

**Village of Martin's Additions
Council Meeting
7013 B Brookville Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815
Agenda
November 20, 2014**

Attendance: Councilmembers: Tiffany Cissna, Jon Fleming, Bill Lebovich; Village Attorney: Ron Bolt; Assistant Manager: Beth Catherwood; Accountants: Joe McCathran, Eva Webb; Residents: Bill Catherwood, Hanne Correl, Frank Correl, Keith Allen, Ted Stoddard, Steve Schmal

7:30 PM CALL TO ORDER: VICE CHAIR CISSNA

PRESENTATION OF FY 2014 AUDIT: JOE MCCATHERN, LSWG

Audit of VMA FY 2014 presented by Joe McCathran with assistance of Eva Webb, both LSWG Certified Public Accountants. With the Standard Audit, there were "no significant changes," according to McCathran. LSWG produced the report and issued a management letter. Financial estimates all derive from budget in this case, and there were "little if any" audit adjustments. Dan Baden has "done a wonderful job." Comparison of budget-to-actuals indicated VMA achieved budgeted numbers which proved close to the actual income and expenditures. Income overall was over budget. The majority of the income was from income tax, which comprised 69% in FY 2013 and 72% of the income in FY2014. Revenues are up 22% compared to prior year. McCathran stated, "the bottom line is, the Village is in good financial position." The Village reserves are approximately four times the annual expenditures, with mostly liquid assets. The Village is financially prepared for a catastrophe.

Councilmember Jon Fleming commented that a small number of Residents determine a large part of the VMA income tax revenues, which are again a large part of the total income of the Village. Fleming stated that cutting the property tax seems enticing since it is the one part of taxes VMA can control but it makes us too reliant on unstable income tax. Additionally, large expenditures are planned for the future, like street repaving, sidewalks, and street lighting.

Councilmember Cissna asked if LSWG recommended a certain amount of reserve to carry. Webb and McCathran indicated surrounding municipalities generally carry one to three years' worth of expenditures in reserve.

Motion to Accept the FY 2013 Audit: Council Member Lebovich; 2nd: Fleming; Vote: All in favor.

RESIDENTS' CONCERNS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Keith Allen, Turner Ln – Weather Report: nice for Thanksgiving, not going to be a bad winter.

DISCUSSION OF TRAFFIC CODE CHANGES: ORDINANCE INTRODUCTION

Attorney Ron Bolt provided a draft ordinance pursuant to the discussion at the previous Council Meeting with additional input from Joe Cutro, VMA traffic engineer. The goal was to incorporate only the provisions from Montgomery County laws deemed appropriate for VMA, the same ones desired to be enforced by the Village police officers. The old VMA code exempted all of Chapter 31 of the County code. Attorney Bolt did not incorporate one recommendation from Traffic Engineer Cutro, concerning the County's authority during snow emergencies, wanting to consult with the Council. Concern was expressed over uniformity and the need to adapt the provisions to VMA.

Councilmember Cissna felt this topic is for a discussion among the entire Council, and should not be considered for introduction at this time. Attorney Bolt agreed. Councilmember Bill Lebovich expressed desired for the Village Manager to be consulted first. No vote taken, issue tabled.

DISCUSSION OF VILLAGE BLOCK PARTIES: POLICY INTRODUCTION

Attorney Bolt summarized other municipalities' procedures, then provided a draft block party application, pursuant to the discussion at the previous Council Meeting. It includes an indemnification provision, where the party organizer(s) would indemnify the Village for block parties, covered by their homeowners insurance. Discussion ensued about three scenarios – public functions put on by the Village, private functions open to all, and exclusive private functions. Public functions put on by the Village (i.e. Halloween Party) are exempt from this legislation. Councilmember Cissna stated the desire to exempt from consideration block parties that had open invitations. Attorney Bolt explained the need for indemnification by organizers if the Village is not present to ensure emergency vehicles can pass through the street. Attorney Bolt mentioned the TULIP program from LGIT, where organizers can purchase additional coverage for the event. Issue tabled until all council members are present.

BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Assistant Manager Beth Catherwood commented on an issue at 3514 Bradley Ln, where Washington Gas cut through a newly poured still-wet driveway apron, damaged tree protection, and imprinted wet concrete leaving all unrepaired. This is an ongoing issue and Village Staff will discuss who will fix the apron.

FINANCIAL MATTERS: REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER, 2014 - Fleming

Councilmember Fleming reiterated many points from the audit, saying the Village is in good financial position. Small surplus for October and cumulative deficit for the year are not a concern since it aligns with Village plans. Councilmember Cissna requested a change of the word "surplus" to "operating reserves."

Motion to accept all financial reports: Lebovich; 2nd: Fleming; **Vote:** All in favor.

UPDATE OF BROAD VILLAGE-ISSUES

- **Street Light Project Progress.** Lighting Engineer Scott Watson was not satisfied with current lights, Holophane agreed to create new lights as desired, PEPCO will do engineering. Councilmember Cissna expressed concern for residents' opinion on lighting, darker or lighter. Assistant Manager Catherwood emphasized the use of the lighting engineer for expertise on this matter, with concurrence of Councilmember Lebovich.
- **Storm Water findings to date (Oxford Street).** Councilmember Lebovich explained the question being explored; whether the water problems on Oxford St were an anomaly or part of a Village-wide problem. He states, "it is much more of a long-standing problem in more of the Village" than just Oxford St. In his opinion as a historian, it is a seventy plus year old system designed for the need at the time, currently overwhelmed. He will continue to speak to residents with water problems to explore the issue.
- **Comcast Agreement Status.** Attorney Bolt provided an update on the franchise renewal negotiations, which have been ongoing since 2011.
- **Snow removal/ Shoveling Contract** Assistant Manager Catherwood explained the unexpected necessity for snow removal contactor change.

MANAGER'S REPORT-SPERLING

Unavailable

Separately, Councilmember Cissna requested a report on changes in traffic infraction after line painting. Assistant Manager Catherwood promised a report. Brookville-Taylor intersection and Brookville-Thornapple intersection being worked with State Highway.

ACTION ON MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2014

Motion to approve: Cissna; **2nd:** Lebovich; **Vote:** All in favor

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENT CLOSING CONCERNS AND REMARKS

Steve Schmal, Summit Ave – Questions regarding snow removal, expressed approval of prior snow contractor. Questions whether lighting plan includes adding new poles. Broader lighting supported for public safety. Questioned nighttime crime in VMA. Supported block parties.

ADJOURNMENT – 8:40pm