

WILDE LAKE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Monday, January 5, 2026, 6:30 pm (Virtual)*

***NOTICE: The in-person portion of the hybrid meeting of the WLCA Board of Directors is cancelled because of the risk of influenza. The meeting will be held as a virtual meeting on Zoom.**

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87591622093?pwd=nJlOaTD5PmVokQu0rZosaUU81a4BXY.1>

THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED AND WILL BE POSTED FOR LATER VIEWING

AGENDA

Call to Order

*Approval of Agenda

*Approval of Minutes (08/04/2025) (09/08/2025) (11/03/2025) (12/01/2025)

RESIDENT SPEAK OUT (3 minutes per person)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

*Approve Report of the Architectural Committee concerning 4938 Reedy Brook Lane.

*Approve Bryant Woods Elementary Donation

*Discuss distribution of remaining funds for donation

NEW BUSINESS

*Wilde Lake Election Chair Appointment

*Setting the 2026 Election Date

*2026 Election Guidelines and Regulations

CLOSED SESSION – *Not required for this meeting*

REPORTS:

Manager

Chair

CA Rep

COMMITTEES:

Education

Governance

ADJOURNMENT

*Indicates action Item

Mission Statement: *To organize and operate a nonprofit civic organization, exclusively for the promotion of the health, safety, common good and social welfare of the owners of property in, and the residents of, the Village of Wilde Lake.*



**Wilde Lake Village Board Meeting Minutes
August 4, 2025**

Slayton House, 10400 Cross Fox Lane, Columbia, MD

Members Present: Chair Katharine Rathbun, Vice Chair Francis Uy, Edward Richards, Brandon Cogdell, Kevin McAliley, Columbia Council Representative Bill Santos and Executive Director and Village Manager, Sharon Cooper-Kerr

Call to Order 6:30 pm

*Approval of Agenda
Addition of Goals for Wilde Lake by Mr. Santos

MOTION: Approve agenda as amended.

Motion: Mr. Uy Seconded
Aye: Mr. Richards, Mr. Uy, Dr. Rathbun
Nay: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley
Abstain: none
Motion Carried (3-2-0)

MOTION: Move to a Closed Session for the following purposes:

- 1. Discussion of matters pertaining to employees and personnel***
- 2. Consultation with counsel on legal matters***

Motion: Mr. Richards Seconded
Aye: Mr. Richards, Mr. Uy, Dr. Rathbun
Nay: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley
Abstain: none
Motion Carried (3-2-0)

The Board went into closed session at 6:22 pm

Members of the audience were asked to leave the room because the Board was in closed session. There was considerable disruption. Many refused to leave but were persuaded to comply after several minutes. Some still refused to leave and were being disruptive. The Howard County Police were called to help restore order. The police spoke with board and community members and helped the two groups come to a resolution to allow resident speakout to occur before the board went to closed session.

MOTION: Dr. Rathbun asked for a motion to return to regular session and convene Resident Speak Out. This motion was made and seconded. All were in favor.

The Board came out of closed session at 7:08 pm

RESIDENT SPEAK OUT (3 minutes per person) unlimited time:

Liz Schoen – Hiring of law firm
Tina Horn – Governance Committee

Carol Ann Leal – Civility of the Board
Beverly Lucas – New resident
Susan Tucker – Civility of the Board and Village Manager
Susan Hellenbrand – Hiring of law firm
Bess Caplan – WL Cares Co-chair, former Village Board Member – yielded her time
Jillian Kerr – Civility of the Board and Village Manager
Gail Clark – Civility of the Board
Debbie Cappucitti – Civility of the Board
Leonard Clay – Village Manager
Larry Schoen – Minutes, Civility of the Board
Regina Clay – Village Manager
Kimberli Maultsby – Conduct of the Board and Governance Committee
Deidre Sykes – Village Manager
Lizz Hamman – Village Manager
Erika Chavarria – Village Manager
Zana Watson – Governance Committee

Other:

Michael Golibersuch, CA Board of Directors, Vice Chair - Introduction
Kat Uy – Community involvement
Jean Joklik - High-definition cameras and on the accusation of harassment made against her.
Alex Votaw, WLCA attorney explained HOA law on closed sessions.

