

Governance Committee Meeting Discussion Documents

Prepared by Edward Richards, Oct. 5, 2025.

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Introduction

This meeting is to discuss potential revisions and additions to the current election guidelines to address problems from past elections and legal changes.

I have listed the problems that were brought to the attention of the Board after the 2025 election. I have also suggested solutions as a starting point for discussion. Another task is to identify additional problems that others have observed that should be addressed, along with potential solutions. I have not rewritten the guidelines or proposed any specific language.

Changing the Qualifications for Being a Board Member

The only qualifications in the Articles of Incorporation for the WLV Board are that the Board have five directors, and that at least two of the directors are members of the WLV Association. (See attached document.) No additional qualifications can be added without changing the Articles of Incorporation. This was confirmed by the law firm (DARS) hired by the 2024–2025 Board when the Chair the law firm about changing the qualifications for board members.

Statutory Change

In 2025, the Maryland General Assembly amended the Maryland Homeowners Association Act to add specific provisions governing the conduct of elections. (See attached document.) We need to revise the WLV election Guidelines to comply with these revisions. At a minimum, this should include these two provisions:

1. Publicly announce the name(s) of the election chair and allow at least one week for HOA members to email objections to the Manager. It is unlikely that 25% of the members would object, but we need to allow time for objections to be submitted.
2. Add the specific statutory qualifications for an independent election chair to the guidelines.

Access to Slayton House During the Election

There were two other events scheduled for the areas outside Slayton House during the last election. They interfered with access to the building and blocked areas of the sidewalk. They also caused a constant stream of traffic through the parking lot.

Slayton House has limited accessibility, especially for people with disabilities. The blocked sidewalks, the traffic in the parking lot, and the events near the entrances made it very difficult for people to get to the building.

The Guidelines prohibit electioneering within 100-feet of the polls and require that the boundary be clearly marked. The candidates and their supporters have a right to electioneer outside that boundary. At the last election, it was unclear where the boundary was located because of the other events. Because of the congestion on the sidewalk, there was no clear area for electioneering. It is not safe for people to have to electioneer in the parking lot.

The guidelines should prohibit any other events during the election. This will keep the entrances and sidewalks clear and will allow clear marking of the no-electioneering zone. The 100-foot exclusion zone should be carefully marked, perhaps by chalk on the sidewalk. By having areas in the exclusion zone clear of events, there will be no confusion over what is electioneering and what is participating in an event.

Contested Ballots

There are no provisions for contacting voters to allow them to cure contested ballots. If your absentee (mailed) ballot is rejected, you are not notified, so you can not fix the problem and resubmit the ballot or vote in person. If there is a question about your eligibility to vote in person, you should be allowed to file a provisional ballot and be given time to cure the problem. This may require preparing a log of who has voted, but this should be simple because addresses are checked off when people vote.

Election Hours

Only a small percentage of eligible voters, including homeowners, voted in the last election. One factor that limits voting is that the polls were only open from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This gives people a limited opportunity to vote in person. Opening the polls for at least 6 hours, starting earlier or ending later, would make it easier for people to vote.

Tenant Voting

Few, if any, apartment tenants vote in WLV elections. Whatever we are doing now is not working. We should modify the election guidelines to include a simple and clear guide for tenants who want to vote or run for office.

Under the Articles of Incorporation (which are very difficult to change), tenants in WLV become members of the Association by presenting a copy of their lease to the Board. We cannot change this requirement to present a lease. We can make it easier to do.

Tenants should be allowed to email their leases to the Village Manager as the representative of the Board and be listed as Association members. Once on the membership list, they should be mailed a personalized absentee ballot and be allowed to vote in the same manner as homeowner members. They should also be allowed to vote in person by showing the same ID as homeowner members. Once they are on the membership list, they should not have to refile their lease. The Articles of Incorporation do not say that a tenant's membership expires. If they receive mail at the lease address or have a driver's license with that address, they should be treated the same as homeowner members. This is part of conducting a fair election as required by the new law.

Election Information

We need to make a special effort to inform tenants how to file their leases and participate in elections. The Association has a mailing list of all the apartment unit addresses. We should mail out information to every apartment about how to register and vote in the election at the beginning of February each year.

That will give tenants who have not already sent in their leases time to get a copy of their lease and get it to the Village Manager well before the election. It will also allow enough time for someone wanting to run for a WLV office to get signatures and file their nomination petition.

The overall voter turnout for homeowners is low and few people file to run for the Board. We should consider sending the early election information to all members, not just tenants.

