

## **Council Meeting Minutes – December 14, 2023**

VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL AND IN-PERSON

The audio recording for this meeting is available on the [Village website](#).

**Council Members Present:** Andrew Kauders; Jeff Blander; Susan Fattig; Arthur Alexander; Katie Howard

**Other Attendees Include:** Village Manager: Michael Silliman; Village Attorney: Ron Bolt; Village Auditor: Eva Webb; Marty Langelan; Steve Howard; John Sharrow; Larry Wasson; Phil Hurst; Lynn Welle; Keith Allen; Jean Sperling; Larry Wasson; Hiromi Maruyama; Doug Grob; and Naomi Naierman.

**7:30 PM Call to Order: Alexander**

**7:32 PM FY23 Audit Report: Eva Webb**

Eva Webb delivered the FY23 Audit Report. Arthur and Jeff made a few comments about the financial health of VMA.

**7:51 PM Weather Report: Keith Allen**

Keith delivered his weather report.

**7:53 PM Opportunity for Council to Hear Residents' Comments: TBD**

Doug Grob asked about accountability regarding Village staffing and the building code.

Larry Wasson asked about corrective measures regarding Village staffing and the building code.

**8:01 PM Committee Reports**

Keith Allen gave the Community Engagement Committee report. They are looking forward to planning the March brunch. There are no confirmed plans for a lantern walk this year.

Naomi Naierman delivered the report for the Antisemitism Awareness Taskforce. The American Jewish Committee will be providing a training on January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Phillip Hurst provided an update for the Storm and Ground Water Taskforce. The taskforce has applied for a grant from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. The grant would pay for an engineer to assess the water issues facing the Village.

**8:10 PM Approve November 16 Council Meeting Minutes**

Arthur moved Katie seconded. The minutes pass unanimously.

**Manager's Report: Silliman**

Village Manager Michael Silliman delivered his report.

### **8:28 PM Discussion and possible introduction of the 2024 Election Plan**

The election committee provided their report and a recommendation for the 2024 Election plan.

First, the Council considered if this Election Plan should be an ordinance, a regulation, or a policy. Village Attorney Ron Bolt explained the differences between ordinances, regulations, and policies in municipal law. Susan moved to consider this a regulation. Arthur seconded. This was unanimous.

Second, the Council discussed several sections of the Election Plans they have concerns about or would want to edit before adoption. Adoption discussion and vote will happen at the January 18<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. The Council introduced the Election Plan as a regulation. Arthur moved and Katie Seconded. This was unanimous. It was noted that it is not clear what changes are proposed from the current election rules. The Council directed the Election Committee to provide a redline or a written summary of the proposed changes from the current election rules, to assist the Council in the review of the proposal.

### **9:29 PM Ordinance Development Process: Blander**

Jeff Blander led a discussion of the process by which the Village Council considers legislation.

### **9:40 PM Discussion of possible building code revisions: Alexander**

Arthur Alexander led a discussion on the possibility of hiring an engineer or urban planner to make recommendations for amendments to the Village's building code. The Village Council agreed to move forward on this and directed the Village Manager to draft a scope of work and have preliminary discussions with engineering and urban planning firms.

### **9:42 PM Discussion and possible introduction of a building code amendment restricting bio retention planter boxes.**

Arthur moved and Susan seconded to introduce ordinance 2023-11-1 to restrict bio retention planter boxes. Katie and Andrew voted in favor. Jeff abstained.

### **9:50 PM Treasurer's Report: Blander**

Jeff Blander provided the treasurer's report.

### **9:52 PM Opportunity for Council to Hear Residents' Comments: TBD**

Larry Wasson commented on the Election Plan. He is in favor of the Election Committee having at least five members and supports providing guidance on referendums in the Election Plan. Larry also commented on the legislation process and suggested that the Council should provide an "explanation of need" for the proposed legislation.

**Adjournment: Alexander**

Susan moved to adjourn, and Jeff seconded. This was unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 10:02 PM.