

MCCAB Meeting Notes 2023.4.20

7:05 p.m.

Call to Order & Welcome

Meeting Protocols

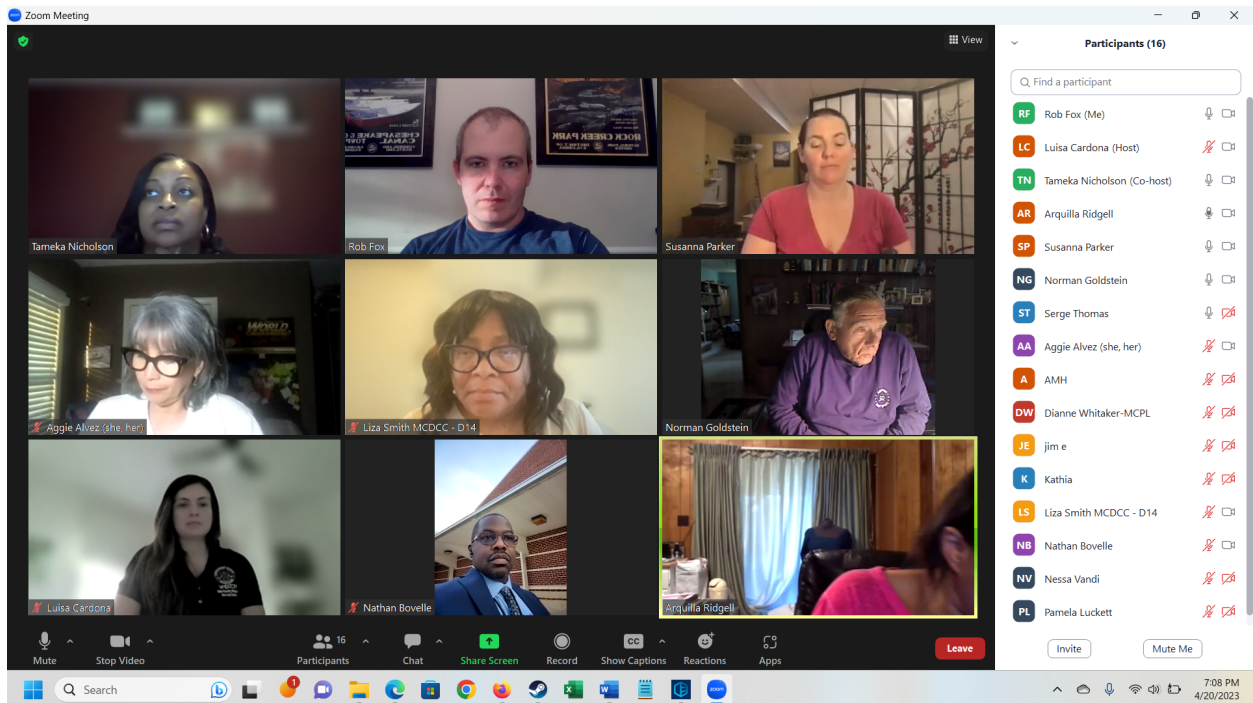
Introduction

Aquilla Ridgell Chair

Objective: Welcome

Review of protocols for online meeting

Guest introduction



The screenshot displays a Zoom meeting window with 16 participants. The main area shows a grid of video thumbnails for participants: Tameka Nicholson, Rob Fox, Susanna Parker, Aggie Alvez (she, her), Liza Smith MCDCC - D14, Norman Goldstein, Luisa Cardona, Nathan Bovellet, and Arquilla Ridgell. A 'Participants (16)' list on the right side of the window lists all attendees with their initials and names, including Rob Fox (Me), Luisa Cardona (Host), Tameka Nicholson (Co-host), Arquilla Ridgell, Susanna Parker, Norman Goldstein, Serge Thomas, Aggie Alvez (she, her), AMH, Dianne Whitaker-MCPL, jim e, Kathia, Liza Smith MCDCC - D14, Nathan Bovellet, Nessa Vandi, and Pamela Luckett. The bottom of the window shows the Zoom control bar with options like Mute, Stop Video, Participants, Chat, Share Screen, Record, Show Captions, Reactions, and Apps. The system tray at the very bottom shows the Windows search bar and various application icons, with the time and date 7:08 PM 4/20/2023.

