

MBRA Public Community Meeting Tuesday November 13th, 2018

Transcript of Complaints Raised At End of Meeting

Peter Schwartz, previous Marshall District Supervisor for Fauquier County and resident member of the MBRA, won a door prize in our free raffle and then shared his complaint: [I had asked Mary whether it would be possible to attend](video starts here) . . . a board meeting, uh, and, uh, she emailed me back and said 'no', that the board meetings were closed to MBRA members. I've been a member for at least 15 years - maybe longer than that - and I was rather astounded by that response. I don't know what the MBRA board could be discussing that's so sensitive that if one of our members wanted to sit in and observe the meeting that that should be a problem, and Mary indicated that that was a long-standing practice. I certainly was never familiar with that practice in all the years I've been a member of MBRA. So I thought it should be raised and discussed this evening because I think it's a very bad rule - if it's a rule - and I think we should see how the members feel about that.

Mary Wilkerson, MBRA President: Um, Patty did you want to say anything?

Patty Cloud, MBRA Treasurer: The only thought that I had was that, um, I've been on several different Boards over the years - school boards, (inaudible) boards, service boards - primarily Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center I've been since 1989, and several other - a hospital board, school board, and couple of other boards - Board meetings have always been closed. Every one that I've ever been on, they're not - the experience that I've had is that if we need specific information and would like some input from a certain member of the community or person that needs to address an issue, then that usually an invitation to come to the Board; it's not an open, public invitation for anyone who wants to sit in.

Audience member: What do you have to hide?

Patty: Pardon?

Audience member: What do you have to hide?

Patty: I don't have anything to hide, and as far as I know the Board doesn't. It's a matter of being a comfortable, low-key atmosphere.

MW: Okay, thank you Patty. Now, I would like to address that question. Over the weekend, Peter did suddenly ask - we haven't had this request from him for, that I, since recent years - I do know in my experience in nine years as serving as a director on the Board, from my experience everyone who came was invited and stayed for that time when they wanted to speak, and then left. For example, Peter would come if he wanted the Board to support something, a letter to the Board of Supervisors or something like that, he would come and then he would leave and the Board would do their business.

Now, I think y'all are confusing us with a governmental body; we are not a governmental body. For private, private organizations, it is up to the organization. As Patty has said, and Patty also, I think you mentioned all your years on the MBRA board it was a private meeting. I have never seen in my nine

years, this be a public meeting. Because, why? Because it's for like, work session and planning. We, our Board members, we put in tons of hours. This is like another full time job, so basically I have 2 full time jobs. We do everything for the community. We're volunteers, blood, sweat, and tears. We're not wealthy investors, we're not wealthy real estate owners. We're doing this because we are, each one of us, following, being true to ourselves, to fulfill the mission statement that we have which is to promote and enhance the quality of personal and professional life in Marshall.

Now, I know our Board has broken from the long-standing tradition of always taking a certain position - whatever the County, or our Supervisor position, or anything - we've had, we are a diverse board; we have a diverse set of opinions. And perhaps that's the first time the MBRA Board has ever had a diverse set of opinions, but we tolerate everyone. You know, we Board members, there are many different opinions on this Board, and we do what we have to do and we respect each other. And I certainly would hope - now we've gotten a lot of heat and pressure because we have allowed diversity of opinion and we have asked questions that maybe were uncomfortable.

We appreciate everyone's contribution to this community and we encourage each one of you, whatever your position is on any topic before Marshall, please, stay true to yourselves and keep that, you know, position, and follow your heart. And we can all work through everything we need to work through together.

Now, I know Peter, you asked, I know you are unhappy that you couldn't attend the Board meeting but like I said, it was a long-standing practice. This is a public forum and you did ask and that's great, and I did get your Saturday night email - I mean Sunday night email, late Sunday night, demanding ten years of our records by tonight --

Peter: No, I didn't demand anything, Mary, okay, let's not characterize it that way -

MW: Okay -

Peter: Um, when you told me that members were not allowed to attend the board meetings, I looked at the bylaws and the bylaws say that the Board is required to keep minutes of all board actions, so if members are not allowed to attend the meetings, which is something I think the membership needs to make a decision about going forward, I certainly think that, in accordance with the bylaws, the members ought to be able to see all of the minutes of Board meetings, so we can see the actions that the Board has taken over the years. I didn't demand them --

MW: And we have no, thank you, that's a good question --

Peter: -- Let me finish, please.

