



President's Message

Thank you to those of you who participated in the Annual Meeting on the 24th of September, either by submitting your proxy or by attending in person. We had a robust turnout and there were a lot of new faces in the group. It's nice to see owners engaging and participating.

One of the night's activities was to hold elections for two Director positions. We welcome to the Board Joann Wray as a new Director. Joann became a resident of AKW initially as a renter and a couple of years ago decided she wanted to take the plunge and become an owner. Re-elected was Sharon Grant, who has served as Treasurer for 3½ years. Kay Wilmoth, who joined the Board in 2016, declined to seek a second term. The community—and the Directors as part of it—offer sincere and deep thanks to Kay for her work on behalf of all of us. At the meeting, the Board presented Kay with a letter of appreciation. She has agreed to share it in this month's *Knolls News* so we can all reflect on some of her vital contributions to AKW. I offer my personal appreciation to Kay for a remarkable three-year tenure and also a thank you to fellow Directors Becky, Bill, Sharon, Pat, Valmy, and Joann.

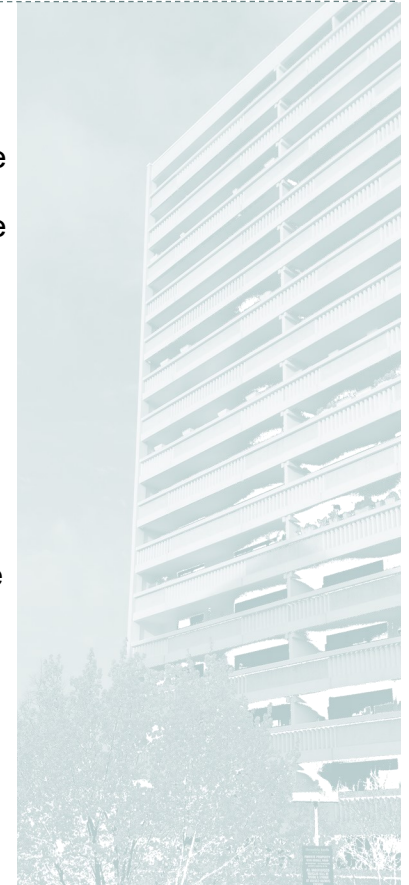
Meet Your 2019-2020 Board

President: Quade Whitmire (2021)
Vice President: Becky Martin (Until 10/31/19, Term Expires in 2020)
Vice President: Bill Munson (2020)
Treasurer: Sharon Grant (2022)
Secretary: Pat Quinn (2020)
Director: Valmy Awasom (2021)
Director: Joann Wray (2022)

Board Meeting Highlights

Reported Financials

	<u>August 2019</u>	<u>July 2019</u>
Total Cash and Investment	\$1,667,255	\$1,689,396
Year-to-Date Income	\$1,335,887	\$1,170,964
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$1,328,881	\$1,141,434
Year-to-Date Net Income	\$7,006	\$29,529
Delinquencies \$	\$55,642	\$51,244
Delinquencies %	2.9%	2.7%
YTD Reserve Expenditures	\$154,140	\$154,140



Six accounts totaling \$53,666 make up 96% of the delinquencies. The balance is in 13 accounts (\$1,975).

Board actions follow:

- Adopted a change to the Personnel Policy on 90-day probation actions
- Adopted a delegation policy for short-term investments
- Accepted the Reserve Advisors August 20, 2019 Reserve Study
- Declined to act on a proposal from Otis Elevator to replace the call panels on each floors at a sum of over \$60,000; there is no option to simply replace the bulbs on the existing panels.
- Signed the 2018 Federal tax return.

President Quade Whitmire submitted his annual summary of accomplishments into the record of the 2019 Annual Meeting. The full text appears below.

24th September 2019

Madam Secretary,

It is with pleasure I submit into the official record the Association's accomplishments for the past twelve months.

