



Meeting Summary for Woodridge Civic Association - 2024, 2025 meeting (From Zoom)

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Quick recap

The October Woodridge Civic Association meeting was held at the Woodridge Library with four scheduled presenters discussing various community updates and services. Mr. Battle, the Treasurer, provided a financial report showing current balances of \$2,054.85. Further, he announced that a planned silent auction fundraiser was cancelled due to insufficient community support. President Montague mentioned the possibility of participating in Councilmember Eleanor Holmes Norton's scholarship fundraiser. Melissa Littlepage from Councilmember Zachary Parker's office updated the community on Ward 5 Week celebrations, upcoming DPR facility closures, and announced the next Public Safety Call scheduled for October 28th focusing on recent break-ins and car thefts in the Turkey Thicket area.

Dallas Thompson, representing WMATA, provided updates on the Bladensburg Bus Garage Replacement Project, addressing concerns about new road configurations and parking restrictions, while noting that the fleet mix for new buses for the replacement garage was still undetermined.

Kendra Wiley from Legal Counsel for the Elderly presented their services for DC residents over 60, including housing assistance, economic security support, estate planning, and health safety services, with information about property tax credits and benefits available to eligible residents.

Keith Jones Jr. from the DC Office of the Inspector General explained their role as the city's watchdog agency, covering audits, investigations, and the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, and provided information about reporting fraud, waste, and abuse.

Dr. Ariana Gard and graduate student Joelle Fuchs from the GardLab presented their oral history project. It is aimed at collecting neighborhood stories to build community connections, offering residents an opportunity to share 10-to-15-minute stories about their experiences in Woodridge.

Courtney Arnold from New America discussed their eviction data response program and invited community members to share stories about home repair issues for an upcoming article.

The conversation ended with announcements about upcoming events, birthdays of Ms. Lisa Brown, and Mr. John Hampton, and the revelation that community member Grayson Jones, attending Morehouse, had received a \$4,000 scholarship from the DC Federation of Civic Associations.

Next steps

Courtney Arnold

- Share the sign-up sheet for the New America home repair story project with interested residents.

Dallas Thompson

- Follow up with DDOT regarding final parking restrictions at the end of Douglas Street and the reconfiguration of the Bladensburg and Channing Road intersection.
- Share the Art in Transit call for artists information with the group at the next meeting.

Jeremiah (President)

- Post presentations and resources from the guest speakers (Legal Counsel for the Elderly, DC Office of the Inspector General, etc.) to the Woodridge Civic Association website under "Activities" or "Useful Resources."
- Coordinate with Ms. Graham to reschedule the next meeting since the library room is designated for elections on November 6th. The assembly moved to have the November meeting on Tuesday following the General Election date.
- Follow up with Dallas Thompson regarding the fleet mix of buses and the 26,000 numbered bus series not being zero-emission.

Joelle Fuchs

- Continue collecting oral histories through November and coordinate with interested neighbors for one-on-one recording sessions.

Keith Jones Jr.

- Provide the OIG presentation to be posted on the Woodridge Civic Association website.

Kendra Wiley

- Provide Mr. Montague with copies of the handouts and practice cards from Legal Counsel for the Elderly.
- Reach out directly to the community member who has had difficulty contacting the Legal Counsel for the Elderly hotline.

Summary

Called to Order

The meeting started around 6:08 PM, but specific details about decisions or action items were not clearly captured due to the poor audio quality. The issue resolved and important issues captured.

Note: Audio Connectivity Issues Meeting

The meeting experienced significant audio connectivity issues at its onset, with multiple participants including Dallas, Jeremiah, and others reporting difficulty hearing each other. Jeremiah attempted to address the technical problems and contacted some participants, though the transcript ends with ongoing audio issues. No substantive business discussion occurred due to technical difficulties.

Woodridge Civic Association October Meeting

Jeremiah opened the October Woodridge Civic Association meeting at the Woodridge Library, broadcasting via Zoom. He welcomed attendees and outlined the agenda, which included four presenters: representatives from the Office of the Inspector General, God Lab, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, and New America. Jeremiah briefly mentioned the DC Federation of Civic Associations' upcoming award ceremony and noted that a community member had benefited from it this year. The meeting was in progress with plans to address the agenda items and presenters.

Financial Report and Community Updates

Mr. Battle presented the current financial report showing a balance of \$2,054.85 and announced that due to lack of support, the planned silent auction fundraising event has been cancelled. The group discussed promotional ideas including t-shirts and varsity jackets, with Jeremiah having already ordered a sample varsity jacket.

Councilmember Parker's Office Updates

Melissa Littlepage from Councilmember Parker's office provided updates on Ward 5 activities, including the recent Ward 5 Week celebration, upcoming DPR facility closures, and information about a residential permitted parking sign installation near Burroughs Elementary School. The meeting also covered public safety concerns, particularly regarding recent break-ins and an attack in the Turkey Thicket area, with MPD announcing the arrest of four juveniles in connection with these incidents.

Bladensburg Bus Garage Project Update

Dallas Thompson provided an update on the Bladensburg bus garage replacement project, announcing that the next newsletter will be published later this month and the next community meeting will be held in December. He addressed community concerns about road patterns and construction impacts, including parking restrictions and safety issues at the intersection of Bladensburg and Channing Road, noting that he has inquired with DDOT about potential solutions. Dallas also mentioned that the Art in Transit program will launch next month with a call for artists. The bus fleet transition details are still being determined, he committed to keeping the community informed as more information becomes available.

WMATA Fleet Emission and Procurement Concerns

Jeremiah raised concerns about the 26,000 numbered bus series not being zero emission and requested that fleet management address this issue. He also provided updates on the reconfiguration of the cul-de-sac at Douglas and 28th Street, noting that the adjacent business is satisfied with the plan, and discussed the ongoing challenges with electric bus procurement due to limited manufacturers and opposition to international vehicle purchases.

Legal Services for Elderly Presentation

Kendra Wiley, now legal counsel for the elderly and formerly legislative director for Councilman Parker, began her presentation on general services but indicated she would not be able to take questions due to time constraints.

Kendry Wiley presented on Legal Counsel for the Elderly, a nonprofit affiliated with AARP that provides free legal and social work services to Washington DC residents aged 60 and older (55 for Social Security). The organization helps in several areas including housing issues, economic security, estate planning, and health and safety, with specific programs like the Schedule H property tax credit that can provide up to \$4,000 in benefits. The intake process involves calling their hotline at 202-434-2120 between 10am and 3pm, and their website is aarp.org/LCE.

DC OIG Community Outreach Presentation

Keith Jones provided an overview of the DC Office of the Inspector General (OIG), explaining its role as a watchdog for city government to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

Keith Jones Jr., the Community Outreach Specialist for OIG, presented details about the office's operations, including audits, investigations, and the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit. Dr. Gard and Joelle from the University of Maryland introduced an oral history project aimed at connecting neighbors in Ward 4 and 5, inviting residents to share stories about their experiences in the community.

25 Years of New America Presentation

Courtney Arnold from New America discussed their work on housing issues, particularly focusing on home repair challenges, and seeking stories from DC residents about their experiences with repairs and maintenance. The conversation ended with announcements about birthdays and a scholarship recipient, and discussions about the community website and Twitter account.