Board Member Qualifications from the Articles of Incorporation

F. On any matter submitted to the members for vote, other than the election of Directors or the election of a representative to the Columbia Council, any member entitled to vote may cast a vote without attending the meeting in question by either of the following procedures, at his election:

(i) the member may sign a written proxy designating a particular individual to cast the member's vote on any issue coming before a particular meeting (other than the aforesaid excluded matters), which proxy shall be valid only with respect to the meeting specified therein; or

(ii) file a written statement with the Board of Directors prior to the meeting in question, specifying the issue on which the member intends to vote (other than the aforesaid excluded matters) and that the member votes for or against the same.

Any vote cast under either of the procedures set forth in this paragraph F shall have the same force and effect as if the member in question had appeared at the meeting and had cast his vote in person.

EIGHTH: The affairs of the corporation shall be managed by a Board of five (5) directors, at least two of whom shall be members of the Association except as herein provided with regard to the initial Board of Directors. The initial Board of Directors shall consist of five (5) directors who shall hold office until the election of their successors. Beginning with the first annual meeting of the Association to be held on or before March 1, 1968, the members, at each such annual meeting, shall elect five (5) directors, at least two of whom shall be elected from among the membership of the Association, each for a term of one year. The names of those persons who are to act as directors until the election of their successors are:

JAMES W. ROUSE

WILLIAM E. FINLEY

WILLARD G. ROUSE

ROBERT E. HUFF

RICHARD L. ANDERSON

Any vacancy occurring in the initial or any subsequent Board of Directors may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Directors by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining directors, though less than a quorum of the Board of Directors, or by a sole remaining director, and if not previously so filled, shall be filled at the next meeting of members of the Association. Any director elected to fill a vacancy shall serve as such until the expiration of the term of the director, the vacancy in whose position he was elected to fill.

NINTH: The following provisions are hereby adopted for the purpose of defining, limiting and regulating the powers of the Association and of the directors and members:

1. The Board of Directors shall have power to determine from time to time whether and to what extent and at what times and places and under what conditions and regulations the books, accounts and documents of the Association, or any of them shall be open to the inspection of members, except as otherwise provided by statute or by the by-laws; and, except as so provided no member shall have any right to inspect any book, account or document of the Association unless authorized so to do by resolution of the Board of Directors.

2. The Association may enter into contracts and transact business with any director or member or with any corporation, partnership, trust or association of which any director or member is a stockholder, director, officer, partner, member, trustee, beneficiary, employee or in which any director or member is otherwise interested; and such contract or transaction shall not be invalidated or in any way affected by the fact that such director or member has or may have an interest therein which is or might be adverse to the interests of the Association, provided that the fact of such interest shall be disclosed or known to the other directors or members acting upon such contract or transaction; and such director or member may be counted in determining the existence of a quorum at any meeting of the members or Board of Directors which shall authorize any such contract or transaction and may vote thereat to authorize any such contract or transaction, with like force and effect as if he were not so interested. No director or member having disclosed or made

2025 Revised Law on HOA Elections

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§ 11B-118. *Elections of governing bodies*

West's Annotated Code of Maryland

Real Property

Effective: October 1, 2025

West's Annotated Code of Maryland
 Real Property (Refs & Annos)
 Title 11b. Maryland Homeowners Association Act (Refs & Annos)

Effective: October 1, 2025

MD Code, Real Property, § 11B-118

§ 11B-118. *Elections of governing bodies*

[Currentness](#)

(a)(1) Elections for the governing body of a homeowners association, including the collection and counting of ballots and the certifying of results, shall be conducted by independent parties who:

- (i) Are not candidates for positions on the governing body of the homeowners association in that election; and
- (ii) Do not have a conflict of interest regarding any candidate in the election.

(2)(i) Unless property management for a homeowners association, or a parent association of the homeowners association, is owned by the homeowners association, representatives of the homeowners association's property management are not independent parties.

(ii) A lot owner is an independent party if the lot owner:

1. Complies with the requirements of this subsection;
2. Does not electioneer for any candidate; and
3. Is not subject to an objection by more than 25 percent of the eligible voting members of the homeowners association.

(iii) The homeowners association may retain a third-party vendor or employ a commercial technology platform to conduct the election.

(b) Individuals conducting an election shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the election is fair and that there is accountability for the process and the results of the election.

(c) A lot owner designated to conduct an election who acts in good faith has no personal liability in connection with the conduct of an election.

(d) Provisions of the governing documents, rules, or regulations of a homeowners association relating to the conduct of elections that are inconsistent with the requirements of this section are void and unenforceable.

Credits

Added by Acts 2025, c. 512, § 2, eff. Oct. 1, 2025.