MW: Yes

Peter: I requested it, and I specifically said that if there was any cost incurred in making copies of those minutes, I'd be happy to pay that cost so that the organization didn't incur that cost.

MW: Yes

Peter: But I think that is not the primary issue here. I think the primary issue here is that I know a number of members of this organization who are long-standing members that I have talked to, um, are incredulous that a member can't simply go and observe a board meeting. I didn't ask to participate - I'm not a Board member, I asked to attend and observe, and, as you can imagine, I have sat on many boards in my life - both governmental boards, community organization boards, and private corporate boards - and frankly, I have never sat on a board where someone involved in the organization, whether it was a member of the community . . . shareholder --

Jeff Symanski, MBRA Director: You were on the Board of Supervisors, weren't you? They have private work sessions, don't they?

Peter: No, they, no, anybody can attend a work session . . . Board of Supervisors

Linda Suter: They do have closed sessions.

John Suter, MBRA Vice President: They have closed sessions.

Peter: They only have closed sessions where the law required it in connection with personnel matters. And, the fact of the matter is, this isn't the BOS, this is an organization that is supposed to represent its members - the Board is supposed to represent the membership of the MBRA and the Board needs to be accountable to the membership of the MBRA and if we don't have minutes that we can see and we can't observe the meetings, then there's no way to determine whether the Board is taking actions or making decisions that are reflective of this organization's membership.

MW: Well, Peter, um, I am definitely - you know I was going to tell you tonight - I am definitely working on that; we are definitely looking into your request, but, I do have to say, I feel it was rather aggressive and hostile to request them by tonight, less than 48 hrs, ten years of records. So I just want to say that. I think we need to go on, keep this on a positive note. Sarah?

Sarah Atkins, not an MBRA member: Um, yeah, I'm the secretary of the Leeds Ruritan club and I consider that to be sort of a similar community event. And as a standard practice, all of our members are invited to the meetings.

MW: Okay, and that's fine. And each private, civic group can decide how they want. We have, um, we also have sensitive matters with, we don't want to embarrass past leadership in any way and we're dealing with them. And also, there is a certain factor that some people in this community have said for years to me, and I didn't really see it myself until the past couple of years - that they feel intimidated about speaking up; they feel there is going to be bullying and retaliation or something like that if they don't go along with the recommended, powers that be -whatever they call them- the popular, the, whatever the idea is, if they have a different opinion. Okay, this is America, we shouldn't feel that way. We shouldn't feel, we should, like I said, be true to ourselves and stick with that. Dan?

Daniel J. Moore MBRA Business Member, 8393 West Main Street: I appreciate that, but I came up to you after the meeting at the Ruritan Club, because as someone who is not opposed to the renovation and improvement as it stands, felt that my voice was def not being heard. So to have, for me, who started coming here because it was a nice meeting and it was lovely, and it was all supportive and it was all warm and fuzzy, to start feeling uncomfortable coming to these meetings, like that's what we were talking about is people feeling like they weren't heard and feeling like they were getting bullied; I definitely feel that way now. I feel, I feel very hesitant to speak up for my position especially knowing that it's very clear, or I perceive it to be very clear, that is how the mbra was being represented, specifically by you.

MW: In what way? Because the statement that we made at our September meeting? Is that the question?

Daniel: Um, well, for one, but also the questions that were asked at the meeting seemed very one-sided.

MW: Well actually those questions were put forth - and I did speak with you afterwards and I encouraged you to definitely stay true to yourself and your opinion. Those questions were put forth by people who were both for and against and anywhere in between in the project, so . . .

Daniel: Right but the perception is that the group as a majority is against. I'm not asking . . .

MW: That's correct, the group in September was against. But we have to be able to flesh things out, *Audience interruption*

MW: - Excuse me -

Peter Schwartz: What group?

MW: Hold on just a second, the Board, excuse me, the Board in September was against. But let, hear me out: we have to be able to flesh things out because we are constantly getting new information, and changing, and if we don't in the course of this process, you don't know if we're gonna end up changing it. You don't know. This is just the simple process of getting information. And we have to allow the civil discourse. Now, I didn't hear that there was any, um, any, um, complaint that anyone was rude, that I was rude, the question, the moderator, or anything else at that time. That's not the case, it was very nicely delivered. We wanted to find out the answers to the questions. You don't know -

Daniel: Well you're hearing them now. No one's talking about anyone's behavior --

MW: - Okay, you don't know if we're gonna change our minds. It's just the process, so. Okay, Sarah?

