



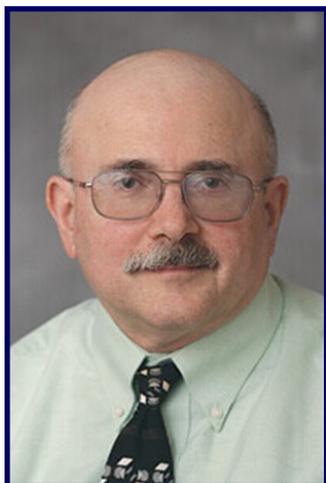
OBserver

Official newsletter of the Owen Brown Community Association

6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

THANK YOU, ANDY!

After 44 years of continuous service on either the Owen Brown Village Board or the Columbia Association Board, Andy Stack has decided it to call it a day...or more accurately 16,105 days (with 11 leap years). All of which makes Andy not only the longest serving Board member for Owen Brown, but the longest serving board member ever of any village in Columbia — a record that is not likely to be broken anytime soon, if ever. Owen Brown and Columbia have been well-served by Andy’s unparalleled dedication and competency, and we will be forever grateful. Thank you, Andy. You are amazing.



Registration Opens May 1st

PREPARE TO Care

Family Shared Aging Options

Gain valuable insight on how to start the conversation about the Aging process. From aging in place to Assisted Living, learn ways to assess your loved one's needs and navigate the programs and services available. Don't miss out on this opportunity to learn, grow, and connect! Space is limited.

Registration required.
410.381.0202

May 22nd 11am

ANNUAL MEETING – QUORUM NOT MET

The Owen Brown Community Association’s Annual Meeting was held on April 20, for the purpose of electing one Columbia Council Representative. Absentee voting began on April 1, and continued through April 19. In person voting occurred during the Annual Meeting from 9 am until 12 pm. A total of 341 votes were needed in order to reach quorum, but only 288 votes were received. Since quorum was not met, it was announced that a second meeting would take place on **May 7** at 7 pm. Those in attendance at the second meeting will constitute a quorum, and all of the votes from the April 20 meeting will be recast by the Election Committee.

OB DATES TO REMEMBER

OB 2nd Annual Meeting	May 7, 7pm
OB RAC Meeting	May 8, 7:30pm
OB Board Work Session	May 21, 7pm
Prepare to Care	May 22, 11am
OB RAC Meeting	May 22, 7:30pm
Dasher Green and Hopewell Pools Open!	May 25-27, noon
	
OB Board Meeting	June 4, 7pm
OB RAC Meeting	June 12, 7:30pm

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/ Event Planner
Nick Bechetti	Asst. Covenant Advisor
Kelly Carney	<i>Observer</i> Editor
Joann Allen	Facility Assistant
Logan Carneric	Facility Assistant

Village Board Members

	Board Chair
Brad Butler	Board Vice-chair
Robert Golibersuch	Board Member
Mae Beale	Board Member
	Board Member
	CA Board Rep.

Check us out on the web and Facebook at:
www.owenbrownvillage.org
www.facebook.com/owenbrownvillage

OBCA BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

from the desk of Board Chair, Michael Golibersuch

The Owen Brown Board of Directors held our monthly meeting on April 2nd at the Owen Brown Community Center. We discussed a few separate topics.

We were joined by a resident who shared some practical recommendations to improve the portion of our architectural guidelines addressing chicken coops (yes, some people have chicken coops in Owen Brown). We appreciate the input and will consider implementing those changes when we do our next annual review of the architectural guidelines.

The board approved Owen Brown’s budget for our next fiscal year (which runs May 2024 - April 2025). We did not make any significant changes to the budget compared to the previous year and plan to deliver the same level of service this coming fiscal year. Our rental income is slowly increasing but has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Please keep the Owen Brown Community Center in mind when you are planning events. It's a great location for baby showers, reunions, and other events.

We also allocated the remainder of the current year’s donation budget. We are making donations to several of our community’s schools, Teen Time (an after-school program at the East Columbia Library), and the Owen Brown Barracudas swim team. If there is a cause in Owen Brown that could use a small donation, please consider bringing it to the board’s attention for a potential donation next fiscal year.

We discussed the county executive’s proposed budget for next year. We are pleased to see that it included a \$1.7M capital project (T-7106) to improve safety along Cradlerock Way. Owen Brown, along with many members of our community, has advocated for that project and we are sending a letter in support of it to the county council as they begin their budget deliberations. Please consider sending your own letter expressing support for capital project T-7106 to the county council. In the future we will be inviting the appropriate county staff to one of our meetings to review the design plans for this project and provide feedback.

Finally, we referred 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.

On a sentimental note, this is the last update I will be writing as Chair of the Owen Brown board. My term on the board ends on 30 April and, after six years, I will not be serving another term on the Owen Brown board. I hope to continue my community service on the CA board but, as I write this update at the beginning of each month, I don’t know the results of the election. I hope these monthly updates have been helpful in understanding the modest role Owen Brown Community Association plays in our community and I hope that whoever is selected as the next chair continues to keep the community informed. In our modern technology-heavy world, it is far too easy to be disconnected from your neighbors and your local community - serving on the board has been a great way to connect with many people I would have never met otherwise. It's also a good way to stay informed about local issues.

