

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT
PUBLIC SESSION
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014
7:00P.M.**

1. OPENING

1.1.1 Call to Order

Councilmember Yeargin called the meeting to order at 7:06p.m.

1.1.2 Roll Call

Present: Mayor Eugene Grant (Late), Councilmember Johnie L. Higgs, Sr., Councilmember Eugene Kennedy, Councilmember Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald R. Raynor, Sr.(Excused), Councilmember Elenora Simms, Councilmember Aretha Stephenson, Councilmember Reveral Yeargin

Staff: Christopher Cotillo, Chief of Police, LaTasha C. Gatling, City Administrator, Dashaun N. Lanham, City Clerk

1.1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:

The invocation was given by Councilmember Stephenson

1.1.4. Approval of Agenda

It was motioned by Councilmember Porter and seconded by Councilmember Kennedy to approve the agenda. The motion carried and the agenda was unanimously approved.

1.1.5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Closed Session meeting minutes for Monday, July 1, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Regular Work Session meeting minutes for Monday, July 1, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.

- It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Public Session meeting minutes for Monday, July 8, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Closed Session meeting minutes for Friday, July 12, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Simms and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Friday, July 12, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Simms to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Friday, July 19, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Simms to approve the Closed Session meeting minutes for Friday, July 19, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Closed Session meeting minutes for Friday, July 26, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Friday, July 26, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Simms and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Closed Session meeting minutes for Thursday, August 1, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Thursday,

August 1, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.

- It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Closed Session meeting minutes for Wednesday, September 4, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Regular Work Session meeting minutes for Wednesday, September 4, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Public Session meeting minutes for Monday, September 9, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Simms and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Wednesday, September 18, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Wednesday, September 25, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Simms and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Thursday, October 3, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Closed Session meeting minutes for Thursday, October 3, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Simms to approve the Regular Work Session meeting minutes for Monday, October 7, 2013. The motion carried.

- FOR: Higgs, Kennedy, Simms, Stephenson and Yeargin
 - ABSTAIN: Porter
 - AGAINST: None
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- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Public Session meeting minutes for Monday, October 14, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
 - It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Simms to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for Monday, October 28, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
 - It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Regular Work Session meeting minutes for Monday, November 4, 2013. The motion carried.
 - FOR: Higgs, Kennedy, Simms, Stephenson and Yeargin
 - ABSTAIN: Porter
 - AGAINST: None
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- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Public Session meeting minutes for Wednesday, November 13, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
 - It was motioned by Councilmember Simms and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Closed Session meeting minutes for Wednesday, November 25, 2013. The motion carried.
 - FOR: Higgs, Kennedy, Simms, Stephenson and Yeargin
 - ABSTAIN: Porter
 - AGAINST: None
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- It was motioned by Councilmember Stephenson and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve the Special Session meeting minutes for

Monday, November 25, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.

- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Regular Work Session meeting minutes for Monday, December 2, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.
- It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Stephenson to approve the Special Session for Monday, December 16, 2013. The motion carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. PRESENTATIONS:

2.1. None

3. LEGISLATION

3.1. Ordinance O-14-10 Approval of Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual. Ordinance O-14-10 was introduced by the City Council on Monday, January 6, 2014 and the first reading was declared. The second reading was held on Monday, January 13, 2014. It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilwoman Simms to approve Ordinance O-14-10. The motion carried and was unanimously approved by the City Council.

4. REPORTS:

4.1. Mayor's Report

- Mayor Grant stated that we have lost two great giants from the Civil Rights era.
- Mayor Grant stated that we are thankful for the residents for coming to participate in the meeting.
- Mayor Grant thanked the City Council for passing the legislation regarding the personnel manual.
- Mayor Grant thanked the City Staff for the work and research on the personnel manual.
- Mayor Grant stated that he was not in the meeting to talk about persons or destroy another person character.
- Mayor Grant stated that on November 25, 2013 marked a very sad day in Seat Pleasant when the City Council cancelled the City Center Project.
- Mayor Grant stated that the Council had the right to take the vote, but they should have continued with the negotiations.

