

**Town Hall
Upper Marlboro, Maryland**



Board of Town Commissioners

Steve Sonnett, President
Joe Hourclé, Jim Storey

THE TOWN HALL IS OPEN WEEKDAYS

Monday–Friday: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Contact Town Hall at:
(office) 301-627-6905
(fax) 301-627-2080

(e-mail) info@uppermarlboromd.gov
(cable channel) Verizon 19
OR VISIT US ONLINE AT:
www.uppermarlboromd.gov

Town of Upper Marlboro
14211 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

TRASH TIPS . . .

- 🗑️ **ALL TRASH** is picked-up on **MONDAYS**
- 🗑️ **RECYCLING** is picked-up on **THURSDAYS**
- 🗑️ Place all items out at curb **BY 7:00 A.M.**
- 🗑️ Clearly separate your Residential Trash from your Bulk Trash and Yard Waste piles (2–3 feet apart)
- 🗑️ **DO NOT MIX** bulk, regular and/or yard waste in the same container. **IT WILL NOT BE PICKED UP**
- 🗑️ Regular, Bulk or Yard Waste items placed in recycling bins **WILL NOT BE PICKED UP.**

Welcome to Landings . . .

A monthly newsletter from the Town of Upper Marlboro



A Monthly Newsletter from the Town of Upper Marlboro February/March, 2011 vol. 6 no. 2

President's Annual Report – March 2011

Town Charter Section 82-15(c) requires an annual report by the President on "... the condition of municipal affairs and make such recommendations as he deems proper for the public good and welfare of the Town"

Overview

Despite the continuing economic slowdown with its attendant drop in revenues and increased costs, the Town remains in solid financial condition. The Town has been able to sustain its solid financial condition even though it has the lowest real estate tax rate in the County and maintains its Homestead Tax credit at 100%.

Year in Review

Since my March 2010 report, we have realigned some front office duties. Julian Wyvill, Town Accountant, has been brought on full time. The part-time duty of Police Clerk has been reassigned from David Williams, Town Clerk, to Mr. Wyvill. The Police clerk's main duty is to take in payments for parking citations and maintaining the citation data base. This shift in duties allows Mr. Williams more time to manage the office and aid me with administrative matters. One of the positive outcomes of this shift in duties is we have been able to conduct a document retention review. Finally receiving a State approved document retention policy, we were able to review and shred over a thousand pounds and recycle several hundred pound of documents. During the review process we consolidated and organized our files, with the beneficial result that information from the files is easier to find. With the advent of the importance of digital files, we are installing a secure backup system.

In August of 2010, the Board modernized Section 82-56 (Purchasing and Contracts) of the Charter of the Town of Upper Marlboro to enable a more efficient procurement process.

During the last year we have received a parking study and a National Historical District registration form from Park and

Planning, and a first draft Codification of the town's ordinances. Possible action on these items will be discussed below.

In October, the Town received a "clean" audit for Fiscal Year 2010 ending June 30th. Revenues were \$ 57,161 over budgeted amounts and expenditures were \$116,819 under budget leaving an excess of revenues over expenditures of \$173,980. No draw on reserve funds were required during the fiscal year. Half way through Fiscal Year 2011, revenues are in line with budgeted amounts and expenditures are tracking below budgeted amounts.

During the last year, we have made some changes in the Public Works operations, invested in new equipment, maintenance and repairs. Starting in July, we contracted out our residential trash service. This permitted us to eliminate one public works position and sell the Town's trash truck. Current analysis indicates both a short term and long term cost savings. We revamped our snow removal operations by purchasing a tractor with a snow blower and bucket. In addition, a new tail gate mounted salt spreader was purchased. This equipment should be better at clearing our streets than the skid loader and old salt spreader, both of which have been surplused.

The street signs, parking meters and curbs have been painted. The roof was replaced on the small shed at public works and other repairs and maintenance was done at the facility.

The Police department converted over to the new public safety communications system. The Town purchased the in-car radios while the hand held radios were funded by a grant

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Annual Report

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from the State.

Outlook for the Next Year

We are ten months away from Town election day, January 9th, 2012. The election is nonpartisan. All three commissioner positions are up for election for two year terms. The President of the Board of Commissioners is selected by the Board and serves as the Chief Executive and Administrative Officer. We do not employ a Town manager or Administrator thus the President manages the operation of the Town. The Commissioners are paid \$600 per year with the President receiving an additional \$3,600. The current Commissioners ran unopposed in the last election with only 39 votes cast. The lack of choice and low voter turn out can be read two ways. The Commissioners were doing such a great job that they should be re-elected, or there was a lack of interest by the Town's citizens in their own Town government.