7:08 p.m.

Agenda, Minutes

Aquilla Ridgell, Chair

Objective: Acceptance of agenda and March minutes

March minutes and April agenda accepted

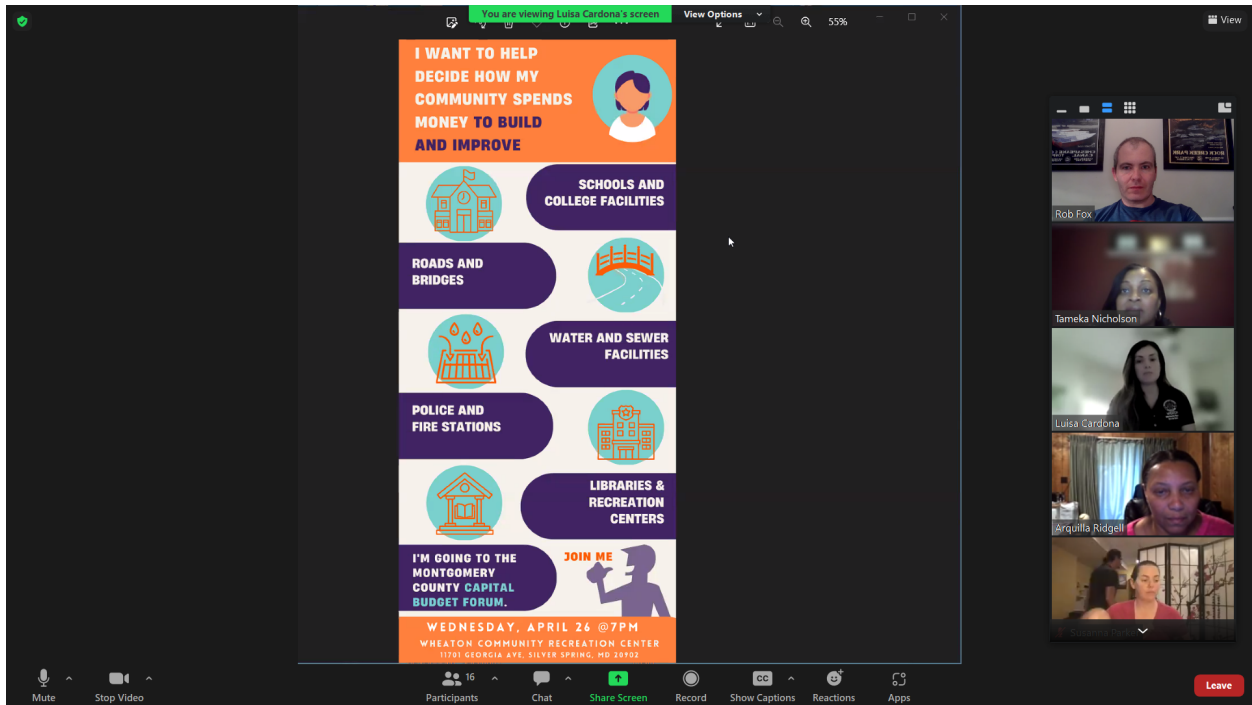
7:10 p.m.

Mid County Directors Report Luisa Cardona

MCRSO Director

Objective: Update on the Mid

County Regional Area



Request for tabling for greenfest as well as the CIP forum. Four participants for CIP and at least one person for a shift at greenfest.

For an in person board event, she can send out a duplo survey

7:15 p.m.

Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee Report

Rob Fox WUDAC Liaison

Objective: Updates

Representative for Natali Fani Gonzalez, police update, homelessness services presentation, McComas Greenway project

7:20 p.m.

Recognition Of Any Elected Officials TBD

Objective: Provide an opportunity to any elected officials or representatives that wish to give brief updates.

