



Village of Martin's Additions
7013-B Brookville Road
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
301-656-4112 (Phone)

Policy No. 2021-1-1

Election Rules and Procedures

The Village of Martin's Additions (Village or Martin's Additions) 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.

Background

The Election of Village Council members takes place on a date determined from year to year in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter. Each year the details of the election cycle for that year are approved by the Council in open session and published in the Village newsletter and on its website.

Council members are elected to terms of two (2) years. Usually, the number of seats open on the Council alternates between two (2) and three (3) seats every other year unless there is a vacancy as provided for in Section 408 of the Charter. All elections are managed by the Committee. The Committee consists of a minimum of three (3) Village qualified voter¹ volunteers appointed by the Council. At the request of the Committee, the Council may appoint additional qualified voters as short-term, assistant Election Committee members as needed. Committee members shall complete an Oath of Service and conflicts of interest disclosure, consistent with Village Policy.

Village Council Election Process

The following rules and procedures apply.

1. Consistent with the Village Charter, no later than sixty (60) days prior to the election, the Committee will open the nominations period. Any qualified voter may run for office. Residents may nominate themselves or be nominated by another qualified voter. Nominations may be made only by qualified voters; anonymous nominations are not permitted. Residents who nominate someone other than themselves must include an email or signed written statement from the proposed candidate expressing his/her consent to be nominated. All nominations must be received by the deadline set by the Committee for that election year.
2. All nominated candidates shall submit via email (a) a statement of interest and qualifications, as well as any other information they deem relevant, and (b) a completed Martin's Additions Ethics Committee conflicts of interest disclosure. The Election Committee may specify any standard questions to which all candidates are requested to respond in their Candidate Statement.
3. Nominations and required candidate submissions must be received by email in advance of the deadline specified by the Committee for that year in order for the candidate to be placed on the official ballot. No nominations or candidate submissions will be accepted by the Committee if received later than the deadline specified.

¹ Village of Martin's Additions Charter Section 301: "Qualified Voter" is any person who owns property or any resident of Martin's Additions who is eighteen (18) years of age or over.

4. Pursuant to Charter Section 602(b), no later than two (2) weeks prior to the election, the Committee shall give notice of the nominations together with related information like the candidate statements and designate the voting method and any associated date(s) and time(s).
5. The Committee may establish a format, date, and time for a public forum for residents to hear from candidates. The forum shall be moderated by the Committee at its sole discretion. If such a forum is created, residents are encouraged to send proposed questions to the Committee via email (VMAElections@martinsadditions.org) by the Committee-specified deadline or be prepared to ask them if/when called upon during the forum. The Committee will not receive questions via phone or otherwise.
6. Pursuant to the Charter and these rules and procedures, unless the election is being conducted by a 100 percent mail-in process, each qualified voter may cast a ballot on the day and at the time designated or may vote by absentee ballot. The rules for voting absentee are set forth under “Absentee Voting” in Appendix A.
7. In any case, blank lines will be placed on the ballot for the purpose of adding write-in. A successful write-in candidate shall be required to submit a conflicts of interest disclosure no later than seven (7) business days following the election.
8. All voting is by secret ballot and election procedures are designed to ensure that voters have the opportunity to cast ballots in privacy.
9. In the event that two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes where only one (1) can be elected, there shall be a runoff election within two (2) weeks of the original election. The Council will instruct the Committee to hold the runoff election consistent with the relevant provisions of the Charter.
10. Each candidate may designate one (1) person as an official observer to be present in-person or virtually, as appropriate, when the ballots are being counted, although such observer may not participate in or otherwise disrupt the counting of the ballots.

Who Can Vote?

Pursuant to the Charter, a qualified voter is “any person who owns property or any resident of Martin’s Additions who is eighteen years of age or over.” This includes students who reside elsewhere during the school year but maintain their permanent address in Martin’s Additions (e.g., college or boarding school students). Each year, the Committee will use the qualified voter roll provided by the Village office. Any voter not listed in the roll should be prepared to show a driver’s license, a utility bill or other documentation the Committee may accept in its sole discretion with his/her qualifying address in Martin’s Additions address when he/she comes to the polls. Questions regarding eligibility to vote at the polls or otherwise should be directed to the Chair of the Committee, who will refer the matter to the Committee for determination, conferring with the staff as needed.