MD Code, Real Property, § 11B-118, MD REAL PROP § 11B-118

Current through all legislation from the 2025 Regular Session of the General Assembly. Some statute sections may be more current, see credits for details.

Provisions for Tenants Becoming Members of the Association from the Articles of Incorporation

Solely in aid of the Purposes of the Association, the Association shall have the following powers:

1. to purchase, lease, hire, receive donations of, or otherwise acquire, hold, own, develop, improve, maintain and operate and to aid and subscribe toward the acquisition, development or improvement, of real and personal property, and rights and privileges therein, suitable or convenient for the Purposes of the Association;
2. to purchase, lease, hire, receive donations of, or otherwise acquire, hold, own, develop, erect, improve, manage, maintain, and operate, and to aid and subscribe toward the acquisition, construction or improvement of, systems, buildings, machinery, equipment and facilities, and any other property or appliances which may appertain to or be useful in the accomplishment of the Purposes of the Association;
3. to impose, collect and disburse dues and assessments in accordance with and subject to the provisions of the Wilde Lake Declaration;
4. to solicit, receive and accept donations of money or property or any interest in property from the State of Maryland, Howard County, or any subdivision of either, the Federal government or any agency or instrumentality thereof, or from any person or entity;
5. to raise money for any particular facility or service which the Association proposes to provide by means of payment of dues or special assessments by its members and to provide, operate and maintain, and supervise the use of any such facility or service upon the voluntary payment of such dues or assessments by its members;
6. to make contracts, incur liabilities, and borrow money and to issue bonds, notes or other obligations and secure the same by mortgage or deed of trust of all or any part of the property, franchise or income owned by the Association and to guarantee the obligations of others in which it may be interested for the furtherance of the Purposes of the Association;
7. to undertake and prepare or cause to be prepared studies, plans, recommendations, budgets and any other similar things (for submission to any public authority, civic group or association, CPRA, or for its own use) which relate to any phase or aspect of the physical, social or cultural development of the Property, or Columbia as a whole, and to create, or cause to be created, committees and other organizations for the supervision and implementation thereof;
8. to engage in and sponsor civic activities relating to the cultural, educational, social and civic affairs of the owners of property in, or residents of, the Property, or Columbia as a whole, and to appear before and represent its members in or before other civic groups, associations, boards or other like organizations;
9. to sponsor, engage in, conduct and encourage cultural, educational, social and civic and other beneficial activities relating to the Property, or Columbia as a whole;
10. to have and exercise to the extent necessary or desirable for the accomplishment of the aforesaid specific purposes and to the extent that they are not inconsistent with the Purposes of the Association, any and all powers conferred upon corporations of a similar character by the General Laws of the State of Maryland.

FOURTH: The post office address of the principal office of the Association in this state is Columbia, Maryland. The name and post office address of the resident agent of the Association in this state are John Martin Jones, Jr., 900 First National Bank Building, Redwood and Light Streets, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. Said resident agent is an individual actually residing in this State.

FIFTH: The Association is not authorized to issue capital stock.

SIXTH: The following shall automatically be members of the Association:

A. *Owners.* "Owner", for purposes of this Article Sixth shall mean and include the owner of any "Unit" within the Property, or any common or joint interest therein if such Unit is owned by more than one person or entity. "Unit" shall mean and include (i) the fee simple title to any Lot (as defined in the Wilde Lake Declaration) within the Property; (ii) the fee simple title to a unit in any condominium development within the Property; and (iii) any share, membership or other interest in any cooperative or other entity

organized and operated for the purpose of making residential dwelling units available to its shareholders, members or other beneficiaries, which share, membership or other interest entitles the owner thereof to possession of any residential dwelling unit within the Property.

B. Tenants. "Tenant" for purposes of this Article Sixth, shall mean and refer to an individual who (i) actually resides on the Property under a written lease from an Owner in which such individual is named as lessee, and (ii) delivers an executed copy of such lease to the Board of Directors.

No person or other entity shall be a member of the Association after he ceases to own or hold the interest in a portion of the Property which theretofore qualified him for membership under the provisions set forth above.

Contract sellers of any of the interests set forth above in connection with qualification for membership in the Association shall be members, but those having an interest merely as security for the performance of an obligation shall not be members of the Association.

SEVENTH : All members, so long as the same shall qualify under Article Sixth above, shall be entitled to vote on each matter submitted to a vote at a meeting of members. Each member of the Association shall have one vote, subject to the following exceptions and conditions :

A. If any member owns or holds more than one lot, unit, share, membership or other interest as described in Article Sixth above, in connection with qualification for membership, such member, subject to the provisions of this Article Seventh, shall be entitled to one vote for each such lot, unit, share, membership or interest owned or held.