- Mayor Grant stated that the City walked away before the negotiations and we walked away from two years of work. He stated that this was unwise.
- Mayor Grant stated that the documents and comments are public record and they are being inspected.
- Mayor Grant stated that the District of Columbia is facing re-gentrification.
- Mayor Grant stated that the City is facing two metro stations. When he first became Mayor he was requested to attend a meeting by someone that had an interest in developing the City. This heightened his knowledge of the value of the City.
- Mayor Grant stated that he thought he and Council had gotten to point where they could negotiate.
- Mayor Grant stated that the City Center Project was approved for the Health Enterprise Zone for a 24hour facility.
- Mayor Grant stated that the City was in a position to be leaders to provide the citizens with health care in Seat Pleasant.
- Mayor Grant stated that he was in negotiations with the NBA to have the name rights to pay for the facility.
- Mayor Grant stated that senior housing that the City could have provided for the residents.
- Mayor Grant stated that it was said the cost was too high. He stated that how do we know what the cost was going to be, as we were still in the middle of negotiations.
- Mayor Grant stated that you all are making erroneous statements to the State Delegates.
- Mayor Grant stated that as an African American community we need to do better.
- Mayor Grant stated that some stated they were going to do better when they got back on the Council and they betrayed him.
- Mayor Grant stated that the negotiations should have been finalized before you cancelled the project.
- Mayor Grant stated that you are trying to stop what is in the best interest of the City.
- Mayor Grant stated that the process involved Citizens and staff.
- Mayor Grant stated that you stated that you want to repair the existing building. He stated that you should not put new wine in an old bottle.
- Mayor Grant stated that the citizens could have aged in the community where they had their ties and not relocate to Florida.

- Mayor Grant stated that the personal attacks on him as the Mayor has nothing to do with moving the City forward.
- Mayor Grant stated that when you have a vision you work with it and he will never limit the vision for the City.
- Mayor Grant stated that if he could be Carnegie Hall for the people, he would, as they deserve it. He stated that they deserve better and we work for the people.
- Mayor Grant stated that when we talked about the project it is no cost to the tax payer.
- Mayor Grant stated that the City Center project would not have cost the City any money until the City had taken possession, which would have been a lease back option.
- Mayor Grant stated that it was risk mitigation put into place to protect the City.
- Mayor Grant requested the City Council to rescind their vote from November 25, 2013 when they cancelled the City Center Project.
- Mayor Grant stated that they are cutting deals with certain County Council Member and it will not work.
- Mayor Grant stated the Council hired staff members to keep him quiet.
- Mayor Grant stated that he was quiet at first, but now he's going to fight for what is needed for the City.
- Mayor Grant quoted a comment from Dr. Cornell West, which states that you cannot lead the people if you do not love the people.
- Mayor Grant stated that he is a leader his legs are strong and his shoulders are wide. He can take anything the Council throws at him.
- Mayor Grant stated that he has been fighting since he was teenager and he fought along HR Crawford and Marion Barry.
- Mayor Grant stated that he has the citizens backing him up and the few they see tonight is a small sample of the support that he has in the community.
- Mayor Grant stated that he would like for the City Council and him to sit together and negotiate.
- Mayor Grant stated this is about putting the facts on the table.
- Mayor Grant stated that it is time for a change in the City and it will be a change in the City.
- Mayor Grant stated that you can bring as many police officers to the meeting as you want. They need to bring them all.
- Mayor Grant stated that the games that are being played are being recorded.
- Mayor Grant thanked the Council for listening and their patience.

4.4. City Administrator Report:

- Ms. Gatling stated that 5825 MLK purchase is in the final stages.
- Ms. Gatling asked the residents to be patience with the work that is being done on MLK Hwy.
- Ms. Gatling stated that she is very confident that we will be getting CDBG funding for PY39.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the Chief was nominated as the Member-At-Large for the Prince George's Police Association.
- Ms. Gatling stated that she did not get any complaints during the snow.
- Ms. Gatling stated that Carrington Avenue was not a sheet of ice.

