

Welcome the new AKW Board of Directors

Mike Sullivan, President

Well, that was a surprise! I ran to be a member of the AKW Board of Directors, but certainly not President. It's going to take a while to get my legs underneath me.

I want to thank Dana, Becky and Pat who previously served and especially the hard-working officers, Quade, Bill, and Sharon. It will be difficult to live up to the standards that Quade set as President and to bring as many innovations to AKW as he did. Quade and the Board did their jobs during the exceptional challenge of the COVID pandemic over the past six months. It helps that we can count on having Sharon's, Quade's, and Bill's experience to help us as we move forward.

The goals I had for serving as a Board member will also guide me as President: (1) ensuring all residents receive excellent service, (2) improving opportunities for residents to be involved in AKW life and decision-making, and (3) improving the way AKW resources are managed.

In collaboration with my fellow Board members, I hope we can try new things and new ways of doing things. Hopefully we will have success, but as with anything brand-new sometimes we may have a few missteps. The collective goodwill and smarts of all of you, if you offer them, improve the odds of success in anything we will undertake.

Bill Munson, Vice President

I am pleased to be able to serve one more year on the Board. This term will allow me to complete some of the initiatives I am following and to help ensure a smooth transition for the new Board members and the Council as a whole.

Laura Rodriguez, Treasurer

Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the Board as Treasurer. I know I have huge shoes to fill, as Sharon has been doing an amazing job! I looking forward to continuing the great work the Board has been doing and hope to bring new ideas and increase our community network.

Joann Wray, Director

My goal for the coming year is to ensure an effective transition in the redesign of our website. This effort will improve the access of information and online experience for the AKW community.

Stephen Colodner, Secretary

I'm proud to join the Board and take the position of Secretary. I have some ideas for no-cost and low-cost process improvements I'd like to propose implementing and I'm eager to get to work. I'm especially excited about inspiring more community feedback and soliciting expert guidance from our own community with its diversity of expertise.

Quade Whitmire, Director

With 5+ years of Board service as Secretary and then President behind me, I have enjoyed my role and look forward to filling out the remainder of my term as a Director. There is much work to be done in the community and we face challenges aplenty. I look forward to sharing my insight and lessons-learned with the new Board of Directors.

Sharon Grant, Director

I look forward to continuing on the Board and offer my support to the new Board members as they become familiar with and accustomed to their important and busy roles.



Board Meeting Highlights

Reported Financials

	<u>August</u>	<u>July</u>
Total Cash and Investments	\$1,947,624	\$1,935,964
Year-to-Date Income	\$1,387,161	\$1,214,073
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$1,365,260	\$1,224,583
Delinquencies \$	\$28,432	\$34,223
Delinquencies %	1.43%	1.72%
YTD Reserve Expenditures	\$84,617	\$62,422
Total Reserves	\$1,519,650	\$1,504,345

Delinquencies are comprised of 9 accounts totaling \$27,247 and another 7 accounts totaling \$1,185.

Board Actions

- \$2,804.62 to SeeView to add two cameras inside the roof boiler room.
- Eliminated the \$100 elevator security deposit and will replace with a to-be-created liability agreement to be signed by the Owner. This change will be made in the BuildingLink interface.
- A Board Training session will be held virtually on Tuesday, October 6th, at 6:30 pm. This meeting is addressed to both new and existing Board directors and will be a forum to review rules and discuss any changes, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Residents are invited to observe the session.

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Project Update: C/D Garage Deck Reconstruction

On September 2, the Board held a Special Meeting to discuss the C/D garage deck reconstruction proposal. A representative from Engineering and Technical Consultants (ETC), the firm selected to manage the bid process, reviewed the full package with the Board.



The Board voted to select Ev-Air-Tight, Shoemaker for this required infrastructure repair at a cost of \$854,925.24 over three years. The contract is currently under review by AKW's attorney. The project will impact all AKW residents by limiting the availability of visitor parking. Updates will be provided in **Knolls News**, via building notices and through the AKW newsfeed at www.akwcondo.com or twitter.com/akwcondo.



So our Office knows what's going on

Residents are reminded that we're each obligated to make arrangements with the Office for our vendor deliveries. Most often there's not a problem. But when a move-in or -out has been scheduled, your furniture or appliance may be turned away.

