



HICKORY RIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Village Board Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2025, at 7:30pm

Meeting recording:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/V69IMLC9oxtuM5b1huD3t-pV7uyKgeGCsjSw08qjtZ4BT4uUcqZQ3IJwPTdfORQ.tMGFDVoyVWX36K9W?startTime=1757373384000>

Members Present: Kristine Amari, Mark Covington, Steve Hannan, Mike McGarity, Mariah Robertson and Skye Anderson

Staff Present: Laura Mayton & Emily Rieger

Guests: 15 attendees

Call to Order: 7:30pm

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Ms. Amari made a motion to approve the agenda and Mr. Covington seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.
2. **Approval of July 28, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes:** Ms. Amari made a motion to approve July 28, 2025, Board Meeting minutes. Mr. Hannan seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
3. **Board Update:** Ms. Amari remarked that all the pathway, bridge and sidewalk work in the Village was needed and much appreciated.
4. **Resident Speak-Out:** No comments were made.
5. **CA Board of Directors Report—Skye Anderson:** Ms. Anderson reported that August is a slow month with no meetings, and the July report is posted on the Hickory Ridge website. She highlighted the upcoming CA budget process and Town Hall meeting, where CA leadership will give informational presentations and answer questions.
6. **New Business:**
 - a. **WAC to CARES, Charter Review:** Ms. Wessner presented the WAC's accomplishments over the past year, including Weed Warrior activities, a flood presentation, and native plant distribution. She introduced the proposed name change from WAC (Watershed Advisory Committee) to CARES Committee (Community Action and Resources for Environmental Stewardship) to align with other Villages and expand the mission of the Committee. The revised Charter includes electronic meetings, a Vice Chair, and expanded purview to include environmental sustainability. Ms. Amari made a motion to approve the new CARES Committee Charter. Dr. McGarity seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b. **Updated Financial Policies Review:** Ms. Mayton discussed the need to update financial policies to reflect the shift to QuickBooks Online and digital record-keeping. She explained the new process for preparing and depositing bank deposits, emphasizing the importance of checks and balances. Dr. Robertson made a motion to approve the changes to the financial policy. Mr. Covington seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
 - c. **Howard County Budget Priorities:** Ms. Mayton and Dr. McGarity discussed the need to clarify requests for marked crosswalks and other traffic improvements in the county budget

priorities letter. Ms. Mayton agreed to make edits to the letter for it to be reviewed during the next meeting.

- d. Columbia Association Budget Priorities:** Ms. Mayton presented a chart comparing CA's total income and village income, highlighting the disparity in inflation-adjusted increases. Dr. Robertson raised concerns about the Village's disproportionate funding compared to smaller villages. Ms. Mayton explained the ongoing discussions with CA to revise the assessment share calculation formula. The Board agreed to include a request for increased assessment shares in the CA budget priorities letter.
- e. Board Meeting Schedule:** Ms. Anderson proposes reducing the number of board meetings from two to one per month, with the option to schedule a second meeting if needed. The Board agreed to tentatively schedule one meeting per month and consider adding a second meeting if necessary. They also agreed to table the topic for the next meeting.

7. Old Business:

- a. Candidate Requirements for the 2026 Election (Table for 9/22 meeting):** Ms. Mayton requested to table the discussion on candidate requirements for the 2026 election until the next meeting. The board agreed to postpone the discussion to allow for further preparation and input from former Election Committee members.

8. Manager Report—Laura Mayton: Ms. Mayton highlighted the success of Prepare for Success in providing school supplies. She reminded residents that there are several unclaimed block party grants. She invited everyone to attend the upcoming Hickory Ridge Flea Market.

9. Action Items

- a)** Ms. Mayton will make edits to the Howard County budget priority letter

10. Adjournment: Dr. Robertson made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Covington seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:44pm.

HICKORY RIDGE ~~VILLAGE~~-COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
of Columbia, Maryland
COMMUNITY ACTION and RESOURCES for ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP
COMMITTEE CHARTER

Mission Statement

The mission of the Hickory Ridge ~~Village~~-Community Association Community Action and Resources for Environmental Stewardship Committee (the “CARES Committee” or the “Committee”) is to enhance environmental awareness and educate residents of ~~the~~ Hickory Ridge ~~Village~~ community on opportunities and concerns related to the local environment.

