



# OBserver

6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

Official newsletter of the Owen  
Brown Community Association



## ANNUAL MEETING ELECTION TO TAKE PLACE ON APRIL 20!

Thursday, March 21, 2024, was the deadline for declaring candidacy for both the Owen Brown Board of Directors and the Columbia Council (CA). No residents declared candidacy for the two open seats on the Owen Brown Village Board, but **Michael Golibersuch** and **William H. Campbell** declared their candidacy for the one open seat on the Columbia Council (CA).

Thus, the Owen Brown Community Association will hold its **Annual Meeting** on Saturday, **April 20**, for the purpose of electing a **Columbia Council Representative** (CA Board of Directors). In person voting for this meeting will take place between 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Owen Brown Community Center, 6800 Cradlerock Way.

Absentee voting will begin on April 1<sup>st</sup> for both **online** and **paper** ballot, which can be found on page three of this *OBserver*, along with instructions on how to vote online. All absentee ballots must be received before 5 pm on Friday, April 20.

To be eligible to vote you must be either an owner or a tenant within the association. Only one vote per lot is allowed, unless the residential property has a tenant, then both owner and tenant can vote. Tenants, however, must provide proof of residency prior to voting by submitting a copy of their lease to the Village Office, or to the Election Committee, the day of the meeting.

For the meeting on April 20 to be valid, a quorum of 341 eligible votes must be cast either in person or by absentee (online or paper) prior to the close of voting. If a quorum is not reached on April 20, a second meeting will be held on Tuesday, **May 7**, at 7:00 pm at the Owen Brown Community Center. Those present at the meeting will constitute a quorum and the results of the first meeting vote will be reported.

A *Meet the Candidates' Night* will be held in-person on Tuesday, **April 9**, 7 pm, at the Owen Brown Community Center. To learn more about the candidates running for this year's election, please see their statements and photos below.

## MEET YOUR COLUMBIA COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE CANDIDATES!

### William H. Campbell

As a longtime resident of Owen Brown Village, I remain committed to James Rouse's vision of Columbia as a community where all residents can live and thrive. After 50 successful years Columbia is at a point where future development may adversely impact Rouse's vision. I would use my successful executive experience to ensure that the Columbia Association (CA) makes prudent and appropriate decisions that support Columbia's future success.



I have 15 years' experience as a Chief financial Officer in both the public and private sectors. I have 8 years' experience as an Audit Committee member for both NASA, and the National Academy of Public Administration. I believe that I can provide constructive oversight for CA's \$75M annual budget and its 1,500 employees.

### Michael Golibersuch

Giving back to my community is one of my core values. I was raised in Owen Brown, served in the Army, and moved back to raise my children here. I've served on the OBCA Board for six years and want to continue my service on the CA Board. Andy Stack's shoes will be hard to fill but he asked me to run and I'm ready. Some of my accomplishments on the OBCA board have been organizing tree planting events and starting Owen Brown's annual plant/tree giveaway, improving OBCA's budget efficiency to ensure we get the most from the money residents pay and facilitating more productive and neighborly meetings. On the CA Board, I will continue to prioritize open space as one of our treasures, and work to ensure effective use of resources to provide a diverse array of quality amenities to Columbia. You can learn more at [www.michaelgolibersuch.com](http://www.michaelgolibersuch.com).



## OB DATES TO REMEMBER

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| OB Board Meeting            | April 2, 7pm      |
| <b>Plant This, Not That</b> | April 10, 1pm     |
| OB RAC Meeting              | April 10, 7:30pm  |
| <b>Columbia Cleans</b>      | April 13, 10am-12 |
| OB Board Work Session       | April 16, 7pm     |
| <b>OB Village Election</b>  | April 20, 9am-12  |
| OB RAC Meeting              | April 24, 7:30pm  |
| <b>Flower Giveaway</b>      | April 26, 5:30pm  |
| OB Board Meeting            | May 7, 7pm        |



## OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

### Office Hours

|               |                         |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Monday-Friday | 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  |
| Saturday      | 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon |

### Village Office Staff

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
|                | 410-381-0202                           |
| Craig Barton   | Village Manager                        |
| Susan Sloan    | Covenant Advisor                       |
| Kelly Kalal    | Facility Coordinator/<br>Event Planner |
| Nick Bechetti  | Asst. Covenant Advisor                 |
| Kelly Carney   | <i>OBserver</i> Editor                 |
| Joann Allen    | Facility Assistant                     |
| Logan Carneric | Facility Assistant                     |