MOTION: Create a committee of three other village managers to advise the Board on our Village Manager.

Motion: Mr. Cogdell. Seconded
Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley
Nay: Mr. Richards, Mr. Uy, Dr. Rathbun
Abstain: none
Motion Failed (2-2-1)

***MOTION: Move to a Closed Session for the following purposes:
1. Discussion of matters pertaining to employees and personnel
2. Consultation with counsel on legal matters***

Motion: Mr. Richards. Seconded
Aye: Mr. Richards, Mr. Uy, Dr. Rathbun
Nay: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley
Abstain: none

Motion Carried (3-2-0)

The Board went into closed session at 8:19 pm
The Board came out of closed session at 11:35 pm

REPORT ON ACTIONS TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION

MOTION: In accordance with the advice from counsel, revise the contract granted to the Village Manager on March 17, 2025, to remove specific sections that violate the Bylaws or the laws of Maryland.

Motion: Mr. Richards. Seconded

Aye: Dr. Rathbun, Mr. Richards, Mr. Uy

Nay: Mr. McAliley, Mr. Cogdell

Abstain: none

Motion Carried (3-2-0)

MOTION: The Board will develop an action plan to improve the working relationship between the Board and the Village Manager.

Motion: Mr. Richards. Seconded

Aye: Mr. Richards, Dr. Rathbun, Mr. Uy, Mr. Cogdell

Nay: none

Abstain: Mr. McAliley

Motion Carried (4-0-1)

MOTION: Waive attorney client privilege between the Wilde Lake Community Association, Incorporated and the law firm Davis, Agnor, Rapaport, and Skalny.

Motion: Mr. Richards. Seconded

Aye: Mr. Richards, Dr. Rathbun, Mr. Uy,

Nay: Mr. McAliley, Mr. Cogdell

Abstain: none

Motion Carried (3-2-0)

REPORTS

Chair of the Board of Directors – cancelled due to the lateness of the hour.

CA Representative – Goals for Wilde Lake Village – cancelled due to the lateness of the hour.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made and seconded. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 pm.



**Wilde Lake Village Board Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2025**

Slayton House, 10400 Cross Fox Lane, Columbia, MD

Members Present: Vice Chair Francis Uy, Edward Richards, Brandon Cogdell, Kevin McAliley, Columbia Council Representative Bill Santos and Executive Director and Village Manager, Sharon Cooper-Kerr. **Absent:** Village Board Chair: Kate Rathbun

Call to Order 6:35 pm by Vice Chair Francis Uy

*Approval of Agenda

Motion to remove items that would have been presented by the Board Chair

MOTION: Approve agenda as amended.

Motion: Mr. Cogdell Seconded: Mr. McAliley

Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley, Mr. Richards and Mr. Uy

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Motion Carried (4-0-0)

MOTION: Approval of Minutes - July 14TH

Motion: Mr. Cogdell Seconded: Mr. Uy

Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. Richards and Mr. Uy

Nay: n/a

Abstain: McAliley

Motion Failed (3-0-1)

MOTION: Approval of Amended Minutes – August 4th

Motion #1 – Move speaker Michael Golibersuch to appear under other topics

Motion: Mr. McAliley Seconded: Mr. Uy

Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley, Mr. Richards and Mr. Uy

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Motion Carried (4-0-0)

Motion #2- Separation of Resident Speakout topics about the Village Manager and Conduct of the Board

Motion: Mr. McAliley Seconded: Mr. Cogdell

Aye: Mr. Cogdell and Mr. McAliley

Nay: Mr. Richards

Abstain: Mr. Uy

Motion Carried (2-1-1)