TIP: when you're making your purchase, give the Office a buzz to reserve your space – and know you'll get the delivery when you want it! *Another reminder: hours for deliveries are 9-12:30 and 1:30-4:30, Monday thru Saturday.* [Handbook pg 17.] And don't forget to tell your vendors they are NOT permitted to park in the 30-min spaces at the canopy; they will be towed!

VOTING IS UNDERWAY !!!

If you went online during the past couple of months (as we strongly encouraged!), Official Ballots were mailed on Friday, September 18th and delivered to our mailboxes on Monday, September 21st! You can find for yourself the instructions and guidance from our Elections Office on alexandriava.gov/elections but the following should answer some questions.



Earn Your Sticker!

Make sure you are registered to vote! If you have questions about your registration, call the Elections Office at 703-746-4050. Deadline to register is Tuesday, October 13th.

Military and Overseas Voters should check the [Virginia website](#) for registration and other instructions.

When your Official Voting mailing arrives, it will contain the Ballot which is sealed in “Envelope A” with instructions for that *and* the “Envelope B” it will go in, and the Return Envelope (does not need postage!) that goes back in the mail (or for you to deliver personally).

The Ballot itself is easy to complete: On the front page there are only 3 boxes to fill in (with black or blue ink), for president, Virginia senator and Virginia congressman. On the reverse side are two Virginia Constitutional questions, one for “redistricting” and the other for disabled veteran tax relief. You will notice a barcode; that’s for your security and ultimately to prevent fraudulent voting!

Envelope B will have one side you need to fill out: your *name as it appears on your driver’s license*, your residential address, and then *your signature as it appears on your driver’s license*. It’s a small space to put in a name to include a middle name, but this is what’s required. *Almost overlooked: be sure to insert the date at the very bottom of Envelope B!*

Witness signature space is included (below yours). *Read the instructions!* Although it states that you need a Witness, the instructions actually say that: “If you believe you may not safely have a witness present... you are not required to have a witness present... Accordingly, you may disregard the witness signature line on Envelope B if you believe you may not safely have a witness present” while completing your ballot. If you want a witness, that person does *not* have to watch you completing the ballot choices, only “be there” when you open Envelope A and then sign on the back of Envelope B.

Seal up Envelope B and insert it in the Return Envelope, which will have the required postage and will have your Return Address *that has the same barcode as on the Ballot!* You may **mail that envelope through the USPS, OR deliver it to the Ballot Box outside the entrance to the Elections Office** (132 North Royal Street, in Old Town). This Box will be available to accept your Ballot until 5 pm on Election Day. You also have the choice of delivering it to a Ballot Box *at your polling place* (for us it’s at the Olympus Condominium) on November 3rd.





If you have your Ballot but decide to **either Vote In-Person** at the Elections Office **OR** at Olympus on November 3rd, you must take that Ballot with you to exchange for the Election Ballot (which will not have a barcode). If you do not have that Ballot with you, you will be given a Provisional Ballot (which will be the last of any to be counted).

If you are mailing the Ballot, be sure to allow sufficient days for the Post Office to do its job! With some slow-downs and other restrictions, it's preferable to allow at least 2 weeks for something that should take no more than 3 days. Ballots will be accepted for counting if received by 5 pm on Friday, November 6th and have a postmark before or by Nov 3rd.

If for some reason you didn't mark the correct box, or you messed up the signature line, or spilled coffee on the document, take it to the Elections Office and exchange it for the election day ballot (without the barcode) and complete your voting right then and there! Ballots received by mail that have any of these (or other) difficulties will be rejected.

In-Person Early voting is available at these locations:

<u>Elections Office</u> 132 North Royal Street		<u>Beatley Library</u> 5005 Duke Street	
Through 10/8	8-5 daily, Mon-Sat	10/23	Noon to 6 PM
Fri, 10/23	8 am - 6 pm	Sat, 10/24	8 am - 5 pm
Mon, 10/26 - Thu, 10/29	8 am - 8 pm	Mon, 10/26	Noon to 8 pm
Fri, 10/30	8 am - 6 pm	Fri, 10/30	Noon to 8 pm
Sat, 10/31	8 am - 5 pm	Sat, 10/31	8 am - 5 pm

You may also drop your completed Ballot at the Box in at these locations. Any questions, call the Elections Office at 703-746-4050.