Sarah: Yeah, if I can just give you the minutes and ask you to pick these questions that you've written and find one that you feel is written in an open and welcoming method to gather information. The

questions are right there; I'll give you a minute to go through them.

MW: Okay, we already feel that they were appropriate questions. So it might just be that we have to agree to disagree on that. So, if everyone would like to stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

Peter Schwartz: No, no.

Bess Taylor (was not an MBRA member): Wait a minute.

Audience member: Excuse me.

Dr. Ren Royston, MBRA Business member, Countryside Family Practice: We're just beginning.

Audience member: We're just starting.

Sarah Atkins: I had a question and you didn't answer.

MW: I already said we looked, we were, we considered

Anne Michael Greene (not an MBRA member): I have a follow-up question: who did actually write those questions?

MW: Our entire Board. Almost everyone of our Board, both for and against, wrote these questions.

Anne Michael: So not the members? Not coming from the membership?

MW: These are questions that our Board had, and some of the Board is for, and wrote these questions and some were against and some were anywhere in between. Debbie?

Debbie Cloud, MBRA Business Member, Exit Realty: Question for you: when Mary Leigh last year stated that they weren't going to be able to bury the lines, I came to you as, the head of MBRA, and asked about having a public hearing for the community to discuss the issue so that we could get input from everybody that's been on the Board and part of the community, and you said you wanted to deal with Mary Leigh and try to find out what the information was, and it ended up getting pushed till September that we had the meeting.

MW: No, I don't remember what, when, did you say "last year"? Do you mean earlier this year?

Debbie: In, she mentioned it around May in the meeting.

MW: Yes.

Debbie: And we met in May or June.

MW: Yes. Um,

Debbie: And so my asking was, can we open up an MBRA open forum where we can discuss big issues instead of a couple minutes at the end . . . of the meeting -

MW: Exactly, exactly, exactly.

Debbie: And you stated that you would take it to the Board, and I never heard a response back, if that was possible, so that we can discuss issues like this, as a community, not just the Board speaking about it, and then presenting questions where we never spoke about it as a community.

MW: Well like I told you in May, Mary Leigh was not ready for it. We had it as - we wanted to have it in July; I actually asked her, 'could we have it as early as July?' She still wasn't ready for it. She pushed it to September. For us to have a meeting when we don't have the County information would be pretty pointless.

Debbie: It would have been on the Board and this group for 15 years and there was plenty of information within this group that a dialogue would have been a good thing to start so that you could start communicating with Mary Leigh and then have a very productive meeting in September. In my opinion.

MW: We have been communicating with Mary Leigh since May. We have been trying to get information and trying to get just such a meeting with her since May, so we've done the best we could and that's the best we could get. John?

John: Mary, could I suggest that the MBRA Board members meet and discuss this, come up with a recommendation to the group, and we'll have a vote on it?

MW: That's fine and also just to let you know, our Board did meet yesterday --
Audience interruption

Duke Yowell, resident member: We really gonna have a vote on it? The membership or the Board?

John: No, the membership of MBRA would vote on it.

Joe Sarsour, MBRA Director: That's a great idea Ms. Wilkerson, we have a lot of new people who are here today and we don't want to give the wrong impression that this is gonna be a terrible meeting here because that's not the way our meetings go. But I think that the Board should get together, have an emergency meeting, and we should have a time of the month that we have an open discussion that people can come to this room or wherever, and we can start talking about all the stuff that you guys like to talk about --

John Suter: And I would suggest we . . .

Joe Sarsour: -- so there's more dialogue.

MW: That sounds good.

Joe Sarsour: But I think right now's not the time.

John Suter: . . that we get back to the membership in a December meeting.

Joe Sarsour: Right, right, so I think this definitely isn't the time right now.

Brenda Payne, MBRA Business Member, Long & Foster: She says we won't have a December meeting.