- Completion of the Ground Floor Project, which saw the ground floor totally refreshed and saw important changes including new mailboxes, new furnishings, the BuildingLink monitor, and a new, fresh look throughout.
- Installation of fob readers on the doors to the fitness center rooms and to the storage area, providing seamless and easy access to the common areas.
- Installation of emergency lighting throughout the common areas, an essential and important safety upgrade.
- Adoption of a Records Management policy.
- A complete update of the Association's Personnel Policy.
- Creation of a trench on the northeast corner of the property to address ice build-up in the wintertime in the driveway near the northeast corner of the building.
- The Association's Reserve Study was examined and completely evaluated and renewed with a new vendor.
- Creation of a solution to the issue of package management in the Office.
- Upgrades to Office equipment, including a new copier and a new phone system, both of which were implemented at cost savings to the Association.
- The addition of Cyber Insurance to help protect the Association in the event of a data breach.
- A Board-sponsored insurance forum to help owners and renters understand what coverage they need to protect themselves in the event of a catastrophe.

In addition to these "job done" items, there are other Association priorities that have taken considerable resources but are still underway:

- Work continues with Association's legal counsel and with engineering firms about the path forward with regard to the roof.
- Instituting a policy for annual HVAC inspections in an effort to protect owners from the personal impact of another owner's lack of upkeep/maintenance on their HVAC.
- The Association continues to monitor the HVAC Moisture Issue and, having identified sources and proven solutions, stands ready to quickly address issues as/if they develop.
- Significant work is necessary in the C/D garage/deck. The Association is currently getting proposals from an engineering firm to oversee this high-dollar project.
- A lot of work has been done to advance the second set of Bylaws updates. That work continues.

The coming year is going to be another significant one for AKW. Among the heavy-work/high-dollar priorities the outgoing Board sees include:

- Concluding the roof matter
- Updating the Bylaws
- Work on the C/D garage/deck
- Continuing work on the HVAC Moisture issue as needed and valve replacements
- Repairs to retaining walls throughout the property
- Additional security cameras in the garages
- Needed repairs to light poles throughout the property

I note, Madam Secretary, that Director Wilmoth has stated that she will not run for a second term. The Association thanks Director Wilmoth for her considerable work on behalf of the Association and her neighbors and fellow Co-Owners. I cannot overemphasize how her work in support of the Ground Floor Project was indispensable to its success. Of course her tenure is marked with many other accomplishments but in particular her work on that project was especially appreciated.

A sincere thank you, Madam Secretary, for your work on behalf of the Association, and the work of our other five colleagues. The Association also thanks the staff for their efforts and work on AKW's behalf.

And, on the occasion of Director Kay Wilmoth's final meeting as a Board member, Kay was presented the below letter of thanks on behalf of the Board and the community.



6101 Edsall Road ■ Alexandria, VA 22304

Email: Office@akwcondo.com

Phone: (703) 751-7541

Facsimile: (703) 751-2136

27th September 2019

Dear Kay:

On the occasion of your departure from the Board, please allow us to offer you most sincere and thoughtful thanks from us and on behalf of the community.

Your tenure over the past three years has been remarkable and with more accomplishments—both large and small—than we can enumerate here. But, we would like to call out some projects you've completed on behalf of the community that were particularly noteworthy, and note collaborative efforts that, without your help, would have been a much greater burden on the Association, staff, and Directors.

Your support in the redesign and upgrade of the Fitness Centers was appreciated by the Fitness Center Improvement Committee and the result is enjoyed by residents daily. Your collaboration and hands-on work during the repaving project was essential to the project's success. The Cooling Tower replacement happened so smoothly and with such minor disruption that most of the community was unaware that this six-figure upgrade had even happened! Your administrative help in the Office during the several instances when we were between managers and in support of other Directors and employees during these interim periods was integral to continuity-of-operations. Your contribution to the Bylaws Committee by way of your knowledge of the building has been most helpful in advancing the project. Your work on and support of the Ground Floor Project in 2017 and 2018 was key to this important upgrade to our community. And, your collaboration with the Landscape Committee has kept the group moving forward and our grounds looking great.

Every person who submits their name to their fellow Co-Owners for consideration for the Board has their own reason, most of which can be boiled down to wanting to make a positive difference in one's home, protecting one's investment, and/or wanting to be in service to neighbors and community. Your service has hit on each of those notes and more. We hope you take pride in your service; we thank you for it. And, we are happy to be able to call you our neighbor.

AKW Board of Directors

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Kay graciously acknowledged the support of the strong vendor relationships enjoyed by AKW and offered her continuing contributions on building projects. Kay responded to the letter with the following message:

“It has been an honor to serve on the AKW Board of Directors the last 3 years. I want to thank the AKW Board of Directors for all their support, without that, none of what I tried to accomplish would have happened. Also, thanks to all my neighbors who supported my efforts.”