B. When any lot, unit, share, membership or other interest, as described in Article Sixth above in connection with qualification for membership, is owned or held by more than one member as tenants by the entireties or in joint tenancy or tenancy in common or any other manner of joint or common ownership or interest, such members shall collectively be entitled to only one vote relative to that lot, unit, share, membership or other interest, and if such members cannot jointly agree as to how that vote should be cast, no vote shall be allowed with respect to such lot, unit, share, membership or other interest.

C. Any member who is in violation of the Wilde Lake Restrictions as defined in the Wilde Lake Declaration, as determined by the Board of Directors, or who fails to pay any dues or any special assessment established by the Association shall not be entitled to vote during any period in which any such dues or assessments are due and unpaid or in which such violation continues, except with respect to the casting of a vote for a representative on the Columbia Council.

D. The Board of Directors may make such regulations, consistent with the terms of the Wilde Lake Declaration and this Charter, as it deems advisable for any meeting of members, in regard to proof of membership in the Association, evidence of right to vote, the appointment and duties of inspectors of votes, registration of members for voting purposes, and such other matters concerning the conduct of meetings and voting as it shall deem fit.

E. Except as specified in this paragraph and in paragraph F immediately following, no member shall be entitled to assign his right to vote, by power of attorney, by proxy or otherwise, and no vote shall be valid unless cast in person by the individual member, provided, however, (i) that in the case of a corporate member, the vote may be cast by an appropriate officer of such corporation; (ii) that in the case of joint or common ownership as set forth in subparagraph B. of this Article Seventh, any one such member shall be entitled to cast the vote with respect to the lot, unit, share, membership or other interest in question; (iii) that members unable to attend a meeting at which Directors are to be elected or at which a representative to the Columbia Council is to be elected shall be entitled to file a written vote under absentee balloting regulation provided in the By-Laws; and (iv) agencies or instrumentalities of the Federal Government, if otherwise entitled to vote, may vote by written proxy.

Election Provisions from the Bylaws

appointed by the Manager or an assistant manager of the Association. The Board of Directors, however, may by resolution appoint some other person or persons to vote such shares, in which case such person or persons shall be entitled to vote such shares upon the production of a certified copy of such resolution.

SECTION 7.03. *Amendments.* Any and all provisions of these by-laws may be altered or repealed and new by-laws may be adopted by any annual meeting of the members, or at any special meeting called for that purpose.

ARTICLE VIII

ELECTIONS

SECTION 8.01. *Elections.* Elections required under Section 1.01 will be held for Board of Directors and Representative to the Columbia Council on a date in April each year designated by the incumbent Board of Directors. Polling places shall be as specified by the Board of Directors and will be open for voting at a time to be specified each year.

SECTION 8.02. *Election Committee.*

- a. *Appointment of the Election Committee.* The Board of Directors of the Association shall appoint an Election Monitor Committee and a Chairman before the first week in March of each year. The Board shall fill any vacancies from time-to-time as they occur.
- b. *Eligibility for Membership on the Election Committee.* Any member of the Association eligible to vote in the next forthcoming election of Directors and Council Representative shall be eligible for membership to the Election Monitor Committee, but in no event shall a member be a candidate for any Association office. No member of the Election Monitor Committee may actively campaign for or against any candidate.
- c. *Duties and Powers of the Election Committee.* The Election Committee upon being certified by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, shall be wholly responsible for the proper conduct of the annual elections of the Columbia Council Representative and the Board of Directors and to that end, the Election Committee shall be empowered to:
 - (i) establish such administrative rules and regulations as are necessary to the orderly conduct of the election and
 - (ii) prepare and make available such blank nomination petitions as are necessary and
 - (iii) prepare absentee ballots and regular ballots upon the receipt of all nomination petitions upon the closing of the nomination period prescribed and
 - (iv) establish and publicize a location for the purpose of receiving requests for, issuing and receiving absentee ballots and
 - (v) distribute the absentee ballots in accordance with Section 8.07 of these bylaws, and

- (vi) issue, receive and count all the ballots cast and post results upon the closing of the polls and
- (vii) certify, in writing, the names of those persons elected and the offices to which they were elected, respectively, to the incumbent Board of Directors of the Association and
- (viii) appoint such additional interim associates as are necessary to the conduct of the election itself and
- (ix) in the event of a challenge, prepare and submit a statement of the conduct of the election to the incumbent Board of Directors.

d. *Acceptance of Petitions, Withdrawals, Ballots & Challenges.*

- (i) the Committee shall accept any valid nomination petition and upon such acceptance shall issue a certification of candidacy to the nominee;
- (ii) the Committee shall accept any written withdrawal of candidacy, signed by the candidate. Upon receipt of any valid withdrawal, the candidate's name shall be obscured from the ballot;
- (iii) the Committee shall validate all absentee ballots and accept only validated absentee ballots. The Committee shall validate all regular ballots at the poll as they are distributed and shall accept only those ballots so properly validated;
- (iv) the Committee shall accept and rule on any written challenge submitted and signed by any candidate or member of the Election Monitor Committee.

