



Forecast

ELECTION ISSUE 2015

NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE

Annual Town Meeting and Election

Tuesday, May 5, 2015

Voting	8 a.m. – 8 p.m.	Town Hall
Reception	6:30 p.m.	Lawton Center Social Hall
Annual Meeting	7 p.m.	Lawton Center Social Hall

The Town Council has five elected members. Town residents will elect two members in the 2015 election to serve for two years. The polls will be located in the Town Hall, 4301 Willow Lane, and will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on **Election Day, May 5**. Any qualified voter may vote by absentee ballot. Residents desiring an absentee ballot must apply individually in writing (by mail, fax, email or in person) to the Town Office. An absentee ballot request form is included in this newsletter and available on the Town website.

Beginning at 6:30 p.m., the Council will host a reception, during which residents will have the opportunity to learn more about the status of the Bethesda Downtown Plan update and the Town's involvement to date. The Town's consultants will be in attendance to provide information and answer questions about ideas for a possible public park along 46th Street.

At 7 p.m., the meeting will begin with a brief presentation by Town consultants about the Bethesda Downtown Plan. Mayor Kathy Strom will then provide an overview of the Town's accomplishments over the past year, and Town Treasurer Vicky Taplin will present the proposed budget for the 2016 fiscal year, followed by a public hearing on the budget.

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Candidates' Meet and Greet

Since the election is uncontested, in lieu of a candidates' forum, the Election Board will host a "Meet and Greet" on Thursday, April 23 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall. This event will give residents an opportunity to talk to the two incumbents running for reelection.

Proposed FY16 Budget

Highlights of the proposed FY16 budget can be reviewed in this issue of the FORECAST. Comprehensive budget documents are available for review in the Town Office and on the Town's website www.townofchevy Chase.org.

Connect with the Town

Residents may sign up on the Town's website to receive Town Crier emails, Alert TOCC voicemail messages and an electronic copy of the FORECAST newsletter. Information on how to connect with the Town using Facebook and Twitter also is posted on the Town website www.townofchevy Chase.org.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Kathy Strom

On behalf of the Town Council, I am pleased to present some of the Town's many accomplishments over the past year.

We maintained a high quality of life in Town by continuing to provide exceptional municipal services; securing our homes and property with 24-hour police coverage and a Neighborhood Watch program; maintaining solid infrastructure; and providing excellent communication to our residents. Specifically we:

- Continued to offer twice weekly household trash collection; single stream recycling collection; yard trash and household organic waste collection; sidewalk snow removal; and street sweeping.
- Repaved many of our roads and repaired and replaced sidewalks and curbs.
- Improved street lighting throughout Town with the installation of seventeen new lights.
- Formed a Power Reliability Task Force to research options to improve electrical service within Town. The Task Force presented its final report to the Town Council in February.
- Installed a "tot lot" at the Lawton Center playground.
- Completed drainage and landscaping improvements in Zimmerman Park.
- Launched Town Facebook and Twitter accounts to provide additional ways to connect with residents.
- Continued support for Chevy Chase @ Home and its services for senior residents.

We continued to be a good steward of our natural environment and offered many programs and services to support environmental preservation and sustainability. Specifically we:

- Planted 86 trees in the public rights-of-way; and planted 35 trees on private property as part of the Town's Native Canopy Tree Planting Program.
- Continued the Private Canopy Tree Maintenance Program, which reimburses residents for some costs to prune canopy trees on private property.
- Reinstated the Consulting Water Management program, which offers residents the opportunity to obtain free professional advice on improving water drainage on their property.
- Established a RainScapes Rebate and Technical Assistance Program to help defray the cost to residents who install eligible landscape projects as part of the Montgomery County RainScapes Program.
- Established a Land Conservation Rebate Program, which offers financial assistance to residents who donate eligible land conservation easements to the Town.
- Worked with the County to secure the installation of solar panels on the Lawton Community Center.
- Hosted numerous events on various environmental topics, in conjunction with the Town's Climate & Environment Committee.

We continued to monitor and advocate Town interests in proposed development projects on the Town's borders. Specifically we:

- Worked to reduce the impacts of the proposed Purple Line project on the Town.
- Continued to follow the Bethesda Downtown Plan update and developed concept plans for a possible public park along the Town's western border.

And finally, we expanded our special events programming and hosted over 30 social events that not only brought together residents of all ages, but also raised significant funds for important charitable causes in our larger community.

I am sincerely grateful for our dedicated staff and the many volunteers who serve on our various committees, boards and commissions. Thank you all for your hard work and sense of civic duty.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

John Bickerman 4011 Thornapple Street

John Bickerman is a professional mediator and arbitrator, specializing in complex, multi-party environmental, public policy, commercial, and tribal disputes. In his career, he has successfully resolved more than \$3 billion in claims in thirty-five states.

Bickerman is a Visiting Lecturer at Cornell University, where he teaches seminar in environmental mediation, has served as an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University Law Center and is a past Chair of the American Bar Association's Section on Dispute Resolution.