Joe Sarsour: Well we're gonna have an emergency December meeting; whatever needs to be done, as soon as possible, so that the Board can meet, and there has to be an open, it has to be an open discussion, like this is right now, where guests that are coming that are not members don't feel like we, it's drama like this everytime, cause it's never been like this before. There seems to be a lot of people that are very angry today that want blood --

Dr. Royston: - Yeah -

Joe Sarsour: I really think, it's like I said -

Dr. Royston: So Joe, you're the person who alleged that I was having secret meetings

Joe Sarsour: Don't, you're better than this.

Brenda Payne: Wait, wait, down.

Joe Sarsour: You're better than this.

Dr. Royston: No, listen, you put it on social media- media, you're gonna hear it.

Brenda Payne: It's okay, easy, easy. Can I . .

Joe Sarsour: You're better than this Dr. Royston.

Brenda: Joe; hush. Can I say something, please?

MW: Yes.

Brenda: MBRA was started many, many moons ago way before half of you were probably here.

Audience member: . . .half of us were born.

Brenda: Careful, now. It was started to keep the lights on in Marshall, remember, Mo? It started with my aunt Marie, Mo, all of these older folks --

Dr. Royston: Joan Fries, who served on the initial Board. We have the minutes going back to the beginning.

Brenda: And they started it, they started it to keep the lights, the streetlights on because we didn't have any and they felt that it was better. We did bingo, I worked bingo, Mo worked bingo, we all worked bingo; we did that. MBRA was never started, and I don't think was ever intended to be the voice of Marshall because Marshall's not incorporated, people. We don't have a voice, I'm sorry. You know, the County Supervisors are our voice. And unless you want to get incorporated, which I highly recommend not because they tried it twice --

Mo Lawrence: No, three times.

Brenda: Three times, and it didn't work. So, these meetings are just, to me, are supposed to be to make sure that we know, I mean the, the mission statement, and not necessarily what's going, -- what's going on is okay -- but we can't change our government body. This Board is not going to change the government body; it is what it is. The only thing that this Board can do is, the things that they're doing, to make sure that everybody knows what the businesses are in Marshall, because that's how we're gonna thrive, is if everybody decides to go to Marshall to determine to buy something. That's what they need to do here. You know, Mary going to Board of the Supervisors meetings or whatever, meeting with whatever, with you guys, it's not going to make Marshall better. We need, you know, the beautification of Marshall is great, as long as it's not during my Christmas parade, but it's great, you know. I'm not a fan of the brick, but you know, that's me against 50,000 other people. So everybody getting all upset tonight is not doing anybody any good. But what you have to do, is you have to reign yourself in, because you're becoming, I don't even know, but you just need to reign it in because you aren't, you aren't the president or the mayor of Marshall and you just need to make sure that what you're doing is within your guidelines of the Marshall Business and Residents Association and your mission statement says to flourish Mar- you know, to, to make sure that Marshall is flourished and do that.

MW: -- To protect and enhance the quality of, it's very active, and I never put myself out there as either of those things, I think --

Brenda: And I didn't say that you did that, but you, but that's what, that's how I feel is that when I see all of these meetings, it's all you know, it's all about, this was good, I mean you didn't answer Sarah's -- I mean, you wouldn't even look at the paper; all you said was, 'I, these are all done.'

MW: We already were familiar with those questions. You haven't, something to say?

Mary-Elizabeth, MBRA Secretary: I'd like to say something as the Secretary. You'll have to forgive me because my voice is mostly gone. Our Board has worked very hard this year to gather information and

disseminate information to the community. The community was by and large unaware of, if not this project altogether, the details of the project --

Peter Schwartz: No.

Dr. Royston: No, no.

Bess Taylor: No, no, no, no, no, no.

Audience member: Can we just quietly --

Audience interruption

Mary-Elizabeth: I need to finish. As far as your point about what we are, as she said, our mission statement is "To protect and enhance the quality of community and professional life in Marshall;" it's very active. If you look at all of the grant applications that the MBRA was used to get this project going ten years ago, I believe it is Paul Lawrence, I haven't been able to get an answer from him whether it was Mr. Schwartz or Mr. Lawrence who wrote those applications, but when sending them in to VDOT, the MBRA was used, referenced, saying that there is no elected body in Marshall because it is not incorporated so the MBRA is essentially the closest thing to an elected body; it's . . . representative of the community . . .

Anne Michael: Oh no, can I correct that?

Audience interruption

Mary-Elizabeth: Ma'am, please, I need to finish --

Anne Michael: Paul's not here,

Mary-Elizabeth: Ms. Greene, please.