SECTION 8.03. *Nominations.* Any qualified candidate for Board of Directors or Representative to the Columbia Council must be nominated. Nomination shall be by petition only. The petition, to be circulated by the candidate or by other persons on the candidate's behalf, and with the candidate's consent, will show the full name and address of the candidate, the candidate's signature, and the office the candidate is seeking. The nomination petition shall be valid when ten or more members of the Association have signed it. Association members shall not be restricted from signing more than one nomination petition. Each candidate shall be nominated for one office only. Each candidate will submit his nomination petitions during such nomination period as the Committee shall establish. The nomination period shall be at least two and not more than four weeks in duration, and shall conclude not less than 30 nor more than 60 days prior to the election date established by the Board of Directors. Each candidate submitting a valid petition during the nomination period will be a nominee for the indicated Association office and his name will be placed on the appropriate ballot.

SECTION 8.04. *Candidates' Statements.* Each candidate meeting the requirements for nomination, as set forth herein, may prepare a written campaign statement of not more than one hundred and fifty (150) words. This statement, in order to be reproduced and distributed at the expense of the Association, shall be

submitted to the respective Board Manager no later than 21 days before the election. The Board Manager shall prepare and distribute no later than five (5) days before the Election, in either a regular or special publication, the names of all candidates, the positions they seek, and their prepared statements. Candidates' statements will not be edited.

SECTION 8.05. *Preparation of Ballots.* The Election Monitor Committee shall draw the names of candidates by lot to determine position on the ballot. Candidates for Board of Directors and Council Representatives will be listed separately. Candidates shall be listed by given name. (First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name), and without reference to titles.

SECTION 8.06. *Balloting.* Members in good standing pursuant to Article III of the Declaration of the Association as of March 1st of each year shall be eligible to vote in the subsequent annual election. The CPRA assessment rolls and the apartment tenant lists together form the official voter registration list. A list of all eligible voters shall be posted at the polling place no later than April 1st. Non-appearance of a qualified voter's name shall be referred to the Election Monitor Committee for resolution. Each candidate shall be allowed one representative to observe the counting of the ballots by the Election Monitor Committee. The candidates receiving the largest numbers of votes for Board of Directors will be declared winners of that election. The one candidate receiving the largest number of votes for representative to the Columbia Council shall be declared winner of that election.

SECTION 8.07. *Absentee Ballots.* Any eligible member of the Association who will be unable to cast a ballot at the designated polling place may cast an absentee ballot. The absentee ballot may be requested in writing or in person from the Chairman of the Election Monitor Committee or designee. It will be the duty of the Election Monitor Committee to prepare, control, distribute, count and account for absentee ballots. Absentee ballots may be requested in writing from the twentieth day until the fifth day prior to the election; or requested in person from the twentieth day until the fifth day prior to the election. The absentee ballot will contain a detachable statement signed by the member certifying that the member will be unable to cast the ballot at the polling place.

The Election Monitor Committee will accept absentee ballots returned by the voter, in person or by mail, until midnight of the day prior to the election.

SECTION 8.08. *Ties and Runoff Elections.* In the event of a tie vote for election to the position of Council Representative, or the last position to be filled on the Board of Directors, the Election Monitor Committee shall conduct a recount of the ballots within two days. Ballots shall be placed in a locked container and retained by the Chairman of the Election Monitor Committee until the recount occurs. Should the tie persist, the Manager shall immediately notify the members of the Association of the date, time and place for a runoff election to resolve such tie. The runoff election shall be conducted within 2 weeks after the posting of the certified election results by the Election Monitor Committee. Only the names of the candidates involved in the tie will appear on the runoff election ballots. A tie vote for Council Representative, or for the last position to be filled on the Board of Directors shall not affect the results of the entire election. When a tie vote occurs and the election results have been challenged, the runoff election shall take place within two weeks of the disposition of the challenge: unless all candidates involved in a tie mutually agree that the election shall be decided by lot.

SECTION 8.09. *Challenge to Election Results.* Any challenge to the election must be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Election Monitor Committee within five (5) days after the posting of the election results. Ballots will be held by the Chairman of the Election Monitor Committee five (5) days, or until the disposition of any challenge.