Follow-up on the Budget Review meeting

On August 6th (*time flies when you're having fun!*) then **Treasurer, Sharon Grant** held a session to help Residents learn about creating next year's Budget, based on past financials. As a matter of fact, looking at numbers from 2019 AND 2020 brought home the fact that what each of us does during the year has a huge effect on the next Budget. For instance, even though only about half of our Units have the new windows and/or the new HVACs, savings on Utilities has shown marked improvement. The overage in "repair expenses" proves how costly it is when maintenance is deferred (especially for original equipment like the cooling tower!). Especially for those of us on a fixed income, the increase in our condo fees for 2021 continues to be dismaying. The many folks who took advantage of this review had questions answered and gained a better understanding of the process.

Based on this meeting and further review of Reserves, the Budget will be voted on at the October 27th Board Meeting. We very much appreciate the comments and suggestions from our Residents and encourage more Co-Owners to become involved. Please also review related articles on "[Those pesky condo fees ...](#)" as well as "[And more about why Reserves are necessary](#)" and "[How the Association addresses delinquencies](#)."

COVID CORNER



City of Alexandria adopts Mask Ordinance

September 14, 2020

At its regular meeting on September 12, the Alexandria City Council voted 5 to 2 to adopt an [ordinance](#) to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by requiring masks in indoor and outdoor public places. The ordinance, which takes effect October 1, expands on a [state executive order](#) that has required masks in most indoor public settings since May 29.

“Local, state and national public health experts agree that wearing a mask is one of the simplest and most effective ways to help stop the spread of COVID-19,” said Mayor Justin Wilson. “The more everyone covers their faces and keeps distance from each other, the sooner life can return to normal.”

Like the existing state executive order, the Alexandria ordinance requires face coverings to be worn over the nose and mouth in retail stores, food establishments, theaters, personal care and personal grooming services, and common areas of condominium or apartment buildings. The ordinance also requires masks in transportation other than personal vehicles; public parks; sidewalks and trails; and any other public outdoor locations where physical distancing requirements cannot be maintained between persons not living in the same household.

Limited exceptions to the mask requirement include when a person is age 10 or younger; when wearing a mask would be harmful to the wearer’s health or is precluded by a workplace safety regulation, religious ritual, medical condition or disability; when a person is actively eating or drinking; or when removal of the mask is necessary to receive government or medical services. Masks are not required while swimming, biking, jogging or engaging in other physical activity for which wearing a mask has been determined to pose a health risk, but participants who do not live together should still maintain at least 10 feet of distance from each other.

Public health experts believe that COVID-19 spreads from person to person primarily through viral respiratory droplets, which are expelled when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, sings, or engages in physical activity. Other people can inhale the infected droplets, especially in confined spaces. Maintaining physical distance between people and wearing masks to block droplets are among the most effective ways to prevent the spread of the virus. Learn how to [properly use face coverings](#). Persons who do not live together should stay at least 6 feet apart at all times. The minimum safe distance is 10 feet during physical activity or singing. [Virginia’s Phase Three Guidelines](#) specify the minimum safe distances for different sectors and activities.

The City of Alexandria and the Alexandria Health Department continue to remind the public that everyone is safest at home. Older adults and persons with underlying medical conditions are at greater risk for severe disease and are advised to minimize potential exposures as much as possible. Everyone should follow the [Six Steps to Stop the Spread](#), which include staying home when possible; washing hands often; maintaining physical distance; covering coughs and sneezes; disinfecting commonly touched surfaces regularly; and covering the nose and mouth with a mask when around other people. Use the Virginia Department of Health’s [COVIDWISE](#) app to be quickly and anonymously notified of likely exposure to the virus.



Those pesky condo fees or, How our Association spends OUR money! (with credits to Terri Hansen)

Each month at bill-paying time we take out our checkbooks and pay a multitude of bills: mortgage, car payment, credit cards, etc. One of the least understood (and possibly the least favored) that we pay is the monthly assessment – “condo fees.”



Every year the Board approves a Budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The Budget lists all the anticipated expenditure categories for our Association, including the master insurance policy, utilities, common area maintenance costs, and administration (staff, CMC, postage and copier). A good portion is set aside every month to go into Reserves. Our Reserve fund pays for the repair and/or replacement of the capital assets owned by the Association. An adequately funded Reserves reduces the chance that a (dreaded) special assessment would have to be passed to pay for repair or replacement of those assets.

