

The Council Report

MARCH 2005

News from the Friendship Heights Village Council—the elected governing body of the Special Tax District of the Village of Friendship Heights



MELANIE ROSE WHITE, *Mayor*
FRANCIS R. VALEO, *Chairman*
MAURICE J. TREBACH, *Vice Chairman*
ELIZABETH DEMETRA HARRIS, *Secretary*
ALVAN M. MORRIS, *Treasurer*
ROBERT M. SCHWARZBART, *Parliamentarian*
LEONARD E. MUDD, *Historian*

Council Cuts Property Tax Rate—Again!

Following the second and final public hearing on the FY 2006 Proposed Budget, the Village Council unanimously adopted the budget and set the tax rate for FY 2006.

Some Highlights:

- **Property tax rate reduced to 5 cents per \$100 assessed property value;**
- **Taxes reduced for the sixth time in the last seven years;**
- **Budgeted surplus allows for expected increases in expenses;**
- **Maintains Village's solid financial condition while retaining all programs and services.**

Council Treasurer Al Morris emphasized that this year's budget is deliberately conservative: "We want to be sure that once taxes are reduced, as has been proposed this year, the reduction will not have to be rescinded the following year when for example our bus subsidy (\$11,111 per month) from the Chevy Chase Land Company ends." Dr. Morris, added, however: "Should our revenues next year rise substantially, I for one, were I in a position to make further recommendations, would propose lowering the tax rate another one cent per \$100 to the lowest amount allowable under our charter, that is 4 cents per \$100 of assessed value."

Councilmember Bob Schwarzbart added: "Noting our seven-year record of nearly consecutive property tax cuts, this Council is committed to continue to operate at the lowest feasible tax rate."

The budget does not rely on the elevated reassessments of Village properties, many of which are now being appealed. As Dr. Morris stated: "If I have \$1000 in my checkbook and there is a possibility that some time in the near future I may receive another \$500, I personally would not immediately spend \$1500 out of the account."

In adopting this budget, the Council was keenly aware of its fiduciary responsibility to maintain strong reserves. While some have suggested that the Village has "too much money," Dr. Morris responded: "What a wonderful compliment."

I thank everyone who participated in the budget process.

Funds transferred to Capital Improvements reserve

At Dr. Morris' recommendation, the Council unanimously approved a transfer of \$250,000 to the Capital Improvements Fund. This amount reflects the actual costs of rebuilding Hubert Humphrey Park along with the repairs to the Village Center, partially offset by lower than expected costs to underground the remaining overhead utilities.

Town Hall meeting on area development projects

At the request of Montgomery County Council member Howard Denis, we are hosting a "town hall" meeting with New England Development (Wisconsin Place), and Chevy Chase Land Company

(Chevy Chase Center), on **Thursday, April 28, at 7 p.m.**, at the Village Center. The developer will provide a brief update of construction progress, then will be available to answer any questions.

No thru truck signs are up

Responding to our request, the County has installed signs prohibiting thru trucks at all entrances to the Village, including Wisconsin Avenue/Somerset Terrace. The signs will stay up throughout the construction of Wisconsin Place, which is expected to be completed in 2008.



Snow removal—it takes a Village

Now that we have put another winter behind us (hopefully), I would like to thank the management of all the buildings in the Village for promptly and thoroughly removing snow from adjacent sidewalks. Once again we were able to keep our residents coming and going safely, thanks in no small part to your efforts.

—Melanie Rose White
Mayor

See Inside:

- **Approved FY 06 Budget**
- **Village Council Election Information**

APPROVED FY 2006 BUDGET

REVENUES

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Property tax | \$361,000 |
| Income tax | 925,000 |
| Municipal Revenue Sharing | 85,000 |
| Gas/highway tax | 70,000 |
| Parking violation income | 135,000 |
| 4602 N. Park Ave. rental | 16,000 |
| Interest income | 40,000 |
| Village Center rental income | 15,000 |
| Permit and license fees | 10,000 |
| Newsletter ad income | 25,000 |
| Center program/misc. income | 7,000 |

