

Election Committee Meeting

November 1, 2023, 7:45 PM

Agenda

7:45 Call to order. Welcome to all participants.

7:50 Review the Committee's main duties and timetable:

- Set the dates for election day and the other 2024 election components - *done*.
- Review the election rules and procedures, and submit the proposed 2024 election ordinance to the Council before the December 2023 Council meeting - *now in progress*.
- Begin to verify the voter roll for 2024, starting in January.
- Open the nomination period in February....

7:55 Approve the minutes from the Committee meeting on October 18. Set up the Committee email. Set the schedule for the next two Committee meetings.

8:00 Residents' comments, questions, and suggestions.

8:10 **ACTION ITEMS** at this meeting:

This is the second public working session to review the 2023 election documents that the Committee is using as the basis for 2024: the rules and procedures ordinance, the voter roll verification procedure, the instructions for the mail-vote contractor, the forum procedure, the vote-counting procedure, and the contract. The Committee will mark up the documents to (1) incorporate the new definition of "qualified voter" that the Council adopted in September 2023, (2) make these documents long-term standard procedures by replacing the 2023 dates with the appropriate generic language, and (3) ensure that the resulting procedural documents are clear and complete. Community input is welcome.

- A. Review mark-up and hold initial vote on the election contract.
- B. Review mark-up and hold initial vote on the forum procedure.
- C. Review mark-up and hold initial vote on the combined instructions for the mail-vote contractor and vote-counting procedure.
- D. Review mark-up and hold initial vote on the rules and procedures document.

8:45 Discussion of the voter roll verification process. Draft the specifications for a proposed RFP and/or a contractor job announcement to assist the Committee with the task of verifying the voter roll this year.

9:00 Discussion of any other procedural election issues.

9:05 Residents' comments, questions, and suggestions.

9:10 Committee task assignments.

9:15 Adjourn.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89731935548?pwd=ZEloQUd3UWRqMFFVRHNrZm1CZDVhQT09>

Meeting ID: 897 3193 5548

Passcode: 876670

Election Committee Meeting Minutes, October 18, 2023

The 2024 VMA Election Committee held its second meeting on October 18, 2023, by Zoom. In attendance: Council liaison Katie Howard. Committee members Marty Langelan, Jen Bergeron, Naomi Naierman, John Sharrow and Paul Weller. Village Manager Michael Silliman. Council member Andrew Kauders briefly stopped by.

Committee chair Marty Langelan called the meeting to order at 8:07 pm, with a quorum present. The Committee voted 3-0 to record its meetings in order to enhance transparency. Jen Bergeron confirmed that she had completed the Maryland Open Meeting Act certificate class on 15 October. The Village Manager said that he would set up the Committee email by October 20. The Committee set the schedule for the next two meetings, voted 3-0 to approve the minutes from the meeting on October 4, and voted 3-0 to confirm the participatory format for the Committee meetings this year to encourage resident comments and participation. The two other Committee members had some technical difficulties but were able to join the meeting shortly after 8:15.

This was a public working session to review the 2023 election documents that the Committee is using as the basis for 2024: the rules and procedures ordinance, the voter roll verification procedure, the instructions for the mail-vote contractor, the forum procedure, the vote-counting procedure, and the contract with the mail-vote service provider. The Committee began the process of updating the documents (a) to incorporate the new definition of “qualified voter” that the Council adopted in September 2023, (b) to make the election provisions long-term standard procedures by replacing the 2023 dates with the appropriate generic language, and (c) to ensure that the resulting procedural documents are clear and complete.

The Committee plans to post the mark-ups in the packet for the next Committee meeting on November 1, and hold Committee votes on the updated documents at that meeting.

Forum Procedure

During discussion of the forum procedure, the Committee agreed that the forum should return to a format of up to two hours and that provision should be made for both advance questions and live questions. There was discussion about the importance of timekeeping and impartiality to ensure that each candidate will have an equal opportunity to present themselves and answer resident questions. The Committee further agreed that the moderator should have some discretion to choose which questions to ask, to cover a broad range of issues and apply to all candidates (per the language in the 2023 election ordinance). The Committee also agreed to be flexible to consider whether to hold a second forum in 2024 if desired by the candidates. Discussion of the forum led to the Committee agreeing that the Committee can make minor administrative changes to the forum format on its own authority and would only need Council approval on substantive policy changes. The Committee plans to vote on the draft Forum Procedure document at the next meeting on 1 November.

Instructions and Contract for the Mail-vote Service Contractor

The Committee discussed whether the 2023 election service contract needed to be renegotiated. Michael Silliman clarified that it is a one-year contract and that ELECTEC is the only bidder in Southern Montgomery County. There was further discussion of the fact that VMA has a \$10,000 limit for a sole source award of a contract and that other municipalities in the area were raising the limit to \$15,000 or \$20,000 due to inflation. Michael noted that ELECTEC’s proposal may come in near or slightly above \$10,000 for 2024. Katie committed to have the Council look at whether an adjustment in VMA for sole source contract awards would be advisable. Michael agreed to ask ELECTEC to provide a cost proposal by 13 November for the 2024 election.

At the next meeting on 1 November, the Committee plans to vote on whether it will recommend that VMA continue with ELECTEC or not.

During the discussion, the Committee noted that paragraphs 6 and 7 of last year's standard election service contract did not apply to VMA. There was also discussion of VMA needing a small election drop-box on Election Day. Marty offered to update the draft contract.

The Committee reviewed the specific instructions to the contractor. There was discussion about whether the Committee would instruct the contractor to accommodate voters who require early ballots due to travel or other circumstances. The Committee agreed that this was beneficial to the democratic process, and consistent with the 2023 election ordinance. The Committee plans to include that information in the Committee's written election notices that the staff sends to VMA residents and posts on the Village email announcements. The Committee agreed that the 2023 operational instructions to the contractor seem clear and should be continued, and that the instructions document should include a provision authorizing the Committee to specify additional instructions if necessary. The Committee plans to vote on the draft document at the next meeting on 1 November.

Vote Counting Procedure

The Committee agreed that the vote counting document as currently drafted is confusing, and plans to circulate a simplified draft for the 1 November meeting. The Committee discussed Katie's suggestion that all valid ballots that are received in time to be counted should be included; the Committee agreed, saying that it makes for a more complete, accurate election, and is simple to do in the vote counting process. There was also discussion about the need to clarify the time allowed for ballot-curing, and to add some flexibility in case the contractor or the Committee might need to reschedule the vote counting session due to unexpected circumstances.

Other Documents

The Committee agree to table the longer documents for further discussion at the 1 November meeting. Marty is working on marking up the 2023 Election Rules and Procedures document so that it can be used for the regular yearly voting procedures. Jen is working on the Voter Roll verification procedures.

Voter Roll Verification Contractor

The Committee discussed the details for hiring a short-term contractor to help verify the voter roll this year and strongly emphasized the need to do so. The chair will present that recommendation at the Council meeting on October 19. The Village Manager will post the RFP/job opening if the Council approves hiring the temporary contractor.

The Committee agreed on its task assignments:

Marty will mark-up the main Election Rules and Procedures.

Paul will review the vote counting document.

Jen will review the voter roll verification document.

The next meetings will be on November 1 and 13, and the Committee agreed to move its meeting time to 7:45 pm.

At 9:30, the Chair moved to adjourn the meeting and the Committee voted 5-0 in favor.



Certificate of Completion

This is an official acknowledgement that

Jennifer K Bergeron

has completed the virtual class entitled

Maryland's Open Meetings Act
October 15, 2023

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephan A. Sherman".

Stephan Sherman, Acting Director
University of Maryland

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anthony G. Brown".

