



# Forecast

JANUARY 2016

NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWN OF CHEVY CHASE

## JANUARY

**Thursday, January 7**  
Community Relations  
Committee, Town Hall,  
7 p.m.

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Land Use Committee  
Lawton Center, 7 p.m.

**Friday, January 8**  
Movie Night for Families,  
6 p.m., Town Hall

**Monday, January 11**  
Climate and Environment  
Committee, Town Hall,  
7 p.m.

**Tuesday, January 12**  
Purple Line Mitigation Ad  
Hoc Committee, Town Hall,  
7 p.m.

**Wednesday, January 13**  
Council Meeting, Town Hall,  
7 p.m.

**Thursday, January 14**  
Public Services Committee,  
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

**Friday, January 15**  
Movie Night for Grown-ups,  
7:30 p.m., Town Hall

**Monday, January 18**  
Long Range Planning  
Committee, Town Hall,  
7 p.m.

**Sunday, January 24**  
Re-Gifting Party  
Town Hall, 4 p.m.

**Thursday, January 28**  
Land Use Committee,  
Town Hall, 7 p.m.

## Message from Mayor Al Lang

I hope all had a wonderful Holiday Season. January is a good time to make resolutions for the coming year.

While opinions on many issues vary, with many holding strong views, I resolve to treat everyone with respect, whether we agree or disagree, while working to achieve win-win outcomes. For example, I believe we can simplify the tree ordinance, while also taking steps to assure and improve our tree canopy. We can consider providing additional tree maintenance to help residents keep their trees healthy, while also increasing incentives for residents to plant more trees.

As your Mayor, I will work with the Council to obtain more input from our residents on the major issues before us. To this end, I will propose that the Council survey residents on key issues, perhaps with an annual resident satisfaction survey, but ensure that the survey is drafted to gain reliable, statistically accurate, representative feedback. Once the survey is in process, we urge you to take time to consider the questions and provide the Council with input that accurately represents your position on each of the questions.

In closing, I want all to know that the Council is working diligently on our revenue issues. This Forecast and our website provide details on what we have established and what we are doing to confront the issue. I want to thank the Revenue Working Group, Fred Cecere, Treasurer, Zach Gast, Tricia Daniels, and Nilmini Rubin, for all their efforts as we continue to address potential significant revenue shortfalls.

## Public Hearing on Ethics/Election Laws

On January 13, the Town Council will hold a public hearing on two alternative ordinances to amend Town laws related to when a write-in candidate in a Town election must file certain documents. Both ordinances are posted on the Town website.

One ordinance would require a successful write-in candidate to file a financial disclosure statement no later than 7 days *following* a *Town election*, while the other would require a write-in candidate to file a certificate of candidacy and financial disclosure statement no later than 7 days *prior* to a *Town election*. The ordinances have been introduced by the Council and were provided to the State Ethics Commission, which found that both satisfy the requirements of State law.

If you cannot attend the January 13 meeting, which begins at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall, you may submit comments on the proposed ordinances to the Town Office at 4301 Willow Lane or by email to [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org).

## Public Meeting on Upcoming Utility Work

Washington Gas and WSSC are planning to undertake extensive infrastructure replacement projects in the Town over the next several years. An informational meeting with representatives from Washington Gas and WSSC is scheduled for January 6 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall for residents to learn more about the upcoming projects.

In early February 2016, Washington Gas is scheduled to begin a large gas main replacement project to improve system reliability and increase capacity. The project is expected to take 15 months. In the spring of 2016, WSSC is scheduled to begin Phase 1 of a two phase water main replacement and relocation project, with Phase 2 scheduled to begin in early 2017. Phase 1 is scheduled to take 28 months to complete, while Phase 2 is scheduled to take 15 months to complete.

Although the work will be noisy, disrupt streets and rights-of-way, and cause parking and traffic inconveniences to residents, the work is necessary given the age of the existing infrastructure. The planned work also will impact several trees on public property that are located in conflict with buried utility lines. The Town is working with arborists from the utility companies to minimize these impacts by adjusting the proposed plans to protect the trees wherever possible. More information about these impacts will be available at the public meeting and on the Town website following the meeting.

The Town will ensure accurate and timely notice to residents of scheduled work, lane closures, service interruptions, and parking restrictions in the impacted areas. A map of the impacted streets has been posted on the Town's website. Affected streets include all or portions of: 44<sup>th</sup>, 45<sup>th</sup>, 46<sup>th</sup>, Willow, Leland, Curtis, Oakridge, Tarrytown, Stanford, Thornapple, Rosemary, Ridge, Walsh, Beechwood, Sycamore, Hillcrest, Bradley, Maple, Maple Terrace, Ridgewood, East, West, and Meadow.