Motion #3 – Revise/rewrite the paragraph related to the Howard County Police’s attendance at the meeting

Motion: Mr. Cogdell Seconded: Mr. McAliley

Aye: Mr. Cogdell and Mr. McAliley

Nay: Mr. Uy
Abstain: Mr. Richards
Motion Carried (2-1-1)

Motion #4 – Approve minutes as amended
Motion: Mr. Cogdell
Aye: Mr. Cogdell
Nay: Mr. McAliley, Mr. Richards and Mr. Uy
Abstain: none
Motion Failed (1-3-0)

RESIDENT SPEAK OUT (3 minutes per person) unlimited time
The disruptions from the audience continued but the following people were recognized and spoke about the Village Manager and the conduct of the Board:

Judy Templeton – WLCA The Arts
Paula Rivers – Minutes
Zana Watson – Minutes and resident speakout
Senator Clarence Lam – Community Responsiveness
Cheryl Spencer – Resident Architectural Committee

Presentation by Officer Eric England Howard County Police Department. Officer England provided an update on crime statistics and calls for service in the Wilde Lake Community.

Motion to move the Wilde Lake CARES presentation to earlier in the meeting
Motion: Mr. McAliley. Mr. Cogdell seconded.
Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley, Mr. Richards and Mr. Uy
Nay: none
Abstain: none

Bess Caplan of Wilde Lake CARES requested a donation of \$150 to purchase items for the group's 10th Anniversary celebration scheduled for October 19th at the Snowy Reach Adopt-A-Spot.

Motion: Mr. McAliley. Mr. Cogdell seconded.
Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley, Mr. Richards and Mr. Uy

Approval of financial reports presented by Ms. Cooper-Kerr for FY2025 end of year
Motion: Mr. Cogdell. Mr. McAliley seconded
Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley, Mr. Uy
Naye: none
Abstain: Mr. Richards (audio issues)
Motion carried (3-0-1)

Approval of financial reports presented by Ms. Cooper-Kerr for FY2026 Quarter 1 Financial
Motion: Mr. Cogdell. Mr. McAliley seconded
Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley, Mr. Richards and Mr. Uy
Naye: none
Abstain: none
Motion carried (4-0-0)

REPORTS

Executive Director/Village Manager – Please see attached

Chair Report - tabled

Columbia Council Representative – Mr. Santos shared that the next Columbia Association Board of Directors meeting will be held on September 11th at Slayton House as a Town Hall to engage residents about the budget process. He requested that community members email him with any concerns they have with regard to the budget for FY2027. Columbia Bike Around will be held on Saturday.

Committees

Education Committee – Mr. Cogdell reported that the committee tabled at Back-to-School nights at Wilde Lake Middle and Bryant Woods and Running Brook Elementary Schools. The committee will apply for a YEP to continue the work of Club Wilde Lake. Mr. Cogdell will meet with the leadership of Ohan Howard County and STAND to discuss youth initiatives and possible partnerships.

Governance Committee – no report. The board and community agreed that a report will be provided at the next meeting and that community members who expressed interest in joining the Governance Committee will be contacted.

Place the Governance Committee update on the agenda for the next meeting. Those who have volunteered should be contacted prior to the next meeting.

Motion: Mr. McAliley. Mr. Cogdell seconded

Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley, and Mr. Uy

Nay: none

Abstain: Mr. Richards

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made and seconded. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.



**Wilde Lake Village Board Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2025**

Slayton House, 10400 Cross Fox Lane, Columbia, MD

Members Present: Chair, Katharine Rathbun, Vice Chair, Francis Uy, Brandon Cogdell, Kevin McAliley, Edward Richards, Columbia Representative Bill Santos, and Executive Director and Village Manager, Sharon Cooper-Kerr.

Call to Order 6:38 p.m.

*Approval of Agenda

The item noted as new business was revised to read "Open Governance Committee Meeting."
All are welcome to attend the meeting.

