



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – May 1, 2023 Agenda Items 1 and 2

Public Hearings

Public Hearing on the FY 2024 Tax Rate (Constant Yield Tax Rate Public Hearing)

Public Hearing on the Proposed FY 2024 Budget

Recommended Council Action

Receive residents' comments on the recommended budget and tax rate.

Context with Key Issues

The City's new fiscal year will begin July 1, 2023. In accordance with Article VIII of the Charter of the City of Takoma Park, the Acting Deputy City Manager has prepared a recommended FY 2024 budget for consideration by the City Council.

The FY 2024 Budget was presented to the City Council and the public on Wednesday, April 12, 2023. Budget work sessions were held on Monday, April 17, Wednesday, April 19, Monday, April 24, and Wednesday, April 26. The first public hearing on the budget took place on Wednesday, April 19.

On May 1, at 7:30 PM, the City Council will hold a public hearing on the tax rate (Constant Yield Tax Rate Public Hearing). The hearing is mandated by the State because the Council is considering adoption of a tax rate that is above the Constant Yield Rate. (See the Constant Yield Tax Rate Public Hearing Notice, attached.)

A second public hearing on the FY 2024 budget will immediately follow the hearing on the tax rate.

After the public hearings, the City Council will continue budget reconciliation.

On Wednesday, May 3, the Council will discuss proposed draft budget ordinances.

The budget is scheduled for adoption by two-reading ordinances to be voted on Wednesday, May 10 and Wednesday May 17. The Finance Director will report the adopted tax rate to the County and State Thursday, May 18.

Council Priority

Advancing a Community of Belonging

Fiscally Sustainable Government

Environmentally Sustainable Community

Engaged, Responsive & Service-Oriented Government

Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life

Environmental Considerations

Addressing carbon emissions and climate change is an everyday part of the City's operations. Specific programs in Public Works, Stormwater Management, Code Enforcement, and Planning target a variety of environmental concerns.

Fiscal Considerations

Budget discussions are still ongoing.

Racial Equity Considerations

Several programs in the proposed budget specifically address race equity (for example, the Public Space Management Plan). Others address it tangentially through ARPA funded programs, continued consideration of the recommendations of the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force, and community engagement efforts.

Attachments and Links

- Constant Yield Tax Rate Public Hearing Notice (published in the April 20, 2023 issue of *The Washington Post*)
- [FY 2024 City Council Budget Process Information](#)

Once the group gathered at the monument, Pezzola said, "We basically stood around there for a while. Nobody had any idea."

Instead of waiting for President Donald Trump's "Stop the Steal" rally speech, the group marched toward the Capitol. Pezzola said he and three friends "were complaining, 'What are we doing? The speech is back there.' We were getting pretty upset we came all this way to hear Trump's speech and we're walking away."

Pezzola's group wandered around D.C. looking for a bathroom, he said, and reunited with the Proud Boys at a group of food trucks on Constitution Avenue. He said they then realized there was a commotion nearby, which was rioters preparing to overrun the first police barriers at the Peace Circle.

U.S. Capitol police officers firing "randomly" into the crowd, which had amassed along bicycle racks separating the rioters from the police. In videos played by Metcalf, Pezzola pointed out flash-bang grenades flying through the air and exploding at the rioters' feet.

Pezzola is charged with stealing a police officer's riot shield, but he claimed that he didn't take it. He narrated a video in which he claimed another man, wearing a black jacket with a white "W" on it, had yanked it away from an officer who had fallen in the crowd. Pezzola said he, too, had fallen and was on his back.

"After the shots started coming in randomly," Pezzola testified, "and I initially grabbed onto the shield, I did pull on it. I pulled it a little bit into the crowd this way. I

of these, I could be hit by a rubber bullet. The whole time we were in the area of the scaffolding, there were police shooting down at us. I used the shield to protect my face. Sure I should've turned around and gone home, but I didn't have full control of my actions, I guess I should say."

He moved with the rioters to the Capitol building, he said, and saw that one man had already smashed a window pane with a two-by-four. Pezzola said that gave him the idea to smash the pane next to it, and then he climbed through. "It was stupid. It wasn't anything I'm proud of," he said.