Following the work, the Town will coordinate repairs to each impacted street.

## Public Hearing on Comcast Franchise Renewal

On January 13, the Town Council will hold a public hearing on an ordinance to renew the Comcast cable television franchise in the Town. The Council introduced the ordinance on December 9.

The proposed ordinance would continue to allow Comcast to operate its cable system in the Town for the next 7 years. A copy of the franchise agreement, as well as the proposed ordinance granting the franchise, are available for review on the Town website.

If you cannot attend the January 13 meeting, which begins at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall, you may submit comments on the proposed ordinance to the Town Office at 4301 Willow Lane or by email to [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org).

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# TOWN UPDATES

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### Recycle Your Christmas Tree!

The Town offers pickup of Christmas trees. All wire, ornaments and tinsel must be removed. Please place the tree on the curb by 7 a.m. on Monday for regular yard waste collection.



### Preparations for Winter Weather

The Town's Winter Weather Preparedness flyer is available on the Town website at [www.townofchevy Chase.org](http://www.townofchevy Chase.org). We encourage you to review this information. If you would

like a hard copy, please contact the Town Office at [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org) or 301-654-7144.

### Please Remember to Shovel Your Sidewalk

It is important after inclement weather to make sure that the sidewalk adjacent to your house is cleared of snow and ice. If the accumulated snowfall is less than 3 inches, you are responsible for clearing the sidewalk. The Town will assist with the clearing of sidewalks when snow accumulates to 3 inches or more.

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# TOWN EVENTS

Sponsored by the Community Relations Committee

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## Movie Night for Families

Friday, January 8,  
6 p.m., Town Hall

*UP* is the computer-animated comedy adventure film for Movie Night for Families. Nominated for five Academy Awards, including Best Picture, this 96 minute animated film for children (and adults) is sure to please. Show time is 6 p.m. Pizza, drinks & snacks will be available. Space is limited. Children must be accompanied by an adult during the entire event. Please RSVP to [301-654-7144](tel:301-654-7144) or [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org).



## Re-Gifting Party

Sunday, January 24,  
4 p.m., Town Hall

Price of admission: one simply wrapped gift you wish you had not gotten. Come enjoy the fun and leave with something different and (hopefully) better. Wine and tasty appetizers will be served. Adults must be accompanied by a wrapped gift.

Please RSVP to the Town Office at [301-654-7144](tel:301-654-7144) or [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org) so we have enough wine and food.

## Movie Night for Grown-Ups

Friday, January 15,  
7:30 p.m., Town Hall



*Finding Vivian Maier* is the presentation for Movie Night for Grown-Ups. The Oscar-nominated, critically-acclaimed documentary features a mysterious nanny who took (but never processed) more than 100,000 photographs. The rolls of film were hidden away and discovered decades later. Vivian Maier is now considered one of the 20th century's greatest photographers. Wine and finger foods will be served. Space is limited. Please RSVP to the Town Office at [301-654-7144](tel:301-654-7144) or [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org)

## Winter Outerwear Clothing Drive

Continues until January 31

The Town's Community Relations Committee, working with the Lawton Community Center, is collecting clean, gently-used or never used warm coats, gloves, mittens, scarves, hats, and heavy sweaters, pants, and socks to donate to local charities serving those in need.

Clothing boxes for your donations are in the Town Hall (Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and the Lawton Community Center (Monday - Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday until 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m.). This drive runs until January 31, so please check your closets and drawers for possible donations. Heavy socks are especially needed.

**Save The Date ~ Magic Show!** Friday, February 5 at 6 p.m. in the Town Hall. Bring your children for a thrilling show with magician Michael Chamberlin. Pizza, popcorn and drinks will be served. Space is limited, so please RSVP to [301-654-7144](tel:301-654-7144) or [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org). Children must be accompanied by an adult during the entire event. Please note this show is in early February!

**New!** We now have an **Events** button on the home page of the Town website. Greater details on events are available on the calendar.

## Town of Chevy Chase

4301 Willow Lane  
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

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### TOWN COUNCIL

*Al Lang, Mayor*

*John Bickerman, Vice Mayor*

*Vicky Taplin, Secretary*

*Fred Cecere, Treasurer*

*Kathy Strom, Community Liaison*



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## AROUND CHEVY CHASE

### Happy New Year from CC@Home

By Caroline Michaelis

**Tuesday, January 12, 2 - 4 p.m.** -- 2016 M & M series with an informative talk about The Wider Circle's Neighbor to Neighbor Program. Open to all at the Chevy Chase Village Hall.