Nathan Bovelle – I didn't have anything specific planned for today. I'll reintroduce myself, I'm with the department of housing and community affairs for 5 months now. I work in part on code enforcement, which includes rental properties. Whenever we're out in the public I like to remind people that we're here to help make sure their rental properties are safe, clean, and in good condition. If you need help, call 311 and ask for code enforcement and we'll usually get out in a few days and start working the issue. We also have our office of landlord and tenant affairs for disputes between landlords and renters, 311 again. That does mediation prior to court, and we have a 90% success

rate. We also work with common ownership communities, with HOAs and the like. Another division works with businesses to improve storefronts and for beautification and renovation activities.

7:28 p.m.

County Council Presentation Council President Evan Glass Objective: Provide an overview of legislative priorities for the next year.

I came up through the boards system, having previously been on the silver spring citizens' advisory board. MoCo now has the top 3 most diverse communities in the country. I'm honored to be leading this council and serving you all as an at large council member. At the beginning of this session I created a new committee, the economic development committee. Whether you want to attract large companies, support small ones, or address the gender and wealth gaps that exist, this committee would focus on those. It is the largest committee at 4 members and is chaired by Natali Fani Gonzalez. I'm really proud of the work we're doing in this body. I'm also chair of the transportation and environment committee. Last week we had a meeting of regional leaders of the COG, recognizing that last year along 500 people were hit walking or biking and 19 killed just last year. The safe streets act I introduced is to address that, with downtown Wheaton and mid-county being the epicenter of this road violence. Road safety might be thought of as only being for pedestrians and bicyclists, but this is about justice as most are people of color. The bill will come to the transportation and environment committee after the budget is finished.

There are a lot of good things in the county budget. The job of the council is to ensure fiscal responsibility this year and into the future. The executive budget fully funds the schools, which are why many people move to MoCo. Our teachers and other educators play a major role, with a 10% property tax increase to support that, and we're looking to see if the 10% increase is necessary to fund the school system. It is a \$6.8b budget, and one of the most paramount roles of the council is to pass the budget and be good fiscal stewards of your tax dollars, making sure that MoCo remains an educated and affordable place to live into the future.

Susanna Parker – Thanks for coming – For the economic development committee how's that different from the Fed committee?

Glass – There was one committee in the past that was the PHED committee, it was a workhorse committee, it was technical. It mostly served land use, zoning, and housing issues. But there was an economic development part, and during the time of that committee there would be presentations from our economic development folks, but that would be more perfunctory. I requested an analysis of all of our committees. In that we learned that PHED met for 60% more than any other committee, focusing mostly on zoning and housing. Everyone in the election talked about economic development. So, the economic development committee now has permitting, economic development, alcohol beverage services, and other entities under its purview.

Serge – I understand that food insecurity is a huge issue in MoCo. We're extremely disappointed that the county's voting to close the HOB, so what are we looking to do to replace the oak chapel HUB.

Glass – I appreciate your work with the Oak Chapel HUB. I've seen all the cars lining the road on the ICC on both sides. We've been working to make sure that all the communities in need in MoCo are receiving support. The county executive's budget has not funded oak chapel, the council has not decided this just yet. We'll take up those recommendations through the health and human services committee. The council can change what's in the county executive's budget, and we'll consider what we think we can do to keep our residents fed.

Liza – It dawned on me that in October would be 10 years for me, and I'm concerned about sidewalks and reliable transportation. Sidewalks takes time, but transportation is an easy fix. We don't have reliable transportation, so kids wanting a summer job aren't able to do it if the bus only goes by four times a day.

Glass – I appreciate it you and I have talked a lot about this issue. I was in Ashton for the reopening of Olney winery. As I parked and crossed the street there was a sidewalk and a ramp right into Olney and Sandy spring road, and it's a ramp to nowhere. I was with another representative and we agreed that we'd work on this. Earlier today the transportation and environment committee were talking about buses and bus routes, and we'll get a report from the department of transportation, about who is reliant on public transport, how to think differently about our bus services, and who will need our services. It will need to continue for a bit more before having a report and going into communities for input. We need to go into each community, have district council member, and have people share their thoughts.

Norman – why do we have county liquor stores?