MW: Okay, one question at a time.

Anne Michael continues interruption

Mary-Elizabeth: I do need to finish; I do need to finish.

Interruption continues

MW: Okay, wait a minute, wait a minute, Anne Michael, you'll have your turn. Mary-Elizabeth?

Joe Sarsour: That's the Secretary of the MBRA, let her finish. How can you interrupt her?

Anne Michael continues interruption

John Suter: Don't interrupt her!

Mary-Elizabeth: I need to finish.

Interruption continues

MW: Okay, we're gonna have to close the meeting.

Joe Sarsour: . . . on the Board, get active in the MBRA.

MW: If we can't have it civil, we're gonna have to close the meeting.

Mary-Elizabeth: There has been a lot of hatred toward the MBRA this year and it is not logical. Because the MBRA, it was fine when the MBRA was used to get this project going; that's fine. We can take positions all the day, till the cows come home; nobody needs to sit in on the Board meetings then, but if we come out with a statement saying that our majority of our Board opposes it, then all hell breaks loose. So, I just want to set the record straight, if you want to see the records, the MBRA has been used as the closest thing to an elected body, and it has been used to take action like this before.

MW: Okay, um, Michael.

Anne Michael: Because Mr. Lawrence has left - he had to go to a business meeting - he was here; he actually has a notebook of historical data of the people that were present during all of the discussions dating back to the early 2000s, some, because everytime he was present at a meeting, in terms of discussing the Main Street improvements, comprehensive plans, form based code discussions, all of that started in 2001. He has an entire notebook of people that signed just similar to this, as far as being in a meeting where they have signed in . . . they were MBRA members . . .

Linda Suter: Well, I had asked him for that information several years ago --

Anne Michael: He was bringing it tonight --

Linda: He said, when I asked him for that information several years ago, he said there was no record, it was not an official meeting, they were, they were not reported, there's no record of the attendance, there's no record of the minutes. He told me that, and he would not give me the information.

Anne Michael: Okay, I was not --

Joe Sarsour: Why didn't he give it to you before he left, if it was that important?

Linda: How about we let him, we let him . . . provide it or not provide it.

Anne Michael: I'm going to clear the record of record; The Board of Supervisors meeting, Citizens' Time, in September, 13th, two days after the meeting that we had at the community center: 'Mary Wilkerson, President of the Marshall MBRA Business and Residents Association said, that at the last

meeting, the majority of the members in the organization do not endorse the current Marshall Main Street Improvement project proposed without providing underground overhead utilities.' My issue with that is that when you started that meeting, you said the Board voted, not the membership, and this is implying that you took a membership vote, by going to the Board of Supervisors and speaking on behalf of the MBRA --

MW: I said that the Board voted; our Board sent me to the, sent me with that message to the Board of Supervisors.

Anne Michael: Are you, are you saying that the Board of Supervisors Secretary is not --

MW: What does it say again?

Anne Michael: It actually says, 'the majority of the members of the organization'

MW: Well then I misspoke, because

Anne Michael: Okay.

MW: Or, or she got it wrong, because it was the majority of the members of our Board.

Anne Michael: Okay, so

MW: So either she got it wrong but that's not what I was saying.

Anne Michael: But what is your point of going to the BOS at Citizens' Time? That's my point. What is your point . . . ?

Joe Sarsour: Because she's on the Board; the MBRA is the only voice for Marshall. If if the MBRA didn't bring it to everybody's attention that they're getting ready to impose taxes on us for new sidewalks and make the sidewalks more narrow through town, no one would ever know; that's why everyone's so upset because the plan's been ruined or been derailed because now the MBRA has brought it by everyone's attention. That's why the MBRA is so important. I mean, if anybody thinks they can do a better job, start a new club, start a new assoc and see what you guys can do. I just don't understand why you guys are embarrassing us in front of these new, nice guests that came in and you're making us look like we're illegitimate, it's crazy, and I think that Ms. Wilkerson, you should close this meeting and we should have a members board should take a vote, and we should have an emergency forum so we that can address all these things, because we could go about this thing all night long --

MW: Right, I think --

Joe Sarsour: And this is, this is,

MW: Wait a minute, yes, Duke's gonna speak, Duke will be the last one, but then I wanna

Duke Yowell: . . .will adjourn.