Goals

To fulfill its mission, the Committee has the following goals:

1. To work with the Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board, the Columbia Association (“CA”) -staff and advisory committees as well as other Columbia village environmental committees to understand and develop support for techniques, procedures and approaches that maintain and enhance environmental ~~sustainability~~ stewardship in the Hickory Ridge ~~village~~ Communitycommunity.
2. To educate and recommend to residents of the Hickory Ridge ~~v~~Village the best community and individual practices that support, sustain and improve the village environment, including (but not limited to) air and water quality, reduction of pollution, soil and habitat improvement. Education may include articles in the village newsletter and events to enable, demonstrate and implement such practices.
3. To make recommendations to the Hickory Ridge ~~Village~~-Community Association Board of Directors regarding potential investments to improve the Hickory Ridge environment and to highlight CA and county policies and procedures that may impact the environment of the village.
4. To make recommendations regarding the Hickory Ridge Architectural Guidelines that will help residents implement environmentally appropriate property modification.

Procedures

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

The CARES Committee shall consist of up to ten (10) residents of the Hickory Ridge [Village Community Association](#). Members will be recommended for appointment to the Committee based on their experience, educational background, and interest in environmental issues.

Section 2

Nominations for Hickory Ridge [Village](#) residents to be members of the CARES Committee shall be presented to the Hickory Ridge [Village Community Association](#) Board of Directors who shall approve each appointment.

Section 3

Committee members shall be appointed for a one year term. Renewal of membership is permissible, but the Hickory Ridge [Village Community Association](#) Board of Directors shall approve each appointment or renewal. Committee members may resign at any time by notifying the Chairperson of the Committee.

Section 4

Committee members are expected to abide by the Hickory Ridge [Village Community Association](#) Board's Conflict of Interest and Ethics Policy. Committee members may be required to sign the "Acknowledgement of Conflict of Interest Policy" upon their appointment by the Hickory Ridge [Village Community Association](#) Board of Directors.

Section 5

The Hickory Ridge [Community Association](#)~~Village~~ Board may remove any Committee member from the Committee, at their pleasure, by a majority vote. The Committee may also recommend that the Hickory Ridge [Village Community Association](#) Board remove a Committee member. Recommendations for removal must include the reason for recommending the member's removal, and must be approved by the majority of Committee members.

ARTICLE II: OFFICERS

Section 1

There will be one Chairperson for the Committee who shall be elected by a majority vote of members present at the first regular meeting of the Committee each year.

Section 2

The Chairperson shall be responsible for preparation of the agenda for all meetings, and shall preside over all meetings of the Committee.

Section 3

There may be a Deputy Chairperson for the Committee who shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the Committee. The Deputy shall be responsible for assisting the Chairperson and shall preside over all meetings of the Committee when the Chairperson is absent.

Section 4

The Chairperson may request another Committee member to serve as recorder of minutes for any meeting, and such recorder may change from meeting to meeting. If a meeting is held by electronic means, a recording of such meeting may substitute for minutes. The Chairperson shall request approval of meeting minutes (electronic approval by email is acceptable).

ARTICLE III: DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Section 1

By accepting a position on the Committee, each member agrees to attend and actively participate in regular and special Committee meetings.

Section 2

The Committee may recommend policy to the Hickory Ridge [Village-Community Association](#) Board of Directors, but shall have no policy-making authority.

Section 3

The Committee shall advocate with the residents of Hickory Ridge [Village-cCommunity](#) for Howard County and CA approved methods and techniques to address environmental concerns.

Section 4

The Committee members shall participate in the majority of the Committee-sponsored activities and community events.

Section 5

The Committee members, individually and collectively, do not speak on behalf of the Hickory Ridge [Village-Community Association](#) Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

Section 1

Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held at least quarterly. More frequent meetings may be established by the membership. Meetings may be held in person or using electronic meeting applications. Notification for all meetings shall be provided to the Hickory Ridge Village Manager who can place the notice on the Hickory Ridge [vVillage](#) website. All meetings shall be open to the public.

Section 2

The Chairperson may call special meetings at any time and shall notify all members and the Hickory Ridge Village Manager, at least one week prior to such meeting, as to the time, place and purpose of such special meetings.

Section 3

Additionally, at the request of the majority of the members, the Chairperson shall cause a special meeting to be called. The request must be made in writing (email is acceptable) and be received at least two weeks before the requested scheduled date and must state the purpose for the meeting. No business except that specified in the notice may be transacted without the unanimous consent of those in attendance.

