



HICKORY RIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Village Board Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2026, at 7:30pm

Members Present: Skye Anderson, Mark Covington, Shane Lease, Mariah Robertson and Mike McGarity. Lynn Hannan was present virtually.

Staff Present: Laura Mayton & Beth Roberts

Guests: Colin Maclachlan

Call to Order: 7:33pm

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Mr. Lease made a motion to approve the agenda and Mr. Covington seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.
2. **Approval of July 13, 2026, Board Meeting Minutes:** Dr. Robertson made a motion to approve August minutes. Mr. Lease seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
3. **Icebreaker Activity:** Dr. Robertson asked each Board member to share a fun or interesting fact about their name. Each board member shared.
4. **Board Update:** Ms. Anderson had a few points to mention. Firstly, Grassroots has lost grants and needs funding. She also mentioned that the intersection between Freetown Road and Quarterstaff is now a 4-way stop with crosswalks, which has been very well received in the community. Lastly, there is a weed warriors training course available on October 3rd for those interested in managing a parcel of land in Hickory Ridge. Ms. Hannan wanted to shout out the CARES Committee for their successful adopt-a-tree program. Dr. Robertson wanted to shout out the community's support for The Meadows, and for Mr. Domm for his efforts to advocate for them. Their lease has now been renewed by Kimco.
5. **Resident Speak-Out:** Residents did not have comments.
6. **CA Board of Directors Report—Mike McGarity:** Dr. McGarity discussed CA's potential purchase of the HQ building. The CA Board has given approval to staff to pursue the acquisition of 6315 Hillside Court. This purchase would include the headquarters as well as the property next to it, which Columbia Association has considered using for a childcare facility.
7. **New Business:**
 - a. **Donation Request:** Bryant Woods Elementary is urgently in need of funding. The Board discussed the request. Mr. Lease made a motion to approve the donation. Mr. Covington seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b. **CA Update, Chris Clem, Open Space Manager, Columbia Association:** Chris Clem gave a report on Open Space operations and updates. Most notable was the team's response to the calls placed after the storm on August 11th, 2026. They received 150+ calls, all of which were responded to within 24 hours. All paths were cleared within the time frame.
 - c. **Sharna Olafisoye, AmeriCorps Intake & Mediation Specialist, Mediation and Conflict Resolution Center:** Ms. Olafisoye of the Mediation and Conflict center shared about the

center's mission and the services they provide. They are the only mediation & conflict resolution center in Howard County and have been in service for 26 years. Ms. Mayton asked if Ms. Olafisoye could explain the mediation process in the event of a neighbor dispute. Dr. McGarity was interested to know if statistics have been published on the number of cases successfully mediated each year. Ms. Olafisoye was unsure if records were published.

- d. Introduction of Colin MacLachlan, Hickory Ridge Representative to Columbia Association's Watershed Resident Advisory Committee (WRAP):** Mr. MacLachlan shared objectives of his role as the HR representative to WRAP. They are looking to provide observations and recommendations on how the villages' guidelines can be improved to align more with sustainability principles. Some examples Mr. MacLachlan provided were stricter guidelines pertaining to planting native vs nonnative plants, as well as limiting the number of trees residents can remove.
- e. FY26 Financial Review and FY26 Q4 Updates:** Ms. Mayton informed the board that there was an error in the reported income in the Q4 financial review that was caught by the accountant performing the financial review. Mr. Lease made a motion to approve the updated financials and Mr. Covington seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Old Business:

- a. Amendment to Bylaws—Requirements for Board Membership:** The board discussed changing the language in the bylaws to eliminate ambiguity regarding board membership eligibility. Current bylaws do not make clear the process of removing Board members who no longer live or own property in the Village. Ms. Mayton will reach out to CA's attorney to discuss Columbia Council member eligibility.

- 9. Manager Report—Laura Mayton:** Dedication ceremony for Emily Rieger has been postponed until the plaque dimensions have been finalized. The plaque will be fixed to a boulder, which will be added to the seating area by the little free library. Once the plaque and boulder are selected, more plans can be made regarding a dedication ceremony.

10. Action Items:

- Ms. Mayton will connect Ms. Hannan and Mr. MacLachlan to further discuss suggestions for WRAP.
- Ms. Mayton will reach out to CA's attorney.

