



## VILLAGE OF MARTIN'S ADDITIONS

7013 Brookville Road (Second Floor, Suite B)

Chevy Chase, MD 20815-3263

Phone (301) 656-4112

[www.martinsadditions.org](http://www.martinsadditions.org)

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

### **Council Meeting Minutes Dec. 15, 2022**

VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL AND IN-PERSON

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

**Residents and other Attendees:** Village Manager: Michael Silliman; Building Administrator: Doug Lohmeyer; Village Attorney: Ron Bolt; Keith Allen (Turner Ln.); Marty Langelan (Chestnut St.); Lorie Mitchell (Cummings Ln.); Susan Kahn (Bradley Ln.); Steve Howard (Taylor St.); George McAleese (Melville Pl.); Elizabeth Goldberg (Oxford St.); Peter Kahn (Bradley Ln.); Paul Weller (Raymond St.); Jean Sperling (Shepherd St.); Larry Wasson (Delfield St.)

**7:31 PM** Call to Order: Andrew Kauders. (Andrew Kauders noted that Jeff Blander was not present, but expected to join the meeting shortly.)

**7:32 PM** Weather: Keith Allen reported that there may be snow in the forecast for Christmas. Over the past couple of days, he indicated that  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch of rain had fallen. He shared that it would be 45 degrees on Friday, but it would turn cold by Sunday night. He anticipated two storms one week apart. He mentioned we could have a white Christmas and the last time we had substantial snow on Christmas was 1962.

**7:34 PM** Motion to approve November 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes: Susan Fattig; Motion seconded: Arthur Alexander. Unanimous vote to approve meeting minutes.

**7:35 PM** Building Administrator's Report: Doug Lohmeyer delivered his report. Highlights were an extension on the permit for 3506 Bradley Ln. and a review of plans for 3412 Taylor St.

**7:38 PM** Jeff Blander joined the meeting.

**7:39 PM** Opportunity for Council to Hear Residents' Comments: Kauders

Peter Kahn shared concerns about clarity of processes and timelines for the election plan and offered a follow-up in writing.

Elizabeth Goldberg shared concerns regarding the Election Committee Meeting of December 13, 2022, specifically regarding the draft election plan. Jeff Blander indicated that everyone will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft plan.

Larry Wasson shared the suggestion that processes be revisited for committees sharing of official documents with residents.

Susan Kahn shared concerns about there being differing versions of draft election plan documents when the Election Committee met. She suggested that there be some oversight for the Ethics Committee and that all residents have the ability to volunteer and participate on committees.

Jean Sperling and Marty Langelan echoed concerns about differing version of the draft election plan documents. Marty said she will submit her concerns in writing as well.

#### **7:41 PM** Committee Updates: Kauders

Community Engagement Committee: Keith Allen, Chair

Keith Allen gave the report and indicated a planning committee meeting would be held soon.

Election Committee: George McAleese, Chair

George McAleese gave the committee's report, reviewing the 12/13/2022 draft plan that was submitted.

Paul Weller shared final comments, starting with an apology to Chairman McAleese as he submitted his resignation from the committee due to challenges with different perspectives on the committee.

Both Andrew Kauders and Katie Howard thanked Paul Weller for his service and apologized for his difficulties serving on the committee.

**8:40 PM** Motion to introduce the 2023 Draft Ordinance for Election Rules and Procedures, dated 12/13/2022: Arthur Alexander. Motion seconded: Susan Fattig.

Jeff Blander voted against and indicated that, procedurally, there should have been a plan that was circulated to residents followed by a comment period.

Katie Howard shared concerns about the process but voted in favor. All other Council members voted in favor.

Jeff Blander recognized George McAleese for serving as committee chair, given the challenges in the process thus far.

Andrew Kauders noted that the Village had a very successful election last year, with excellent turn out and no significant issues being presented. He stated that he hoped the Village would be able to update the election plan each year by adjusting the dates, only. Edits and

improvements should be made based on lessons learned from year to year, but given the success of recent elections, we unlikely need to engage in significant rewrites each year.

**8:45 Ethics Committee report: Lori Mitchell, Chair**

Lorie Mitchell delivered the committee's report. In response to Jeff Blander's request for clarification about the committee's role, Lorie explained that the Ethics Committee would only be the decision-making body if the Council chose to abstain from votes.

It was noted that if the ordinance is introduced in January, the vote must be in March because there won't be 30 days between the January and February meetings. The committee is still working on gathering conflict of interest and oath of office forms. Ethics training was conducted in November 2022, and it will be repeated in early 2023.

**9:02 PM Financial Matters: Treasurer Arthur Alexander**

New Village Manager, Michael Silliman, has been working with the accountant. A highlight: Amount we received from the State income tax for November 30 is the second largest we've ever received at \$465,000. We should receive 3-4 times that throughout the year, which looks positive for the remainder of the year.

**9:04 PM Village Manager's Report: Michael Silliman**

Michael Silliman gave his report including the following highlights:

We have hired a new Assistant Village Manager, Erin Byrnes. Michael will become a notary and will be meeting with the external accountant in the coming weeks. We have been receiving the Holiday Fund donations. There was a suggestion that we use Venmo for the Holiday Fund, and Michael said he'll be looking into online payment possibilities for next year.

The Annual Survey has been sent out using Google Forms this year, which is working well and resulted in a savings of 40% from our communication and old survey tool Constant Contact. Jeff Blander mentioned that the most important consideration about surveys is the limitations of the results.

We completed our fall tree planting, and our final leaf vacuuming is happening next week.

**9:15 PM Opportunity for Council to Hear Residents' Comments: Kauders**

Peter Kahn expressed concerns about staffing committees and about this being a volunteer government.

George McAleese expressed an interest in the annual survey results to inform communications about the next election.

Susan Kahn suggested that the Zoom comment section be enabled for residents to provide comments during meetings. Village Manager Michael Silliman called on Village Lawyer Ron Bolt to address this. Ron Bolt explained that if Zoom meetings are recorded and if chats are allowed, the chats likely need to be preserved under the Public Information Act. That presents administrative issues. Additionally, the Open Meetings Compliance Board has stated that public officials should not receive (or send) individual messages that are not shared with all participants during meetings. Zoom allows such private messaging. Therefore, the Village decided not to enable the chat feature during Council meetings. The chat feature will be active to message the Zoom meeting host for administrative purposes only, *e.g.*, to indicate that a person would like to make a comment if they are unable to use the “raise hand” function.

Susan Kahn also suggested that future annual surveys be consistent in referencing the budget cost of added services as it is unfair to reference the cost in some places and not others.

Marty Langelan inquired about the annual audit and about the amount of funds currently in the bank. She also expressed an interest in voter-friendly procedures.

In response, Arthur Alexander indicated that there is a draft of the annual audit, but that the final version is forthcoming. Currently, our assets are roughly \$4 million.

**9:49** PM Adjournment: Kauders