Anthony G. Brown, Attorney General
State of Maryland

ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES, INC.
10 Eagle Avenue, Suite 800, PO Box 791, Mt. Holly, NJ 08060
(800) 833-9912 * Fax (609) 267-8072

ELECTION SERVICE CONTRACT

THIS AGREEMENT, approved, made and executed this _____ day of _____, by and between ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES, INC. (hereinafter called "ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES") and VILLAGE OF MARTIN'S ADDITIONS (hereinafter called "MARTIN'S ADDITIONS").

Deleted: 03rd

Deleted: April 2023

WITNESSETH, that for and in consideration of the agreements herein stated and expressed, the parties hereto covenant and agree as follows:

FIRST: ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES shall provide Election support services, and election supplies for the Election of MARTIN'S ADDITIONS to be held on Tuesday May 7, 2024.

Deleted: ,

Deleted: Wednesday May 10, 2023

SECOND: ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES shall provide support services and election supplies in accordance with the _____ Estimate of Costs for _____.

Deleted: April 03, 2023

Deleted: \$8,592.85

THIRD: In the event of a Run-Off Election, the charge shall remain at _____ for the Run-Off Election as stated in Second Item and/or Estimate of Cost Sheet submitted to MARTIN'S ADDITIONS by ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES.

Deleted: \$8,592.85

Deleted: ;

Deleted: shall remain

FOURTH: MARTIN'S ADDITIONS agrees to pay a 50% deposit upon signing of this contract to lock-in your election date. The remaining invoice amount will be due within thirty (30) days of date of final invoice, or may be paid in person to the ELECTEC technician on the day of the election. ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES shall apply a late charge of one and one-half percent (1½%) per month to past due amounts.

FIFTH: As soon as they are known, MARTIN'S ADDITIONS shall provide ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES with the details of the election information as it should appear on the ballot (Offices, candidates, ratification vote wording, etc.). The costs for preparation and printing of all ballots shall be borne by MARTIN'S ADDITIONS, and are included in this agreement.

Deleted: 1

SIXTH: [Intentionally Omitted]

SEVENTH: ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES shall provide the MARTIN'S ADDITIONS ELECTION COMMITTEE with a small secure standard drop-box on site in MARTIN'S ADDITIONS on the afternoon and evening of Election Day, May 7, 2024, for sealed completed ballot return envelopes, and shall provide a secure means to promptly convey those completed ballot return envelopes to ELECTEC'S office in New Jersey, for the subsequent vote-counting session.

Deleted: **SIXTH:** ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES warrants that voting machines shall be delivered undamaged and in good working order to site(s) specified and shall make necessary arrangements with the management of election site(s) for the receipt of the voting machines and acknowledges that, subsequent to delivery, MARTIN'S ADDITIONS shall be responsible for the care and security of said machines. In the event that any machine is lost, damaged, or otherwise rendered unusable while in the custody of MARTIN'S ADDITIONS, MARTIN'S ADDITIONS hereby agrees to pay for replacement or any repairs necessary to restore the machine to the same condition as when it was delivered to the election site

Deleted: a representative to instruct election officers and to be present during the election to render any services that may be required in connection with the voting machines. ¶ ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES reserves the right to have a representative present at the close of the polls to monitor and guide the tabulation process

Deleted: .

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.09", Hanging: 0", Space Before: 0 pt

EIGHTH: ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES agrees to provide Election Services in exact accordance with this contract and MARTIN'S ADDITIONS' election plan, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. However, it is expressly understood that ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES shall not be responsible for any unforeseen occurrences that may prevent or delay its performance of this contract. Such unforeseen occurrences include, but are not limited to, Labor Disputes, Road Hazards, Civil Disorder, or Acts of Nature. In the unlikely event that an undetected malfunction within the machine results in incomplete results, ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES liability is expressly limited to providing replacement equipment for any additional elections that may be required as a result of such malfunction.

**ELECTION SERVICES CONTRACT
VILLAGE OF MARTIN'S ADDITIONS
PAGE2**

NINTH: [Intentionally Omitted]

TENTH: In all states except Pennsylvania and New Jersey, ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES does NOT add sales/use taxes to its invoices and does NOT collect sales or use tax. However, if at any time in the future ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES should become liable for such taxes, it is agreed that MARTIN'S ADDITIONS will reimburse ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES for any and all such liabilities. MARTIN'S ADDITIONS may on its own, remit sales/use tax to the state in which the election is held, if it so desires.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES has caused this presents to be signed by its President or Designee the day and year first above written and has caused this presents to be signed by its Officers.

FOR: ELECTEC ELECTION SERVICES, INC.

FOR: VILLAGE OF MARTIN'S ADDITIONS

(Signature)

(Date)

(Signature)

(Date)

CLEAN COPY:

STANDARD PROCEDURE: VMA ELECTION FORUM

Deleted: ¶

Formatted: Font: Not Italic

1. The election forum shall be held during the second half of April. The Election Committee shall finalize the date, time, and details for the forum after consulting with the candidates about their preferences and availability. The forum shall run for at least ninety (90) minutes, and may run for up to two hours at the moderator's discretion. The Committee shall conduct the forum by Zoom or other remote means, to ensure that the forum is readily accessible for the candidates and residents. The Committee may hold more than one forum after April 15.
2. The election forum shall be strictly impartial: (a) the forum must cover a broad range of issues, with questions applicable to all candidates; (b) all candidates must have equal time to present their views; and (c) the moderator and Committee members must remain neutral and in no way indicate or imply approval or disapproval of any candidate.
3. One member of the Election Committee shall moderate the forum; a second member shall serve as the timekeeper. The VMA staff shall assist the committee in setting up the technical logistics.
4. All VMA residents are welcome to participate directly (by Zoom, or via a call-in number). Residents may email questions to the Committee in advance at VMAelections@martinsadditions.org or submit questions to the Committee by other means. Residents may submit forum questions anonymously, and may ask live questions during the forum. No candidate is permitted to see the questions prior to the forum. The Committee shall compile the advance questions from residents and provide the list to the forum moderator.
5. VMA forum rules and structure:
 - A 1-minute welcome and introduction from the moderator or Committee chair.
 - A 2-minute opening statement from each candidate.
 - Residents' questions:
 - 1 minute for each question from a resident.
 - A 2-minute answer from each candidate.
 - Each candidate is allowed a 1-minute follow-up round on each question if a candidate wants to respond.
 - A 2-minute closing statement from each candidate.
 - The moderator thanks the candidates and residents for participating and closes the forum.

The Election Committee may revise these format and timing elements at its discretion, provided that all candidates shall have equal time to respond to each question.

The moderator:

- shall rotate the order of calling on the candidates to respond to the residents' questions.
- shall include both live questions from residents and the questions submitted in advance.
- shall keep the time balanced fairly among all the candidates to maintain a level playing field.
- shall have discretion to choose which questions to ask.

The timekeeper shall hold up "15 SECONDS" and "TIME" cards, as needed, for the candidates, the moderator, and the residents to see. The timekeeper may also use a bell or other means to signal when time is up.

Formatted: Space After: 0 pt

Formatted: Font: (Default) + Headings (Calibri), Font color: Custom Color(RGB(34,34,34))

Formatted: Space After: 0 pt, Add space between paragraphs of the same style, Line spacing: Multiple 1.15 li

Formatted: Space Before: 6 pt

6. The VMA staff shall record the forum and post the audio and video on the VMA website afterward, to be readily accessible to VMA residents.
7. Public notice: The Election Committee shall publish the formal notice about the date, time, Zoom link and call-in number for the forum by email on Constant Contact, in the VMA newsletter, and in the official VMA election information packet that is sent by mail to all VMA households. The Committee shall post an additional forum notice on Constant Contact two days in advance, and again on the morning of the forum. The Committee may also post informal reminders on the village listserv.