10. Adjournment: Dr. Robertson made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lease seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:13 PM



Hickory Ridge Community Association

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DONATION REQUEST FORM

Date: 9/2/26

Name of Organization: Bryant Woods Elementary School PTA

Contact Person: Emma Curran

Address: 5450 Blue Heron Lane, Columbia, MD 21044

Telephone: _____

Email: fundraising@bwespta.org

Please answer the following questions:

The Hickory Ridge Board prefers that the donation be used primarily for Hickory Ridge residents.

Who will receive the service?

Bryant Woods Elementary school students living in Wilde Lake and Hickory Ridge

How many people?

200

What will the donation be used for?

Student programming and events, teacher and staff appreciation, educational activi

What is the total budgeted amount of the project?

\$1,000

How are other funds being obtained? What other organizations have made or will be making donations?

Wilde Lake village, Queen takes book, will be approaching local businesses

Please use another page for any additional information.

Amount requested: \$1000

Mediator Conflict Resolution Center

Strengthening Communities & Navigating Conflict Through Peaceful
Dialogue

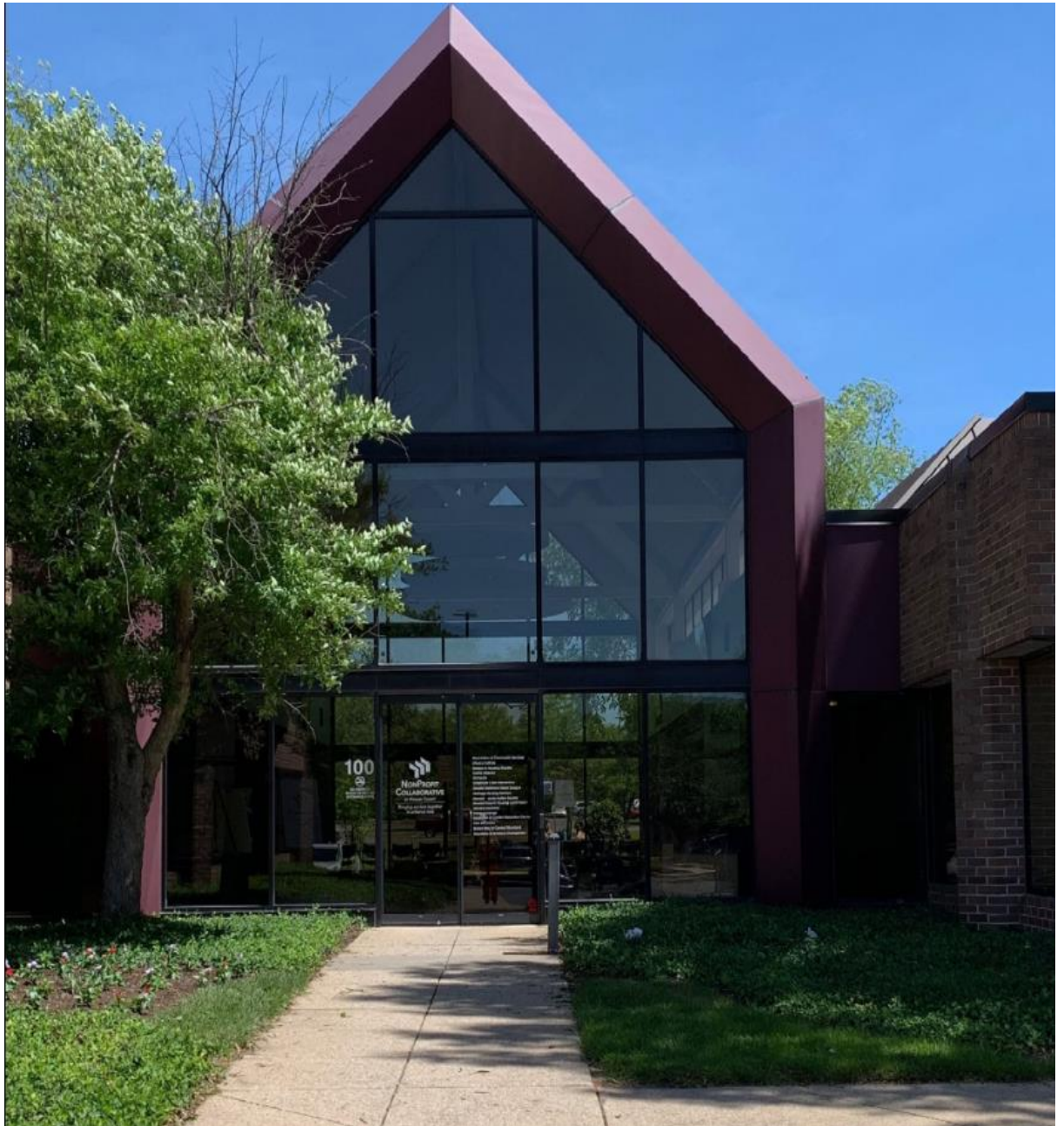


26 Years in Howard County

Rooted in Our Community

Founded 26 years ago at Howard Community College, MCRC holds a unique responsibility as the **only community mediation center in Howard County**.