Each month in *Knolls News* we list income, expenses, total investments, and information about delinquencies that affect overall financial health.

When you write out that monthly check, remember it covers *many* items necessary to ensure our Association maintains Reserves and enhances our property values.



**Worth
Repeating**

How the Association Addresses Delinquencies

The Association’s collection efforts are meant to bring Owners current. Delinquent Owners can expect specific actions:

- On the 16th of the month a late fee of 10% is assessed on the delinquent amount.
- At 30 days late, CMC sends a letter advising of the delinquency and warns of future steps that could be taken.
- At 60 days late, the account is handed over to the Association’s legal counsel. At this point the delinquent owner is assessed fees associated with the effort to collect from them. Also at 60 days, the Board will review the account and decide whether to accelerate the Owner’s dues through the end of the calendar year and/or seek wage/account garnishment, conveying the seriousness of the matter.
- At 90 days late, the Board will ask the Delinquent Owner to attend a hearing to discuss revocation of privileges, including the pool, gym, in-unit service program, and visitor parking. The Board may also direct legal counsel to pursue foreclosure.

If you are delinquent, please bring your account current. If you are more than 60 days late, please reach out to the Association attorney as soon as possible to discuss a repayment plan. The Association wants to work with you and make your Co-Owners whole.

Updated Insurance Provisions

(excerpted from an email notice sent by Quade Whitmire to AKW Owners)

Increase of Water Damage Insurance Deductible from \$25,000 to \$50,000

The Council experienced an unexpected number of large water damage claims last year. These claims were largely the fault of contractors and are now being subrogated. Subrogation means that AKW's insurance carrier has sued for reimbursement of all claims from the at-fault contractors' insurance companies.

Unfortunately, and until the contractor claims are resolved, these are reflected on the Council's loss history because the claims were paid by the Council's insurance carrier. After requesting bids from a variety of carriers, AKW's insurance broker advised an increase in the water damages insurance deductible from \$25,000 to \$50,000. This larger deductible prevented the loss of standard coverage as well as an exorbitant increase in insurance premiums. Hopefully – and presuming that contractor matters are satisfactorily resolved and the Council's water damages claims are much lower in the future – insurance carriers will eventually agree to a reduction in the water damage insurance deductible from \$50,000 to \$25,000 without a huge increase in premiums. On a separate note, the insurance deductible for loss claims other than water damages remains \$25,000.

Potential Implications for Owners

As you may recall, the Bylaws provide that “the co-owner shall pay the deductible, if the cause of any damage to or destruction of any portion of the Condominium originated in or through an apartment, or any component thereof without regard as to whether the co-owner is negligent.” Thus, it is important to note that, should a claim involving water (e.g., pipe leak, burst pipe, HVAC issues, toilet overflows, etc.) originate in your apartment, as the owner of the apartment you are responsible for all maintenance, repair, restoration, and replacement expenses that could total as much as \$50,000. Further you are still responsible for all maintenance, repair, restoration, and replacement expenses that could total as much as \$25,000 when the cause of the loss is something other than water (e.g., fire) that originates in or through your apartment. This is why it's important to insure yourself against such an event.

Owners are encouraged to contact their insurance agent to ensure sufficient coverage.

Report SUSPICIOUS Activity

Sometimes it's just a matter of looking out your window. See something or someone that looks suspicious? In a place that looks different? Go ahead and call the non-emergency number for the police (703-746-4444) and ask them to do a drive-around of the property. (If you see something that looks like an emergency, dial 911 and then report to the Office or Guard for their follow-up.)

It's important for each of us to BE AWARE so that our Community stays as safe as possible. And add our emergency numbers (from the back page) on your speed-dial (landline) or Contacts (mobile phone) – so you'll know where to find them when you need them!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR	
November 3	General Election



To do in Alexandria this Fall

- 8 [New Things to Do in Alexandria](#) — Food, hair, cats, dogs, art, cruise, history and shop
- 11 [Ways to Celebrate Oktoberfest](#) — Beer, food and more beer and more food
- 8 [Great Instagram Spots](#) — Make and share memories
- 4 [Great Leaf Peeping Spots](#) — See the best colors and find the largest trees in the City
- 1 [Halloween](#) — And more events, ghost & cemetery tours and a T-Rex costume contest

Remember to maintain social distance and wear a mask!