TOTAL REVENUES \$1,689,000

EXPENDITURES

General Government

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| 1 Elections | \$0 |
| 2A Financial admin/accounting | 12,000 |
| 2B Administrative costs | 10,000 |
| 2C Memberships and conferences | 25,000 |
| 2D Legal counsel and consultants | 15,000 |
| 2F Village Council reports | 8,000 |
| 3A Salaries | 448,000 |
| 3B Health/life/family benefits | 75,000 |
| 3C F.I.C.A. | 36,000 |
| 3D Worker's Comp Insurance | 1,000 |
| 3E Retirement contribution | 34,500 |
| 4A Xerox copiers | 1,000 |
| 4B Aquarium | 1,900 |
| 4C Heating/cooling maintenance | 7,000 |
| 4D Security system maintenance | 2,500 |
| 5A Public officials liability ins. | 2,500 |
| 5B Treasurer's bond | 2,500 |
| 5C Building/general liability ins. | 17,000 |
| 6 Telephone and utilities | 32,000 |
| 7 Hospitality and special events | 17,000 |
| 8A Equipment and supplies | 15,000 |
| 8B Office and building furniture | 5,000 |
| 8D 4602 N. Park maintenance | 5,000 |
| 8E Computer equip./supplies | 5,000 |
| 8F Center maintenance - repairs | 25,000 |
| 8G Maintenance service | 85,000 |

Total General Government \$887,900

Public Safety

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| 9A Security patrol contract | \$105,000 |
| 9B Police Field Office | 5,000 |
| 9C Security vehicle maintenance | 6,000 |

Total Public Safety \$116,000

Public Works

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 10 Bus contract | \$225,000 |
| 11A Street maintenance | 5,000 |
| 11B Sidewalk maintenance | 5,000 |
| 11C Snow removal | 35,000 |
| 11D Storm drain maintenance | 2,500 |
| 12A Waste collection | 15,000 |
| 12B Recycling | 1,500 |
| 13 Street lighting | 14,000 |
| 14 Street signs | 5,000 |
| 15 Trees | 6,000 |
| 16 Villagescape | 6,000 |

Total Public Works \$320,000

Health/Education/Social Serv.

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| 17B Health/social services | 10,000 |
| 17C Housing program | 5,000 |
| 17D Scholarship program | 10,000 |

Total Health/Ed/Social Serv. \$25,000

Recreation and Parks

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| 18C Lecture fees | 2,000 |
| 18D Musicians' fees | 28,000 |
| 18E Instructors' fees | 4,000 |
| 18F Trip fees | 8,000 |
| 18G Art/theme shows | 2,000 |
| 18H Equipment purchases | 2,000 |
| 18I Consumable supplies | 8,000 |
| 18J Art supplies | 300 |
| 18K Lunches/brunches/teas | 13,000 |
| 18L Hospitality | 1,000 |
| 18M Center special events | 28,000 |
| 18O Current Events Series | 10,000 |
| 19 Reading Room materials | 3,000 |
| 20B Flyers | 0 |
| 20C Village newsletter | 42,000 |
| 21A Village parks: electricity | 2,000 |
| 21B Village parks: water | 4,300 |
| 21C Village parks: fountain maint. | 12,000 |
| 21D Village parks: lighting maint. | 2,000 |
| 21E Village parks: furniture | 1,000 |
| 21F Village parks: walkway maint. | 3,000 |
| 21G Art fund | 5,000 |
| 23 Landscaping contract | 80,000 |
| 24 Arborist contract | 10,000 |

Total Recreation and Parks \$270,600

Total Operating Expenditures \$1,619,500

General Fund Deposit \$69,500

Cap. Imp. Fund Deposit \$0

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$1,689,000

Village Council Election Guidelines

Election Date: Monday, May 9, 2005

General Provisions

Election of the Friendship Heights Village Council shall be conducted under the guidance of the appropriate provisions of Article 33 of the Maryland Code, Section 66-4 of the Montgomery County Code, and these By-Laws.

Notice of Election

Notice of the election specifying time, requirements, and the procedures for nomination and voting shall be posted on the Hubert H. Humphrey Friendship Park Bulletin Board at least sixty days prior to the election.

Nomination

Nomination shall be by petition, signed by at least ten registered and qualified voters of the Village, and shall be filed at the office of the Council at least five weeks prior to the election (**by 5 p.m., Friday, April 1, 2005**). Such petition shall include the signature of the candidate indicating willingness to run.