4.6. Police Department Report

- Chief Cotillo read the statistical data for the month of December 2013 report
- Chief Cotillo stated that he regularly comes to the meetings and brings two officers with him at the request of Mrs. Feggans..
- Chief Cotillo stated that the Police Department made 14 on view arrest, served 1 arrest warrant
- Chief Cotillo stated that the Police Department handled 367 service calls.
- Chief Cotillo stated that his quarterly report stated that 166 reports were written and submitted.
- Chief stated that they had written 361 traffic citations. He stated that crime was down by 7%.
- Chief Cotillo stated that we hired two new officers one which is a Seat Pleasant resident. He stated that one of the officers is a female officers with prior military experience.

5. CITIZEN COMMENT

Jacqui Battle-500 70th St

- Ms Battle stated that the letter only allows one person to receive the response and the community may want to hear the response. She stated the Council needs to start answering them now.
- Ms. Battle inquired if it was a closed door meeting early last month at which the Feggans Center project was voted out.
- Ms. Battle stated the Council votes against everything the people are for in the community.
- Ms. Battle stated that during the campaign the council made many promises.

- Ms. Battle inquired on the Ward meetings for each Ward.
 - Ms. Battle stated that the project would have been housing for the seniors where they have raised their families, cancelled out jobs, it would have been a state of the art building in the community.
 - Ms. Battle stated that this reminds her how the Council voted against the over pass on Central avenue.
 - Ms. Battle stated that they do not understand why the council want to keep them stagnant and in the typewriter ages.
 - Ms. Battle stated that the council is making it obvious that they need a change in the seats.
 - Ms. Battle stated that they residents want to keep the name as it is, as they heard the name may be changed.
 - Ms. Battle stated that the Council need to be accountable for their actions or they will be impeached or voted out.
 - Ms. Battle stated that the Council cannot lead the people if they don't love the people.
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- Kenneth Green, Sr. 517 68th Pl.
 - Mr. Green requested the City Council to rescind their motion made on November 25, 2013 to cancel the City Center Project. They did not involve the community in their decision.
 - Mr. Green stated they would like to see the City Center project built in accordance to the letter of intent.
 - Mr. Green stated that he's asking the Council to allow the project to be built and allow jobs for the residents where they can get residency preference.
 - Mr. Green stated that it is goodbye to days where the Council has politically bullied the residents.
 - Mr. Green stated the residents should not be stuck with the mentality of the council that is stuck in 1984.
 - Mr. Green stated that they will have a change in the community starting with Ward I.
 - Mr. Green stated that where there no vision the people will perish, and he asked the Council to keep the law, which will make the people happy.
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- Wilhelmina Evans-617 64th Ave
 - Ms. Evans thanked God for allowing her to be here in 2014.
 - Ms. Evans stated that she hoped everyone had a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

- Ms. Evans stated that we need to have peace and love for one another.
- Ms. Evans stated that she want them to do the right thing by the residents.
- Ms. Evans stated that Mayor Grant is trying to help the children and the seniors.

- Leta Barner 815 Carrington Ave
- Ms. Barner stated that we need to step out of the fear of the unknown.
- Ms. Barner stated that if there was a plan they should have at least seen what could have happened or gone back to the table.
- Ms. Barner asked what other opportunities were cut-off for the residents by cancelling the project.
- Ms. Barner stated that this brings out a matter of trust for her as resident.
- Ms. Barner stated that she was upset about the vision being tarnished.
- Ms. Barner stated that a good vision will spur you to work harder.
- Ms. Barner stated that she lives here and want to see things change for her family.
- Ms. Barner stated that this was opportunity to bring better to the City and she feel that the cancellation of the project stated that she and the residents do not deserve better.
- Ms. Barner stated that she feel the elected officials are not respecting one another and they do not have respect for her.
- Ms. Barner stated that she's not sure if the project can be brought back to the City. She's not looking for any modular buildings.
- Ms. Barner stated that the District of Columbia is building up and we are right next door and we are not doing anything.
- Ms. Barner stated that the City runs the risk of being taking to court. She stated that we cannot afford that either.
- Ms. Barner stated that she feels the decision has tarnished the City. The project was to provide a brighter future.

- Mr. Garry Jones-6303 Capon St.
- Mr. Jones stated that he resided in Seat Pleasant since 1965 and went to school in the community.
- He stated that he has another issue and he would like to start with his Ward representative.
- Mr. Jones asked Councilmember Kennedy who was the most powerful person in your government beside the Council.

