

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 22, 2024
SEWANEE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Community Council meeting was via Zoom only due to inclement weather.

Members via Zoom: Rob Pearigen, Scott Wilson, June Weber, Ben Beavers, Laura Willis, Robert Benton, John Solomon, Michael Payne, Marilyn Phelps, Sallie Green, Rhea Bowden, and Bill Harper

Absent: Bruce Manuel, Lynn Stubblefield, Ben Tarhan, Evelyn Patton, Phil White, Sean McEwen, and Margaret Crone

Minutes taken by: Carey Fulmer

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

1) Approval of the October Minutes

The minutes for October 2023 were approved as circulated.

2) ADA Compliance with Matt Brown- Willis

ADA Director, Matt Brown was invited to speak to the Community Council about ADA compliance on campus. Matt confirmed that there were current discussions regarding ways to increase ADA parking that was removed with the new Wellness Commons renovation that resulted in the relocation of five ADA compliant parking spots from University Avenue to the rear of the Wellness Commons. Recently the issue was realized with an employee could not access the Wellness Commons offices after breaking their foot. Matt explained more to the Council about the process of ensuring ADA compliance while preserving the beauty of the campus. Matt also asked for any community issues to be submitted to his office via the [ADA website](#). Laura Willis asked if Sallie Green could circulate this link to the committee/community.

Scott Wilson confirmed that there is a civil engineer from Tullahoma that is assisting the University in discussing reconfiguring the bike lanes along University Avenue as well as adding three or four ADA compliant parking places between the Wellness Center and the chapel that will also provide ADA compliant parking for access to McClurg dining hall. Once the engineer provides drawings for the proposal, permission/approvals will have to be received from all appropriate Franklin County officials.

3) Traffic Safety Committee Update- Payne

Michael Payne updated the Council on the purpose and goals of the Traffic Safety Committee. He reported that the committee had met and discussed options such as “speed humps” as they are

less costly than some other options. Michael hopes that an unbiased option could be provided by a professional analysis regarding issues such as speed and sidewalks. Johnny Hughes represents Franklin County Highway Commission for District I & V, and he asked if the speed humps would cause any issues in snow removal. This is the kind of question that would be helpful to confirm with a study. Vice Chancellor Rob Pearigen asked if any discretionary funds could assist with paying for this kind of study and Sallie Green, Superintendent of Leases and Community Relations confirmed there is a small amount of funds in the Community Services budget.

4) Election of New Agenda Committee Member

Michael Payne volunteered to replace John Solomon on the Agenda Committee unless there was another volunteer. All members approved this appointment.

5) Annual Trash Pickup- Wilson

Scott Wilson announced the next annual trash pickup day and asked the Council to mark their calendars and meet at the Mountain Goat trailhead on Saturday, April 27 at 9:00 am.

6) Announcement and/or Questions

Michael Payne asked if Robert Benton could briefly speak on the University's snow removal process with the current snow event causing significant issues countywide. Robert Benton discussed how TDOT addresses road conditions from the interstate to the hospital and Franklin County Highway Department assists as much as possible in snow removal campus-wide, but both departments were overloaded by the severity of the storm. Benton also discussed the need to replace or purchase new snow equipment and confirmed that a lot of issues were caused by the extended and extremely low temperatures in the snow event.

Vice Chancellor Rob Pearigen gave kudos to Facilities Management for a job well done in clearing the sidewalks and ensuring that the Convocation and Athletic Anniversary event could carry on as planned during the severe weather.

A question was presented by a community member asking why sand was not used in the icy road conditions to assist in better traction and Robert Benton confirmed that the use of sand causes worse issues in the drainage systems, therefore was not a viable option. Scott Wilson confirmed that the Emergency Management Team would meet and discuss what went well through the weather issues and steps to take to better prepare for future weather events.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carey Fulmer