He said he wandered around the Capitol for a few minutes, did not join any of the fights between rioters and police, then walked out of the Capitol and handed the police shield to an officer.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The County Council of Montgomery County proposes to increase real property taxes.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2023, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 2.9%, from \$210,639,687,085 to \$216,739,524,527.
2. If Montgomery County maintains the current tax rate of \$0.6940 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 2.9% resulting in \$42,332,872 of new real property tax revenues.
3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be decreased to \$0.6745, the constant yield tax rate.
4. The County is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The County proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$0.7700 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 14.2% higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$206,986,246 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 1:30 PM on May 2, 2023 at the Council Office Building. The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged. Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call 240-777-7803 for further information.

Residents have the opportunity to testify remotely for public hearings or provide in-person testimony at the Council Office Building in Rockville. Residents can register to speak at a public hearing, provide written testimony, prerecorded audio or video testimony via www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/testify.html; or sent by mail to County Council, 100 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850; or residents may sign up to testify remotely by phone (call 240-777-7803 for information). To express an opinion call 240-777-7900.

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The City Council of the City of Takoma Park proposes to increase real property taxes.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2023, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 4.1%, from \$2,688,034,783 to \$2,798,767,009.
2. If the City of Takoma Park maintains the current tax rate of \$0.5397 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 4.1% resulting in \$597,622 of new real property tax revenues.
3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to \$0.5183, the constant yield tax rate.
4. The City is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The City proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$0.5705 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 10.1% higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$1,459,642 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 7:30 pm on Monday, May 1, 2023 at the City of Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland.

The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged.

Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call 301-891-7267 for further information.

A beloved musical duo's response to a scary diagnosis



John Kelly's Washington

When **Marcy Marxer's** doctor called with the results of her biopsy, the Maryland musician was in Tennessee, leading a ukulele workshop. As 30 ukuleles plucked

out a jaunty "You Are My Sunshine," Marxer slipped out to take the call.

"She just said, 'We've got the results and they're positive,'" Marxer recalled. "I said, 'Positive in a negative way?'"

Yes. Breast cancer: positive in a negative way. *Please don't take my sunshine away.*

That was nearly eight years ago. Next week, one result of the grueling journey that began with that phone call will receive its Maryland premiere: "All Wiggled Out," an hour-long musical by Marxer and **Cathy Fink**, her partner in music and her partner in life.

Said Marxer: "Music is how we connect with ourselves and

connect with each other."

And it's how Fink and Marxer have been connecting with audiences for more than 40 years. The pair are beloved fixtures on the East Coast folk scene, touring and teaching constantly, and releasing more than 50 albums since 1980.

The weeks after Marxer's diagnosis were spent living one day at a time.

"I think it's when Marcy was preparing for chemotherapy that we really started re-contextualizing the story," Fink said.

Music had always been a balm for them, though. Ironically, it was the positive reaction to funny cartoons Marxer created and posted to friends on social media that made the couple think there was something worth creating.

"We decided we wanted this story to be funny, but helpful and useful," said Fink. "For a long time, we thought it would be a one-woman show, a monologue with a little music."

They crafted a one-woman show with the help of storyteller

and comedian **Andy Offutt Irwin** and booked it into the Capital Fringe Festival for the summer of 2020.

The festival was canceled because of the pandemic. But the cancellation gave the team time to rethink the show — and Fink's role.

"It didn't make sense that she wasn't in it," Marxer said.

Now she is.

"To us, one of the really important things is that there are so many parallel stories packed into 58 minutes," Fink said. "There's a 40-year love story right in the center of this."

Through dialogue, monologue and song, Marxer and Fink explore such things as the painful acrobatics a mammogram requires, the similarity between putting your body through cancer treatment and sending your car through a carwash, and the unlikely joy of shopping for a wig. With the right wig, Marxer says, she could finally have "the head of hair my mother always wanted for me."

But there are serious parts, too.

For a while, neuropathy robbed Marxer of the ability to play her instruments. (She seems as fleet-fingered as ever now.)

And even well-meaning friends often don't know how to respond to cancer. That notion is contained in a song contributed by their fellow musician **Ken Whiteley**.

"He came up and said 'I've got the perfect song for you,'" Marxer said.

It's called "Unsolicited Advice."

Said Marxer: "Anyone who's ever had an illness — cancer or something else — knows you get a bucketload of unsolicited advice. Most of it is well-intentioned, unsolicited crap. People don't know what to say, but they keep talking."

With theaters still closed because of the pandemic, Marxer and Fink needed another way to put "All Wiggled Out" before an audience. The idea: Film a live performance.