Voting Locations

In general, the Martin’s Additions Council election is held in-person from 5:00-8:00PM outside the Village Office at 7013-B Brookville Road on a date certain. If the weather is inclement, voting takes place in the Village Office with appropriate accommodations to be made by the Committee for accessibility concerns. All qualified voters are encouraged to vote by casting their ballots in the polling area. However, if due to a declared emergency, Montgomery County Maryland or the State of Maryland is restricting mass gatherings during the traditional Martin’s Additions election period, including when in-person voting would likely take place, the

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Council may instruct the Committee to hold the election by alternate means. Such instruction would be made in open session no later than the regularly scheduled February monthly Council meeting.

Records

All election records, including qualified voter rolls, nominations, absentee ballot requests, and ballots, shall be maintained at the Village Office, in accordance with the Village's State-approved Document Retention Schedule. Ballots shall be securely stored until such time as they may be destroyed in accordance with said schedule.

Electioneering

1. Candidates' election materials:
 - (a) 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 should be placed in residents' mailboxes).
 - (b) All candidates' brochures and election materials must prominently state that they have been paid for by (or on behalf of) the candidates.
 - (c) Use of the Village logo and/or letterhead on election campaign materials is prohibited. Candidates' materials may not imply, suggest, or give the impression of any official endorsement by the Village of Martin's Additions.
 - (d) Candidates' campaigns may give residents token gifts that display candidate information, provided that such gifts do not exceed \$1 in fair market value.
2. Yard signs: Residents may display candidates' yard signs, provided that the size, location, construction, and duration of such signs comply with the County's sign ordinance (Article 59-F of the Montgomery County Code).
3. On Election Day, the Election Committee shall set and enforce a reasonable "No Electioneering Zone" around the polling place (ballot table) of no greater than a 100-foot radius. Sound amplification systems such as bullhorns will not be permitted.

Policy Number: 2021-1-1

Action/Adoption: January 21, 2021

Effective Date: February 10 , 2021

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APPENDIX A

Absentee Voting

Residents may apply for an absentee ballot by a date specified by the Committee. The Committee will determine whether to conduct the absentee process itself or contract with a qualified service provider to comply with the State mandate. Of note, if an election is conducted 100 percent by mail, the requirement for a separate absentee ballot process no longer exists.

If the Committee deems it appropriate to conduct its own absentee balloting process, to ensure privacy, absentee ballots will be assigned randomized control numbers and will not reflect any voter information on the ballot. Control numbers will be maintained by the Committee and will be utilized by the Committee for purposes of authenticating absentee ballots received. Absentee ballots may be requested from the Committee using any of the following methods:

- (1) by coming to the Village Office (7013 Brookville Road, Suite B) in person to complete an absentee ballot application provided by the Committee or
- (2) by sending a request via
 - (a) email to VMAelections@martinsadditions.org or
 - (b) mail to the Election Committee at the VMA Office address (7013-B Brookville Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815).

Such correspondence will be considered to be a ballot application and must contain the qualified voter's full name and qualified voter address in Martin's Additions together with a stated preference for receiving the absentee ballot by mail or e-mail. If no such preference is stated, the request will be deemed to have specified a delivery preference of mail through the United States Postal Service. Following verification that the requester is a qualified voter, an absentee ballot and instructions will be mailed or emailed, as specified, to the requesting voter.

Absentee ballots may be requested on an individual or household basis by the qualified voter or a member of his or her household provided, that if the absentee ballot request states e-mail as a delivery preference, each voter for whom an absentee ballot is requested must have a separate individual e-mail address for receipt of such absentee ballot, and such e-mail address must be provided with the request for each such qualified voter. The Committee will not accept absentee ballot requests from any person or by any method except as described in this Appendix.

Absentee ballots may be requested starting twenty-one (21) days prior to Election Day.

Absentee ballots must be received by the Committee by Election Day by one of the methods below. Requests for absentee ballots should be made sufficiently in advance of the election to allow time for delivery. Delivery times cannot be guaranteed. Completed absentee ballots must be returned to the Committee according to the following procedures:

- (1) by mailing via the United States Postal Service the completed ballot to the Committee post office box as indicated on the absentee ballot instructions and received by 3:00PM on Election Day.
- (2) by personally dropping the absentee ballot in the slot in the locked ballot box in the VMA office no later than 3:00PM on Election Day. The ballot must contain the assigned control number on the outer envelope to be considered eligible. Security of the locked ballot box will be maintained by the

Committee and only designated members of the Committee, who do not have access to the control numbers, will have access to the contents of the ballot box. Residents should not ask Village staff to handle completed ballots at any time.

(3) by submitting the ballot in person at the polling place on Election Day during regular voting hours following verification by the Committee of the resident's identity and the ballot's control number.