### Village Board Members

|                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Michael Golibersuch | Board Chair      |
| Brad Butler         | Board Vice-chair |
| Robert Golibersuch  | Board Member     |
| Mae Beale           | Board Member     |
| Linda Ortiz-Byrd    | Board Member     |
| Andrew Stack        | CA Board Rep.    |

Check us out on the web and Facebook at:  
[www.owenbrownvillage.org](http://www.owenbrownvillage.org)  
[www.facebook.com/owenbrownvillage](https://www.facebook.com/owenbrownvillage)

## DIRECTOR OPENINGS ON THE OWEN BROWN VILLAGE BOARD

The Owen Brown Village Board is looking to appoint two qualified individuals to fill the two open seats on the association's Board of Directors. This is for a two-year term that runs through April 30, 2026. Any Owen Brown owner or resident interested in serving on the Board should submit a letter/email of interest or any questions to the Village Manager at [manager@owenbrownvillage.org](mailto:manager@owenbrownvillage.org) or attend an upcoming meeting. The April 16 meeting will be a board orientation session for returning and potential members. If you are at all interested in serving on the Board, this would be a very helpful meeting to attend.

## OB BOARD AND EAC UPDATE VILLAGE GUIDELINES

The Village Board and the Executive Architectural Committee (EAC) voted to update the Owen Brown Architectural Guidelines in February. Since this is now an annual process for the two groups, the changes are relatively minor, but do help to either clarify or specify the Village's intent with regard to certain items. You can view the updated Guidelines in their entirety or just the items that were changed by going to our website at <https://owenbrownvillage.org/exterior-change-process> Scroll down to the download section and look for the Architectural Guidelines 2024 and/or Recent Changes to the Guidelines – 2024 documents.



# How to Vote in the Village Annual Meeting Election

There are three ways to vote in the upcoming election:

1. **Online** – Beginning April 1 thru April 19 by 5:00 pm
2. **Paper** – Fill out the ballot below and return by 5:00 pm on April 19
3. **In Person** – Come to the Owen Brown Community Center on April 20, between 9:00 am and 12:00 pm (noon)



## Instructions for Online voting:

Beginning April 1<sup>st</sup> thru the 19<sup>th</sup> (till 5 pm), you can vote online by going to the following website address: <https://bit.ly/OBCA2024election> or scanning the **QR code above**. Once there, insert your unique **PIN number**, which can be found on the back page of this *OBserver* next to your address highlighted in yellow. Follow the directions on the screen and you are done. *(The PIN number can only be used once for voting.)*

## Early Voting Raffle!

You have three chances to win our Early Voting Raffle. Be one of the first 100 votes and have a chance to win \$100 gift card to Giant. Be one of the first 200 votes and you could win a \$75 gift card. Or, if you are one of the first 300 votes you could win a \$50 gift card from Giant. All raffle drawing votes must be received by 5:00 pm on April 19 in order to qualify.

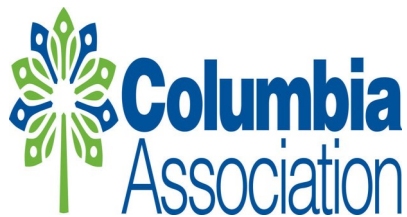
## Instructions for using Paper ballot below:

Detach the ballot below and fill in. You must sign the ballot and include all identifying information for your vote to be valid. Mail or drop off your ballot to the Owen Brown Community Center, 6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045. All absentee ballots must be received by 5:00 pm on **April 19**.

*(Detach Here)*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p align="center"><b>OWEN BROWN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION</b><br/>2024 Village Election - Absentee Ballot</p> <p align="center">Columbia Council Rep. (CA)<br/><i>Only vote for <u>one</u></i></p> <p align="center">___ Michael Golibersuch     ___ William H. Campbell</p> <p><i>If quorum is not reached at the April 20 Annual Meeting, a second meeting will be held on May 7, solely for the purpose of validating the April 20 elections results. At the May 7 meeting, the Election Committee will recast this ballot on your behalf and no other business will be conducted.</i></p> <p>Entire ballot must be received in the mail or dropped off on or before April 19, 2024, by 5 pm at the:</p> <p align="center"><b>Owen Brown Community Center</b><br/><b>6800 Cradlerock Way</b><br/><b>Columbia, MD 21045</b></p> | <p><b>Election Committee to detach prior to counting.</b><br/>I, _____<br/><i>(print name clearly)</i> do hereby declare that I am an Owner/Tenant <i>(please circle one)</i> in the association and will not be able to cast my ballot on the regular election day. <i>(Tenants must provide a copy of their lease to the Village office on or before April 20.)</i></p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>Signature: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p align="center"><b>Raffle Drawing</b><br/>Add your telephone number below for a chance to win a gift card to Giant.<br/><i>(Must be 18 or older to vote)</i></p> <p>Telephone: _____</p> |
|---|---|





*THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME BE YOUR REPRESENTATIVE; I HAVE ENJOYED SERVING OUR COMMUNITY*

*From the desk of Andy Stack, OBCA Columbia Council Representative*

After 14 years as your Columbia Council Representative/CA Director and 44 years on the Owen Brown Village Board, I have decided not to run for re-election. I have truly enjoyed being your representative and serving our community. But 44 years is a long time. Given that our village is a little over 50 years old, I have served for the vast majority of our village's existence. It has been amazing to see how our village and Columbia has developed. I am awed that I had a role to play in how our village and Columbia developed. I will still be around and I wish my successor well. Thank you for letting me be your representative on the Village Board and the CA Board.

The CA Board is still on schedule to select the next CA President/CEO by the end of April 2024. We are interviewing finalists and if everything goes well, hope to make a public announcement sometime in mid to late April. Please see [columbiaassociation.org/news/ca-begins-search-for-next-president-ceo/](http://columbiaassociation.org/news/ca-begins-search-for-next-president-ceo/) for further information.

The new Hopewell Meadow off Rustling Leaf is progressing. CA recently planted trees and added signage.

CA will open both the Dasher Green outdoor pool and the Hopewell Water Park this summer. In fact, all 23 outdoor pools will open. As a pilot, 3 outdoor pools (one of them is Dasher Green) will be

staffed by a contractor. After the season, CA will evaluate the pilot.

The CA Board continues to work on the next 5 Year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Focus Areas will be

- Identity and Community Management (engaging with the community);
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (welcoming all community members);
- Environmental Stewardship/Ecological Health (taking care of our Open Space);
- Fiscal Responsibility and Risk Management (ensure CA's long term fiscal stability); and
- Technology and Data Transfer (ensure technology/data systems are adequate for the future)

The proposed plan will be discussed at the CA Board's April sessions (April 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>).

The new County East Columbia 50+ Center opened on March 7<sup>th</sup>. It is a great addition to our village.

Don't forget to check out CA Blog articles at [www.columbiaassociation.org/blog/](http://www.columbiaassociation.org/blog/). Interested in a career with CA? Please visit [www.columbiaassociation.org/about-us/careers/](http://www.columbiaassociation.org/about-us/careers/). For questions or comments, please contact me at [andrew.stack@ca-board.org](mailto:andrew.stack@ca-board.org) or [obvbcarep@gmail.com](mailto:obvbcarep@gmail.com). I look forward to hearing from you.

## New East Columbia 50+ Center Is Now Open on Cradlerock Way in Owen Brown!

For more information, call 410-313-7680 or email [eastcolumbia50@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:eastcolumbia50@howardcountymd.gov).



## OBCA BOARD HIGHLIGHTS...*from the desk of Board Chair, Michael Golibersuch*

The Owen Brown Board of Directors held our monthly meeting on March 5th at the Owen Brown Community Center. It was a lengthy meeting that included three invited guests and covered multiple topics.

Our first invited guest was the CEO of Howard County's Economic Development Authority, Ms. Jennifer Jones. We shared our community's concerns regarding recent business closures (the bank, Dollar Tree) at the Owen Brown Village Center and discussed what options are available to help reverse that trend. Ms. Jones informed us that part of her organization's role is to work with commercial property owners and prospective businesses looking for retail space and to facilitate cooperation. She will be contacting the ownership of Owen Brown Village Center to begin those efforts for our community and we will follow up with her later this year.

Our second invited guest was CA's new Director of Aquatics, Mr. Matt Helfrich. As you may know, CA has had difficulty maintaining adequate staffing at all its outdoor pools for the entire summer - as a result one of the pools on Owen Brown has closed early the past two years. Mr. Helfrich informed us that CA is testing a pilot program where three of CA's outdoor pools (including Dasher Green) will be staffed by an independent contractor this coming summer. Depending on how effectively this pilot works, CA may consider expanding this program in the future. Mr. Helfrich fielded a variety of questions from us including informing us that he does have a contingency plan for lifeguards at Dasher Green should the pilot program fall short.

Our third invited guest was our County Council Representative, Ms. Christiana Rigby. We share a variety of desires for the county budget and other local concerns including the desire for improved pedestrian safety along Cradlerock, the completion of the South Entrance Trail which should link Lake Elkhorn with downtown Columbia, the continuation of the Complete Streets project along Dobbin, the deteriorating condition of the vehicular bridge on Cradlerock, and lackluster county enforcement of the prohibition on large commercial vehicles parking on residential streets. We appreciate Ms. Rigby's attention to these matters.