In my opinion, the Town has been able to maintain the lowest tax rate in the County in large part due to the volunteer nature of its elected officials. Many small municipalities have turned over management to a Town Manager or Administrator at a cost ranging from approximately \$40,000 to \$60,000 per year. I believe the Town should be managed by an elected official, not only because of the cost consideration, but also it requires the elected officials to be more involved and knowledgeable about the day-to-day operations of the Town. On the other hand, this requires the Town to be able to elect good people to office. We should not expect the same three people to stay in office forever. Are you one of those good people? If so, please consider running for Commissioner in January 2012.

Given the slow economic recovery, and the State's money problems, budgeting for Fiscal Year 2012 will be interesting. Based on current advice and some assumptions, we anticipate revenues for FY2012 to be slightly below this year's projected revenues. Due to the reassessment of real property values effective this July, we project an 11% drop (about \$21,000) in Town real estate tax revenue. We did do better than the surrounding areas which dropped about 30%. Part of this difference is due to the Town having a 100% Homestead Tax Credit.

Councilman Mel Franklin's District 9 Forum

Newly elected Councilman Mel Franklin is holding monthly public meetings to connect county residents with police, school board members, and state and county public works officials to address issues concerning public safety, school budget cuts and street repairs. He has also launched an Internet survey seeking feedback from residents.

Two of the District 9 public meetings in our area are scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m. for the following dates and locations:

- **April 28:** Gwynn Park Middle School
8000 Dyson Road, Brandywine
- **August 25:** Frederick Douglass High School
8000 Croom Road, Upper Marlboro

To complete Councilman Mel Franklin's resident survey, e-mail Franklin's office at mfranklin@co.pg.md.us or use links available through Franklin's Facebook page or Twitter account at www.twitter.com/melcouncil9.

Residents who cannot access the Internet but would like to participate should call Franklin's office at 301-952-3820.

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

TOWN MEETING: Tuesday, March 8th, 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME: Spring forward! Advance clocks one hour. Sunday, March 13th, 12:00 a.m..

TRINITY CHURCH FISH FRY: Friday, March 18th & April 1st, 4:00–7:00 p.m.

COLONIAL TAVERN DINNER: Saturday, March 19th, 7–9:00 pm at Darnall's Chance. Sea chanties & tavern songs.

WORK SESSION: Tuesday, March 22nd, 9:15 p.m. at the Town Hall.

18TH & 19TH CENTURY WOMEN'S HISTORY: Wednesday, March 30th, 9:30–3:30 pm at Darnall's Chance.

POLICE REPORTS

JANUARY • 2011

Town Citations: 138 • State Citations: 50

<u>In-Town Incidents:</u>	<u>Out-of-Town Incidents:</u>
1 Property Damage	
2 Theft (1 residential)	13 Theft
2 Theft from Auto (res)	4 Assault
8 Vehicle Impound	7 Burglary
6 Warrant Service	

FEBRUARY • 2011

Town Citations: 128 • State Citations: 37

<u>In-Town Incidents:</u>	<u>Out-of-Town Incidents:</u>
1 Stolen Vehicle	3 Burglary
3 Warrant Service	2 Stolen Vehicle
2 Vehicle Impound	1 Robbery

All in-Town incidents were in the downtown area and not in the residential areas, unless indicated by ().

Revenues that are received from the State are still in flux until the State passes its budget. As of now, the State Aid for Police Protection and Highway Users Revenues will be frozen at this year's reduced level. Other revenues, at this point, will fluctuate some. But, in the long run, they will be consistent with this year's projections.

On the expense side, salaries will be the major focus. We are analyzing our salary structure compared to other small towns in the county, based on the recent salary survey conducted by the *Gazette*. Comparisons will be difficult due to the limited data, the limited job descriptions and the economic profile of the other Towns. Other factors that come into play are the State-imposed cost increases for employees who wish to maintain their current level of benefits within the State retirement system. Also, under our current policy, the anticipated single digit increase in health insurance coverage will be passed on to the employees.

There are several items to be reviewed with respect to capital improvements. I would recommend, based on the current parking study, that we proceed with the upgrades to the Church Street parking lot. Other items include: finalizing the codification of the Town's ordinances, replacing one of the police cars, moving forward with the addition to Town Hall and assessing other infrastructure needs.

Residential Trash collection occurs once a week on Monday

If **New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day** or **Christmas Day** fall on a Monday, residential trash will be picked up the next day (weather permitting).

Residential trash **will be picked up on all other holidays** that may fall on a Monday (*for example:* Presidents' Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday, etc.).