SECTION 8.10. Where the procedures set forth in the Article of the by-laws are found to be inconsistent with other sections of these by-laws pertaining to elections, the procedures set forth in this Article shall supersede election procedures set forth in those other sections.

As amended February 12, 1972; 1974; April 21, 1990; January 9, 2017

As edited April 2, 1990

As edited by the Board of Directors April 17, 1990.

Current Election Guidelines

Village Elections in Wilde Lake are officially guided by Article VIII, Section 8 of the Wilde Lake Community Association (hereinafter referred to as "Association") By-laws. The following rules and regulations are derived from these By-laws and past Election experiences, traditional practices, and press deadlines. These guidelines are for the benefit of the Village Board, staff, and the Election Chair before, during, and after the Village Elections. The procedures are described according to the timeline of Election activities.

In administering Village Elections, the following major goals should be reached:

1. The Election should be fair and be perceived as fair by the establishment of clear procedures.
2. The Election procedures should encourage potential candidates to run in the Election and encourage people to vote.
3. The Election should be efficient and conducted at reasonable cost.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. BEFORE ELECTION

A. Selection of Election Chair

The Election Chair works very closely with the Village Manager and Association staff to ensure that the By-laws requirements are met and that all duties are performed

1. Appointment by Village Board

The Village Board is responsible for appointing the Election Chair during the first Board meeting in January.

2. Duties and Responsibilities of Election Chair

In addition to the duties and powers as described in Section 8.02(c)i-ix, the Election Chair has the following responsibilities:

- a. The Election Chair must be completely familiar with the rules and regulations of the Election. It is the Election Chair's ultimate responsibility to the Wilde Lake Village Board that the Election conforms to the By-laws and that all deadlines, as required by the By-laws, are met.
- b. The Election Chair coordinates Candidates' Night and serves as moderator.
- c. The Election Chair and the Association staff are responsible for instructions to poll workers who are recruited. It is particularly important that all poll workers clearly understand how to determine voting eligibility, how to read the voters list, and how to manage special problems.
- d. The Election Chair is responsible for validating all ballots.

- e. After the Election, the Election Chair is responsible for posting the official Election results, handling challenges to the Election and submitting an Election Report to the Village Board.

B. Schedule for Election

1. Setting Election Day

The Village Manager is responsible for setting the date of the Election with other Village Managers so that elections are held simultaneously throughout Columbia. The Village Manager will consider the need for transition time between the Election of the Village Board members and their taking office on May 1 to allow time for Election challenges to take place and for the Election results to be accepted by the outgoing Village Board.

2. Setting Election Schedule

The Village Manager prepares an Election timetable based on the By-Law requirements in January. Important dates are outlined below:

- **April:** Required month for Village Elections
- **January:** Appointment of the Election Chair
- **45 days or more prior to the Election:** Candidate information packets available and begin accepting nomination petitions
- **No later than April 1:** List of eligible voters posted at Slayton House
- **30 days or more prior to the Election:** Finish accepting nomination petitions ●
- 30 days or more prior to the Election:** Validation of nomination petitions
 - **20 to one day prior to the Election:** Receive requests for absentee ballots
 - **By April 1:** Mail out absentee ballots and instructions for online voting
 - **21 days or more prior to the Election:** Deadline for candidates' statements ●
 - 5 days or more prior to the Election:** Publish candidates' statements
 - **By 4pm of the Business Day prior to the Election:** Deadline for Tenants to submit current Lease Agreements.
 - **By 4pm of the Business Day prior to the Election:** Deadline for mail-in absentee ballots ●
 - By 4pm of the Business Day prior to the Election:** Deadline for online votes ●
 - 5 days after posting Election results:** Deadline for written challenges to the Elections ●
 - Within 5 days of receiving a challenge:** Election Committee will meet for discussion ●
 - 5 days after Election or until disposition:** Election Chair will hold ballots of any challenge

C. Nomination Petitions

1. Preparation

- a. Each nomination shall show the full name and address of the candidate, their signature, and the office they are seeking.

b. Room will be provided for twelve signatures of Association members (Owners and Tenants), plus space for printed name, address and telephone numbers.

c. Candidates may file for either Village Board or Columbia Council Representative but not both.

2. Validation

a. The Election Chair will declare the petition valid when ten signatures have been verified as members of the Association.

b. Association members may sign more than one petition. Each member of the Association (including joint owners) may each sign the same petition.

D. Election Information Packets

1. Preparation and Distribution of Packets

a. Association staff is responsible for the preparation of packets for each candidate. These packets are posted on the Association's website. Hard copies of the packets will be made available upon request.