MOTION: To add a discussion about the Governance Committee to the meeting agenda.

Motion: Kevin McAliley. Seconded

Aye: Mr. McAliley, Mr. Cogdell

Nay: Mr. Edwards, Dr. Rathbun, Mr. Uy

Motion Failed (2-3-0)

MOTION: to approve the Agenda as revised

Motion: Dr. Rathbun. Seconded

Aye: Dr. Rathbun, Mr. Richards, Mr. Uy, Mr. Cogdell

Nay: Mr. McAliley

Motion Carried (4-1-0)

*Approval of Minutes (8-4-2025) (9-8-2025)

MOTION: To table the minutes of the August 4th and September 8, 2025, meetings to the next Board meeting.

Motion: Mr. Richards. Seconded

Aye: Dr. Rathbun, Mr. Richards, Mr. Uy

Nay: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley

Motion Carried: (3-2-0)

RESIDENT SPEAKOUT (3 minutes per person, unlimited time):

MOTION: To extend the 15-minute limit on residents speak out

Motion: Mr. McAliley. Seconded.

Aye: Mr. Cogdell, Mr. McAliley, Dr. Rathbun, Mr. Richards, Mr. Uy

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Motion Carried (5-0-0)

RESIDENT SPEAK OUT:

Deidre Sykes – read a letter from a neighbor regarding community engagement.

Michelle Hinjosa-Melencio – Board goals and how the board would engage in the Bryant Woods Elementary School proposed redistricting discussion.

Paula Rivers – possible revision of election guidelines and transparency

Susan Tucker – proposed donation policy and elections

Laura Burris – board dynamics and possible change in election policy

Rhanda Dormeus – school redistricting

Debbie Cappucitti – spoke on behalf of resident Christin Gourdin about board conduct and focusing on the community.

Chris Tsien – board misconduct

Larry Schoen – legal fees/spending community money prudently

Liz Schoen – board behavior and Bryant Woods Elementary School proposed redistricting.

Bill Santos – shared past involvement of the WLVB in redistricting conversations

Susan Hellenbrand – Donations policy

Cassandra Belton – second resident speakout

Barbara Lawson – board dynamics and broken community trust

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion of various systems for the allocation of donations and support.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Election Guidelines and Regulations – An open Governance Committee meeting will be held on Monday, November 10th at 6:30 p.m. at Slayton House. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the new HOA election law and to review proposed new election guidelines and procedures. This will be a town-hall style meeting.

REPORTS

Village Manager– Provided updates on what has happened at Slayton House since the Board last met in September, including technology and energy efficient upgrades, Bernice Kish Art Gallery Exhibit, and thanked everyone for attending the Wilde Lake Fall Festival on Saturday, October 11th, Attended the annual meeting of Visit Howard County and trunk or treat events at Bryant Woods and Running Brook Elementary Schools. Coming soon: Breakfast with Santa is scheduled for Saturday, December 6th, from 9 a.m. until 12 noon.

Chair – no report.

Wilde Lake Representative to the Columbia Council – mentioned the CA board is reviewing their ethic policy. Campaigning for Board members is now allowed. The Board is in the middle of the budget season. Key focus areas are resource resilience awareness, long term capital expenditures, pools, prioritizing maintenance assets and affordability of CA membership.

Education Committee – the education committee will meet on tomorrow to discuss Club Wilde Lake. The Committee is working with the schools to identify community resources and needs of our neighbors.