Prior to beginning his legal career, he was an economist with special expertise in the federal budget, especially needs-based programs for low-income Americans. Bickerman has BS and MS degrees from Cornell University and is a graduate of Georgetown Law Center.

He has a strong commitment to the environment, both professionally and personally. As a professional mediator, he helped facilitate landmark settlements involving the national forests, fisheries and water rights in the arid west. Locally, he negotiated the settlement of a major stormwater runoff case in the Anacostia River. Privately, he's been committed to protecting and improving the environment.

I've lived in Chevy Chase and Bethesda since 1992 and been a resident of the Town since 2006. I'm completing my first term on the Council. I've sought to apply a measure of even-handed common sense that respects the interests of all of the Town's residents. My core principles are simple:

- Fiscal responsibility – as stewards of the tax dollars of the Town's residents, funds should be spent judiciously to benefit the widest number of residents. Core functions should be adequately funded. Care should be taken not to overextend the Town's resources, especially on programs or services that benefit a relatively few members of the community;
- Preserving the Character of the Town – when I moved to the area in 1992, I always wanted to live in the Town because of its leafy tranquility, its proximity to Bethesda and its beautiful homes. The Town's lifestyle is threatened by potential over-development of Bethesda and we need to fight back;
- Transparent and Open Governance – Town government must be open and accessible to the entire town not just those residents who are able to attend meetings.
- Can't We All Just Get Along – Civility between neighbors must be an ongoing goal of the Town's elected representatives. The Town should not pit neighbor against neighbor. For too long, I've seen the Town divided and it shouldn't be that way.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Patricia Burda
4108 Woodbine Street

It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve as your councilmember. Over the last several years, you've seen my willingness to listen to residents, my collaborative spirit in solving problems and my dedicated hard work on your behalf. I think I've been a responsible leader, committed to providing quality municipal services, expending funds judiciously and building community spirit by promoting better communication and community-based programming.

I don't kid myself that I could have seen any success without the many Town volunteers. They make special events such as family movie nights and the Fourth of July celebration possible, and they provide the Council direct assistance through participation on committees, boards and special projects. Likewise, we have a dedicated professional staff that keeps the Town running like a top.

I believe in smart growth, but it has to be truly smart. I know Bethesda will change, and I personally welcome that change. However, unchecked growth brings chaos to our roads, schools, and quality of life. I will continue to advocate for a balanced approach to Bethesda development.

I believe in transit, but I think the Purple Line light rail project is ill-conceived. Proposals for a countywide rapid bus transit system make much more financial and environmental sense.

I believe in sensible regulation. I was here several years ago when the quality of life for many residents was compromised as new houses were inserted in the community by spec developers – building out to property lines, clear-cutting lots, allowing storm water runoff onto adjacent yards. That being said, our ordinances are not carved in stone, and we need to recognize that our code is a living document.

I believe in respect. We can disagree, but we need to listen and be thoughtful to different points of view. I have changed my vote based on resident input. I have changed my vote based on facts presented to me. My goal is to make this “our” town.

My background in strategic planning and interior design provide the foundation for my work on behalf of you – thinking and planning for our future and working to create a warm, comfortable place to live. My husband, Joe Guerra, and I have enjoyed our 15 years in the Town where we raised our two children. We are currently empty nesters, but our rescue dog, Stella Blue, makes sure things are never too quiet.

FY16 Budget Public Hearing And Adoption

The Town Council recently approved the proposed budget and tax rates for fiscal year 2016. At the May 5 Annual Meeting, the Town will hold a public hearing during which residents may comment on the proposed **\$3.5 million combined operating and capital budgets** and the **continued elimination of the Town's real estate tax and personal property tax**. Following the public hearing, the Council will adopt the budget, with any modifications to which it agrees, at the May or June Town Council meeting.

Financial Review & Budget Overview

Over the years, the Town has maintained fiscal soundness through careful planning, including maintaining a healthy reserve balance to fund capital improvements and provide for emergencies or unforeseen expenditures. The Town continues to enjoy sound financial health. However, current projections indicate that income tax revenue for FY15 will be approximately \$1 million less than budgeted due to an over distribution by the state in the previous year. The FY16 budget assumes income tax revenue at the actual FY15 level.

FY15 Financial Review

Revenues

- Total operating revenues are estimated to be \$3,290,972, under budget by \$1,034,028 due primarily to a decrease in income tax revenue as a result of the state's over distribution last year.

Expenditures

- Total operating expenditures are expected to be \$3,524,807, under budget by \$130,693.
- Total capital project expenditures are expected to be \$910,000, under budget by \$38,500. The Town expended capital funds primarily for infrastructure repairs, new tree plantings and park improvements.

General Fund Balance

- The Town's reserve balance as of June 30, 2015 is projected to be \$7,503,611.

FY16 Proposed Budget Overview

Revenues

- Total operating revenues are budgeted at \$3,298,000, of which \$2.9 million is projected income tax revenue.
- Town revenue sources: 89.5% from income taxes (\$2.9 million), 2.5% from highway user taxes (\$85,000), and 8% from other sources (\$263,000), including municipal tax duplication reimbursement, cable franchise fees, permit fees, and interest income.