2 Contents of Information Packets

a. The information packets for Columbia Council Representative shall include:

1. CA Articles of Incorporation and By-laws
2. Responsibilities of the Columbia Council Representative
3. All of the information included in the packets for the Village Board listed below:

b. The information packets for the Village Board shall include

1. Village Articles of Incorporation and By-laws
2. Election Information
3. Calendar for Election
4. Biographical/Emergency Forms
5. Declaration of Compliance
6. Responsibilities of the Board of Directors
7. Other information about the Village as prepared by the Village Manager.

E. Candidates' Statements

1. Length

Candidates' official statements must be 150 words or less. All words more than 150 will be deleted from the statement. Candidates may be asked to supply a shorter statement for use when space will not allow printing the official statements.

2. Publication

- a. If the statements are reprinted in the Columbia Flier, the Village Manager will inform the candidates of any space limitations.
- b. The statements shall be posted on the Association's website.

F. Uncontested Elections

In January 2017, Sections 2.03A and 4.04 of the Wilde Lake Community Association By-laws were amended.

1. The Association is not required to have an election for Village Board in a year when the number of candidates for Village Board is five or less **AND/OR**
2. The Association is not required to have an election for Columbia Council Representative if there is not more than one candidate for Columbia Council Representative.
3. In the event of no election, qualified candidates shall be deemed to be elected by the members of the Village Board and Village Board shall appoint such candidates for the term provided for in the Association's Articles of Incorporation.
4. If there are more than five candidates for Village Board or more than one candidate for Columbia Council Representative, then an election will be held in accordance with the Association's By-laws and Wilde Lake Village Elections Guidelines and Regulations.

G. Volunteers for Election Day

1. Recruiting

- a. The Election Chair and Association staff are responsible for recruiting workers to staff the polls on Election Day.
- b. The Election Chair is responsible for the supervision of poll workers on Election Day and for answering their questions during Election hours.

2. Training

- a. Each poll worker must receive clear instructions or a letter at least one week prior to the Election. All workers are encouraged to attend a training session before Election Day.
- b. Poll workers should be encouraged to arrive at least 15 minutes before their shifts begin to review and observe procedures. Questions on procedures will be answered at this time.

H. List of Eligible Voters

1. Acquiring Eligible Voters List

- a. The Village Manager is responsible for securing a list of eligible voters according to the

By-laws.

- b. The list of property owners shall be obtained from the Columbia Association annual charge office.
- c. The list of apartment tenants shall be a list of apartment dwelling units, not residents of the units, for each apartment complex.

2. Format of List

- a. Two lists of property owners should be available at the polls, one printed out in alphabetical order by owner, one by address. Both are important to validate all ballots.
- b. A current list of apartment dwelling units must be available.

I. Regular and Absentee Ballots

1. Preparation

- a. Association staff is responsible for the preparation of all ballots. In September 2013, the Wilde Lake Village Board approved use of a joint Business Reply Mail Account with five other Villages which is used for the return of mail-in absentee ballots.
- b. The order of names on the ballot is determined by lot at time set by the Election Chair.

2. Absentee Ballots

- a. Absentee ballots will be available as provided by the By-laws and will be mailed to all eligible voters.
- b. The Election Chair will accept absentee ballots (mail-in and online) until 4pm of the day prior to the election.
- c. Absentee ballots are not accepted on Election Day.
- d. In December 2018, the Wilde Lake Village Board approved the use of absentee e-voting in addition to absentee mail-in and in person voting.

3. Procedures for Validating Ballots

- a. All ballots will be validated during the Election and after the close of the polls. This includes in-person and mail-in absentee ballots.
- b. The Election Chair will slit mail-in absentee ballot return envelopes, verify addresses and sort absentee ballots after 4pm of the day prior to the election. Ballots remain in the envelopes until the polls close. Each candidate may designate an observer to watch as the absentee ballots are sorted. The name of the observer must be provided to the

Election Chair by 5pm two or more days before the Election. At no time may the observer handle the ballots.

c. The first ballot received will be accepted. Therefore, in-person ballots will not be accepted if an absentee ballot (mail-in or online) has been received.

II. DURING ELECTIONS

A. Voting Places

1. Voting tables should be in a clear, obvious place, not obstructed by other special events or displays.
2. People setting up poll sites should be aware of the electioneering boundaries. Such boundaries should be clearly marked.

B. Electioneering

1. Electioneering Boundaries

- a. No electioneering is allowed within one hundred feet of the polling tables.
- b. Poll workers should take care to remove any electioneering hand-outs from the voting tables.

2. Violations

- a. The Election Chair is responsible for warning candidates and their representatives if they electioneer within the electioneering boundary.
- b. If a serious problem results, the Election Chair should document the violations in writing and may recommend that the Village Board invalidate the Election.