AC Liaison – no report

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

DRAFT



**Wilde Lake Village Board Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2025**

Slayton House, 10400 Cross Fox Lane, Columbia, MD

Members Present: Vice Chair Francis Uy, Felisa Garrett, Edward Richards, CA Representative Bill Santos and Executive Director and Village Manager, Sharon Cooper-Kerr

Members Absent: Chair Katharine Rathbun, Brandon Cogdell, Kevin McAliley

Meeting opened by the Vice Chair at 6:38 pm

*Approval of Agenda: **(No action taken due to lack of quorum.)**

*Approval of Minutes: **(No action taken due to lack of quorum.)**

RESIDENT SPEAK OUT

Susan Hellenbrand
Susan Tucker
Deb Cappucitti
Chris Tsien
Lynn Hannan
Zana Watson
Michelle Hinojosa-Melencio
Larry Schoen

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES/SPEAKERS

Victoria Garcia
Tracy Manning
Amy Bennett
MaryBeth Ryan
Rebecca Payne
Jillian Kerr
Amanda Hicks
Ginny Thomas
Amy Churilla
Stefani Lyngard
Jean Moon
Bess Caplan
Joel Hurewitz
Yoni Osa
Skye Anderson
Delilah Holmes
Liz Schoen
Cheryl A McLeod

Regina Clay
Jeff Churilla
Willie Flowers
Rusty Toler
Jean Joklik
Mary Kay Sigaty
Alan Schneider

OLD BUSINESS

*Bryant Woods Elementary Donation: (No action taken due to lack of quorum.)

NEW BUSINESS – (Reports posted but not discussed due to lack of quorum)

Response to the Election Co-Chair Report

Report on Legal Fees Paid

Apparent Violation of the Ethics Rules of the WLCA and Howard County

Regarding Removal of a Board Member

Apparent Violation of the Ethics Rules of WLCA and Columbia Association

CLOSED SESSION – Not held

NOTICE OF CLOSED SESSION November 25, 2025

A closed session of the Wilde Lake Village Board was held on-line on November 25, 2025, at 6:30 pm. A report on the status of pending legal actions was given by Charles Kresslein of Jackson Lewis. In accordance with WLCA Bylaws Sections 2.02 and 2.04, the number of Directors of the Association was increased to 6 and Felisa Garrett was appointed to the Board of Directors.

(This notice was posted with the agenda, publicly discussed in the meeting, and included in these minutes in accordance with the requirements of the Maryland HOA Act Section 11-111.5 (ii))

Meeting closed by the Vice Chair at 6:42 pm

MEMO

Date: January 4, 2026

To: Wilde Lake Community Association Board of Directors

From: Francis Uy, Architectural Committee Liaison

Re: Report on the property at 4938 Reedy Brook Lane

The Covenant Advisor has provided extensive reports and documentation of the problems at this property and the failure of the owner to respond or make corrections.

Members of the Architectural Committee have reviewed the documents and inspected the property.

By unanimous vote, the Architectural Committee recommends that the WLCA Board of Directors:

1. Approve sending the 15-day notice letter as presented by the Covenant Advisor.
2. Approve referring the matter to The Columbia Association Architectural Resource Committee if no suitable response is received.
3. Authorize the WLVB Chair Dr. Rathbun to sign both documents.

Respectfully submitted by WLCA Architectural Committee Liaison, Francis Uy

BRYANT WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

5450 Blue Heron Lane • Columbia, MD 21044 • 410-313-6859 • (F) 410-313-6864 •
bwes.hcpss.org



Date: November 7, 2025

Dear Executive Director Sharon Cooper-Kerr,

On behalf of Bryant Woods Elementary School, I am writing to share a proposal for partnership support toward our **Family Empowerment & Belonging Initiative**, an effort designed to strengthen family-school connections, elevate student achievement, and promote consistent attendance through equitable, high-impact engagement. Bryant Woods Elementary, a Title I school within the Howard County Public School System, continues to serve a richly diverse student body. Our focus on equity aligns with the district's Strategic Call to Action and the Maryland Blueprint's core pillars ensuring every child has access to academic excellence and a sense of belonging in our school community.