Expenditures

- Total operating expenditures are budgeted at \$2,780,000. The FY16 operating budget includes funds to continue the Town's high quality municipal services.
- Total capital expenditures are budgeted at \$797,500. The FY16 capital budget includes funds for anticipated infrastructure repairs, additional street lighting and park improvements.
- Total FY16 operating and capital expenditures exceed total budgeted revenues by \$279,500. The Town will use monies from the General Fund to cover the possible shortfall.

General Fund Balance

- The Town's reserve balance as of June 30, 2016 is projected to be \$7,224,111.

Comprehensive budget documents are available for review in the Town Office and on the Town website: www.townofchevy Chase.org.

FY16 Proposed Budget Highlights

Revenues

Property Taxes

The Town Council is proposing the continued elimination of property taxes for FY16.

Income Taxes

Given economic uncertainties, and anticipated adjustments to income tax revenue due to an over distribution by the state, the FY16 budget assumes income tax revenue equal to that expected to be received in FY15.

Expenditures

Municipal Services

The FY16 budget includes funds to maintain the Town's excellent municipal services, including twice weekly household trash collection; single stream recycling collection; yard trash and household organic waste collection; sidewalk snow removal; and street sweeping.

Employee Salaries

The FY16 budget does not include any salary increases for Town employees.

Professional Services for Purple Line Analysis

The FY16 budget does not include funding for services related to the proposed Purple Line project.

Charitable Contributions

The FY16 budget does not include funds for charitable contributions given the uncertainty of income tax revenue for the next fiscal year.

Environmental Programs

The FY16 budget includes funds to continue the Consulting Water Management Program and Rainscapes Rebate and Technical Assistance Program. As part of the Land Conservation Rebate Program, the Town Council will consider any conservation easement donations and related financial assistance on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Town's established policies and procedures.

Private Tree Planting and Maintenance

The FY16 budget includes funds to continue the Town's Native Canopy Tree Planting Program and Private Canopy Tree Maintenance Program.

Montgomery County Police

The FY16 budget maintains funding for 24-hour police coverage.

Open Space Acquisition

Open space acquisition is a priority for the Town Council and will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Town's established policies and procedures.

Street Lighting

The FY16 budget includes funds for new street lights. The Council will continue to research alternative lighting technologies, including LED technology.

The Town Council wants to hear your thoughts on these proposals as well as the FY16 budget as a whole. You are welcome to share your comments at the public hearing on the proposed budget at the Town's Annual Meeting at 7 p.m. on May 5. You also are welcome to submit your comments by e-mail to townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org or by mail to Town Office, 4301 Willow Lane, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

Town of Chevy Chase

4301 Willow Lane
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

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TOWN COUNCIL

Kathy Strom, Mayor

Patricia Burda, Vice Mayor

Al Lang, Secretary

Vicky Taplin, Treasurer

John Bickerman, Community Liaison

Annual Town Meeting and Election Issue
2015 Election and FY16 Budget Information Enclosed

Election Day - May 5, 2015

Polling Location and Hours: Town Hall, 4301 Willow Lane, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Voting Eligibility

To be eligible to vote in the May 5 Town Election, you must be a citizen of the United States, at least eighteen years of age, have resided within the corporate limits of the Town for thirty days preceding the Town election and be a registered, qualified voter of the State of Maryland, Town of Chevy Chase.

Voting By Absentee Ballot

Any qualified voter may vote by absentee ballot. Residents desiring an absentee ballot must apply individually in writing (by mail, fax, email or in person) to the Town Office. An absentee ballot request form is included in this newsletter and available on the Town website. Absentee ballots will be available on **Tuesday, April 21**. The absentee ballot must be returned in the printed envelope provided by the Town. To be counted, any absentee ballot must be received by the Town by 8 p.m. on **Election Day, May 5**.

Election Board

Residents with questions on any aspect of the election are encouraged to contact a member of the Election Board: **Steve Lawton, Chair, 301-654-5904; Anthula Gross, 301-652-3017 and Gloria Tristani, 301-215-4005**. The Town has contracted with the League of Women Voters to work with the Town's Election Board to administer and monitor the election.

REQUEST FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT

Town of Chevy Chase Council Election Tuesday, May 5, 2015

To be eligible to vote in the May 5 Town election, a resident must be a citizen of the United States, at least eighteen years of age, have resided within the corporate limits of the Town for thirty days preceding any Town election and be a registered, qualified voter of the State of Maryland, Town of Chevy Chase.

DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

Please provide an absentee ballot so that I may vote in the Annual Election of the Town of Chevy Chase on **Tuesday, May 5, 2015**.

signature of applicant (required)

print name (must be legible)

Ballots will be delivered beginning Tuesday, April 21, 2015.

To be counted, any absentee ballot must be received by the Town office by **8 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, May 5, 2015**. The ballot must be in the printed return envelope provided by the Town at the time the ballot was issued. Absentee ballot requests are considered public documents and are subject to public inspection.