Budgeting 101

On 17 September, Treasurer Sharon Grant led a meeting to discuss the 2020 AKW budget. In the meeting she outlined past budgetary trends, current-year spend and projections, 2020 priorities and expectations, and talked about projected expenditures in 2020—and beyond—from the Reserves. It’s a good time to offer a basic, crash course on how condominium-association budgeting works generally and some things within that process that are unique to AKW.



In personal financing, ideally we keep three general types of accounts—running cash, near-/long-term savings, and retirement savings. Our running cash accounts we use to pay for food, gas, haircuts, eating out, clothes, and some of the things we buy, use, and consume. Our near-/ long-term savings accounts are for building up funds to buy a new refrigerator, pay for condo renovations, and maybe to save for a big vacation. Retirement savings are meant for... well, retirement.

In condo association financing, there are the operating account and the reserve fund. The operating account covers regular, ongoing, and recurring expenses such as payroll, electric and gas bills, ordinary building upkeep, and the like. The reserve fund is roughly the equivalent of a personal savings account in that it’s intended to address big-ticket items that we know will come, such as garage repairs, roof replacement, physical plant items—boilers, chillers, cooling tower, etc., and so forth. Condo associations do not have an equivalent to personal retirement accounts and, though we are planning for repair and replacement events even 40 years into the future, our reserve savings are meant for nearer-term big-ticket items and to invest for mid-term items.

When you pay your condo fee, a percentage of that fee—determined each year at budget formulation time—goes into the reserve fund to save for big-ticket items that we know are on the horizon, while the rest goes into the operating fund for day-to-day operations. Although the 2020 budget is not finalized, preliminary numbers suggest that nearly 22% of your monthly dues will go into the reserve fund and the rest into the operating fund. Reserve expenditures expected in 2020 will be for the C/D parking decks, the roof, and to address HVAC insulation.



One unique AKW aspect regards Special Assessments. At most condo associations, big-ticket items are often handed as Special Assessment items, meaning that, instead of paying for those from savings, the costs are assessed directly to owners as an add-on to the monthly dues for a set length of time. AKW has never had a Special Assessment and has historically chosen to plan for and fund big-ticket items from the reserve

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fund. The upside of not levying Special Assessments is that owners are protected from these financial “surprises.” The downside is that regular, monthly assessments are higher than they otherwise would be.

AKW’s approach is a fiscally conservative one and is designed to protect owners’ investments and make our community a pleasant, welcoming, and safe place to live. Please reach out to [Sharon](#) or attend the next Board meeting if you have questions about how the budget process works or about the 2020 budget.

Your editor adds...

Looking at numbers from 2018 AND 2019 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 likely increase in our condo fees for 2020 is dismaying. The many folks who took advantage of this review had questions answered and came to understand the process.

Based on this meeting and further review of operating expenses, the Budget will be voted on at the October 22nd Board Meeting. We very much appreciate the comments and suggestions from our Residents, and encourage more Co-Owners to become involved.

Reserves Snapshot

There are several big-ticket items in 2020 that will be funded from the Reserve fund. So, we will see the available funds go down in 2020 and we expect the net balance of the Reserves to be less than at the start of the 2020 budget cycle. For many of us who are used to a steady or rising reserves balance this is a bit disconcerting but in reality, it’s not unusual in the ebb-and-flow of reserve funds.



As we think about the Reserve Study, it’s helpful to return to the idea of our personal savings account covered in the article [Budgeting 101](#). In our personal life, if we have a savings balance of \$5,000 and we get \$3,000 worth of new kitchen appliances, our balance is \$2,000. But, we will not need new appliances for another fifteen years so the need for that money is way off in the future and there is plenty of time to rebuild savings for the future need for these big-ticket items.

Once we spend money on a reserve item we push out the subsequent need for it several—to many— years and there is time to rebuild the fund for future big expenditures. A higher savings or reserve balance is always desirable—and our projections are that the reserves will rebound in 2021 because there will be fewer big-ticket projects to fund.

Future Board Meeting Dates

October 22 November 19
December 17



And more Reserves benefits

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/reserve fund may be required by: (1) any secondary mortgage market in which the association participates such as Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, FHA, and VA, (2) state statutes, regulations, or court decisions, or (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 (e.g., Annual Report). Our reserve balance is reported in our CPA’s annual audit of our financials.