MARK-UP -- STANDARD PROCEDURE: VMA ELECTION FORUM

1. The election forum shall be held during the second half of April. The Election Committee shall finalize the date, time, and details for the forum after consulting with the candidates about their preferences and availability. The forum shall run for at least ninety (90) minutes, and may run for up to two hours at the moderator's discretion. The Committee shall conduct the forum by Zoom or other remote means to ensure that the forum is readily accessible for the candidates and residents. The Committee may hold more than one forum after April 15.
2. The forum shall be strictly impartial: (a) the forum must cover a broad range of issues, with questions applicable to all candidates; (b) all candidates must have equal time to present their views; and (c) the moderator and Committee members must remain neutral and in no way indicate or imply approval or disapproval of any candidate.
3. One member of the Election Committee shall moderate the forum; a second member shall serve as the timekeeper. The VMA staff shall assist the committee in setting up the technical logistics.
4. All VMA residents are welcome to participate directly (by Zoom, or via a call-in number). Residents may email questions to the Committee in advance at VMAelections@martinsadditions.org or submit questions to the Committee by other means. Residents may submit forum questions anonymously, and may ask live questions during the forum. No candidate is permitted to see the questions prior to the forum. The Committee shall compile the advance questions from residents and provide the list to the forum moderator.
5. VMA forum rules and structure:
 - 1-minute welcome and introduction from the moderator or Committee chair.
 - 2-minute opening statement from each candidate.
 - Residents' questions:
 - 1 minute for each question from a resident
 - A 2-minute answer from each candidate.
 - Each candidate is allowed a 1-minute follow-up round on each question if a candidate wants to respond.
 - 2-minute closing statement from each candidate.
 - the moderator thanks the candidates and residents for participating and closes the forum.

- Deleted: sets
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Deleted: final
- Deleted: location
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Deleted: may
- Deleted: in person or
- Deleted: both
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Deleted: will
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Formatted: Font: +Headings (Calibri)
- Deleted: 2.
- Deleted: s
- Deleted: s
- Deleted: s
- Deleted: physical location and
- Deleted: 3.
- Deleted: in person,
- Deleted: can
- Deleted: can
- Deleted: can
- Deleted: chair
- Deleted: s
- Deleted: s
- Deleted: 4.
- Deleted: comments and
- Formatted: Indent: First line: 0.5"
- Deleted: s
- Deleted: all the
- Deleted: s
- Deleted: is allowed
- Deleted: M

The Election Committee may revise these format and timing elements at its discretion, provided that all candidates have equal time to respond to each question.

The moderator:

- shall rotate the order of calling on the candidates to respond to the residents' questions.
- shall include both live questions from residents and the questions submitted in advance.
- shall keep the time balanced fairly among all the candidates to maintain a level playing field.

--- shall have discretion to choose which questions to ask.

The timekeeper shall hold up "15 SECONDS" and "TIME" cards, as needed, for the candidates, the moderator, and the residents to see. The timekeeper may also use a bell or other means to signal when time is up. 6. The VMA staff shall record the forum and post the audio and video on the VMA website afterward, to be readily accessible to VMA residents.

7. Public notice: The Election Committee shall publish the formal notice about the date, time, Zoom link and call-in number for the forum by email on Constant Contact, in the VMA newsletter, and in the official VMA election information packet that is sent by mail to all VMA households. The Committee shall post an additional forum notice on Constant Contact two days in advance, and again on the morning of the forum. The Committee may also post informal reminders on the village listserv.

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: s

Deleted: alternates between the

Deleted: s

Deleted: in order

Deleted: s

Deleted: and

Deleted: ¶
¶

Deleted: 5.

Deleted: s

Deleted: s

Deleted: or

Deleted: 6.

Deleted: es

Deleted: s

CLEAN COPY

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ELECTION SERVICE CONTRACTOR AND VOTE COUNTING PROCEDURE

The Martin's Additions Election Committee is the government body responsible for managing the election process. The election service contractor reports to the Committee.

Election schedule and voter roll: The Election Committee shall update and verify the voter roll before sending it to the mail-vote service contractor in early April. The election is held in the first half of May. The Committee shall notify the contractor of the date for Election Day, and shall determine the date for the vote counting session in consultation with the contractor. The vote counting shall take place approximately two weeks after Election Day.

Voter roll changes: The Committee may add or delete voters until 8 pm on Election Day, and may instruct the contractor to issue replacement ballots until five (5) days before the vote counting date. The Committee shall instruct the contractor in writing, by email, (a) to add new voters as appropriate after the Committee has verified their status; (b) to cancel the original assigned ballot security number before sending a voter a replacement ballot; or (c) to cancel the voter's ballot security number if the Committee determines that a ballot was sent to someone who is no longer a qualified voter. The Committee and the contractor shall each keep a complete written record of all instructions and actions with respect to the list of voters and issuance of ballots.

Mailing date for the ballot packets and final received-by date for completed ballots: The contractor shall mail the ballot packets to the voters on the Committee's instructions, after the candidate forum in late April. To be included in the vote count, completed ballot envelopes must be received at the contractor's P.O. Box by 5 pm on the day of the vote counting.

The Committee may instruct the contractor to mail early ballot packets to voters who will be out of the country during the general mailing to the Village.

Specifications for the ballot packet and equipment on Election Day:

The contractor shall:

1. Provide the draft ballot packet (including the voting instructions, ballot format, and envelopes) to the Committee for review at least two weeks before the planned general mailing date. The Committee will check the content, format, clarity and accuracy of the draft documents and vote to approve the packet before authorizing the contractor to send it to the voters.
2. Rotate the candidates' names on the ballot format to prevent positional bias.
3. Include the blank lines on the ballot for the write-in votes.
4. Provide postage-paid ballot return envelopes, and the inner envelope to protect voting privacy.
5. Assign a random 6-digit security control number to each voter, and print that number on the voter's ballot return envelope.
6. Print the affidavit/affirmation form on the back of the return envelopes.
7. Put USPS tracking codes on both the incoming ballot packets and the return ballot envelopes.
8. Send a test mailing to the Committee members before the general mailing to the Village.
9. Provide a small secure election drop-box on site in Martin's Additions on the afternoon and evening of Election Day for the completed ballot return envelopes, and provide a secure means to promptly convey those completed ballot return envelopes to the contractor's location for the subsequent vote counting session. The Election Committee shall supervise the drop-box.

Vote counting procedure:

1. The contractor shall make arrangements with the Martin's Additions Village Manager for the Committee, the candidates and/or their representatives, and residents to view the vote counting process by Zoom or other remote means, and shall record the vote counting session.

Formatted: Space After: 6 pt

2. The contractor shall include all ballot return envelopes that are received by 5 pm on the day of the vote counting. Prior to the start of the vote counting, the contractor shall inform the Committee about the total number of ballot envelopes received and the number that are still in postal transit as of 5 pm on that date.

3. On the Committee's instructions, the contractor shall begin the vote counting session by presenting any non-conforming envelopes for Committee adjudication. A return envelope that is unsealed, was not issued by the contractor, does not have a valid control number, or does not have a signed affidavit, is non-conforming. If voters within the same household have merely switched their return envelopes, those envelopes are valid. The contractor shall set aside, unopened, any ballot return envelopes the Committee determines to be non-conforming. The Committee shall follow up with the individual voters to attempt to "cure" those envelopes, after the initial vote counting session.

4. On the Committee's instructions, the contractor shall:

- Open the valid envelopes and tally the votes by machine count.
- Present any non-machine-readable ballots for Committee adjudication, to complete the initial vote count.
- Provide the Committee with the preliminary tally of the votes for each listed candidate, the name and number of votes for each write-in candidate, the number of envelopes, ballots and/or votes that were disqualified, and the reasons for the disqualifications.
- Work with the Committee to resolve any questions about the vote count.

