

# Chevy Chase Village 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

April 20, 2020

*Note: This meeting was held virtually with members of the Board of Managers, staff and the public attending and participating via phone and video-conference.*

## BOARD OF MANAGERS

Elissa A. Leonard, Chair	Present
Robert C. Goodwin, Jr., Vice Chair	Present
David L. Winstead, Secretary	Present
Richard M. Ruda, Assistant Secretary	Present
Gary Crockett, Treasurer	Present
Nancy E. Watters, Assistant Treasurer	Present
Linda Willard, Member	Present

## STAFF

Shana R. Davis-Cook, Village Manager	Present
John M. Fitzgerald, Police Chief	Present
Ellen Sands, Municipal Operations Coordinator	Present
Demetri Protos, Finance Director	Present
Ruby Brown, Administrative & Constituent Services Assistant	Present

Ms. Elissa A. Leonard, Chair of the Board of Managers, called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes of the 105<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, April 15, 2019**

*Mr. Winstead moved to approve the minutes of the 105<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting held on April 15, 2019, as drafted.* Mr. Crockett seconded the motion. Ms. Leonard, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Crockett, Ms. Watters, Mr. Winstead, Mr. Ruda and Ms. Willard voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

### **State of the Village Report**

Ms. Leonard began by acknowledging the necessary changes to this year's meeting due to the COVID-19 emergency, including the Village Hall remaining closed to the public. Despite the state of emergency, the Village remains in great shape and staff have been able to maintain essential Village operations and services. Ms. Leonard expressed thanks to the Village staff and residents for adjusting as the pandemic is navigated. Ms. Leonard then presented the following highlights:

The Village's Finances:

- At the close of Fiscal Year 2020, the Village's reserves are anticipated to be around \$11 million, which is around double the annual operating budget.
- The reserves keep the Village well-positioned to address unforeseen contingencies or complications that arise due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The proposed Fiscal Year 2021 budget reflects an increase in police salaries and an increase in capital spending for the ongoing municipal storm drain project.

#### The Village Board:

- Linda Willard became the newest member of the Board in June 2019, elected by acclamation.
- All seven board members intend to continue serving on the Board into the new term.

#### Village Administration and Services:

- The State Highway Administration has approved the conversion of the flashing yellow beacon at Connecticut and Lenox Street to a three-color signal. Ms. Leonard noted the hard work of Village Manager Shana Davis-Cook and Police Chief John Fitzgerald working with the Pedestrian Safety Committee to bring about this change.
- Staff began a glass drop-off program at the Village Hall after learning our collection contractor was throwing glass in the trash instead of processing it as recyclables. The contract will be rebid and resuming collection and recycling of glass will be prioritized in the review of bids. The Village will continue to research and prioritize reducing waste.
- The municipal storm drain project is ongoing and in February the Board voted to reduce the scope of the project so backyard buildings will not be impacted, while still addressing the most severely affected areas.
- The dog park was disestablished after much consideration, including reviewing neutral metrics for municipal dog parks published by Montgomery County Park and Planning.
- The Village has maintained its status as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation for the third consecutive year. Last year's celebration was held in Newlands Park- no celebration will be held this year to maintain social distancing safety during the COVID-19 emergency. Ms. Leonard read the public proclamation required of Tree City USA designees.

Ms. Leonard read the names of the following residents who passed away since the last Annual Meeting and lead a moment of silence in their memory:

- Rose Marie Petrucelli of Cedar Parkway
- Robert Levin of Grafton Street
- Leon Bramson of Montgomery Street
- Ellen Talbott of Cedar Parkway
- Mary Clark of Kirkside Drive

#### **Report from Village Manager**

Ms. Shana Davis-Cook presented her 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Report as Village Manager:

- She acknowledged the dedicated work of the 28 Village staff members, particularly during the COVID-19 health crisis.
- The Village has been working on its emergency response processes for over 15 years and continues to review and refine operations and policies. The Village has adopted local Emergency Operations and Continuity of Operations Plans to guide modifications to services and operations during public closures. Other guiding partnerships include the Maryland Municipal League and its Montgomery County Chapter, and the International City/County Management Association and its Montgomery County Chapter.
- The blast email system has continued to provide essential communication, especially when the COVID-19 pandemic required the Village Hall to be closed to the public.

