

**Village of Martin's Additions
7013 Brookville Road, Suite B
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
Council Meeting Minutes**

April 21, 2022

VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL AND IN-PERSON

Council Members Present: Andrew Kauders; Susan Fattig; Arthur Alexander; Katie Filipczyk Howard; Jeff Blander; Village Manager: Niles Anderegg; Manager Assistant: Martha Fessenden; Building Administrator: Doug Lohmeyer; Village Attorney: Ron Bolt

Residents and other Attendees: Keith Allen (Turner Ln.); Marty Langelan (Chestnut St.); George McAleese (Melville Pl.); Steve Howard (Taylor St.); Naomi Naierman (Quincy St.); Lorie Mitchell (Cummings Ln.); Amy Herman (Summit Ave.); Paul Weller (Raymond St.); Josh Bowers (Summit Ave.); Holly Worthington (Turner Ln.)

7:30 PM Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Andrew Kauders.

Keith Allen gave the weather report. The month of May will be cooler than normal.

7:33 PM Building Administrator's Report: Lohmeyer

The Village Council received Building Administrator Lohmeyer's report on ongoing building projects in the Village (see attached).

7:34 PM Opportunity for Council to Hear Residents' Comments: Kauders

Marty Langelan (Chestnut St.) thanked the Council for the first speed hump that was installed on Thornapple Street and urged the Council to add more humps on other streets, including Turner Lane.

Naomi Naierman (Quincy St.) spoke in favor of the Village providing funding for snow shoveling. Arthur Alexander replied that snow shoveling for those who request it is in the budget for the coming year.

Holly Worthington (Turner Ln.) asked that election materials go out by mail before the candidate forum is held. Niles Anderegg noted that the timeline was very tight and that the spacing of the tasks involved in the election might be reconsidered going forward.

7:44 PM Committee Updates

Community Engagement Committee

Chair Keith Allen said he has spoken to some of the new residents and invited them to come to a Council meeting to meet everyone. He praised the efforts of Hannah Howard and Oliver Kahn for the excellent articles they wrote for the *Telling Our Stories* section of the monthly newsletter. Lastly, Keith listed the street captains (see VMA website for roster) and stated that they are "fired up and ready to go." The Committee will meet next month about the July Fourth and other events.

Keith coordinated with Niles regarding the gas odor, which was detected by several residents, but which turned out not to be a problem. Niles reminded everyone that if they smell something to report it to Washington Gas.

Ethics Committee

Chair Lorie Mitchell reported that the Ethics Committee has now reviewed all Conflict of Interest (COI) forms and Oaths of Office, and although there were no COI, several glitches were identified. The Committee will develop an SOP and redesign the COI questionnaire, which may be available by next month's meeting for the Council to review. The Committee is also working on its year-end report. They have received no ethics complaints this year thus far. These trends are consistent with ethics research which correlates well-defined ethics laws and heightened ethics awareness to a reduction in the number of ethics complaints. Hopefully this information will eliminate any concerns that the passage of the impartiality ordinance would increase the number of ethics complaints received. More can be found on the ethics pages of the Village's website

(https://www.martinsadditions.org/governance/village_committees/ethics_committee.php).

Residents are encouraged to attend the Ethics Committee meetings; the next one is on April 26.

Election Committee

Chair George McAleese reported that as soon as the vendor confirms it, the Committee will notify residents that the ballots are on their way. He expressed thanks to all who submitted questions for the candidate forum. The Election Committee will meet next week to discuss vote counting procedures. Before the end of the year the Committee will hold a lessons-learned meeting. Andrew Kauders thanked the Committee for bending over backwards to get ballots to residents who needed to get them early before traveling overseas.

Committee member Naomi Naierman recommended that a celebration be held after the election, not on the night before ballots are due. Marty Langelan expressed support for Naomi's view and also asked the Committee to let everyone know how they can add their names to the voter roll. George said some messaging to that effect had already gone out and additional messaging is planned after ballots are sent out.