They hooked up with Chicago director **Tracy Walsh** and moved to that city in summer 2021. For a month they rehearsed each day,



TODD ROSENBERG

Marcy Marxer, left, and Cathy Fink in "All Wiggled Out." They wrote the musical after Marxer's breast cancer diagnosis.

joined by **Janet Cramer** on drums and **Stacy McMichael** on bass.

For two days they filmed in front of a vaccinated, masked live audience in a Chicago dance studio. The mixed and edited performance of "All Wiggled Out" will be available next month on DVD and for streaming.

And on April 27, the film will be screened at the Silver Spring Civic Center in a benefit for Hope

Connections for Cancer Support. (For information, visit CathyMarcy.com.)

Fink said the most meaningful experience of "All Wiggled Out" so far came after the live show in Chicago. A man came up, holding the hand of his wife — who was, Fink said, "clearly going through cancer" — and said: "I'm her Cathy."

Said Marxer: "I hope everybody has a Cathy in their lives."

Rioter says acts on Jan. 6 driven by fear

TRIAL FROM B1

with Proud Boy Charles Donohoe, who texted a leadership group that they "got a riot shield." Donohoe has pleaded guilty to involvement in a conspiracy to storm the Capitol.

Prosecutors will have a chance to cross-examine Pezzola later this week. The only other defendant to testify at the trial, Philadelphia Proud Boy Zachary Rehl, underwent what his lawyer described as "harsh" questioning from the government Tuesday during which he was accused for the first time of pepper-spraying police officers at the Capitol.

Rehl denied that, continuing to insist that from his vantage point on Jan. 6 he saw "nothing out of the ordinary for a protest."

During a second day on direct examination from his lawyer, Steven Metcalf, Pezzola said that when he awoke on Jan. 6 there was no plan at all for the Proud Boys, until they received a message from



MANUEL BALCE CENETA/AP

Dominic Pezzola, center, and other insurrectionists are confronted by police officers outside the Senate Chamber on Jan. 6, 2021.

Moving with the crowd toward the Capitol, Pezzola said that he saw one rioter, Joshua Black, get hit in the face by a rubber bullet and that he helped treat the bloody wound. Black would later

think there was a step I fell over, I actually landed completely on my back." He said he was able to take possession of the shield as he used it to stand back up.

"I was in complete fear for what

MARYLAND

Shot fired in attempted carjacking at casino

A shot was fired during an attempted carjacking in the garage of the MGM National Harbor hotel and casino in Oxon Hill early Tuesday, but no one was injured, Prince George's County police said.

Detectives are trying to identify the carjackers who attempted to take the vehicle about 3 a.m. Tuesday, police said. They did not say how many people were involved.

A preliminary investigation found that a man approached the victim in the garage and demanded his car at gunpoint, police said. The carjacker and the victim got into a struggle, and the carjacker's gun fired. No one was struck by the bullet.

Police said the attacker then got back into the car he arrived in and fled the scene. The victim's vehicle was not taken.

LOCAL DIGEST

gunpoint in the same MGM garage in February, police said.

— Justin Jouvenal

THE DISTRICT

Metal canisters found at Fort Totten Park

The unexplained discovery Tuesday of two metal canisters in Fort Totten Park prompted officials to close part of the Northeast Washington site as a "public safety" measure, the National Park Service said.

Their discovery came about three years after an inert World War I-era munition was found elsewhere in the park.

A Park Service worker found the items near Farragut Street NE in a large heap of soil that apparently had been pushed into the park from the nearby street, according to the agency.

The Army took custody of the canisters and will analyze them, the Park Service said. Officials will try to determine where the

origins of several mounds of soil at the edge of the road.

"An abundance of caution" while studies are pending prompted authorities to close the park just east of Fort Totten Drive, south of Gallatin Street, and north of Brookland Avenue and Farragut Street NE, the Park Service said. The Fort Totten Metro stop to the east of the restricted area was also closed for a time.

About three years ago, the Park Service discovered an empty metal canister from the World War I era on the ground east of the Metro station. The canister, thought to be an unexploded piece of ordnance, was removed from the site and inspected. The munition was empty, unused and without a detonating fuse and was safely disposed of.

The park, about three miles north of the Capitol, is on the site of a Civil War fortification that was part of a chain of military posts that formed part of Washington's northern defenses.