Overview & Purpose

The Family Empowerment & Belonging Initiative seeks to deepen the partnership between families and educators by providing meaningful tools, experiences, and systems that empower parents as co-educators and active contributors to school progress. Through a balance of culturally responsive enrichment, family learning toolkits, and positive attendance incentives, this initiative addresses the "4 A's" of student success: **Access, Achievement, Attendance, and Acceptance.**

Proposed Activities

- 1. Family Empowerment & Learning Opportunities**
Bilingual wellness toolkits and QR-linked videos created by staff to model learning and SEL strategies families can use at home.
- 2. Attendance & Belonging Campaigns**
Family challenges, assemblies, and motivational incentives that celebrate consistency, connection, and community.
- 3. Cultural & Community Connection Series**
Culturally rich student showcases and interactive hallway exhibits highlighting academic learning through heritage and history (e.g., Black History Month and Blacks in STEM workshops).
- 4. Family Voice & Data Access Tools**
Surveys and feedback that allow all families to share input and see progress toward our shared goals in real time.

Importance & Expected Impact

This initiative transforms engagement from attendance at events to shared ownership of student growth. It bridges home and school learning, reinforces daily attendance habits, and celebrates identity in academically meaningful ways. We anticipate measurable increases in:

- Family participation in learning-focused activities
- Student attendance and daily engagement
- Representation of diverse family voices in decision-making
- Parent confidence in supporting learning at home

Funding Request

Bryant Woods Elementary respectfully requests **\$2,500** in community partnership funding to support program materials, event facilitation, and family learning resources. Your support would directly advance equitable access, enrich the school experience for all students, and strengthen the bridge between families and the classroom.

Timeline

- **Winter 2025:** Implement Cultural & Community Connection Series
- **Spring 2026:** Host Family Learning Showcase and Program Evaluation
- **Fall 2026:** Host Family Back to School “Better Together” Initiative

Thank you for your continued commitment to the Bryant Woods community. Your partnership helps ensure every child has not only access to education, but a sense of connection, value, and belonging. Warm regards,

Uyiosa Y. Osahon

BSAP Community Liaison

Bryant Woods Elementary School

Uyiosa_Osahon@hcpss.org • (410) 313 6859

MEMO:

Date: January 4, 2026

To: Wilde Lake Community Association Board of Directors

From: Katharine C Rathbun, Chair

Re: Appointment of the 2026 WLCA Election Chair

To the Wilde Lake Community Association Board of Directors

As noted in the report on the new election requirements, The Board is responsible for appointing the Election Chair, and the Chair recruits the rest of his or her committee.

In November, the Village Manager posted a request for volunteers to be on the Election Committee. As of her December 15 deadline, she had received responses from six people, and I had received inquiries from two others.

On December 19 and December 24, I sent the attached email to all eight candidates, and I followed up with phone calls. The email states the requirements for sitting on the committee, and the information about the Election Chair position.

I received two responses to my request for volunteers to be Election Chair. I spoke to both these candidates several times and we exchanged emails. We discussed the duties and responsibilities of the Election Chair, time commitment, and support from the Board and the Association. Both were willing to serve as Chair, but one finally decided that she wanted to consider running for office.

Fortunately for Wilde Lake Community Association, the final candidate for 2026 Election Chair is Joe Garifo. He and his family have lived in Wilde Lake for several years. He is active in the community, and has children in school here. He has no conflicts of interest, he meets all the requirements of the Bylaws and the new law, and he has good ideas for how to recruit members for the Election Committee.

Nomination of Joe Garifo for 2026 Election Chair respectfully submitted January 5, 2025

Katharine C Rathbun, Chair

To All Who May be Willing to Volunteer

Thank you for your interest in helping the Wilde Lake Community Association during the 2026 elections for the Board of Directors, and for the Columbia Council Representative.

There may be some changes in how we do elections in Wilde Lake because there is a new law in Maryland that requires that an independent party must conduct all HOA elections. For us, the independent party is our Election Chair.