5. If candidates or their representatives raise objections during the envelope-adjudication and/or vote counting process, the Committee shall resolve such objections by Committee vote during the session and instruct the contractor to include or set aside the envelope, or include or disqualify the ballot or vote, accordingly. If a voter subsequently "cures" a non-conforming ballot envelope, the Committee shall instruct the contractor in writing to open that envelope and include those votes in the final tally. The Committee shall notify the contractor about any cured ballot envelopes within five (5) business days after the initial vote counting session.

6. At the conclusion of the ballot-curing process, the contractor shall within 24 hours provide the Committee with the complete certified Official Count of Ballot Report on all votes received, including the number of votes for each listed candidate, the name and number of votes for each write-in candidate, the number of envelopes, ballots and/or votes that were disqualified, and the reasons for the disqualifications.

Additional instructions: The Election Committee is authorized to specify additional instructions for the contractor if necessary to ensure a fair and accurate election.

Return of election materials: The contractor shall securely return all ballots, envelopes, and other election materials to the Martin's Additions Village Office by mail or courier.

MARK-UP --

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ELECTION SERVICE CONTRACTOR AND VOTE COUNTING PROCEDURE

The Martin's Additions Election Committee is the government body responsible for managing the election process. The election service contractor reports to the Committee.

Election schedule and Voter roll: The Election Committee shall update and verify the voter roll before sending it to the mail-vote service contractor in early April. The election is held in the first half of May. The Committee shall notify the contractor of the date for Election Day, and shall determine the date for the vote counting session in consultation with the contractor. The vote counting shall take place approximately two weeks after Election Day.

oter roll changes: enj The Committee may add or delete voters until 8 pm on Election Day, and may instruct the contractor to issue replacement ballots until five (5) days before the vote counting date. The Committee shall instruct the contractor in writing, by email, (a) to add new voters, as appropriate after, the Committee has verified their status; (b) to cancel the original assigned ballot security number before sending a voter a replacement ballot; or (c) to cancel the voter's ballot security number if the Committee determines that a ballot was sent to someone who is no longer a qualified voter. The Committee and the contractor shall each keep a complete written record of all instructions and actions with respect to the list of voters and issuance of ballots.

Mailing date for the ballot packets and final received-by date for completed ballots: The contractor shall mail the ballot packets to the voters on the Committee's instructions, after the candidate forum in late April. To be included in the vote count, completed ballot envelopes must be received at the contractor's P.O. Box by 5 pm on the day of the vote counting.

The Committee may instruct the contractor to mail early ballot packets to voters who will be out of the country during the general mailing to the Village.

Specifications for the ballot packet and equipment on Election Day:

The contractor shall:

1. Provide the draft ballot packet (including the voting instructions, ballot format, and envelopes) to the Committee for review at least two weeks before the planned general mailing date. The Committee will check the content, format, clarity and accuracy of the draft documents and vote to approve the packet before authorizing the contractor to send it to the voters.
2. Rotate the candidates' names on the ballot format to prevent positional bias.
3. Include the blank lines on the ballot for the write-in votes.
4. Provide postage-paid ballot return envelopes, and the inner envelope to protect voting privacy.
5. Assign a random 6-digit security control number to each voter, and print that number on the voter's ballot return envelope.
6. Print the affidavit/affirmation form on the back of the return envelopes.
7. Put USPS tracking codes on both the incoming ballot packets and the return ballot envelopes.
8. Send a test mailing to the Committee members before the general mailing to the Village.

9. Provide a small secure election drop-box on site in Martin's Additions on the afternoon and evening of Election Day, for the completed ballot return envelopes, and provide a secure means to promptly convey those completed ballot return envelopes to the contractor's location for the subsequent vote-counting session. The Election Committee will supervise the drop-box.

V. Vote counting procedure:

1. The contractor shall make arrangements with the Martin's Additions Village Manager, for the Committee, the candidates and/or their representatives, and residents to view the vote-counting process by Zoom or other remote means, and shall record the vote counting session.

Deleted: ¶

Formatted: Font: Not Bold

Formatted: Font: Not Bold

Formatted: Font: Not Bold

Deleted: VMA

Deleted: VMA

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: after the roll has be

Deleted: certified

Deleted: :

Deleted: will

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Space After: 12 pt

Deleted: through May 10,

Deleted: once

Deleted: removes a voter from active status.

Deleted: will

Deleted: re:

Deleted: Election Day is May 10.

Deleted: must

Deleted: C

Deleted: May 23

Deleted: a few

Formatted: Font color: Auto

Formatted: Font color: Auto

Formatted: Space After: 12 pt

Formatted: Font color: Auto

Deleted: Please p

Formatted: Font color: Auto

Formatted: Font color: Auto

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: (Default) Calibri, 11 pt

Formatted

Formatted

Deleted: Ballot return envelopes and v

Formatted

Deleted: M

Deleted: VMA staff

Deleted: envelope-adjudication and

Deleted: .

2. The contractor shall include all ballot return envelopes that are received by 5 pm on the day of the vote counting. Prior to the start of the vote counting, the contractor shall inform the Committee about the total number of ballot envelopes received and the number that are still in postal transit as of 5 pm on that date.

3. On the Committee's instructions, the contractor shall begin the vote counting session by presenting any non-conforming envelopes for Committee adjudication. A return envelope that is unsealed, was not issued by the contractor, does not have a valid control number, or does not have a signed affidavit, is non-conforming. If voters within the same household have merely switched their return envelopes, those envelopes are valid. The contractor shall set aside, unopened, any ballot return envelopes the Committee determines to be non-conforming. The Committee will follow up with the individual voters to attempt to "cure" those envelopes, after the initial vote counting session.

4. On the Committee's instructions, the contractor shall:

- Open the valid envelopes and tally the votes by machine count.
- Present any non-machine-readable ballots for Committee adjudication, to complete the initial vote count.
- Provide the Committee with the preliminary tally of the votes for each listed candidate, the name and number of votes for each write-in candidate, the number of envelopes, ballots and/or votes that were disqualified, and the reasons for the disqualifications.
- Work with the Committee to resolve any questions about the vote count.

5. If candidates or their representatives raise objections during the envelope-adjudication and/or vote counting process, the Committee shall resolve such objections by Committee vote during the session and instruct the contractor to include or set aside the envelope, or include or disqualify the ballot or vote, accordingly. If a voter subsequently "cures" a non-conforming ballot envelope, the Committee shall instruct the contractor in writing to open that envelope and include the votes in the final tally. The Committee will notify the contractor about any cured ballot envelopes within five (5) business days after the initial vote counting session. 6. At the conclusion of the ballot-curing process, the contractor shall within 24 hours provide the Committee with the complete certified Official Count of Ballot Report on all votes received, including the number of votes for each listed candidate, the name and number of votes for each write-in candidate, the number of envelopes, ballots and/or votes that were disqualified, and the reasons for the disqualifications.

Additional instructions: The Election Committee is authorized to specify additional instructions for the contractor if necessary to ensure a fair and accurate election.

Return of election materials: The contractor shall securely return all ballots, envelopes, and other election materials to the Martin's Additions Village Office by mail or courier.

Deleted: Count

Deleted: May 23

Deleted: .

Deleted: I

Deleted: May 23,

Deleted: prior to the vote counting.

Deleted: May 24

Deleted: , before opening the ballot return envelopes, set aside

Deleted: and present them

Deleted: The Committee will promptly contact voters to correct any curable ballot envelope problems.

Deleted:

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.2"

Deleted: preliminary

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.2", Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.25" + Indent at: 0.5"

Deleted:

Deleted: remaining

Deleted: final

Formatted: Indent: Left: 0.3"

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: 5.

Deleted: Within 24 hours,

Deleted: a

Formatted: Font: Bold

Formatted: Space After: 0 pt

10/2023

PRELIMINARY MARK-UP – VMA ELECTION ORDINANCE

**Based on the 2023 Election Rules and Procedures
As adopted 1-19-2023**

The Village of Martin's Additions ("VMA") is governed by a municipal Charter that provides for a five-member elected Council to appoint an Election Committee ("Committee") that operates according to rules and procedures adopted by the Council, pursuant to Section 602 of the Village Charter. The Committee verifies and certifies the voter roll, accepts nominations of candidates for the Village Council ("Council"), and manages the annual elections.