Glass – I agree. One of the very first things I ever did when I ran for office was write an op ed for the Washington post on liquor sales. The reason MoCo is the only county in the entire country to be the wholesaler and distributor of liquor, so you can only buy it from the county. In other states there are state stores or have it be available anywhere, but here liquor can only be bought at the county store. When prohibition ended, each state was left to determine how they wanted to move forward. We could have it again, and they deferred to each state. Some states didn't care letting each municipality make choices. Others said we as a state will regulate it. Two states would let each county decide, with MD and NC being those. Since then the counties have evolved where a number of counties controlled liquor and decided to move on. Now we're the only county out of 4000 in the country doing this. Flip side, we get to make money off of the sale of liquor. We bring in about \$35 million because we're the wholesale distributor. That's the amount of the recreation or library department. If we get rid of it we'd need to shore that up.

Jim Epstein – I have two quickies. One coming out of COVID, is the concept of streeteries, and in the budget there are currently no funds for streeteries but each of the districts are being allowed to choose to move forward. How will the council work with the transportation department to make them existent and safe.

For the funding model for Friendship heights, what's the concept for how Wheaton draws mostly from the operating budget, making us more impacted by operating budget cuts.

Glass – there is money in the county executive's budget for a more stable path for streeteries, particularly Norfolk in Bethesda, Silver Spring, and Limerick in Wheaton. The roads that the streeteries are on are county roads, and we've supported those funds.

With regard to the different downtown areas, we passed a bill. Friendship heights isn't the place it was, it is a ghost town of sorts. MoCo is working with DC to create a cross jurisdictional busuiness improvement district. There aren't many of those around the country. Friendship heights is a little different that way, so we're not treating Wheaton as second fiddle, because Friendship heights is different since Western ave is almost like the Potomac river.

Aggie Alvez – I know that recently council staff came out with an analysis of the poclie and county executive's budget. It was disconcerting, violent crime is up, vacancy problems for police, 4th district having the highest vacancies of patrols. Young people and PoC are mostly victimized by crimes. The executive budget has an increase but these are mostly civilion roles. We're at a time where the vacancies aren't abating, and we're not getting patrol officers.

What role does the council have in this?

Glass – We have to do our due diligence over the six to seven weeks to get this budget passed. The article you're referring to correctly relayed what the council staff said, but there's more than that. MoCo was in the same position as jurisdictions all around the country, having declining enrollment from police. We increased the signing bonus, and in the last few months enrollment is up 50%, which sounds good but we still need to do better. In the spring class we had 40 people there for our various jurisdictions. Last year I increased funding by nearly \$200k for the cadet program, which is basically an intern program hiring students from around the county for them to become police themselves eventually. These are complex questions and require more conversation than headlines can provide, but I'm happy to engage further. If anyone wants links to these things I'm happy to provide them. The FOP itself said hiring more staff doesn't necessarily make our communities safer, making sur ethey're deployed and utilized better is necessary. The recommendations of the public safety committee will come before the council, they'lll make recommendations on their own and we'll either agree or reject the different recommendations. I've not spoken with the president of the FOP but have heard his comments from many others relaying it to me.

Tameka – I want to ask about the budget and affordable housing. We're finally starting to see after 6 years in the area more support to make affordable housing. When I see in my industry it's hard to get people to relocate here. For the people that live here that want to become homeowners and take advantage of the school systems, it's become challenging to afford to purchase here. Talk to us a little bit about the priorities so that we're still not having this conversation and we still haven't seen any traction.

Glass – In MoCo the average home cost is \$538k, and it's expensive along with the entire DC region. For the budget and how I'm working to meet your needs. So many people move to and live in MoCo because of our schools. I received info of someone moving from Baltimore city to MoCo for the schools. We need to make sure our teachers are being paid fairly too. There are only so many ways for us to help support our teachers. Half of them can't afford to live in MoCo themselves. In an effort to provide more support for our teachers the executive decided that a 10% property tax would be the best way to do that. Whether you're on a fixed income or retirees that's a tricky decision to deal with. We had four public hearings on the budget last week, and had more people than in recent memory testify on the budget.

