	Paige Whitley (Cumberland)
Newcomers	Phyllis Wiesenfelder (Cumberland)

COMMITTEE	CHAIR
Parks & Natural Resources	Josh Rosenthal (River)
Pool	Matt Zaft (Dorset)
Public Safety	Kumar Vaswani (Trent)
Revenue	Nick Fox (Cumberland)
Swim Team	Dario Fuentes (Cumberland)
Tennis	Carrie Wofford (Essex)
Traffic	Elizabeth Hurwit (Dorset)

TOWN COUNCIL CALENDAR 2023

COUNCIL MEETINGS

(All times at 7:00 p.m.)

- Mon., June 5
- Mon., July 10
- Mon., August 7
- Tues., September 5
(Sept. 4 is Labor Day holiday)
- Mon., October 2
- Mon., November 6
- Mon., December 4

WORK SESSIONS

(All times at 5:30 p.m.)

- Tues., June 20
(June 19 is Juneteenth holiday)
- Mon., July 17
- Mon., August 21
- Mon., September 18
- Mon., October 16
- Mon., November 20
- Mon., December 18

LINKS TO COMMITTEE-PROVIDED RESOURCES

STORMWATER STUDY COMMITTEE

- Stormwater Study Committee Report: <https://bit.ly/3M7R9b4>
- FAQs for Somerset Residents: <https://bit.ly/3uVIX96>
- Resource Guide to Green Infrastructure: <https://bit.ly/3MhYnsW>
- LIDC Final Report — Stormwater Master Plan 1/20/2022: <https://bit.ly/3uUADp8>
- Recording of May 10, 2022 Stormwater Study Committee Town Forum: <https://bit.ly/39FMAr3>

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

- Ban on Certain Pesticides: <https://bit.ly/3MKQpt5>
- Resolution Declaring Climate Emergency: <https://bit.ly/38DGIDz>

- Sierra Club Maryland Mayors for 100% Clean Energy Pledge: <https://bit.ly/3NuCeZ5>
- Fossil Fuel No-Proliferation Treaty: <https://fossilfuel treaty.org>
- Ban on Gas-Powered Blowers: see Chapter 140, section 3 (§140-3) of the Town Code (<https://bit.ly/3LDF1xR>)
- Recording of June 7, 2022 Bee Forum: <https://bit.ly/3be19SN>

EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

- Resolution Condemning Anti-AAPI Hate: <https://bit.ly/38I0t7r>
- Recording of January 18, 2022 Slavery & Segregation History Forum Recording: <https://bit.ly/3MHSV3o>

VIDEO RECORDINGS OF 2022 TOWN MEETINGS

All Town Council and Work Session meetings are available for viewing on the Town of Somerset YouTube channel: <https://bit.ly/3Uq7Tz4>

Preliminary Agenda

(The final agenda is available and emailed to Town residents on the Friday before the monthly Council Meeting.)

Regular Somerset Town Council Meeting June 5, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

The Somerset Town Council will hold a “hybrid meeting,” both in-person at the Town Hall and simultaneously cast via Zoom on Monday, June 5, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda and updates are posted on the Town website: www.townofsomerset.com

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://bit.ly/3TEP2Av> Meeting ID: 836 4271 5125 Passcode: 287338

Dial by your location: +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Somerset Town Council

- Steve Surko, Council President
- Robin Barr
- Debbie Heller
- Kabir Kumar
- Shannon Rovak

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

7:00 p.m. Opportunity for residents to make public comments.*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

7:05 p.m. **Motion:** To consider approval of agenda as presented.

CONSENT AGENDA

7:06 p.m. **Motion:** To consider approval of the following items without discussion

- Re-appointment of Ron Bolt (Bolt Legal) as the Town Attorney for Fiscal Year 2024
- Re-appointment of Matthew Trollinger as the Town Manager and Clerk-Treasurer for Fiscal Year 2024
- Hold a Town Nonagenarian Party at the Town Pool on Thursday, September 7

NON-CONSENT AGENDA

7:08 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval of a four-month extension to the existing building permit for an addition to the front of the existing home located on the property at 5502 Greystone Street

7:15 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval of a 100% native plant planting strategy, and

removal of invasive species, as presented by Groundsmith Collective, LLC for the Town of Somerset entrance at River Road & Greystone Street

7:35 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval of a contract with American Pool Enterprises, LLC for the reconstruction of the Town Pool deck, and other repairs to the Town Pool in an amount not to exceed \$705,000, as recommended by the Town Manager

8:00 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider an amendment to the 2023 Town Pool Fee Schedule, to remove the fee for the Stroke & Technique Pilot Program, as requested by the Town Pool Committee

8:15 p.m. **Motion:** To consider introduction of an amendment to the Town Charter Sec. 83-21 to extend the right to vote in Town of Somerset municipal elections to all residents 16 years and older

8:20 p.m. **Public Hearing/Motion:** To consider approval of a streetlight replacement agreement with Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO), for the replacement of existing streetlights with LED bulbs of the Town's preferred wattage

8:35 p.m. **Discussion:** Manager's Report

8:45 p.m. **Adjourn**

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.

*Questions should be submitted via email ahead of the meeting to manager@townofsomerset.com or town@townofsomerset.com.

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

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.