To be on the Election Committee, you must 1) be a voting member of Wilde Lake, either Tenant or Owner, 2) not be a candidate for office, 3) not have a conflict of interest regarding any candidate in the election, and 4) not electioneer for or against any candidate.

If you are still interested in serving on the committee, we will keep you on the list and send out additional information as it becomes available. If you know others who might be willing to join the committee, please forward this email to them or have them contact me. Many hands make light work.

If you think you might be willing to serve as Election Chair, please let me know as soon as possible. We hope to appoint the Chair at the January 5, 2026 meeting.

Kate Rathbun

Chair, Wilde Lake Community Association Board of Directors

225-202-0854

Report

Date: 4 January 2025

To: Wilde Lake Village Association

From: Edward Richards

Re: Board Duties Regarding the 2026 Election and a Report on the Public Meeting on the Election Guidelines held November 10, 2025

Attached Documents

Notes from Public Meeting on the Election Guidelines held November 10, 2025 - publicly distributed by the Village Manager, November 25, 2025.

Governance Committee Meeting Discussion Documents - publicly distributed by the Village Manager before the public meeting.

Discussion

SECTION 8.02(c)(i) of the WLVA Bylaws empowers the Election Committee to “establish such administrative rules and regulations as are necessary to the orderly conduct of the election.”

As discussed below, the Election Guidelines used in the 2025 election must be suspended until they are revised to comply with the 2025 Amendments to the Maryland HOA Act. Since revisions must be carried out by the Election Committee, the Board must appoint an Election Committee Chair at this meeting so the revisions can be completed in time to meet the election calendar set in the Bylaws.

Since the Governance Committee has no formal role in revising the Election Guidelines, I conducted an informal meeting on November 10, 2025, to gather community input on improving election accessibility, particularly for tenants. While many valuable suggestions are outlined in the attached Public Meeting Notes, specific mandatory changes are required to comply with the 2025 Amendments to the Maryland HOA Act (§ 11B-118).

Statutory Qualifications: Incorporating the legal standard for "independent parties," ensuring those overseeing the election are not candidates and have no conflicts of interest.

Member Objection Rights: Establishing a reasonable period for members to object to Election Committee appointees, with a mandatory replacement if more than 25% of Association members object.

Legal Supremacy: Clarifying that the 2025 Amendments to the Maryland HOA Act supersede any inconsistent provisions in the Village Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, or current Guidelines.

Liability Protection: Adding a provision that any lot owner designated to conduct an election who acts in good faith has no personal liability.

Role of Staff: While the HOA Act technically allows association-employed management to be "independent," it explicitly disqualifies any party with a "conflict of interest regarding any candidate". Because the Manager's employment status is tied to Board composition, they possess a potential conflict. Therefore, the 2026 Guidelines must limit staff to administrative tasks performed under the direct, independent supervision of the Election Committee.

The Election Guidelines used in the 2025 election must be suspended until they are replaced by the Election Committee's 2026 Election Guidelines, which will comply with the Maryland HOA Act and, as the Election Committee determines, may include other revisions.

Notes from the Public Meeting on the Election Guidelines held November 10, 2025

Prepared by Edward Richards, November 25, 2025

Introduction

The meeting started at 6:30PM and adjourned about 7:30PM. There was a good turnout and many members of the community participated in the discussion. These notes attempt to summarize the excellent ideas of the community members and to provide a basis for further discussion and action.

Access to Slayton House during the election

There was a consensus that the Howard County drug drop-off program caused access problems. Since people are expected to drive through the parking lot and drop drugs off from their car, there was a constant stream of traffic. It was also unlikely that it brought in many voters because it is countywide and discouraged people from stopping. If it cannot be scheduled at another time, there were several good suggestions of other locations nearby where it could be held, including the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center.

Most people felt that the plant adoption program did attract voters and could be moved away from the doors of Slayton House so that there could be a buffer zone to clearly show where electioneering is not allowed. There were suggestions to mark off the area and to have a walkthrough the day before with the candidates.