This statement of the Election Rules and Procedures, adopted by the Village Council on _____, constitutes the VMA Election Ordinance. The purpose of this Ordinance is to provide for fair and independent elections in the Village of Martin's Additions and to ensure that all qualified voters are able to freely exercise their right to vote.

The Village Council Election Process

The Committee shall set the date of Election Day between May 1 and May 15, on a date determined from year to year in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter. Council members are elected to terms of two years. The number of seats open on the Council alternates between two and three seats every other year; vacancies are filled per Section 408 of the Charter. All Elections are managed by the Committee. The Committee shall consist of no fewer than five qualified voter volunteers appointed by the Council. The Council may appoint additional qualified voters as short-term assistant Election Committee members, as needed. Committee members shall complete an Oath of Office and a Conflicts of Interest form, as provided by the Village.

General Provisions

Each year the details of the election cycle for that year shall be published in the Village newsletter and in the standard Village election information packet that is mailed to all Village households. The following rules and procedures apply:

1. Consistent with the Village Charter, no later than seventy-five (75)) days prior to Election Day, the Committee shall open the nomination period and request that declarations of candidacy and nominations of candidates be submitted in writing to the Committee. Any qualified voter may declare their candidacy or be nominated by another qualified voter.
2. To be placed on the ballot, all candidates shall submit (a) a statement of interest and qualifications, and (b) a conflict of interest disclosure statement in a form specified by the Village, no later than forty-five (45) days prior to Election Day. *[MOVED SOME LANGUAGE TO THE CANDIDATE FILING SECTION BELOW.]*
3. *[MOVED TO THE NOMINATIONS SECTION BELOW.]*
4. The Committee shall establish a format, date, and time for an Election Forum for residents to hear from the candidates and ask questions. The forum shall be moderated by the Committee in accordance with the Forum Procedure specified below. *[MOVED SOME LANGUAGE TO THE FORUM PROCEDURE SECTION.]*

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

5. No later than two (2) weeks after the candidate filing date, the Committee shall publish and mail the official Village election information packet to all VMA households, with the written statements of the candidates for office, the official election notice and forum notice, and general voting instructions.

6. Pursuant to the Charter and this Ordinance, each qualified voter may cast a mail-in ballot provided by the Committee in accordance with the schedule publicly announced by the Committee.

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

7. Blank lines shall be placed on the ballot for the purpose of adding write-in candidates at the time of the election. A successful write-in candidate shall be required to submit a Conflicts of Interest disclosure Statement no later than seven (7) business days following the election.

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

8. In the event that two or more candidates receive the same number of votes where only one can be elected, the Committee shall hold a runoff election as soon as possible. Runoff elections shall be held by mail.

9. VMA elections may include referendum questions, in accordance with Maryland state election law.

10. Recounts: A losing candidate may submit a written request for a recount to the Committee up to three (3) calendar days after the election results are announced if the margin between the winning and losing candidates is fewer than ten (10) votes.

[MOVED SOME LANGUAGE TO THE VOTE COUNTING PROCEDURE SECTION BELOW]

QUALIFIED VOTERS: Who Can Vote?

Pursuant to Charter Section 301, a qualified voter is "any natural person whose residence is in Martin's Additions and who is eighteen years of age or over."

ADD THE VMA ATTORNEY'S NEW LANGUAGE ABOUT DEFINING RESIDENCE FOR VOTING PURPOSES:

"As used in the Charter, 'residence' means the location deemed one's primary residence (or 'permanent abode' according to case law) and single domicile in the United States for voting purposes, and where one intends to return after a temporary residence elsewhere."

A student who resides elsewhere during the school year but who maintains a permanent address in Martin's Additions is deemed a resident and entitled to vote in the Village Council election. Voters in Martin's Additions need not be registered to vote in Montgomery County or in the State of Maryland and need not be U.S. citizens.

[ADD THE PROVISION ABOUT VOTING RIGHTS DURING MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS.]

[ADD THE NEW PROVISION ABOUT ALLOWING TEMPORARILY ABSENT OWNERS TO VOTE IF THEY FILE A SIGNED FORM OR DECLARATION.]

The Committee shall utilize the most recent electronically available Village resident contact information and other appropriate sources to verify the names and addresses of the qualified voters for each annual election.

The process for creating the annual voter roll prior to each year's election is specified in the Voter Roll Procedure, which is hereby appended to and made an integral part of this Election Ordinance. The Committee shall develop, verify, and certify the voter roll in accordance with the Voter Roll Procedure. The Committee shall confirm that the verified voter roll is used in operating the election, and shall certify the final official voter roll for that year at 8 PM on Election Day.

New voters may contact the Committee to request to be added to the voter roll up until 8 PM on Election Day. To be eligible to receive a mail ballot, new voters must show a driver's license or other documentation acceptable to the Committee in its sole discretion, showing the voter's full name and current address in Martin's Additions. The Committee may also require documentation of a voter's date of birth.

The Committee is responsible for verifying and adding new voters, and is likewise responsible for removing from the voter roll the names of residents who are no longer qualified voters, per the process described in the Voter Roll Procedure.

PROCEDURE FOR VOTING

VMA's elections shall be held entirely by mail. There shall be no in-person voting. To protect election security, the Committee's election service provider shall mail the ballots directly to the voters. Voters will mail their completed ballots back to the election service provider in the postage-paid envelopes issued by the provider. On Election Day, the Committee shall also provide an opportunity for voters to drop off completed and sealed ballot envelopes in a secure ballot drop-box directly supervised by the Committee, with a secure Committee procedure to convey those completed ballot envelopes to the election service provider for counting.

Traditional absentee ballots will not be necessary, because every person on VMA's voting roll will automatically receive a ballot by mail.

If voters are planning not to be at their VMA address during the voting process, they may elect to receive a ballot by mail at a different location by so informing the Committee no later than 8:00 PM on Election Day. No one may vote two ballots at two different addresses. If voters have lost or damaged their ballot or ballot return envelope, they may request a replacement ballot by contacting the Committee no later than one week after Election Day. On receipt of such requests, the Committee shall instruct the service provider in writing, by email, to void the previous ballot sent to that voter before mailing the replacement ballot.

Voters can also notify the Committee if they will not be able to receive a ballot by mail during the regular voting period. The Committee shall instruct the service provider to mail early ballots to such voters, if possible.

All completed ballot envelopes must be received by the service provider by 5:00 PM on the day of the vote counting session.

NOMINATIONS AND CANDIDATE FILING

The Committee shall issue a call for candidates no less than seventy-five days prior to Election Day. Any qualified voter may run for office. Qualified voters may nominate themselves or be nominated by another qualified voter, in writing. Nominations may be made only by qualified voters; anonymous nominations are not permitted. Qualified voters who nominate themselves must submit an affirmative statement or email

stating that they wish to run for office. Qualified voters who nominate residents other than themselves must include an email or signed written statement from the proposed candidates expressing their consent to be nominated.

To be placed on the official ballot, all candidates must submit their filing materials by email to the Election Committee by 6 PM, no later than 45 days before Election Day. The required candidate filing materials are (a) a brief Candidate Statement of up to approximately 1000 words, including their qualifications as well as any other information they deem relevant, and (b) their signed and completed Conflicts of Interest Disclosure form. The Election Committee will specify the form of both documents when the nomination period opens. A thirty-minute grace period will be allowed for email submissions to arrive in the Committee's email inbox. The Committee will maintain a record of the date and time when nominations and candidate filing materials were received.

The Election Committee may specify standard formatting for the candidate statements and any standard questions to which all candidates are requested to respond.