- Councilmember Yeargin stated that the most powerful person in the Government is the City Administrator.
 - Mr. Jones stated that he does not feel that the City Administrator should have the power as she is not elected and she does not reside in the City.
 - Mr. Jones stated that one of the Councilmember may want to be Mayor and feel the power should and votes should be allowed by the Mayor.
 - Mr. Jones stated the City Administrator should reside in the community.
 - Mr. Jones stated that Seat Pleasant will become like other communities that were not developed.
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- Amanda Feggans
 - Ms. Feggans stated that she has not seen a police car in a year
 - Ms. Feggans stated she want to know the plans for the Feggans Center.
 - Council President Yeargin stated that they had an assessment done on the building and for the building to be re-built it will cost 6.5 million dollars and the City does not have those monies either.
 - Councilmember Porter stated that the Council had a discussion on last Thursday, January 9, 2014 and the Council was suppose to provide their ideas on what they want to see developed in the Feggans Center.
 - Councilmember Porter stated that nothing has been concrete regarding the development.
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- Barbara Kennedy-6110 Addison Rd
 - Mrs. Kennedy stated that she feels it is citizens here that are for the project and some residents are not for the project.
 - Mrs. Kennedy stated that she appreciates the work that the Council is doing for the residents.
 - Mrs. Kennedy stated the Council was voted in as well by the residents.
 - Mrs. Kenney stated that she feels they each are doing their job to best of their abilities. She stated that the Council had others advise them on the project.
 - Mrs. Kennedy stated that she was really saddened about the article on December 12, 2013. She stated that she feels it is disrespectful and wrong for any resident to be called out of their names and the characters to be assassinated.
 - Mrs. Kennedy stated the residents should come to the meeting and request information and or attend the Ward Meetings of Ward V or Ward II.
 - Mrs. Kennedy stated she feels the City knows and understands the risk. She stated that the City budget is 3.7 million dollars and revenues are not available.

- Mrs. Kennedy stated that she feels that some of the money spent was excessive, money spent for legal advice, which is needed. She stated that the \$110,000 spent for a ground breaking, which you just needed some dirt and a shovel was excessive. She does not feel the Council should be responsible for putting the money back.
 - She stated that the residents should get both sides of the story before they make any judgment.
 - Mrs. Kennedy stated that she is just as concerned as any other residents.
 - Mrs. Kennedy inquired with Ms. Gatling regarding her owning property in the City and she stated that she is aware that Ms. Gatling is well educated.
 - She stated that they want cohesive government.
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- Carla Hart 303 68th Pl
 - Ms. Hart stated this really baffles her that the neighborhood is 99% black and we cannot come together on anything.
 - Ms. Hart stated that the Council do not talk to the Citizens and they have Closed meetings.
 - Ms. Hart stated that it makes a difference if you do not live in the City, you are not able to effectively run the government.
 - Ms. Hart stated that some of the Councilmember's do not take care of the properties.
 - She stated that the Feggans Center has rodents come from the building into the community.
 - Ms. Hart stated that the Council is stagnating the City and the older people have feeble minds.
 - Ms. Hart stated they are having a lot of meeting and nothing is getting done.
 - Ms. Hart stated the stop signs on 69th Street and Crown Street and cars are flying through the streets.
 - Ms. Hart stated that she feel the project was cancelled because Mr. Grant brought the project up.
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- Mary Barber 6020 Crown St.
 - Ms. Barber stated that everything has been said and she wants the Council and Mayor to work together to do right for citizens.
 - Ms. Barber stated that she wanted to know what the Council had against the Mayor.
 - The Councilmember's stated that they do not have anything against the Mayor.

- Betty McGhee-Price 6200 Addison Rd
- Mrs. Price stated that she had few comments, she has not been attending the meetings and should have.
- Mrs. Price stated that the charter needs to be changed because the Council has too much power.
- She was made aware at the last meeting that the project was voted on some years ago.
- She was disappointed to hear the project was not going as agreed upon. She stated the Council are representatives of the citizens and they should be made aware of the progress or the decision that was made regarding the cancellation of the project.
- She stated that there is friction going on between the Mayor and Council and this should not be going on, as we all are adults and should not be conducting ourselves in this manner.
- She stated they need to work together, as they elected to do so.