While it was not discussed in the meeting, we might consider reducing the buffer distance from the polling tables. The current requirement is 100 feet from the polling tables. This could be changed to no electioneering inside Slayton House and within 25 feet of the entrances to Slayton House. This would be easier to implement and would still provide a clear access area to the polls. We do not have the large crowds of voters or of candidate supporters that lead public elections to use a 100-foot buffer.

Election hours

Many people were concerned that the election hours, 10AM-2PM, were too short. It was noted by Bill Santos and others that voting falls off in the afternoon. A number of people commented that this is a busy time of year and opening the polls earlier, say at 9AM, would be more helpful than keeping the polls open later.

How many votes per unit?

There was a discussion about whether there is only one vote per unit. The bylaws do not clearly resolve this, which led to some confusion. It is addressed in the Articles of Incorporation, but the language is arcane. The Seventh Section, paragraph B, reads:

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 entirety 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.

This does not mention a lease, and the references to tenancy are to forms of joint real estate ownership, not rental agreements. However, a lease is an interest in property, as in the phrase “any other manner of joint or common ownership or interest.” Thus, both tenants and property owners are covered by this provision. This means that there is only one vote per unit (single-family detached house, townhouse, condo, apartment, co-op, or other dwelling unit, as defined elsewhere in the Articles of Incorporation). Under this provision, if there is a dispute over who can vote for the unit, then no one can vote. There were questions about changing this rule at the meeting. However, as discussed at the meeting, the Articles of Incorporation are difficult to change because they require a majority of all members who are eligible to vote to approve the change.

Absentee voting and notice of rejected ballots.

There was an extended discussion of absentee ballots. Many members were concerned about potential lost votes from individuals who are eligible to vote. At the same time, people wanted to ensure that if an individual’s ballot was disqualified, the individual would be notified and given a chance to cure the problem with the ballot. The absentee ballots have a phone number and/or email address that could be used to contact the voter and explain the problem. There was general support for doing this. It would require notification before election day, or there would need to be a provision to consider the disqualified ballot as provisional and give the member a few days after election day to correct the error. This would also give time to correct problems that are identified during in-person voting on election day. One idea would be to post the voting list on the WLW WWW site so folks could check to see if they are on the list before submitting a ballot. It would also be valuable to post the list of the units that voted after the election.

Increasing tenant voting participation

Very few tenants vote in WLW elections. There was an extended discussion of increasing the number of tenants who vote in WLW elections. WLW Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws require that a tenant file a lease with the HOA to become a voting member of the HOA. It was discussed that other villages have less complicated requirements for tenants to vote,

but that this would require changing the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. While neither document requires the lease to be refiled each year, there was concern that people might be able to continue to vote after moving out of WLW unless they refile a valid lease each year.

There was general support for making it easy for tenants to present their leases, including emailing the lease to the Village office. If the Village created a devoted email address for filing leases, Gmail can be set up to automatically add the information from emails to that address to a spreadsheet. This would reduce the work necessary to keep an up-to-date list of tenants eligible to vote. A link to the list could be posted on the WWW site so that tenants could check their status.

There were many useful ideas on getting information about voting to the tenants. These included a voter registration table at festivals and other community events and posting information in the common areas of the apartment buildings. A short guide to voting for tenants could be prepared to use at events and for posting. This could be posted on the WLW WWW site year-round, perhaps as part of a Welcome to WLW page for tenants.

There was also discussion of Dear Occupant mailouts to apartment addresses. There was some confusion about what is currently mailed out. It was reported that the mailout is in February and that it includes the ballots. The candidates are usually not confirmed until sometime in March, and the ballots are prepared after that.

There was a consensus that we needed more information about how to reach tenants and the impediments to voting. We need to get tenants involved in this discussion and ideally represented on the Board.

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

[Home Table of Contents](#)

§ 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

Updated February 2024

Updates reviewed and approved by WLVB 1/10/2022