MW: Right. Duke, hold on just a sec; I want to say that I think that's great to have another meeting, we will plan another meeting, and if we want, we will have every single member vote -- that's fine -- but my statement to the board was, to the Board of Supervisors, the Board, the majority of our Board members, so I don't know if the secretary made a mistake, I don't know what. But that's what I was tasked to do, and that's what I did. Duke?

Duke Yowell: Thank you, Mary. I normally don't speak very long, but --

MW: That's okay.

Duke: I have a lot to say, not like my pastor here . . . Mark. But I just wanted to say, Joe Sitton spoke tonight, he's a good man, if he doesn't mind my using his name, and Connie, just to tell you that I'm probably the oldest, been in Marshall longer than anyone in this room. Connie's father Albert cut my hair and so does Connie, so that's how long I've been in Marshall. Uh, I went to grade school, high school here, I worked in the banking community for over 50 years here. I've served on a lot of committees for the state for the town and for the county, but I'm really just, I don't know what to say about this meeting. I'm very disappointed. I told you that I was disappointed with this MBRA and I'll tell you why, and I wanna clear up something tonight if I could and I won't take long. I'm very disappointed that you have, that a couple of members, like Joe, who everybody goes into his store, he says, 'do you know that that Main Street project committee was going behind people's backs in closed doors?' That is a lie; that did not happen. I've known Dr. Royston for over 40 years; I've known Paul Lawrence since he was this big, I've . . . known his parents for a long time. And Michael grew up in this town. And I'm telling you now, these are honorable people and they did not meet behind anybody's back. And that's the main thing that I wanted to tell you, is you have a couple of Board members that are doing that.

Joe Sarsour: That was before I was a Board member. I just became a Board member last night. And --

Duke: But you . . .

Sarsour: That was, whatever, whatever anyone's implying I said, I never say it. But --

Duke: But you say that, you're a Board member now.

Sarsour: I was a little boy then, now I'm a grown man. I'm gonna do better.

Audience member: You said it last month.

Joe Sarsour: I was a little boy then. I grew up and become a man all of a sudden.

MW: Okay thank you very much. Thank you. First of all, let me just say something --

Duke: Let me say one more thing,

MW: Sure

Duke: if Joe decided to . . . another organization --

Joe Sarsour: And I want to apologize for Dr. Royston if anybody got scared

Peter Schwartz: You don't ever need to apologize for Dr. Royston

Joe Sarsour: Oh I have to, he scared everyone here.

Peter Schwartz: Don't ever apologize for Dr. Royston.

Joe Sarsour: He, you didn't get scared . . . tonight? We've never had a deputy come to any of our meetings.

Brenda Payne: Hush. Joe, Joe, hush.

MW: Thank you, thank you. I'd like to say something for everyone.

Joe Sarsour: It's a sad day in Marshall.

MW: the MBRA is going to get back with a meeting, we're gonna have a meeting. We'll get back to you about having another meeting on this topic --

Duke: Are you gonna put people on the Board without the membership voting on it?

Sarah Atkins: It's self-perpetuating.

MW: -- on this topic, and I'd like to just say, look, everybody has a care and concern of Marshall at heart. There is no reason to be so angry. We don't need hate in this room, we don't need hate in this world. There's no reason to be so angry. All of us here have the common goal of the caring about Marshall. And Duke, and Dr. Royston, Peter Schwartz, all these people have been working on this for a long, long time and, to their credit, they've put a lot into this and a lot of care. Now, a lot has changed over the past 30, 20, 10 years. Here we are today. We need to engage all of the community; all of the community has questions, because 30, 20, even 10 years ago, I'm talking to people who didn't know these details. These details of the project are coming out now. The devil is in the details, so now the community needs to look at them. I suggest we do just that. So, the MBRA will get back to you with another meeting to address your needs on this. Neal?

Neal Wavra, MBRA Business Member as of Sept, 2018, Field & Main: I'm just curious what the, what

the MBRA is gonna get back to us on? Are we gonna have a vote about opening Board meetings? Are we gonna have a discussion further about the consternation that exists here? I don't know what our next step is going to be.

MW: Okay, the next step is our Board will call an interim meeting and our Board will discuss this because I think these things are a very good idea to take the vote of every single member that wants to come out; I think that'd be a great idea.