The Committee will review the submissions and identify any conflicts-of-interest forms that are incomplete. The Committee will notify the candidate, and the candidate will have 24 hours to correct the problem. .

Candidate Announcement

The Committee will promptly notify the Village of the candidates for office and publish the election information and candidate statements by email, by posting on the Village's website, and in the official Village election information packet that is mailed to all VMA households. Information will also be included in the Village's Friday wrap-up emails and newsletters and will be available for review in the Village Office throughout the election period.

ELECTION FORUM PROCEDURE

The Committee shall host an Election Forum on a date agreed upon by the Committee and candidates during the last fifteen (15) days of April to allow qualified voters and residents to hear from candidates and ask the candidates questions. Candidates and residents will be afforded the ability to attend and participate remotely. The Committee shall provide a mechanism for residents to submit forum questions anonymously. Residents may ask questions directly at the forum when called on and are encouraged to send their questions for the candidates to the Committee by any means that is convenient for the residents. The Committee shall send the Village election packet containing the candidate information and statements to voters in time to be received before the forum.

[PUT THE FORUM PROCEDURE HERE.]

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ELECTION SERVICE PROVIDER

Pursuant to the Charter and these rules and procedures, each qualified voter may cast a ballot, according to the following vote-by-mail procedures.

The service provider shall mail via first class post (a) a ballot, (b) voting instructions prepared by the Committee in consultation with the election service provider, and (c) a postage-paid return ballot envelope to each voter listed on the voter roll at their address of record.

a. The Committee shall instruct the election service provider to deliver the ballot packets to the voters shortly after the Candidate Forum.

[REPLACE THIS SECTION WITH THE 2024 DOC ON THE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CONTRACTOR.]

c. The Committee will work with the election service provider to identify projected dates when ballots will begin arriving and shall provide notice to the Village.

The VMA Election Committee shall post reminders for all qualified voters to return ballots by mail sufficiently early to ensure the ballot envelopes arrive at the offices of the election service provider by the vote counting date.

4) For voters' convenience, the Election Committee will also provide a secure ballot drop-box, supervised by the Committee, to collect completed ballot envelopes on the evening of Election Day, May 10, 2023. Voters may deposit their sealed ballot envelopes containing a voted ballot and bearing a completed affidavit in the Election Committee ballot drop-box between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Promptly after 8:00 p.m., the Election Committee shall open the ballot drop-box, count the number of ballot return envelopes in the box, and then securely convey the ballot envelopes to the service provider. The election service provider shall hold all ballots received until the date for ballot counting, May 24, 2023.

5) Between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, the Election Committee will also provide an opportunity for qualified voters whose ballots have been lost, damaged, spoiled, or are otherwise unable to be voted, to request that their existing ballot be voided and a new ballot be issued to them by the service provider.

a. The Committee shall send all replacement ballot instructions to the election service provider in writing, via email, in order to keep a complete VMA election record that can be audited and verified. The service provider cannot issue ballots without the Committee's written instructions.

b. The election service provider shall void the original ballot before the second ballot is issued.

c. The service provider shall then send the replacement ballot to the voter, and shall keep a complete record of all ballots issued, all ballots voided, all replacement ballots sent, and all Committee emails received, to maintain a complete record that can be audited and verified.

VOTE COUNTING PROCEDURE *[REPLACE THIS SECTION WITH THE 2024 VOTE COUNTING PROCEDURE.]*

8) Candidates or their designated representative(s) — only one per candidate — may observe the tallying, review, and adjudication process. Candidates or their designated observers may raise objections during the counting process. The candidate or observer must identify the challenge at the time of vote counting. Other qualified voters may also observe the process, but they may not raise objections. 9. Each candidate may designate one person as an official observer to be present when the ballots are being counted. Other qualified voters may also observe, although no observer may participate in or otherwise disrupt the counting of the ballots. Specific vote counting procedures will be recommended by the Committee and adopted by the Council each year, as appropriate.

Election Interference

Maryland state election law [cite section] prohibits interference with election officials in the performance of their official duties. VMA Council members and staff shall not alter or delay election notices, issue ballots, be involved in the vote counting process, or otherwise interfere with the management of the election process. The Committee shall document any interference and promptly report it to the Council.

Records

All election records, including nominations, candidate statements, ballots, envelopes, and all materials pertaining to voter rolls and the voting process, shall be securely stored at the Village Office, in accordance with the Village's Document Retention Schedule.

Electioneering

- 1) Residents may distribute candidates' information to Village residents, provided that such distribution complies with applicable laws, including Sections 7-208 and 9-106 of the Village Code and the United States postal service regulations (for example, no unstamped non-postal material may be placed in residents' mailboxes).
- 2) All candidates' brochures and election materials must prominently state that they have been paid for by, or on behalf of, the candidates.
- 3) Use of the Village logo and/or letterhead on election campaign materials is prohibited. Candidates' materials shall not imply, suggest, or give the impression of any official endorsement by the Village of Martin's Additions.
- 4) Candidates' campaigns may give residents token gifts that display candidate information, provided that such gifts do not exceed \$1 in fair market value.
- 5) On Election Day, the Committee shall set and enforce a reasonable "No Electioneering Zone" around the election table where voters may place their ballots in the Election Committee ballot drop-box. That zone shall prohibit electioneering within a 50 foot radius of the election table. Sound amplification systems such as bullhorns will not be permitted.

[ATTACH THE VOTER ROLL VERIFICATION PROCEDURE HERE AS APPENDIX A.]

PRELIMINARY MARK-UP – VMA ELECTION ORDINANCE -- October 2023

2023 Election Rules and Procedures
As adopted 1-19-2023

The Village of Martin’s Additions (“VMA”) is governed by a municipal Charter that provides for a five-member elected Council to appoint an Election Committee (“Committee”) that operates according to rules and procedures adopted by the Council, pursuant to Section 602 of the Village Charter. The Committee verifies and certifies the voter roll, accepts nominations of candidates for the Village Council (“Council”), and manages the annual elections.

This statement of the Election Rules and Procedures, adopted by the Village Council on constitutes the Election Ordinance. The purpose of this Ordinance is to provide for fair and independent elections in the Village of Martin’s Additions and to ensure that all qualified voters are able to freely exercise their right to vote. The Village Council Election Process

The Committee shall set the date of Election Day between May 1 and May 15, on a date determined from year to year in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter. Council members are elected to terms of two years. The number of seats open on the Council alternates between two and three seats every other year; vacancies are filled per Section 408 of the Charter. All Elections are managed by the Committee. The Committee shall consist of no fewer than five qualified voter volunteers appointed by the Council. The Council may appoint additional qualified voters as short-term assistant Election Committee members, as needed. Committee members shall complete an Oath of Office and a Conflicts of Interest form, as provided by the Village. Each year the details of the election cycle for that year shall be published in the Village newsletter and in the standard Village election information packet that is mailed to all Village households. The following rules and procedures apply:

General Provisions

1. Consistent with the Village Charter, no later than seventy-five (75) days prior to Election Day, the Committee shall open the nomination period and request that declarations of candidacy and nominations of candidates be submitted in writing to the Committee. Any qualified voter may declare their candidacy or be nominated by another qualified voter.
2. To be placed on the ballot, all candidates shall submit (a) a statement of interest and qualifications, and (b) a conflict of interest disclosure statement in a form specified by the Village, no later than forty-five (45) days prior to Election Day. [PUT THIS IN THE CANDIDATE FILING SECTION BELOW.]
3. [MOVED TO THE NOMINATIONS SECTION BELOW.] 4. The Committee shall establish a format, date, and time for an Election Forum for residents to hear from the candidates and ask questions. The forum shall be moderated by the Committee in accordance with the Forum Procedure specified below. [PUT THIS IN THE FORUM PROCEDURE SECTION.]
5. No later than two (2) weeks after the candidate filing date, the Committee shall publish and mail the official Village election information packet to all VMA households, with the written statements of the candidates for office, the official election notice and forum notice, and general voting instructions.
6. Pursuant to the Charter and this Ordinance, each qualified voter may cast a mail-in ballot provided by the Committee, in accordance with the schedule publicly announced by the Committee.