Arquilla – Thank you for the efforts to lower speed limits on some of the higher speed limit state roads.

Glass – we've worked collaboratively with the state to do that.

Rob Fox - A lot of things for improving our communities, increasing pedestrian safety, implementing cycling infrastructure, increasing housing opportunities, are things that create local opposition when proposed under our current paradigms of engagement. From a philosophical viewpoint of governance and responding to things while moving us forward, what are your thoughts about doing things that the community needs in the face of community upset?

Glass – When on the SS CAB and the apartment buildings were going up, there was an apartment building that was being built, 2008 housing crisis hit, it went bankrupt. I'd walk up and down metro each way and I'd hear from my neighbors about being worried about it being affordable housing. I spoke to our regional services folks, I was a journalist at CNN, and I learned that the affordable housing project would be 90% of units making \$45-\$75k, which is average middle class housing here. I asked people if they didn't want teachers, recent graduates, nurses to live here? That's who lives there. I made a meeting with our council member, and none of the naysayers showed up, because I did the work to convince the heart of the naysayers. Some people will automatically get it and they'll be first in line marching, and others can get there but they need some answers and support. Progress is good, data can help us make progress. I'll continue to pledge to do that for all of you, there's a lot of good work that needs doing. I'm absolutely confident that because of the MCCAB and our engaged residents that live here we'll get the answers right but we'll get there.

8:15 p.m.

Kathia for Natali Fani Gonzalez

As CM Glass mentioned, Natali is the head the ED committee, and we've been trying to hear from small businesses to know their circumstances. We've been hearing heartbreaking stories from some businesses.

Norman – NFG was on a trip to Taiwan, was there any developments for ED for the county from that trip?

Luisa – we heard from the executive that it was quite a productive meeting for talking with businesses for relocating here. Big interests in coming here was our diversity, and one of the biggest hurdles was housing for their employees. There were some good connections made and they're hoping those businesses will come to MoCo for further discussions.

Kathia – she met with a lot of people who came here for school and moved back home to work.

8:22 pm

County Council Presentation Council Member Will Jawando

Objective: Provide an overview of legislative priorities for the next year.

8:15 pm

Michelle Whittaker – the council member is coming from another zoom meeting.

8:22 pm

These meetings are important, thank you for having me. Can you give me a sense of how long want me to speak?

Arquilla – you're scheduled until 8:45, but you can do it any way you want, updates followed by questions we can do that, or some other format.

Jawando – I'm the chair of the education and culture committee. We've had our first three operating budget meetings around MCPS, the school system has requested a record amount of funding to meet a record amount of need. The executive has requested a 10% property data tax so we're trying to account for that. Capital improvement project costs are also taking up resources and attention. Dealing with people who are homeless, police, fire, all of our public safety apparatus, our department of public safety. We're going through that process now through the end of May. We're also dealing with policy issues in trying to create a lot more affordable housing for people. All of our great amenities need to be kept up as well, and we need to do it in an equitable way, we have some of the highest levels of students experiencing poverty. 162k students and that need is there. The students are bright and they just need support. We have a plan to eliminate childhood hunger and we have a plan to work through that over the next 7 years. I'll pause there and take any questions from folks.

Norman – there’s a lot of talk about work being done on affordable housing, but I haven’t heard anything about what is being done about homelessness.

JAwando – we just confirmed a new director of the office to prevent and end homelessness. We just recently opened up a new homeless facility that has a lot of beds to address some of the capacity challenges. A few years ago we ended veterans homelessness, so there’s a lot to do obviously, we have a good leader. There’s a myriad of issues, we recently had our point of time count. There’s a lot of work going on, and a lot of the work is how we’re going to deal with these issues. A lot of times they’re wrapped up with mental health or substance abuse challenges. Eviction is something we’re concerned about. We’re considering a bill around rent stabilization.

Liza – What’s the status of summer rise and other programs to help high school kids get their first jobs and first experience earning money?

Jawando – we need to do more, and we are only able to offer a small number of opportunities compared to the number of graduates from MCPS. It’s my hope and my goal that we ramp it up as well as our internships throughout the year. It’s a very important way to introduce children into the workforce. I hope to recruit more non-profits and businesses into the program. We’re hoping to grow the program more.