Candidates shall be registered and qualified voters and reside in the Village at the time of the nomination and the election. Any candidate may withdraw his/her petition up to twenty-four hours before the start of the election.

Qualifications for Voting

Any person residing in the Village on the date of the election whose name appears on a list of registered and qualified voters as of two weeks prior to the election, furnished by the Board of Elections of Montgomery County, shall be eligible to vote.

Place of Voting

The polling place or places shall be conveniently located (the Village Center).

Election Officials

Appointment by the Council of the judges and clerks shall be made prior to the election. Assistants may be made available and appointed in a similar fashion. No candidate for Council membership or member of his/her immediate family shall serve as an election official.

Poll Watchers

Poll Watchers appointed by candidates shall be permitted to observe the voting and counting, but shall not interfere in any way with the voting or counting.

Counting of Ballots

Counting shall be conducted by judges and clerks.

Certifying and Reporting of Ballots

The incumbent Mayor shall notify the Montgomery County Council of the election returns, certified by the election judges. Such letter shall be sent by registered mail the day following the election. A copy of this letter shall be retained in the permanent files of the Village.

Absentee Ballots

Any qualified voter shall be entitled to vote as an absentee voter. An application must be received by **Friday, April 29, 2005**. (If you are unable to meet this deadline, call the League of Women Voters representative listed on the absentee ballot application.) Applications for absentee ballots are available at the Village Center and online at www.friendshipheightsmd.gov (click on "Village Council" link). Upon receipt of the application, the Council shall have mailed or

delivered to the voter entitled thereto an absentee ballot.

No candidate for Council membership shall serve as a duly authorized agent for the purpose of submitting a completed absentee ballot application. A qualified voter shall return an absentee ballot by mail, by delivery in person, or by requesting that an election judge or clerk be dispatched to obtain the absentee ballot on the day of the election. The ballot shall be returned to the Council office or other previously designated location. An absentee ballot received after the time for closing of the polls shall not be counted.

Disclosure

All candidates for the Friendship Heights Village Council must indicate agreement with the following requirements: Each candidate for election to the Council must submit two written financial reports to the Village Office—a preliminary report on the Monday preceding election day (**May 2**) and a final report by 5 p.m. on the Friday after election day (**May 13**).

Each report must include the following: 1) a list of all contributors and the amount(s) of their contributions made to the candidate; 2) an itemized list of expenditures made by the candidate on his (her) own behalf; 3) a list of all contributors and the amount(s) of their contributions made to another party on behalf of the candidate; and 4) an itemized list of expenditures made by another party on behalf of the candidate.

The data from these reports shall be compiled and posted on the Village bulletin board as soon after receipt as possible. Failure to comply shall disqualify the candidate from assuming office.

The Council took the following actions at the March 14, 2005, meeting:

- Held final public hearing on Draft Budget for FY 2006;
- Approved FY 2006 Budget and set property tax rate at 5¢ per \$100 assessed property value;
- Appointed Howard Denis, Sue Byrnes, Norton Baron, Kurt Liva, and Marion Ladwig to serve as election judges for Village Council election on May 9, in accordance with Village charter.

FORM
502 MARYLAND TAX RETURN 2004
(OR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING)

RESIDENT

Don't forget!

Montgomery **Friendship Heights**

YOUR FILING STATUS—See Instruction 1 to determine if you are required to file.
1. Single

EXEMPTIONS—See Instruction 10
Enter No. Checked (A) × \$1,850 \$

Please Print
Blue or Black Ink Only

Your first name Initial Last name
Spouse's first name Initial Last name
Present address (No. and street) City or town State Zip code
Name of county and incorporated city, town or special taxing area in which you were a resident on the last day of the taxable period. (See Instruction 6)
Maryland county City, town or taxing area
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER(S) (REQUIRED)

MVA Mobile Office—April 25; May 23, June 20 (all Mondays), 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Friendship Heights Village Council
4433 S. Park Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
301-656-2797

Note new website and e-mail address:
Website: www.friendshipheightsmd.gov
E-mail: info@friendshipheightsmd.gov



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