- Formatted
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Deleted: oversees
- Formatted
- Deleted: these rules and procedures
- Deleted: free and ...air and independent elections in the
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Deleted: The election of Village Council members takes
- Deleted: s
- Formatted
- Deleted: a minimum of three, but preferably
- Deleted: , consistent with Village Policy
- Formatted
- Deleted: ¶
- Formatted
- Deleted: ¶
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Deleted: sixty (60)
- Deleted: will
- Formatted
- Deleted: . according to the election rules and procedures. ¶
- Deleted: A...I nominated
- Formatted
- Deleted: ,...in a form provided
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Deleted: The Election...Committee may specify standard
- Deleted:
- Deleted: qualified...voters and
- Formatted
- Deleted:Qualified voters are encouraged to send
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Deleted: these rules and procedures
- Formatted
- Deleted: subject to
- Formatted

7. Blank lines shall be placed on the ballot for the purpose of adding write-in candidates at the time of the election. A successful write-in candidate shall be required to submit a Conflicts of Interest disclosure Statement no later than seven (7) business days following the election.

8. In the event that two or more candidates receive the same number of votes where only one can be elected, the Committee shall hold a runoff election as soon as possible. Runoff elections shall be held by mail.

9. VMA elections may include referendum questions, in accordance with Maryland state election law.

10. Recounts: A losing candidate may submit a written request for a recount to the Committee up to three (3) calendar days after the election results are announced if the margin between the winning and losing candidates is fewer than ten (10) votes.

[PUT THIS IN THE VOTE COUNTING PROCEDURE SECTION BELOW]

QUALIFIED VOTERS: Who Can Vote?

Pursuant to Charter Section 301, a qualified voter is "any natural person, whose residence is in Martin's Additions and who is eighteen years of age or over."

ADD THE VMA ATTORNEY'S NEW LANGUAGE ABOUT DEFINING RESIDENCE, FOR VOTING PURPOSES:
As used in the Charter, "residence" means the location deemed one's primary residence (or "permanent abode" according to case law) and single domicile in the United States for voting purposes, and where one intends to return after a temporary residence elsewhere.

A student who resides elsewhere during the school year but who maintains a permanent address in Martin's Additions is deemed a resident and entitled to vote in the Village Council election. Voters in Martin's Additions need not be registered to vote in Montgomery County or in the State of Maryland and need not be U.S. citizens.

ADD THE PROVISION ABOUT VOTING RIGHTS DURING MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS.

ADD THE NEW PROVISION ABOUT ALLOWING TEMPORARILY ABSENT OWNERS TO VOTE IF THEY FILE A SIGNED FORM OR DECLARATION

The Committee shall utilize the most recent electronically available Village resident contact information and other appropriate sources to verify the names and addresses of the qualified voters for each annual election. The process for creating the annual voter roll prior to each year's election is specified in the Voter Roll Procedure, which is hereby appended to and made an integral part of this Election Ordinance.

The Committee shall develop, verify, and certify the voter roll in accordance with the Voter Roll Procedure. The Committee shall confirm that the verified voter roll is used in operating the election, and shall certify the final official voter roll for that year at 8 PM on Election Day.

New voters may contact the Committee to request to be added to the voter roll up until 8 PM on Election Day. To be eligible to receive a mail ballot, new voters must show a driver's license or other documentation

- Deleted: will
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Formatted
- Deleted: there shall be
- Deleted: within two weeks of the date when votes are tabulated and recorded.
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Deleted: 9. Each candidate may designate one person as an official observer to be present when the...ballots are being counted. Other qualified voters may also observe, although
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Deleted: the
- Deleted: who owns property or any
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Deleted: resident of
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Deleted: In the case of students, such as college or
- Formatted
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Deleted: confirm voters'
- Formatted
- Deleted:
- Deleted: are
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Formatted
- Deleted:
- Deleted: with the assistance of the Village staff ...n
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Deleted: rolls
- Deleted: are
- Deleted: E
- Formatted: Font: 11 pt
- Formatted
- Formatted
- Deleted: should be prepared to ...how a driver's license, {

acceptable to the Committee in its sole discretion, showing the voter's full name and current address in Martin's Additions. The Committee may also require documentation of a voter's date of birth.

The Committee is responsible for verifying and adding new voters, and is likewise responsible for removing from the voter roll the names of residents who are no longer qualified voters, per the process described in the Voter Roll Procedure. **PROCEDURE FOR VOTING**

VMA's elections shall be held entirely by mail. There shall be no in-person voting. To protect election security, the s election service provider shall mail the ballots directly to the voters. Voters will mail their completed ballots back to the election service provider in the postage-paid envelopes issued by the provider. On Election Day, the Committee will also provide an opportunity for voters to drop off completed and sealed ballot envelopes in a secure ballot drop-box directly supervised by the Committee, with a secure Committee procedure to convey those completed ballot envelopes to the election service provider for counting.

Traditional absentee ballots will not be necessary, because every person on VMA's voting roll will automatically receive a ballot by mail.

If voters are planning not to be at their VMA address during the voting process, they may elect to receive a ballot by mail at a different location by so informing the Committee no later than 8:00 PM on Election Day. No one may vote two ballots at two different addresses. If voters have lost or damaged their ballot or ballot return envelope, they may request a replacement ballot by contacting the Committee no later than one week after Election Day. On receipt of such requests, the Committee shall instruct the service provider in writing, by email, to void the previous ballot sent to that voter before mailing the replacement ballot.

Voters can also notify the Committee if they will not be able to receive a ballot by mail during the regular voting period. The Committee shall instruct the service provider to mail early ballots to such voters, if possible. All completed ballot envelopes must be received by the service provider by 5:00 PM on the day of the vote counting session.

NOMINATIONS AND CANDIDATE FILING

The Committee will issue a call for candidates no less than seventy-five days prior to Election Day. Any qualified voter may run for office. Qualified voters may nominate themselves or be nominated by another qualified voter, in writing. Nominations may be made only by qualified voters; anonymous nominations are not permitted. Qualified voters who nominate themselves must submit an affirmative statement or email stating that they wish to run for office. Qualified voters who nominate someone other than themselves must include an email or signed written statement from the proposed candidate expressing his or her consent to be nominated.

To be placed on the official ballot, all candidates must submit their filing materials by email to the Election Committee by 6 PM no later than 45 days before Election Day. The required candidate filing materials are (a) a brief Candidate Statement of up to approximately 1000 words, including their qualifications as well as any other information they deem relevant, and (b) their signed and completed Conflicts of Interest Disclosure form. The Election Committee will specify the form of both documents when the nomination period opens. A thirty-minute grace period will be allowed for email submissions to arrive in the Committee's email inbox. The Committee will maintain a record of the date and time when nominations and candidate filing materials were received.

- Deleted: address. ...
- Formatted ...
- Formatted ...
- Deleted: ¶ ...
- Formatted ...
- Deleted: 2023 ...
- Deleted: will ...
- Deleted: will ...
- Formatted ...
- Formatted ...
- Formatted ...
- Formatted ...
- Formatted ...
- Deleted: Committee ...
- Deleted: ...
- Deleted: will ...
- Formatted ...
- Formatted ...
- Deleted: May 10, ...
- Deleted: a voter is ...
- Deleted: May 10 ...
- Deleted: a voter has ...
- Deleted: 8:00 PM on May 18 to request a replacement ...
- Deleted: will ...
- Deleted: A voter ...
- Deleted: will make reasonable efforts to provide those ...
- Deleted: ¶ ...
- Deleted: May 23, 2023 ...
- Formatted ...
- Deleted: ¶ ...
- Deleted: on February 20, 2023 ...
- Deleted: The nominations period will open on February ...
- Formatted ...
- Formatted ...
- Formatted ...
- Deleted: 700 ...
- Formatted ...
- Deleted: In order to appear on the ballot, within seven ...
- Deleted: supporting ...
- Formatted ...