HVAC Inspection Policy Proposals



At the height of last summer’s HVAC moisture issue, the Association spent considerable resources to track down the cause of the problem. You’ll recall—especially if you were one of the impacted Units—that there were a number of causes. Some of those were the responsibility of the Association and it has been working through those and also on the lookout for new issues so they can be addressed more quickly.

As part of the search for the cause of these moisture problems, Unit-by-Unit inspections were undertaken. Observations of HVAC units, particularly the older, original models, often showed HVACs that were inoperable, not maintained, or, in some cases, to be causing damage to neighboring Units because of poor maintenance.

The Association consulted legal counsel to determine what the Association’s responsibilities and rights were to make sure owners are maintaining their HVACs so that their neighbors are not negatively impacted. Counsel advised us to develop an inspection program to ensure HVAC units are maintained.

The Board considered a proposed policy in its July 2019 meeting. There were suggestions from Directors and from owners present on changes to the initial proposals. The revised document was presented in the August meeting but was not discussed because of time constraints. It was presented again in the September meeting but was put on hold again because several Directors had questions and research they wanted to do individually. The proposed policy has been in the Open Session Book for the past three months; that Book is available in the Office for owners’ and residents’ review.

The policy, as proposed, would consist of a twice per-year program. There would be a mandatory filter change and visual inspection by the Association’s staff or contractors each autumn. There would be an additional requirement that owners have their HVAC units inspected by a licensed professional once per year in the spring. Owners would be required to provide proof of the inspection to the Office. Please take time to read the proposed policy and provide feedback so it can be considered by the Board in October.

Be Forewarned!

Multiple residents have complained about objects being thrown off of a balcony on the East side of our building. Small liquor bottles, broken glass, large screws, rugs, oven mitts, cigarette butts, and other items have been found on and around residents' cars and on the ground between residents' patios and the parking lot.



We are working to identify the responsible parties. However, some residents have filed police reports and the Alexandria Police Department (APD) advises that it is a crime to throw items off of balconies – not to mention that it violates AKW rules and regulations, as well as basic common sense. The Association will fully and completely support the APD and the District Attorney in the prosecution of these individuals.

Ew, Ew, That Smell



Occasionally, and lately more frequently, the Office receives complaints about the smell of smoke coming into residents' Units—both tobacco and marijuana smells. There is little that the Office can do to lend an assist on these matters because wafting smells—from cooking food to cigarette smoke—are an inevitability in a hi-rise building. Marijuana, however, remains illegal in the Commonwealth of Virginia. If you smell or otherwise detect the presence of marijuana, your recourse is to dial the Alexandria Police Department's non-emergency line (703-746-4444). The Office cannot call on your behalf, so you must initiate the call.



Superior Service?

Have an great experience with a vendor? Let us know and we can add their name to the Services section of the [AKW Web Site](#). See recommendations made by other residents there too!

For many of us, a honk reminds drivers to notice the light's turned green, or to allow room for another vehicle (or other communications!). In front of a private dwelling, a honk means your ride has arrived. In our environment, while seemingly insignificant, for residents with small children or those who work night hours, a honk is an interruption of needed rest or the restart of the task of settling a child down for a nap. In a condominium environment, noise can impact others in way we don't always consider. Please tell others: text or call upon arrival! *Thank you!*



Just so our Office knows what's going on



Reminder to Residents 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!)



Check out the [Alexandria Insider](#) for fun things to do in our neighborhood.

Art on the Avenue, October 5

Discover more than 300 artists while enjoying live music, food and fall-themed activities for children.

Portside in Old Town Fall Festival, October 12

Enjoy a day of maritime history, nautical demonstrations, live music, children's activities, local food, beer and wine on the Old Town Alexandria waterfront.

Fall in Alexandria

As fall foliage emerges, step onto Alexandria's historic brick-lined streets and enjoy autumn with outdoor art festivals, Halloween haunts, events to toast the season and more.

Halloween Events

Ghostly tours, historic haunts and family-friendly trick-or-treat events make Alexandria the spookiest place to celebrate Halloween.

Things to Do in the West End

Alexandria's West End is the city's headquarters for award-winning craft beer, international cuisine and some of the region's top barbecue spots.

HAPPY HOUR

The Happy Hour Club (HHC) is open for business every Thursday evening in the Bar!