The board had a lengthy discussion regarding an unfortunate dispute we are having with CA. As you may know, while Owen Brown Community Association (OBCA) and CA are legally distinct entities, we share a common goal of serving the community. CA provides Owen Brown's funding (which ultimately comes from the assessment share residents pay) and leases the Owen Brown Community Center to our village for free - both of these arrangements are covered in a single contract between CA and OBCA. For several years, Owen Brown has raised concerns with CA that we receive significantly less investment per capita compared to most other villages. In response, CA has consistently told us these concerns would be addressed during the current fiscal year in correspondence with the expiration of our contract. Unfortunately, despite those

commitments, CA has unilaterally decided not to address those concerns this year and is pressuring Owen Brown to extend the contract on the same terms that underinvest in our community. The village board is attempting to engage CA in good faith on this issue but it is unclear if CA has the capacity or will to do so.

The board also approved a letter to Howard County's Department of Planning and Zoning regarding the Gateway Master Plan currently under development. Our input covered a variety of topics including our desire for the development to boost county revenue, include adequate planning for public amenities and services, contain mixed-use zoning, be easily accessible via foot and bike from Owen Brown, and ensure that the frontage of the development abutting Owen Brown is attractive (we don't want a warehouse backing up to our Solar Walk community). We intend to invite DPZ representatives to a future meeting for additional discussions.

Other actions our board took at the meeting included:

- A review of Owen Brown's quarterly financial statement. We continue to be in sound financial health.
- Approval of purchase of a new commercial ice maker for our Community Center.
- Referring a property with covenant violations to CA for legal action. We only take this step after several months of attempting to resolve the violations with the property owners.

Owen Brown has several upcoming events that we hope you can take advantage of. We have a Master Gardener Class on April 10th; our annual Columbia Cleans Day will focus on the area near the Community Center on April 13th and our new tradition of an annual plant giveaway will take place on April 26th - please come grab some free plants (appropriate for apartments, townhomes, duplexes, and single-family homes) and help beautify our community. In addition to the annual Columbia Cleans Day, our Owen Brown CARES group is starting to do annual trash pickups around Lake Elkhorn. Please contact our CARES group if you would like to participate.

We are also thrilled that the new East Columbia 50+ Center had its grand opening on March 7th. The Owen Brown board - as well as several committed Owen Brown residents - advocated for the county to provide this amenity for several years. If you are 50 or over, consider checking out what this facility has to offer. Thank you to everyone that supported this effort.

Finally, please be sure to vote in the Owen Brown elections this April. Instructions to vote online can be found in this issue of the *Observer* but you need the included code - please don't throw it away! If you prefer voting in person, you can also do that from 9AM-12PM on April 20th.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, you can email the board at [obvillageboard@googlegroups.com](mailto:obvillageboard@googlegroups.com).





# FLOWER *Giveaway*

**FRIDAY APRIL 26TH**  
**5:30 PM**

*Stop by the Owen Brown  
Community Center and pick up  
some free Annuals and Native  
Perenials for your yard!  
Quantities are limited per  
households, on a first come first  
served basis until we run out!*

**Limited to Owen Brown Residents**





# COLUMBIA CLEANS DAY



**Let's Make Owen Brown Sparkle**

JOIN FELLOW RESIDENTS TO PICK UP TRASH IN AND AROUND OUR TRAILS, TOT LOTS & PATHWAYS. THIS IS A WONDERFUL WAY FOR YOUR FAMILY, SCOUT TROOP OR CIVIC ORGANIZATION TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT IN THEIR OWN BACK YARD.



**Saturday  
April 13th**

10am-Noon

Owen Brown  
Community  
Center

**Registration Encouraged**

**Scan the QR code or contact [events@owenbrownvilage.org](mailto:events@owenbrownvilage.org)**

**Owen Brown Community Association**  
6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045  
Office: 410-381-0202 Fax: 410-381-0235



**Howard County  
Master  
Gardeners**

**PLANT THIS,  
NOT THAT!**  
Native Alternatives to  
Invasive Plants

**WEDNESDAY APRIL 10TH  
1pm**

Learn which Native Plants will  
Thrive in your Garden and  
support local Wild Life.  
Registration Encouraged, not  
Required



[events@owenbrownvillage.org](mailto:events@owenbrownvillage.org)  
410.381.0202



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  - Playgroups
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