C. Who Can Vote?

1. The Association shall have as members only Owners and Tenants. Each member of the Association shall have one vote.
 - a. The Articles of Incorporation specifically state that there shall be one vote per Lot.
 - b. For Owners, the vote shall go to the Owner. If any member owns more than one lot, such member shall be entitled to one vote for each such Lot. When any Lot is owned or held by more than one member by any manner of joint ownership or interest, such members shall be entitled to only one vote.
 - c. For Tenants, if casting an absentee (mail-in or online) ballot, Tenants must file a copy of a lease agreement with the Association no later than 4pm on the day prior to elections. If voting in-person, Tenants may present a copy of a lease agreement on Election Day. The voter shall be 18 years of age or older.

2. Eligibility and Identification

- a. Members will be considered eligible to vote if they can present an identification showing current address to be in Wilde Lake Village. If identification cannot be presented, then members must sign attestation form to confirm that they are an Owner or Tenant at the stated address.
- b. The Election Chair should publicize, along with the names and statements of candidates, information about who can vote and I.D. requirement to encourage voter turnout.

D. Voters Lists and Procedures for Validating Ballots at the Polls

1. Voters Lists

There should be poll volunteers at the polling table, each with a part of the official voters list.

2. Validation of Owners

- a. After showing suitable I.D, Owners whose names are on the voters list will be checked off by the poll worker. A ballot will then be issued to them.
- b. Owners whose names are not on the voters' lists will record names on the printout next to their address for further verification using the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation online property search records. They will then place their ballots in an envelope with their name and address on the outside, and the ballot, in the sealed envelope will be placed in the ballot box.

3. Validation of Tenants

- a. An apartment tenant will be checked off the apartment unit at the appropriate address.
- b. To cast an absentee ballot (online or mail-in), Tenants must present a legal, executed copy of a lease agreement by 4pm prior to election day. To cast a ballot in person, Tenants must present a lease agreement at the polls on Election Day.

III. AFTER ELECTIONS

Vote Count

Each candidate may designate an observer to watch the counting process. The name of the observer must be provided to the Election Chair by 5pm two or more days before the Election. At no time may the observer handle the ballots.

A. Setting up for the Vote Count

1. The Election Chair and poll workers shall count the ballots. The Election Chair is responsible for the smooth processing and counting of the ballots.
2. The vote count shall be held in a room separate from post-Election socializing.

1. All ballots will first be scanned to be sure none has more than five (5) votes cast for Village board slots and no more than one (1) ballot cast for the Columbia Council

Representative. If part of the ballot is invalid, only the invalid section will not be used in the count.

2. The Election Chair validates the absentee ballots. These ballots are added to the in-person ballots.

C. Counting the Ballots

1. The ballots are divided into piles of up to fifty ballots and each pile of ballots is assigned two (2) counters.
2. Each counter records ballots on a counting grid. The grid shall be numbered vertically from one to fifty and have candidates' names across the top. Each pile of ballots shall be numbered from one to fifty. Each ballot shall be assigned a separate line.
3. Each team counts one pile of fifty ballots twice on separate grids. The grids are totaled and compared for accuracy. If a discrepancy exists, the pile of fifty ballots shall be recounted until the discrepancy is resolved.
4. Each candidate may designate a representative to observe the counting of the ballots. The name of the representative must be provided to the Election Chair by 5pm two or more days before the Election.

D. Official Election Results

1. After the ballots are counted, the Election Chair notifies the candidates and posts the official Election results.
2. Only the Election Chair, or his/her designee, is authorized to post, publish, announce or otherwise release the Election results. The Election Chair also acts as the only spokesperson for the committee.

E. Challenge Procedure

1. Challenges to the manner in which the Election was conducted must be in writing and submitted to the Election Chair within five (5) calendar days after the posting of the Election results. The By-laws do not allow for request for re-count except in the event of a tie.
2. After receiving a challenge, the Election Chair will make any recommendations to the Village Board within seven (7) calendar days.
3. The Election Chair is not required to consider any challenges, unless they could affect the results of the Election, until after the Election is certified. The Election Chair should then evaluate the Election procedures and the complaint and make recommendations in the final report of the Election.

F. Certification

1. The Election Chair certifies in writing the Election results to the incumbent Village Board after the deadline to challenges to Election by the end of April.
2. The Election Chair will submit its report at the first Village Board meeting in May.

Approved by the Wilde Lake Village board 1/17/91
Revised: 1/95
Revised 3/96
Revised 2/99

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Updates reviewed and approved by WLVB 1/10/2022