Happy Hour members pay monthly dues of \$15, which covers beverages and snacks. The last Thursday of each month is Pizza Night and attendees pay \$5 to share the meal cost.

All residents are welcome to participate in Happy Hour through BYOB (\$5 includes mixers and snacks) or attending and not imbibing. Happy Hour is all about the company and conversation.

Come end your tough day in a nice relaxing swivel chair, warm atmosphere, drink of choice and pleasant conversation. Hope you join us Thursdays at 6:30 PM.

Before you begin....

Finally ready to tackle that remodeling project? Longing for an open floor plan and upgraded lighting? Between conceptualization and getting started, you must submit a [Unit Modification Form](#) to the Office, which will be forwarded to the Board for review. You will need to provide details of the anticipated work and a copy of your contractor's license and insurance certificate. Getting this Board review avoids the pitfall of impacting common elements (plumbing and antenna, for example). And we all know that "time is of the essence," but factor the once-monthly Board meeting into your planning.





Fraud Watch Network

It seems we can do an article nearly every month on what Seniors (and, frankly, others!) should watch out for in the ongoing problem of scams to somehow take our identities and our money! This one deals with a “Senior Medicare Specialist” (*conveniently calling from Leesburg or Falls Church!*) who wants to be able to enroll you in a new program that will save you hundreds (*maybe thousands!*) in

Medicare charges and copays for pain medication. He said Medicare had tried to reach me through letters (*no, they hadn't!*) and this may be the last time they could call after trying so many times to reach me. Actually, they were calling *all* people on Part B. (*Can you imagine how many calls that might be?*) When I asked who told him I had pain, he sounded as if *everyone* has some sort of pain – like arthritis. When I said “no, I didn't have arthritis,” he hung up the phone (sorry I couldn't string him along for more of what he was trying to do).

I called the AARP Fraud Hotline (**877-908-3360**) and sure enough, they were onto this particular scam. The Fraudster would try to get all of my personal information ... SS#, birth date, address, new Medicare number, credit card number, anything else ... and then enter different diagnoses into the Medicare system, charging hundreds to my card as well as running up gigantic charges against my account with Medicare. The Hotline gave an example: the Fraudster would charge an electric wheelchair to my account, but I wouldn't find out about it until I really needed one months or years from now, and of course the new (now second) request would be denied! Your information can be sold to other Fraudsters who will call regarding Social Security, the IRS, timeshares, etc. *Even trying to get you through a **DNA test!!!***

You can follow their work on [AARP's Fraud Watch Network](#). You may also check your own Medicare account through [Medicare.gov](#). Anything you find that isn't what you expected or know is legitimate, should be reported to Medicare.



We've replenished the supply in our Library

The Library Committee is pleased to tell you that we've gotten more copies of the **Directory of Resources for Older Adults & Adults With Disabilities**. This is a marvelous 57-page booklet about what services are available and how to find them. The listings, comments, and summary of information are for general reference or resource purposes. The listings are in alphabetical order and all have phone and website information. A handy table of contents on pages 2-3 divide the services from Adult Day Health Services to Food and Nutrition to In-Home Care and Assistance, through Volunteer Opportunities and Voter Information. There's something for everyone, so take advantage of what the City has to offer!



IMPORTANT DATES IN OCTOBER

- ◆ **Knolls Knitters** **Second Sunday of the month, 2 PM**
- ◆ **Board Meeting** **Tue, 10/22**
- ◆ **Halloween!** **Thu, 10/31**
- ◆ **Happy Hour Club** **Thursdays, 6:30-8:30 PM in the Bar Area**

Unless indicated otherwise, meetings begin at 7:00 PM in the Community Room

The "Board Book" (containing what's on the agenda) is available in the Office for Residents' perusal on the Friday before the Board meeting.



NEED A NOTARY?

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	703-751-7541
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



Board of Directors

Quade Whitmire, President	quade@akwcondo.com
Becky Martin, Vice President (thru 10/31)	becky@akwcondo.com
Bill Munson, Vice President (effect. 11/1)	bill@akwcondo.com
Pat Quinn, Secretary	pat@akwcondo.com
Sharon Grant, Treasurer	sharon@akwcondo.com
Valmy Awasom	valmy@akwcondo.com
Joann Wray	joann@akwcondo.com