For over a quarter century, our mission has remained simple: helping neighbors talk through tough situations constructively before they turn into costly legal battles.





The Core of What We Do

Moving away from adversarial division to anchor community support in five essential approaches

The 5 'C's Framework (Part 1)



Community

Columbia and Howard County thrive when local relationships are healthy. Strong villages require open communication.



Conversation

Creating a structured, neutral space where all parties can safely say what truly needs to be said.



Communication

Guiding both sides to genuinely hear each other, rather than simply waiting for their turn to react.

The 5 'C's Framework (Part 2)



Collaboration

Ensuring core needs are addressed without forcing artificial consensus. Success often means discovering practical middle ground, learning to respectfully disagree, or finding a clean path forward.



Conflict

Reframing friction depending on your relationship to general conflict—not viewing it as an insurmountable crisis, but as an opportunity to address what isn't working.

Everyday Neighbor Disputes

Living close together naturally creates friction. MCRC helps resolve common neighborhood tensions before escalation:

- **Property & Encroachment:** Disagreements over trees, fences, and shared driveways.
- **Noise Disturbances:** Ongoing sound issues that disrupt daily home life.
- **Yard & Property Maintenance:** Tensions arising over unkept lawns or boundary upkeep.



Why Community Mediation Works



Saves Time, Money & Stress

Avoid Costly Battles: Court cases, police calls, and HOA disputes can take months or years while costing thousands of dollars.

Preserve Relationships: At the end of a trial, you still live near your neighbor. Mediation resolves disputes on your own terms with mutual dignity.

Full Spectrum of Services



Restorative Justice

Facilitated processes to repair harm, navigate group dialogue, and support youth and community healing.



Comprehensive Mediation

Dedicated mediation services across housing, family, neighborhood, and organizational spaces.



Volunteer Opportunities

Training everyday Howard County residents to become certified volunteer co-mediators.

Community-Driven Impact



Navigating Conflict Together

"A strong community isn't defined by the absence of conflict—it's defined by how we navigate it when it arises."

Co-Mediator Model: MCRC pairs two neutral, trained volunteer mediators per session to ensure fair, respectful, and balanced support for all parties.

Let's Talk It Through Together

If you or someone you work with is dealing with a dispute, MCRC is here to help.



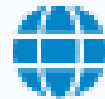
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www.mcrchoward.org

Image Sources



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c9/Howard_Community_College_sign_Columbia_MD_2023-04-02_09-06-01.jpg?utm_source=en.wikipedia.org&utm_campaign=index&utm_content=original

Source: en.wikipedia.org



https://barrierbossusa.com/cdn/shop/articles/Black_corrugated_in_red_cedar_backyard_privacy_separation_boundary_property_urban_1fa8d0f6-e19d-4ec7-a37c-4e51f41f39da_1200x.jpg?v=1760740362

Source: barrierbossusa.com



<https://swmhhs.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Circle-Group-1024x684.jpeg>

Source: swmhhs.com

Village: Hickory Ridge
Fiscal Year: FY26
Quarter: 4
Date Prepared: 8/15/26 REVISED