JAwando - The sheriff’s department has a role to play in that, and I’m not aware of any specific programming, but I am aware that there are efforts to improve communications and to involve and include non-profits in it. I’d definitely be interested in any of the information you have about reforms in that space.

Jim Epstein – I hope for having access, accessibility, walkability and branding Wheaton as an A&E district for reaching the arts and cultural center. We appreciate your support on those and hope you can continue to help us advocate for those as well.

Jawando – we’re definitely looking to make the space as good as possible for Wheaton, making improvements to the circumstances in the space.

Arquilla – We’ve been interested in not only walkability but also accessibility, and I’ve been people on GA avenue having to roll their wheelchairs on GA ave or Layhill road. If people in Wheelchairs need to reach bus stops or public transport.

Serge – I’m on MCCAB and also work with Oak Chapel HUB, and we’re counting on your support to keep our HUB open.

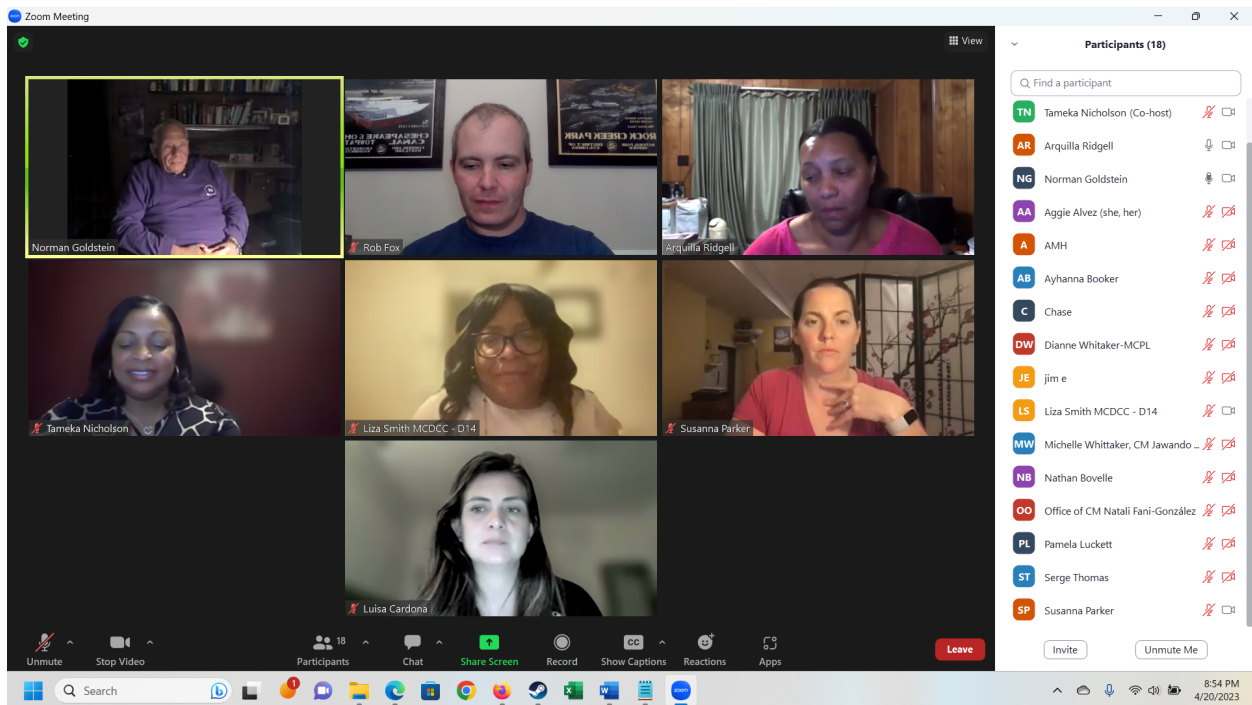
Tameka – I think this is a good question. You talked about the great diversity of MoCo, and you being on the Ed committee, what influence does any council have on the teachers and staff in the schools reflecting our diversity.