Section 4

In the event of a meeting requiring a vote, a majority of the Committee's membership is required to be present at the meeting to constitute a quorum. Due to the time between meetings, if a topic is agreed to be reviewed during a meeting members may be requested to provide an email vote on the topic between meetings, directed to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will report to all members by email on the result of such vote and will also report the result at the next Committee meeting.

ARTICLE V: AMENDMENTS

The Committee may vote at any regular or special meeting to recommend amendments to this Charter. The recommendation must be accomplished by a vote of two-thirds of the entire Committee. Proposed amendments must be communicated to the membership at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which a vote will be taken with respect to such amendment. Modifications to the charter are subject to approval by the Hickory Ridge Community Association Village Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI: MEETING PROTOCOL

The agenda for each meeting shall address old business and then new business. The Committee may adopt a format appropriate to conduct meetings in a civil manner. Should Hickory Ridge community residents who are not members of the Committee attend a meeting they shall each be given an opportunity to speak on topics not on the agenda for two minutes.

ARTICLE VII: STAFF SUPPORT

The Hickory Ridge Village-Community Association staff member(s) shall provide support to the Committee by working with the Chairperson to maintain a schedule of Committee meetings and notifying the public of meetings or events. The staff member(s) also will assist the Committee in gathering, assessing and presenting reports to the Hickory Ridge Village-Community Association Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VIII: REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Minutes and/or recordings of the Committee's meetings will be sent to the Hickory Ridge Village Manager, ~~and who~~ shall ~~be available~~ provide them on request to the Hickory Ridge ~~Community Association Village~~ Board or Hickory Ridge residents. The Committee will provide a written report to the Hickory Ridge ~~Village~~ Community Association Board of Directors on an annual basis, or more often as requested.

ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEE CHARTER RENEWAL

This Committee Charter ~~may be~~ will automatically be renewed annually. ~~The by an affirmative majority vote of the~~ Hickory Ridge ~~Village~~ Community Association Board of Directors may determine to terminate the Charter if they so choose by a majority vote. . If the Charter is not renewed, the work of the Committee shall terminate and the Committee shall be disbanded.

Excerpt from the Board Policy Manual – financial policies require updates after moving from Quickbooks Desktop to Quickbooks Online.

VII. FINANCIAL POLICIES

A. Check signers

The manager and three Village Board members will have check-signing privileges. The Village Manager will approve~~initial~~ all invoices for payment, and the bookkeeper will ~~pay and mail bills~~create checks in Quickbooks Online. Checks will be printed by a staff member and signed and mailed by the manager. Any check over \$~~1500~~1000, ~~except monthly health insurance premiums~~, must be signed by at least one Board member. This restriction does not apply to recurring bills and transfers between accounts. Recurring bills include:

- Gas & Electric
- Insurance
- Janitorial Expenses
- Newsletter Printing
- Taxes
- Telephone
- Water Bills
- Special Events expenses within the yearly budget

Any check made payable to the Village Manager must be signed by a ~~b~~Board member. No check will be signed by the payee. Access to savings, money market or certificates of deposit will require two signatures, one from staff and one from a Board member.

B. Security

All blank checks will be kept in a locked and secure location. There will be accounts for each individual accessing Quickbooks Online and the bank, each with a secure password.~~a computer password for access to the accounting information and check register.~~

C. Receipts

Staff must create an invoice for payment or give issue a numbered receipt for any transaction in excess of \$5. Receipts for lesser amounts will be given if requested. Cash received for stamps, fax, and copier will be placed in their proper containers. We do not accept payments for any class instructors or any other organization that rents our facility. All money received after normal business hours is labeled or attached to the appropriate documentation and placed in the safe.~~under the locked office door.~~

D. Deposits

Staff will deposit ~~cash and checks~~ the contents of the safe at least weekly. Absent extenuating circumstances, the amount of cash in the office should not exceed \$500. When checks are received at the office, staff will immediately endorse the back.

E. Division of Duties

- ~~The bookkeeper~~ Staff will prepare bank deposits. ~~unless he/she is out of the office. In such cases, another staff member may prepare the deposits.~~
- The preparer will photocopy scan all checks and deposit slips and save them to the Hickory Ridge share drive under Bookkeeping; Deposits. file them in the Bank Deposits notebook
- The bookkeeper or manager will deliver the money deposit to the bank and make the deposit. The bookkeeper will log the deposits in Quickbooks Online the accounting software.
- Monthly statements from the bank will be reviewed by the bookkeeper. initiated by an employee who does not have check signing privileges.
- The Bookkeeper will reconcile the accounts and the Village Manager will review ~~and initial/date~~ the reconciliations.