8:01 Discussion and Possible Introduction of an Ordinance on Staggered Terms for the Ethics Committee

The Council discussed the ordinance drafted by Attorney Ron Bolt to implement the Ethics Committee's recommendation of staggered terms for Ethics Committee members. Arthur Alexander spoke in support of the ordinance but asked about process and if a formal statement of purpose or explanation is needed for the new ordinance. Lorie Mitchell commented that the Ethics Committee had provided such a statement at a previous meeting. Andrew noted that making such a statement part of the process could prevent residents from feeling ambushed by a proposed ordinance. Susan Fattig questioned why a statement would be needed if an ordinance had been discussed at length at several Council and Committee meetings. Jeff Blander recommended that a 3-4 sentence cover note might accompany future ordinances. Niles noted that some ordinances, such as budget or tax ordinances, are annual and required, while others that are new might be accompanied by a cover memo. Marty Langelan expressed support for having a cover memo for ordinances and asked if the proposed ordinance would limit the Council's authority to remove or appoint people to the Ethics Committee. Arthur Alexander

clarified that each new Council would not be able to appoint a completely new slate of Committee members but would retain the power to remove.

Motion: Susan Fattig moved to introduce the ordinance for staggered terms for Ethics Committee members; seconded by Arthur Alexander. Motion passed unanimously.

Arthur commented on the wealth of past minutes available on the VMA website and Niles thanked Martha Fessenden for her work in locating and posting past minutes. Jeff Blander recommended that the Council also consider staggered terms for other committees, such as the Election Committee.

8:19 PM Discussion of Guidelines for Committees

Andrew Kauders noted that the Council had received a lot of feedback from Council members and the community and now has draft guidelines ready for introduction, which would set the clock for a 30-day review before the Council takes action. Marty Langelan recommended that the guidelines call for public discussion of an issue before the Council asks the Village Attorney to draft an ordinance. Arthur responded that the process currently in place gives the public a 30-day period to review and respond unless it is an emergency ordinance. Marty asked if the Council should seek feedback before it expends public funds on drafting a new ordinance. Jeff noted that this draft is focused on committees and the appendix provides that the Council vote before asking a committee to propose an ordinance. Arthur described some of the appendices as dealing with Council procedures rather than committees and questioned whether they are needed. Susan Fattig expressed the view that the guidelines are very top-down and complex. Instead, she advocated for a simpler, less overwhelming version, a call for volunteers that states a clear set of expectations. Andrew described the guidelines as a good cheat-sheet of discretionary recommended practices. Jeff spoke in support of the guidelines as addressing many of the issues that have arisen over the past years and as reflecting considerable discussion. Andrew commented that the guidelines would help new volunteers on committees. Arthur further noted that the guidelines provide institutional memory for committees. Lorie Mitchell recommended SOPs for each committee so that expectations are clear to volunteers, as opposed to non-binding guidelines that might seem overwhelming in their detail and too loose since they are not required. George McAleese suggested that the guidelines might be broken into smaller pieces depending on the audience.

Motion: Katie Filipczyk Howard moved to introduce the committee guidelines; Jeff seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

8:39PM Financial Matters, including the Treasurer's Report

The Village Council received the Treasurer's report (see attached). Arthur Alexander noted that the Village has received more money in the first nine months of the year than was budgeted for the entire year.

8:51 PM Manager's Report: Anderegg

The Village Council received the Manager's report (see attached). Niles is working on the first report required for the American Rescue Plan Funds. The Office will be sending out maps showing planned walkability improvements, so residents are aware in advance of projects. Projects include adding illuminated stop signs, which cost \$1,200 each (half the cost of a speed

indicator sign) to selected intersections and fixing the sidewalk along Brookville Road at the same time that WSSC is doing their work. Niles attended a SHA meeting that introduced the idea of reducing lanes on Connecticut Ave from three to two, broader sidewalks, and adding protected bike lanes. This idea was not well-received by the public or by the villages that border Connecticut Avenue due to concerns that changes may impact traffic on side streets. Jeff Blander asked about the status of plans for the Chevy Chase Library. Niles noted that these plans may not be finalized until after the November election. Jeff recommended that the Village add a sentence or two in the budget about the flow of American Rescue Plan Funds into the budget and how they are being used. Katie Filipczak Howard requested that the Office provide a list of utility emergency numbers for residents and thanked Oliver Kahn, Cecilia Cummings, Nancy Ferris, and Naomi Nairman for their participation in the Telling Our Stories newsletter project.

PM Opportunity for Council to Hear Residents' Comments: Kauders

Lorie Mitchell (Cummings Ln.) asked if a HAWK-EYE light would be added by the state to crosswalk by the post office. Niles responded that he would raise that with SHA at the next meeting of the regional managers with the state.

8:54 Adjournment: Kauders

Motion: Susan Fattig moved to adjourn the meeting; Arthur Alexander seconded. Motion passed unanimously.