- Since last spring there have been 14 variance and Special Permit requests prepared for Board consideration first by Ellen Sands then by the new Permitting & Code Enforcement Coordinator Jessica Gebhart.
- The Board's Building Officer, Gary Crockett, and Village Manager considered and approved 9 administrative appeals and executed 6 licenses for private improvements in public rights-of-way.
- 192 Building Permits were reviewed and approved which almost doubles the number issued during the prior year.
- 172 trees were approved for removal upon recommendation by the Village Arborist and 52% of permit applicants indicated an intention to reforest.
- The Village's Tree Ordinance Board established Consent Agreements with homeowners to remove three trees from private property and the Board granted the removal of two trees from the public right-of-way to, all accommodate private improvements. All these approvals required a 1-1 replacement for the loss of these trees.
- We welcomed 12 new families to the Village.
- Finances remain in good order, thanks to Finance Director Demetri Protos. The Village reported another clean audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. Demetri and the Village Manager supported Board Treasurer Gary Crockett and the Financial Review Committee in their review and re-write of the Village's Investment Policy.
- Village staff also worked with our Pedestrian Safety Committee to reengage efforts to secure a three-color signal at the pedestrian crossing on Connecticut Avenue at Lenox Street.
- The Village hired a consultant to work with the Village's arborist to create a multi-year plan for restoring the stands of historic boxwood in front of the Village Hall and along Chevy Chase Circle.
- Chief Fitzgerald and the Village Manager worked with the Friends of Chevy Chase Circle to improve the beauty and safety of the circle.
- Ms. Davis-Cook expressed thanks and appreciation to the Village Board for its continuous work on behalf of the community and members' support of Village staff.

#### **Report on Public Safety by Police Chief John Fitzgerald**

- Chief Fitzgerald began by acknowledging the COVID-19 crisis and that the essential employees still reporting to the office are healthy and have a good supply of personal protective equipment (PPE), including N95 masks.
- The Village saw a 35% reduction in reported thefts in 2019, though the beginning of 2020 has seen a slight increase in thefts. The Village has developed a strong partnership with other local law enforcement agencies to address what is a regional uptick in crime.
- Over the course of the past year, one police officer and two dispatchers were hired to replace staff that moved on.
- The police department has acquired two hybrid vehicles, which will reduce costs and the fleet's carbon footprint. Three electrical charging stations will be installed at the Village Hall free of charge, funded through a grant.
- The National Night Out event planned for August has been cancelled due to COVID-19.
- Chief Fitzgerald expressed thanks and acknowledged the Board and residents for their continued support.

### **Budget Overview by Board Treasurer Gary Crockett**

- Mr. Crockett gave a reminder that all budget related information is posted to the website.
- The Village is in a good position to handle the impacts of COVID-19 and has reserves to cover about two years of the operating budget. The current budget will not be impacted.
- Mr. Crockett explained that the Village gets about 60% of its revenues from income taxes, about 20% from property taxes, about 7% from *SafeSpeed* cameras, and about 4% from various state transfer payments. There is no way to estimate how each source of revenue will be impacted by COVID-19 for Fiscal Year 2021, or if there will be any long-term effects.
- Currently no major changes are planned for Village operations nor the property tax rates in response to COVID-19.

### **Elections Supervisors Report by Committee Chair Mary Sheehan**

Ms. Sheehan reported that three Board member's terms will end June 30, 2020 and all three incumbents intend to run for their respective positions again. The committee oversaw the candidate declaration and election process beginning in February 2020 and used the *Crier* and the blast email system to keep residents informed of the candidacy and financial disclosure process. The committee established election procedures that could replace in-person voting, should an election be necessary, in consideration of the Village Hall being closed due to the COVID-19 emergency. No election will need to be held since the number of candidates equals the number of Board vacancies, and Ms. Sheehan declared the following three members as duly elected: Elissa Leonard, Robert Goodwin, and Nancy Watters.

Ms. Sheehan acknowledged the other members of the Elections Supervisors, Robert Broeksmit, Karen Spangler, and Nancy Wilkinson, and expressed thanks to Village Manager Shana Davis-Cook for her support of their operations.

### **Public Discussion Period**

Board Chair Elisa Leonard opened the floor for public discussion. Saul Goodman expressed thanks to the Board and the Village staff. Mary Sheehan expressed appreciation to the Board and staff.

### **Adjournment of Annual Meeting**

*Mr. Goodwin moved to adjourn the Annual Meeting to move into a business meeting.* Mr. Crockett seconded the motion. Ms. Leonard, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Crockett, Ms. Watters, Mr. Winstead, Mr. Ruda and Ms. Willard voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed. The Chevy Chase Village 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting adjourned, and the Board of Managers' business meeting opened at 8:07 p.m.

### **Board Action on Budget Adoption and Tax Levy Ordinance**

**Resolution No. 04-02-20:** An Ordinance to adopt the fiscal year 2021 budget and to levy a tax on certain real and personal property under the provisions of §6-203 of the Tax-Property Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended.

*Mr. Winstead moved to approve Resolution No. 04-02-20, as drafted. Ms. Watters seconded the motion. Ms. Leonard, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Crockett, Ms. Watters, Mr. Winstead, Mr. Ruda and Ms. Willard voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

**Adjournment**

*Mr. Crockett moved to adjourn the business meeting. Mr. Winstead seconded the motion. Ms. Leonard, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Crockett, Ms. Watters, Mr. Winstead, Mr. Ruda and Ms. Willard voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.*

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Attested by: Shana Davis-Cook, Village Manager

*FINAL.*