Inside the Vaults "George Washington and The Paparazzi"

An *Inside the Vaults* video short highlights a letter written by President George Washington to his friend, Gov. Henry Lee of Virginia, on July 3, 1792. In the letter, Washington turns down the request of the artist William Williams, who wished to paint the President's portrait. National Archives curator Alice Kamps — who chose the letter and curated its exhibit at the National Archives — describes painters as the 18th-century equivalent of today's paparazzi. Alexandria-Washington Masonic Lodge 22 Archivist Hans Pawlisch tells the story of how Williams' eventual portrait of Washington came to hang in the Lodge. Click [here](#) to learn about this interesting piece of history.

Smoking Materials

A resident recently reported, again, ashes on their balcony.



Cigar and cigarette butts can easily be carried in the wind. We've seen smoldering fires on the ground floor due to discarded cigarettes and were lucky to notice before they spread. Upper level winds can be quite strong. If you've experienced the wind around our entrances, it's evident that a leaf, a twig—and certainly cigar, cigarette butt or ashes from either—will not fall directly to the ground.

We had hoped this issue was behind us, but apparently it is not. Residents are directed to review page 26 in the Handbook.



2020 Board Meeting Dates

October 27 November 17
December 15

And more about why Reserves are necessary... \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$



Equipment and major components (like the roof) must be replaced from time to time, regardless of whether we planned for the expense. The prudent approach is to plan and set the funds aside on a current and continuing basis. Reserve funds aren't an *extra* expense; they just more evenly spread out expenses.

Reserve funds provide for major repairs and replacements that we know will be necessary at some point in time. Although a roof may be replaced when it's 25 years old, every owner who lives under it should share its replacement costs. Having been through recaulking the balconies, replacing the roof and the inconvenience of the repaving effort, etc., it's a relief to have the funds for these restorations and not resort to a special assessment for these items (and more). We are soon to begin a multi-year repair of our three parking structures, with the C/D garage first to be done. More anticipated expenses will come in the next year-plus for hallway ceiling repairs, changed and additional hallway lighting, carpet and replacement. And keep in mind – by the way! – that *planned Reserves* paid for the fabulous renovations of the Office, lobby, the Bar area, mailroom/library/billiards room *and* those restrooms — as well as partial renovation of the Community Room.

Reserve funds enhance resale values. Lenders and real estate agents are aware of the ramifications for new buyers if the reserves are inadequate. Most states require associations to disclose the amounts in their reserve funds to prospective buyers (in the “condo documents”).

Reserve funds meet legal, fiduciary and professional requirements. A replacement fund may be required by: (1) any secondary mortgage market in which the association participates (e.g., Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, FHA, VA), (2) state statutes, regulations, or court decisions, (3) the community's governing documents (Master Deed & By-Laws).

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) requires the community or association to disclose its reserve funds in its financial documents.

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Customer Service Scams

The AARP Fraud Victim Support department has seen a huge uptick in customer support scams over the summer. With phone books now obsolete, people are turning to internet searches to find phone numbers and scammers have adapted this way to steal from you! Five tips for those searches:

- 1) Go directly to the company's website to find its customer service number.
- 2) Don't ask devices like Alexa or Siri to find customer service information.
- 3) Check the URL for misspellings or other oddities.
- 4) Never agree to pay for a service that should be free.
- 5) Don't give anyone remote access to your computer.

Important Dates in October

- ◆ Board Training Meeting Tuesday October 6, 6:30 pm*
- ◆ Investment Strategy Meeting Wednesday October 14, 7:00 pm*
- ◆ Board Meeting Tuesday October 27, 7:00 pm*
- ◆ Happy Hour Club On hiatus until further notice

*Information on accessing the electronic meetings will be provided in advance.
The Board Meeting agenda is available in the Office the Friday
before the meeting.



Sharon Grant is a Virginia Notary and offers services
to AKW residents by appointment at no charge.
Email sharon@akwcondo.com



Important Phone Numbers

Guard Mobile	571-565-5591
AKW Office Phone	703-751-7541
AKW Office email	office@akwcondo.com
AKW Fax	703-751-2136
A-1 Towing	703-971-2600
CMC Emergency	301-446-2635
Police Non-Emergency	703-746-4444
Police Emergency	911
City of Alexandria Info	311 or 703-746-4311



Board of Directors

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