F. Reports

The bookkeeper and CPA will prepare for the Village Board a quarterly financial report which includes a profit/loss statement, a balance sheet and an itemized category report of all income and expenses for that quarter. The profit/loss statement will be reviewed and approved by the Village Board and signed by the Chair and/or Vice Chair and the Village Manager. The board-approved quarterly profit/loss statement and balance sheet will also be sent to the Columbia Association. ~~Staff will also prepare an itemized category report for all income and expenses during that quarter.~~

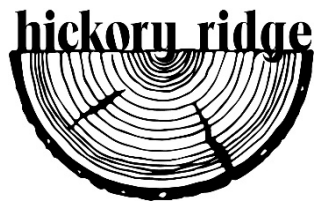
G. Reimbursing Staff

All requests for reimbursements must be on the appropriate forms and approved by the ~~m~~Manager before a check is written. Reimbursement requests, other than petty cash requests, from the Village Manager must be approved by the Chair or Vice Chair.

Original receipts must accompany any reimbursement request. Requests for reimbursement of mileage will be paid at the IRS deduction rate for use of a private vehicle. A staff person may use a personal credit card to pay for an office expense, but the original receipt must accompany the reimbursement request.

H. Taxes

The manager will file all appropriate federal and state tax returns in a timely manner.



Hickory Ridge Community Association

6175 Sunny Spring, Columbia, Maryland 21044 • 410 730-7327
hickoryridgevillage.org • thehawthorncenter.org

September 23, 2025

Calvin Ball, Howard County Executive
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear County Executive Ball:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on short, medium, and long-term priorities for communities in Howard County. We appreciate your efforts in the past year in accomplishing several items on our previous list. Below please find our updated list of priorities.

Short Term (one year, in order of priority):

1. Pedestrian crossings at intersections. While pedestrian crossings have been added in several areas, the Little Patuxent Parkway loop needs additional crosswalks for safety. There are several locations where pathways are on either side of the road with no crosswalk nearby. Also, at the south end of Martin Road near county park, there is a crosswalk without curb cuts and no connection to the sidewalks. Please continue to evaluate village intersections and other pedestrian crossing areas to be in line with the “walkability/bikeability” of Columbia. (Transportation)
2. Traffic study on Martin Road north and south of Halfcrown Court to determine the need for traffic calming/control in this area. (Transportation)
3. Road maintenance – Pothole filling should be tended to as soon as possible to avoid compounding the problems. (DPW)

Mid Term (next two years, in order of priority):

1. Facility Maintenance – Neighborhood schools, like Bryant Woods ES, require repairs/renovations to bring facilities up to good maintenance standards.
2. School Capacity Projects and– School capacity is an issue as our part of Columbia is set for significant new housing development. We want to ensure that we have adequate school capacity for our growing population. The HCPSS 2020 Feasibility Study recommends building a new elementary school in downtown Columbia as one of the next school construction projects. New school capacity at the elementary school level should be added to our area as soon as possible. (HCPSS)
3. Expansion/Improvements to our local public transportation options – Bus routes and maintenance of bus stops (improvements at some bus stops make them much more usable and attractive), and further extension of Complete Streets Policy/Bikeway through adequate funding. (Transportation)
4. Cedar Lane and Hickory Ridge Road Bike Corridor– implement the Bicycle Master Plan which includes improvements to Cedar Lane from Route 32 to Harpers Farm Road and improved cycling accessibility from Hickory Ridge to downtown Columbia. (Transportation)
5. Climate Action Plan – Implement recommendations of work groups in a timely manner to meet benchmarks in climate action.

Long Term (next 4 to 5 years, in order of priority):

1. Racial Equity – Hickory Ridge fully supports the mission of the Equity & Restorative Practices Unit. Please ensure that the recommended practices are being observed by all County offices. County programs and policies should be evaluated through the lenses of their ability to close racial disparities and inequalities. Columbia should strive for racial equity in metrics such as home ownership, college attainment, and wealth. (DCRS)
2. Comprehensive traffic congestion and traffic safety – a thorough, comprehensive review of traffic congestion, safety, and travel patterns should be a priority on our major corridors: Cedar Lane, Broken Land Pkwy, Little Patuxent Parkway, and Hickory Ridge Road. These roads are only going to get more congested with the pending developments in and around Columbia. (Transportation)
3. Environmental – Increase tree canopy with tree planting in Howard County Open Space areas adjacent to Hickory Ridge. Continue and expand tree giveaways for resident to allow greater tree coverage in the County.