The Election Committee may specify standard formatting for the candidate statements and any standard questions to which all candidates are requested to respond.

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: nomination materials

The Committee will review the submissions and identify any conflicts-of-interest forms that are incomplete. The Committee will notify the candidate, and the candidate will have 24 hours to correct the problem.

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: submit an updated form addressing the issue

Deleted: Submission of updated materials will not be subject to the deadline above for submissions.

Candidate Announcements

Deleted: and Candidate Forum

Formatted: Font: 11 pt, Bold

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: will

Deleted: Candidate

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: qualified voters

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: qualified voters and

Deleted: m

Deleted: The Committee shall moderate the forum in an impartial manner. This includes: (a) the forum must cover a broad range of issues with questions applicable to all candidates; (b) candidates must have equal time to present their views; and (c) the moderator must remain neutral and in no way indicate or imply approval or disapproval of the candidates or their answers.

Deleted: u¶

Deleted: At the discretion of the moderator, qualified voters and r

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: Election Procedures¶

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: ¶

Deleted: 1) The Committee or its agent will

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: c

Deleted: b. Both the incoming ballot packets and the ball...

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: 2) Ballot envelopes will bear on their exterior...

Deleted: a. Ballots must be returned in the official servic...

ELECTION FORUM PROCEDURE

The Committee shall host an Election Forum on a date agreed upon by the Committee and candidates during the last fifteen (15) days of April to allow qualified voters and residents to hear from candidates and ask the candidates questions. Candidates and residents will be afforded the ability to attend and participate remotely. The Committee shall provide a mechanism for residents to submit forum questions anonymously. Residents may ask questions directly at the forum when called on and are encouraged to send their questions for the candidates to the Committee by any means that is convenient for the residents. The Committee shall send the Village election packet containing the candidate information and statements to voters in time to be received before the forum.

[PUT THE FORUM PROCEDURE HERE.]

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ELECTION SERVICE PROVIDER

Pursuant to the Charter and these rules and procedures, each qualified voter may cast a ballot, according to the following vote-by-mail procedures.

The service provider shall mail via first class post (a) a ballot, (b) voting instructions prepared by the Committee in consultation with the election service provider, and (c) a postage-paid return ballot envelope to each voter listed on the voter roll at their address of record.

- a. The Committee shall instruct the election service provider to deliver the ballot packets to the voters shortly after the Candidate Forum.

[REPLACE THIS SECTION WITH THE 2024 DOC ON THE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CONTRACTOR.]

- c. The Committee will work with the election service provider to identify projected dates when ballots will begin arriving and shall provide notice to the Village.

VMA Election Committee shall post reminders for all qualified voters to return ballots by mail sufficiently early to ensure the ballot envelopes arrive at the offices of the election service provider by that date.

4) For voters' convenience, the Election Committee will also provide a secure ballot drop-box, supervised by the Committee, to collect completed ballot envelopes on the evening of Election Day, May 10, 2023. Voters may deposit their sealed ballot envelopes containing a voted ballot and bearing a completed affidavit in the Election Committee ballot drop-box between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on [Election Day](#). Promptly after 8:00 p.m., the Election Committee shall open the ballot drop-box, count the number of ballot return envelopes in the box, and then securely convey the ballot envelopes to the service provider. The election service provider shall hold all ballots received until the date for ballot counting, May 24, 2023.

Deleted: May 10

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

5) Between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on [Election Day](#), the Election Committee will also provide an opportunity for qualified voters whose ballots have been lost, damaged, spoiled, or are otherwise unable to be voted, to request that their existing ballot be voided and a new ballot be issued to them by the service provider.

Deleted: May 10

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

a. The Committee shall send all replacement ballot instructions to the election service provider in writing, via email, in order to keep a complete VMA election record that can be audited and verified. The service provider cannot issue ballots without the Committee's written instructions.

b. The election service provide shall void the original ballot before the second ballot is issued.

c. The service provider shall then send the replacement ballot to the voter, and shall keep a complete record of all ballots issued, all ballots voided, all replacement ballots sent, and all Committee emails received, to maintain a complete record that can be audited and verified.

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: 6) The service provider shall count the votes on the ballots on May 24 and ensure that the Election Committee and candidate observers can clearly observe the counting process. ¶

¶

7) On May 24, the election service provider shall examine the ballot envelopes without opening them and identify non-conforming envelopes. The provider shall then display each such non-conforming envelope to the committee members, who will then decide, based on a majority vote, whether each such envelope has the potential to be 'cured' or corrected of any discrepancies or deficiencies. If so, the Committee must make a prompt, reasonable and meaningful attempt to contact the voter identified by the control number on that envelope to cure the defect and have the ballot be counted in accordance with the county and state election regulations.

VOTE COUNTING PROCEDURE [REPLACE THIS SECTION WITH THE 2024 DOCUMENT.]

8) Candidates or their designated representative(s) — only one per candidate — may observe the tallying, review, and adjudication process. Candidates or their designated observers may raise objections during the counting process. The candidate or observer must identify the challenge at the time of vote counting. Other qualified voters may also observe the process, but they may not raise objections. 9. Each candidate may designate one person as an official observer to be present when the ballots are being counted. Other qualified voters may also observe, although no observer may participate in or otherwise disrupt the counting of the ballots. Specific vote counting procedures will be recommended by the Committee and adopted by the Council each year, as appropriate.

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

Deleted: 9) At the vote counting session, the service provider shall tally all votes cast, including the write-in votes. The service provider shall deliver a complete, certified Official Count of Ballot Report to the Election Committee by email within 24 hours.

Election Interference

Maryland state election law [cite section] prohibits interference with election officials in the performance of their official duties. VMA Council members and staff shall not alter or delay election notices, issue ballots, be involved in the vote counting process, or otherwise interfere with the management of the election process. The Committee shall document any interference and promptly report it to the Council.

Deleted: 10) The Committee shall review the Report, address any remaining ballot or vote issues, and certify the election by Committee vote. The Committee shall announce the election results as soon as practicable. ¶

11) The election service provider shall return all ballots, ballot return envelopes, and other election materials to the Village Office by mail or courier, for preservation according to the Village's state-approved Document Retention policy. ¶

Formatted: Font: 11 pt, Bold

Records

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

All election records, including nominations, candidate statements, ballots, envelopes, and all materials pertaining to voter rolls and the voting process, shall be securely stored at the Village Office, in accordance with the Village’s Document Retention Schedule.

Electioneering

1) Residents may distribute candidates’ information to Village residents, provided that such distribution complies with applicable laws, including Sections 7-208 and 9-106 of the Village Code and the United States postal service regulations (for example, no unstamped non-postal material may be placed in residents’ mailboxes).

2) All candidates’ brochures and election materials must prominently state that they have been paid for by, or on behalf of, the candidates.

3) Use of the Village logo and/or letterhead on election campaign materials is prohibited. Candidates’ materials shall not imply, suggest, or give the impression of any official endorsement by the Village of Martin’s Additions.

4) Candidates’ campaigns may give residents token gifts that display candidate information, provided that such gifts do not exceed \$1 in fair market value.

5) On Election Day, the Committee shall set and enforce a reasonable “No Electioneering Zone” around the election table where voters may place their ballots in the Election Committee ballot drop-box. That zone shall prohibit electioneering within a 50 foot radius of the election table. Sound amplification systems such as bullhorns will not be permitted.

Deleted: feet but no greater than a 100-foot

Formatted: Font: 11 pt

[ATTACH THE VOTER ROLL VERIFICATION PROCEDURE HERE AS APPENDIX A.]

Formatted: Font: 11 pt