Neal Wavra: If you will wait, please, I've been a member in the past and I've let our membership lapse just out of being too busy, and I after the September meeting felt very uncomfortable with the scope and the focus of what was happening. I did my own digging at the County and came up with an understanding of this issue that I think was far more comprehensive than what was presented at either of the two meetings, and I'm back a member here because I'm more concerned about how this is going. And I don't like the idea that something will happen in a boardroom behind me; as a member I should have access to that information. I'd like to know how I get to know what happens; what . . . than as a board representing as what is my opinion on things it's not clearly the case; I've never been asked.

MW: Okay, for one thing, the Board, the Board members can share; you can always ask the Board members; there's no secret, nobody asks us.

Audience member: We don't know who they are.

MW: So all this thing can all be asked.

Patty Cloud: We stood up.

MW: So, okay, one more question. You've had a couple or three, Sarah. Dr. Royston, one more statement.

Dr. Royston: So, I ran in speaker and vice speaker of the Medical Society of Virginia, multi-hundred doctor meetings based on Sturgis's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure, and parliamentary procedure is what needs to be used in this organization. And if you don't have it in the by-laws that this is an open, open forum and you want to make it closed, you have a problem here, and let me tell you, the rules of parliamentary procedure precede the law, and it stands above the law, and the duty of the speaker is to protect the rights of the minority, and I'm standing here to protect the rights of the minority, and I intend to continue to do so.

And I only have one more concern, alright? One more concern: I've heard and I perceive, as many people in this room have perceived, that there's opposition to making this Main Street a better place and a safer place. Correct me if I'm wrong, Mary, but I believe that you have a sister married to a Manuel and one of those Manuels that he's related to, was killed in front of what's now The Red Truck Bakery, so it defies reason how you could lose some peripheral relative due to safety concerns on Main Street and support opposition to making this a safer place.

Joe Sarsour: Wow, that's a low blow.

Dr. Royston: I also want to tell you something else. When you make this town accessible to Americans for Disabilities then you have to comply with all the state and federal regulations. There is nothing in this plan that isn't in the state and federal regulations, and so we're not doing anything different. In fact, this plan is the same plan that was paid for by Marshall National Bank in 1990 by the School of Architecture at Virginia Tech. So, due process is important to our well-being. And I want to add that this man made a hinge for my curtains on Christmas! And he went out of his way to do it, so, this lady I now have known for quite a while, she is thinking about living here permanently in this community. We need to make this the best place we can, the safest place we can. And my passion is to make this a better place to live, so we're all on the same page. This lady, there's no words for that.

Brenda: Hey!

Dr. Royston: Every single, every single thing you look at in this community goes back to her family and her relatives and they're totally dedicated to that fire department, to this Health Fair that was here, to this Community Center. Um, listen, there's more, this lady, my gosh, I've worked with her for decades and we've been through some tough times, okay? And this lady, I don't blame her. He was so upset that we didn't, couldn't, the money didn't fall in place to bury the power lines, he couldn't even call me and tell me. So her concerns that they're not in the plan, I share that concern. And so, we will have an open forum, and actually it shouldn't be represented of this organization at all. It just needs to be a really open forum where everything is discussed in detail.

MW: Okay, first of all, I think many of us share that concern about undergrounding - lack of undergrounding. Second of all, I didn't know there was any non, any relative by marriage that happened to have that happen on Main Street; that's news to me. And thirdly, I think you've just put out there, I think some of the anger is that you don't realize that we all want a safe Main Street. All of us do. We have so much common ground here. And all we've been trying to do is communicate, and I think that's what we need to continue to do because we can work together. We all, no one's doubting anybody's contributions to this community --

Peter Schwartz: Then let's start acting like we are . . .

Dr. Royston: Yeah, then let's start acting like we are . . .

MW: Nobody's doubting any contribution. We all have that common ground, so let's --

Patty Cloud: We need have what is called civil discourse, and all parties need to partake in civil discourse,

MW: Yes.

Patty Cloud: Whatever the opinion or the stand or the feeling . . .

MW: We need to tolerate different opinions without anger. We need to tolerate different opinions, we need to get everything out on the table because you don't know where we're all gonna end up. We're getting all kinds of information and sometimes our opinions are changing, so don't hate, please don't hate. We need to work together for our common goals. And now it's time to say the Pledge of Allegiance.

Meeting was adjourned with the Pledge of Allegiance at 8:53 pm