Jawando – we’re going to talk about things like that, making sur that our teaching force is compensated well. Retaining and obtaining a diverse base of teachers. The diversity of teachers is a long standing issue, and we’ve been trying to make a wider range of diversity in our school staffing. Our schools don’t necessarily recognize the credentials of people from other nations, which is an area we could improve on. BOND educators is focused on getting more black males into the classroom, since if you have someone who looks like you as a teacher it helps you. We’re pushing for more bilingual staff in our schools, educators who can speak to our parents. It’s a challenge but there are efforts and there’s more we can do.

8:45 p.m.

Community Concerns Community members Objective: Opportunity for public comments

Norman – we got the business running out of a house needing to cease and desist by a judge, and an inspector came out to tell them they need to do it or they’ll go to jail. Progress has been made on this issue bit by bit.



8:56 p.m.

Adjourn Aquilla Ridgell

Chair

Objective: Close out meeting

19:03:02 From Serge Thomas to Everyone:

Hi everyone I am on my way home soon, so I will keep my video off. Good to see all of you 😊

19:03:13 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:
[https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/midcounty/Resources/Files/MCCAB%20agenda%2004_20_2023%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/midcounty/Resources/Files/MCCAB%20agenda%2004_20_2023%20(1).pdf)

19:22:40 From Kathia to Everyone:
I'll put it here!

19:24:16 From Kathia to Everyone:
Kathia Chevez with the office of CM Natali Fani-González.
Kathia.Chevez@montgomerycountymd.gov

19:24:50 From Pamela Luckett to Everyone:
Pamela Luckett, office of Council President Evan Glass

19:25:19 From Serge Thomas to Everyone:
Hi Pamela! Good to meet you!

19:27:41 From Arquilla Ridgell to Everyone:
Replying to "I'll put it here!"

Welcome Kathia. Thank you for coming.

19:28:59 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:
Nathan E. Bovellev
Manager II

Division of Community Development
Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Montgomery County Government

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For questions about services provided by Montgomery County, or to file a complaint, please contact MC311 at 3-1-1 or (240) 777-0311.

19:55:36 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:
Per MCDOT the funding for Streeterie is for planning

19:55:57 From Luisa Cardona to Everyone:
1.8 million for the three

19:57:19 From jim e to Everyone:
thanks Luisa....planning means a long time before implementation unfortunately

20:07:26 From Pamela Luckett to Everyone:

Washington Post Op Ed on Community Policing written by Council President Glass

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/05/13/community-policing-montgomery-county-by-community/>

20:11:09 From Pamela Lockett to Everyone:

Washington Post Op Ed on County Liquor Stores written by Council President Evan Glass

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/time-to-end-montgomery-countys-alcohol-monopoly/2014/04/25/68beb01c-cb1f-11e3-a75e-463587891b57_story.html

20:11:55 From Tameka Nicholson to Everyone:

Thanks Pam.

20:12:48 From Pamela Lockett to Everyone:

Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov

Pamela.lockett@montgomerycountymd.gov

20:16:34 From Pamela Lockett to Everyone:

I will stay on.

20:33:46 From Michelle Whittaker, CM Jawando Office to Everyone:

Summer RISE <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/partnerships/summer-rise/>

20:38:06 From Rob Fox to Everyone:

<https://freakonomics.com/podcast/chicagos-renegade-sheriff-wants-to-fix-law-enforcement/>

20:45:25 From Rob Fox to Everyone:

Oakland Terrace is actually implementing dual language programs, as well as some of the other schools in my area

20:48:15 From Rob Fox to Everyone:

<https://www2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms/elementary/two-way-immersion>

20:48:20 From Rob Fox to Everyone:

found the link

20:48:47 From Michelle Whittaker, CM Jawando Office to Everyone:

Here is information on BOND Project <https://bondeducators.org/about-us/>

20:49:37 From Michelle Whittaker, CM Jawando Office to Everyone:

Councilmember.jawando@montgomerycountymd.gov

20:49:47 From Michelle Whittaker, CM Jawando Office to Everyone:

Thank you!