Thank you for considering these suggestions.

Cordially,

Stephen Hannan
Chair, Hickory Ridge Board of Directors



Hickory Ridge Community Association

6175 Sunny Spring, Columbia, Maryland 21044 • 410 730-7327
hickoryridgevillage.org • thehawthorncenter.org

September 22, 2025

Columbia Association Board of Directors
6310 Hillside Court, Suite 100
Columbia, MD 21046

Dear Directors:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on budget priorities for Hickory Ridge in the Columbia Association FY27 budget. Here are some suggestions that Hickory Ridge would like you to consider as you review the priorities.

- Increase the Villages' share of assessment dollars to allow the Villages to be adequately funded.
- The Clemens Crossing pool splashpad project and locker room renovation has been deferred for several years. Please return this project to the capital budget for FY25.
- ~~Update the large tot lot at the center of the Little Patuxent Parkway loop. This tot lot is in a densely populated area, and it gets a lot of use.~~ **DONE THIS YEAR**
- Place additional charging stations for electric cars at CA facilities.
- Reach out to new residents who are not new homeowners to welcome them to Columbia and make them aware that they are members of the community and Columbia Association.

Cordially,

Stephen Hannan
Hickory Ridge Board Chair



Manager's Report September 8, 2025

1. Dates to Note:

- **September 13**, 8:00 – 10:30am, Flea Market and CA Tree Giveaway
- **September 17**, 7:30pm, RAC meeting, virtual
- **September 22**, 7:30pm, In-person Board meeting with hybrid option

2. Block Party Grants: Plan a block party and invite everyone on your street!

- A total of 15 grants are available for FY26. Each grant is for a \$100 Giant Gift Card.
- One block grant per street is allowed each year (except for very long streets, at the Manager's discretion).
- Everyone on the street must be invited to the party, and a copy of the invitation must accompany the application form.
- We must have [a completed form](#) and invitation before issuing a gift card.
- The party sponsor must drop off the completed form (with attached invitation) at The Hawthorn Center, Monday through Thursday, 9:30am – 5:00pm or Friday, 9:30am – 3:30pm. The party sponsor must sign to indicate receipt of the gift card.

3. Prepare for Success: Prepare for Success (PFS) reached a record 5,300 students in 2025—their largest impact yet! That is 1,000 more students than last year who walked into school with a brand-new backpack and essential supplies, ready to learn. PFS distributed supplies to 54 different schools or non-profit organizations. They estimate that the collected loose supplies (like ours) yielded 1,000 of the stuffed backpacks.

4. Community Walk: Walk the Hawthorn neighborhood paths with members of the community on Monday mornings. Meet at The Hawthorn Center at 10:00am, take a walk, and enjoy a coffee at The Hawthorn Center on us! Happening almost every Monday. Follow Hickory Ridge on Facebook or Instagram using the QR code below for weekly updates!

5. Columbia Card for Columbia Association Assessed Residents: If you live on Columbia Association (CA) assessed property but aren't a CA member, you can request a free Columbia Card to access their facilities at a reduced, pay-as-you-go rate. As a Columbia Cardholder, you'll get discounts at CA's pools, tennis courts, and golf courses, as well as on group fitness classes and kids' programs. SUMMER BONUS: Columbia Cardholders receive 4 single-use guest passes per family on their Columbia Cardholder accounts. These guest passes are automatically added. The passes can be used at any of CA's 23 outdoor pools throughout the summer, Monday – Thursday only (excluding holidays). They cannot be used at other Columbia Association facilities or programs. (<https://columbiaassociation.org/sports-recreation/membership/columbia-card/>)

6. Open Space Issues: Report issues on CA Open Space via a form on their web site. Photos may be included. It is also helpful to note the location, if possible. Tot lots and bridges are marked with identification numbers. Visit CA's web site here: <https://columbiaassociation.org/open-space/contact-us/> To view current CA Open Space projects, visit <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/400d4f61a51e4db6acebe2daf5971244>

7. **Follow Hickory Ridge:** Find all the ways to connect with [Hickory Ridge here](#):



8. **Committee Reports:**

- **Resident Architectural Committee:** The RAC continues to review applications as usual.
- **Watershed Advisory Committee:** The WAC meets regularly on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00pm. For meeting information, see the calendar on our website.
- **Aging Well in Columbia (AWC) at CA:** No updates for this meeting.