**Thursday, January 14, 10 - 11:30 a.m.** -- Brunch Bunch will gather at the Olympia Cafe on Brookville Road for some neighborly conversation. Everyone is invited, just buy a cup of coffee and pull up a chair at the CC@ H table.

**January 1, and every Friday morning at 10 a.m.** -- The Walking Club will meet in front of the Brookville Market for either a long 3 mile walk or a medium 1.2 mile one. Registration at [301-657-3115](tel:301-657-3115) is recommended.

**Wednesday, January 6, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. and Friday, January 8, 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.** -- Gentle Seated Pilates and Balance Classes begin. Registration and payment at [www.chevyCHASEathome.org](http://www.chevyCHASEathome.org) or call [301-657-3115](tel:301-657-3115).

**Sunday, January 24, 1 - 4 p.m.** -- Guitar Master Class with award-winning Croatian guitarist Zoran Dukic at the Chevy Chase Village Hall.

**Thursday, January 28, 10 a.m. to 12 noon** -- Volunteer Training for New Volunteers. Consider becoming a CC@ H volunteer today! Details on the website at [www.chevyCHASEathome.org](http://www.chevyCHASEathome.org).

In 2016, MVA on Wheels will begin its eighteen years of service in Friendship Heights. The bus will park on Friendship Boulevard adjacent to the Chevy Chase Village Center from **10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** on **January 25, February 22, March 21, April 25, May 23, and June 20.**

# Revenue Working Group Report

The Revenue Working Group was established by the Town Council in June 2015 to help develop ways to better predict future income tax receipts after a \$1 million drop in income tax revenue between FY14 and FY15. Of note, the Town of Chevy Chase reserves were \$7.5 million at the end of FY15.

To complete its mission, the Group requested data from the State of Maryland on tax filings and discovered that the drop in income tax revenue was the result of two separate issues:

1. The way the State allocates taxes over the year is based on forecasts with reconciliation payments in November every year. When those reconciliation payments are significantly different between years, the amount available for the fiscal year bounces significantly. The reason forecasts are needed is that people often file extensions and the actual payments for a tax year aren't known for a year later. So, Maryland begins paying the Town in May 2013 for Tax Year 2013, but doesn't know final taxes owed until November 2014. (The Group figured out a way for the Town to reduce the volatility of the estimate of tax receipts for upcoming fiscal years, but these will still be estimates and not exact numbers.)
2. Town residents paid less in income taxes that directly resulted in a drop in Town income tax revenues.

During the course of its work, the Revenue Working Group uncovered that the State of Maryland mistakenly allocated taxes to the Town from people who don't live in the Town. This mistake coincides with the State's introduction of a geolocation system in 2010 that allowed software to match addresses with jurisdictions for tax purposes. Following the implementation of the geolocation system, the number of tax filings from the Town jumped by 49 percent.

As a result of the State's mistake, the State may have provided an estimated \$4.9 million extra to the Town. This number is still tentative because we don't have final data from the State, which is starting an audit because the geolocation mistake didn't just affect the Town of Chevy Chase...it affects other jurisdictions as well.

It is not clear if, when or how much the State will request that the Town return of the roughly \$4.9 million in excess tax receipts that were inadvertently sent to the Town's coffers. The Revenue Working Group expects the State to start that discussion with the Town and other affected jurisdictions after its audit is completed in six months.

The Town also will have to contend with the revenue effects of the Wynne case that should show up in tax year 2014 and hit the budget in FY16. Initially, cumulative repayment owed by the Town over 2 years as a result of the Wynn case was \$500,000. On one hand, since excess households might be included in this estimate because of the geolocation mistake, the amount owed may end up being lower. On the other hand, depending on the outcome of the court case that may extend the amount of years of necessary repayment, the amount owed may be higher.

For FY16, the Town's budget included the expectation of \$2.95 million, and the Revenue Working Group estimates that the actual revenue will be closer to \$1.8 million, which results in a \$1.15 million difference between expected and actual income. The Town will need to figure out how to deal with the FY16 \$1.15 million shortfall, which was not discussed by the Revenue Working Group.

The Revenue Working Group relies on the State to provide most of the tax information and, as soon as the necessary data is provided, the Group will be able to refine ongoing income tax estimates and determine the total excess payments to the Town (i.e. double check to see if it is really \$4.9 million). The Group also will examine options on the implementation of a property tax and if even a small tax will trigger a \$130,000 reimbursement from the County.