- Roosevelt Cox-6020 Crown St
- Mr. Cox stated that he voted for a lot of the people to represent him. He stated that he had grown up in the City and they watched him grow up.
- Mr. Cox stated that everyone of the Council attended the ground breaking and did not have a problem.
- Mr. Cox stated that it is shame that we do not have a recreation center for the youth.
- Mr. Cox inquired of the Mayor to build the project. Mayor Grant stated it was projected to be 100 million dollars.
- Mr. Cox stated that if the Council do not want to make a change they need to leave.
- Mr. Cox stated that he is 28 years old and he has a lot common sense and he has more than the Council.
- Mr. Cox stated that the project is not for the Council it is for the youth. If they are not about progress why are you here.
- He stated that he has had conversation with Councilmember Yeargin and Councilmember Kennedy and they know he is about positive change.
- Mr. Cox stated that it is about votes and all it takes is for one vote. He asked them to think about the kids. He stated that he did not get into trouble until the recreation center closed.
- He stated the children have to go over to the other side of the City to play basketball.

- Florence Johnson 716 Birchleaf Ave
- Ms. Johnson stated that to the Chief of Police it is a lot guys hanging on the corner.
- Councilmember Yeargin stated that he will give her a Welcome Package, as she is in his ward.

- Donald Thomas-6508 Adak St
- Mr. Thomas stated that he resided in the City for 42 years.
- Mr. Thomas stated that nothing in this world is free if the project was going to cost a 100 million dollars.
- He stated that nothing has been brought down to the citizens regarding the project.
- He stated that the citizens want to make an issue with the City Administrator not living in the City.
- He stated that we have residents that travel from Maryland to work for the District Government. It's not an issue where you live, but rather you qualify for the position.

- Ms. Leta Barner
- Ms. Barner stated that she need clarifications to capture what will revitalize the project. Can it be put on the website stating what has been done.
- Councilwoman Stephenson stated it would be better if Council will hold a meeting for the citizens to participate in and receive all the information.
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- Carlton Jones-308 68th St
- Mr. Jones stated that can the Council and Mayor get together to have a meeting for the citizens of Seat Pleasant so they can get real answers with documents being present.
- He stated the building was bringing some revenue to the City.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

6.1. Strategic Plan Update (Meeting Request)

- Council President Yeargin stated that the Strategic Plan will be on the February 3, 2014 meeting agenda.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

7.1. City Center Cancellation Letter

- Council President Yeargin asked the City Administrator if the letter from the City Attorney had been received.
- Ms. Gatling stated that she did not receive the letter as of the night of the meeting and the letter will be forthcoming.
- Council President Yeargin asked the City Council if they wanted to request for the City Attorney to expedite the letter.
- Councilwoman Stephenson stated that the letter was forthcoming and she did not see a need to request the Attorney to expedite the letter.

8 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 8.1. **Ward V Meeting, Thursday, January 23, 2014, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 5:30p.m.**
- 8.2. **Ward II Community Meeting, Thursday, January 23, 2014, Pleasant Homes Community Center, 6810 Greig St., from 6:00p.m.-8:00p.m.**
- 8.3. **Black History Month Activity, Raisin Cane: A Harlem Renaissance Odyssey, Starring Jasmine Guy, Friday, February 7, 2014. Must register to attend!! Seats are first come first serve. Bus will leave City Hall at 9:30a.m.**
- 8.4. **Black History Month Activity, Black Wax Museum, Friday, February 14, 2014. Must register to attend!!! Seats are first come first serve basis. Bus will leave City Hall at 8:30a.m.**
- 8.5. **Black History Month Activity, Movie Night, Friday, February 21, 2014, Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department, 6305 Addison Rd, Seat Pleasant, MD 20743 "FREE" and Open to the Public at 7:00p.m. Showing the Movie "42"**
- 8.6. **Black History Month Activity, Movie Night, Friday, February 28, 2014, Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department, 6305 Addison Rd, Seat Pleasant, MD 20743 "FREE" and Open to the Public at 7:00p.m. Showing the Movie "The Great Debaters"**

9 ADJOURN

ADJOURN-The meeting adjourned at 9:55p.m.

Submitted by,


Dashaun N. Lanham
City Clerk