SUMMARY STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
May 1 - April 30

	<u>Actual Quarter</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>YTD Prior Year</u>
<u>REVENUES</u>					
1 CA Annual Charge Share Grant	83,906	335,625	335,625	(0)	325,876
2 Lease & Rental	26,236	140,053	147,000	(6,948)	161,708
3 Tuition & Enrollment	0	0	0	0	0
4 Interest	329	1,120	180	940	135
5 Special Events	1,630	3,615	6,635	(3,021)	5,125
6 Fees	94	134	110	24	132
7 Miscellaneous	400	2,580	3,200	(621)	2,420
8 Gain/loss on Disposal of Asset	0	0	0	0	0
Total Revenue	<u>112,595</u>	<u>483,124</u>	<u>492,750</u>	<u>(9,626)</u>	<u>495,395</u>
<u>EXPENSES</u>					
9 Staff Salaries	63,725	266,955	280,625	(13,670)	277,329
10 Janitorial Wages	0	0	0	0	0
11 Contract Labor	1,666	6,166	7,000	(834)	1,725
12 Payroll Benefits	6,332	24,009	21,500	2,509	22,492
13 Payroll Taxes	5,636	21,884	21,000	884	21,748
14 Janitorial Expense	6,232	28,269	30,900	(2,631)	28,964
15 Fees	4,217	27,137	25,300	1,837	14,281
16 Operating Expenses	3,138	12,257	9,750	2,507	13,293
17 Business Expenses	97	1,104	3,300	(2,196)	1,900
18 Insurance	1,171	14,350	11,000	3,350	10,414
19 Advertising	0	198	1,000	(803)	1,029
20 Newsletter	8,211	21,480	20,000	1,480	21,369
21 Other Printing	5,657	5,657	4,500	1,157	4,699
22 Donations/Contributions	7,200	9,200	9,000	200	12,100
23 Special Events	8,565	16,077	20,000	(3,923)	27,627
24 Taxes	0	1,691	1,600	91	2,465
25 Utilities	8,820	19,085	14,500	4,585	12,749
26 Repairs & Maintenance	2,035	7,369	6,640	729	9,382
27 Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment	3,054	5,645	3,000	2,645	1,583
28 Total Expenses Before Depreciation	<u>135,757</u>	<u>488,533</u>	<u>490,615</u>	<u>(2,082)</u>	<u>485,149</u>
29 Depreciation	<u>532</u>	<u>2,134</u>	<u>2,135</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>4,237</u>
30 Total Expenses	<u>136,290</u>	<u>490,668</u>	<u>492,750</u>	<u>(2,082)</u>	<u>489,386</u>
Increase/(Decrease) in Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>(23,695)</u>	<u>(7,543)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(7,543)</u>	<u>6,009</u>



Manager's Report

September 14, 2026

1. Dates to Note:

- **September 16**, 7:30pm, RAC meeting, virtual
- **September 17**, e-issue of The Log newsletter
- **September 17**, 7:00pm, CARES meeting, virtual
- **October 2**, Tree Giveaway (signup required)

2. **CA Weed Warrior & Howard County Tree Savers Course**: Saturday, October 3 from 10 AM - 3 PM at Robinson Nature Center. This free one-day course is offered by Columbia Association and Howard County jointly to residents interested in the health of our Open Spaces. Certified volunteer leaders, who complete CA's training program, may supervise and "lead" groups of volunteers onto the open space to perform designated invasive weed removal tasks. There will be both a classroom and a field portion, so participants should bring water and wear long pants, long sleeves, close-toed shoes, and a hat. Lunch will be provided. Anyone interested can email Sustainability@columbiaassociation.org.

3. **From Lawn to Meadow**: Wednesday, September 16, 7 pm, virtual presentation. What does it really take to transform a conventional lawn into a thriving native meadow? Join Wild Ones and Sara Weaner Cooper for a candid look at her family's ongoing lawn-to-meadow project. Sara will share the decisions, methods, successes, surprises, and challenges that have shaped the landscape over multiple growing seasons. [Register here](#). This webinar will be recorded and shared with registrants after the premiere.

4. **Join the Resident Architectural Committee**: Are you interested in the housing styles and architecture in Hickory Ridge? Join the Resident Architectural Committee (RAC)! The RAC reviews exterior alteration applications for homes in Hickory Ridge. Get to know community members and learn more about the Village you live in! The RAC meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month in a virtual meeting at 7:30pm. In addition, RAC members visit 1 – 4 neighborhood properties in the week before the meeting as part of the application review process. Interested? Email Tania at applications@hickoryridgevillage.org.

5. **Monday Community Walks**: Walk the Hawthorn neighborhood paths with members of the community on Monday mornings. Meet at The Hawthorn Center at 9:00am, 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!

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



7. Committee Reports:

- **Resident Architectural Committee**: The RAC continues to review applications as usual, but the RAC needs new volunteer members! Email Tania at applications@hickoryridgevillage.org.
- **CARES Committee**: CARES 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.
- **Watershed Resident Advisory Committee (WRAP) at CA**: Rep attending meeting.