...continued on page 4



REVIEWING A SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR CA AS I CLOSE OUT MY TIME AS YOUR CA COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

From the desk of Andy Stack, OBCA Columbia Council Representative

This is my last article as your Columbia Council Representative. I wish my successor well. It has been an amazing journey. I am awed that I had a role to play in how our village and Columbia developed. Thank you for letting me be your representative on the CA Board.

As I close out my term, it has been a successful year for CA and the Board. Some accomplishments include:

- The FY-2024 budget is ending on a positive note; all budget targets were met and CA improved its bottom line; the final results will be available in July 2024 after the independent auditors complete their analysis
- The independent auditors gave CA a clean opinion (which is the best you can receive) for the FY-2023 budget
- CA's 990 IRS Form (the non-profit tax form) was approved
- CA was able to place \$3,000,000 into the Emergency Cash Reserves Fund which brings the fund to approximately \$11,100,000 (the goal is \$19,000,000)
- Memberships to CA facilities continue to increase; working on reaching pre-pandemic level
- CA's Line of Credit (for short term borrowing) was extended
- The CA Points Program was extended to 20 schools (allowing more students to earn memberships)
- The budget process was enhanced to allow for more community input (including surveys) and community meetings
- The FY-2025 budget was approved which continues CA's recovery from the pandemic; \$13,000,000 will be devoted to Capital Projects and the budget target is for CA to have a positive increase in net assets and to place another \$3,000,000 into the Emergency Cash Reserves Fund; borrowing will be held to a minimum
- A CA Director Handbook (a first for CA) was approved; this gives incoming CA Directors information about processes for the Board (a "how to" manual)
- A new CA Director Orientation process was created; this will allow incoming Directors to be better informed and adjust more quickly to serving on the CA Board
- Maryland approved funding for a new permanent bandshell at the Lakefront (it replaces the temporary stage and tent)
- Howard County approved funding for a new CA outdoor fitness amenity on CA open space in the Gateway area
- A new digital kiosk was installed at the Lakefront
- Additional Electrical Vehicle (EV) chargers were installed
- CA successfully migrated from the Google environment to Microsoft 365 environment
- A new Play Area Policy was approved; replaces the existing Tot Lot Policy
- Enhancements to CA's Easement process were approved (providing for additional information, notification and communication with the community)
- Changes to Board operations were approved (moving to the New Business/Old Business format in place of work session/meetings format)
- A number of obsolete CA Board policies were sunset; this was the first step to revise over 150 policies to ensure that CA Board policies are up-to-date and do not conflict
- A revised Ethics Policy was approved and an independent Ethics Committee was established (to handle complaints against CA Board and Senior Staff members)
- Responsibility for CA Advisory Committees was transferred to CA staff
- An easement was granted to the State for construction of the new access road into the Merriweather area; this will help relieve traffic on Broken Land Parkway headed to Little Patuxent Parkway
- The Coral Reef activity, held in a CA outdoor pool, was successful
- The CA Art Center hosted the 2023 Congressional Youth Art Competition
- Three Change in Columbia speaker events were held
- Several successful Festive Friday events were held in December at the Lakefront
- A very successful Lakefront Live (the CA sponsored entertainment at the Lakefront) was held over the summer
- CA's Annual Trunk or Treat event was held at the Sports Park and over 1,000 people attended
- The 4th of July event was held at the Lakefront with great attendance
- CA helped sponsor the November Veterans Day parade and activity at the Lakefront
- A successful stakeholder event was held with the Village Chairs and Village Managers
- A new five-year Strategic Plan is underdevelopment; initial work was done this year
- A new CA President/CEO, Shawn MacInnes, was hired; he takes office in June 2024
- Interim CA President/CEO Dennis Matthey's contract was extended until the new President/CEO takes office; Dennis will then retire after 50 years of service to CA!
- A new CA General Counsel was hired

Don't forget to check out CA Blog articles at www.columbiaassociation.org/blog/. Interested in a career with CA? Please visit www.columbiaassociation.org/about-us/careers/.

Owen Brown Community Association

6800 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

Office: 410-381-0202 Fax: 410-381-0235



YOU'LL SOON BE SEEING "SPOTS" 

FROM ED WARNER, OB'S REP TO THE
CA WATERSHED ADVISORY COMMITTEE (WAC)

Last month, a group of volunteers featured in the adjacent photo planted native plants in an area set aside by the Columbia Association as an *Adopt a Spot*. The location, beside the pathway around Lake Elkhorn, is the first of two Spots to "come to life" in Owen Brown this year. The other, along a pathway in Dasher Green, will be planted in June. *Adopt a Spots* are small areas in CA Open Space that can be converted into gardens of native plants, to beautify an area and show passersby how native plants are beautiful, hardy and deer resistant. Both Spots in Owen Brown were undertaken by Owen Brown CARES, a group of volunteers working to make our Village cleaner and more environmentally friendly. In April, OB CARES helped remove trash from around the community center and pathways in Dasher Green and did a native plant giveaway, handing out pollinator garden kits to families.

But, planting and sprucing up our Village takes volunteers. If you'd like to be part of the OB CARES mission, please



email me at edwarner@hotmail.com, and I'll add you to our list of helpers.

OBCA BOARD HIGHLIGHTS...continued from page 2

I encourage everyone in the community to consider attending the board's meetings and/or volunteering in some capacity. Thank you for the support these past six years. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, you can email the board at obvillageboard@googlegroups.com.
