

## President's Report

By Michael Sullivan

Greetings,

I hope this finds you enjoying the Summer and keeping cool in this record heat. Our Community Swimming Pool is open and many residents are taking advantage of this amenity and relief from the heat.

We are certainly happy to have also opened up our social events after over a year of missing them due to pandemic safety restrictions. Our Fourth of July party was well attended by over 50 neighbors. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet some of our new residents and catch up with longtime friends as well. And, we were delighted to be able to re-open our Community Happy Hours on Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 pm in the AKW Lounge. All residents are welcome!

As you know, September is Annual Meeting month and the time when we elect new Board Members to fill the upcoming vacancies. Three positions will be available this year and we are hoping to tap some new and energetic talent to volunteer to help guide the future of Alexandria Knolls West. Please consider running for one of these vacancies. Your Community needs you!

In light of the recent tragedy in South Florida, we are increasingly aware of the absolute need to stay on top of our building's structural health. We understand our State Government may be proposing certain inspection requirements in the near future. In the meantime, we have been actively reviewing proposals from Structural Engineering companies to assist us in this evaluation.

Stay well and safe.



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## BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR ...



The Alexandria Knolls West Condominium's Council of Co-Owners Annual Meeting will be held **IN PERSON** in the Community Room on Tuesday, September 14, 2021. Registration and Proxy verifications will begin at 6:30pm, with the Annual Meeting convening at 7:00. Please plan on attending so that we are able to achieve our quorum. **THREE** new Members for the Board will be elected, so your participation is really necessary!

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

### Reported Financials

	<i>June</i>	<i>May</i>
<i>Total Cash and Investments</i>	\$2,254,328	\$2,254,328
<i>Year-to-Date Income</i>	\$1,060,456	\$883,010
<i>Year-to-Date Expenses</i>	\$1,051,274	\$844,550
<i>Delinquencies Dollar Amount</i>	\$31,601	\$37,838
<i>YTD Reserve Expenditures</i>	\$188,790	\$39,703
<i>Total Reserves</i>	\$1,686,942	\$1,777,100

Delinquencies are comprised of 8 accounts totaling \$29,643 and another 5 accounts totaling \$1,958 for a delinquency percentage of 1.5% (*down from 2% in May*). Most auditors consider an average of 5% to be good and under 3% to be excellent.

### Board Actions

- Voted to approve moving \$100,000 Money Market Mutual Funds to Operational Funds, to cover garage repairs to date.
- Voted to conditionally approve a \$1,200 charge to replace the pool handrail with an ADA-compliant version. The Pool Company has to confirm that the new rail will fit the space as well as disposing of the old one. Once this is confirmed, the Board will use its “e-vote” to take effect. There is a 40-day lead-time for installation, at which time the summer will likely be over.

### *And here’s the quickie version:*



On Tuesday, Sept 14<sup>th</sup> in the Community Room and IN PERSON!! Registration check-in begins at 6:30; meeting convenes at 7pm.

There will be three (3) members elected for three (3) year terms.

**No later than Friday, August 13<sup>th</sup>**, please provide your resume to the Office, containing your name and unit number, any brief bio of yourself plus your possible experience and expertise special to our committee and Association structure; and of course a sentence or two about why you want to be a Board Member!

On Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm in the Community Room, we will hold a Forum to introduce the candidates and give participants the opportunity to ask questions.



## **Senior Services of Alexandria**

partners with these services for your benefit:

### **ESSENTIAL SERVICES -**

**The Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard Hearing Persons** serves a diverse range of people, including the deaf, deaf-blind, late-deafened, hard of hearing, parents with deaf and hard of hearing children, children of deaf and hard of hearing parents, educators, sign language teachers and students, hearing aid users, people with cochlear implants, people with tinnitus, and people with auditory processing disorders. They provide numerous onsite resources and educational programs for those with hearing problems. Click on [Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Persons – Improving Communication, Changing Lives \(nvrc.org\)](http://nvrc.org) to learn more.



## **DCHS Initiates New Dental, Vision and Hearing Aid Program**

The Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) has initiated a new [Dental, Vision and Hearing Aid Program](#) to help City residents with low incomes obtain free or low-cost dental care, prescription glasses and hearing aids. City of Alexandria residents who need dental care and do not have health or dental insurance coverage are invited to apply. Those who are eligible will be given an intake appointment with the Northern Virginia Dental Clinic, where treatment will be provided. The program will cover the cost of the first visit to the clinic; however, all patients will be required to pay \$50.00 at the first visit to cover the cost of the follow-up visit. Patients will pay \$50.00 per office visit for all future visits.

To be eligible for the Dental, Vision and Hearing Aid Program, individuals must be residents of the City of Alexandria, meet income and resource guidelines (50% of Virginia median income guidelines), and provide additional documentation as requested to show proof of residency, proof of income and proof of other resources. Immigration status is not requested. Residents can [apply at alexandriava.gov/DCHS](http://alexandriava.gov/DCHS) in English, Amharic, Farsi or Spanish, or call DCHS Customer Relations at 703.746.5700 or walk-in to the DCHS office located at 2525 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Patients of the Alexandria Health Department (AHD) or clients of the Alexandria Community Services Board (CSB) should apply through their provider at the AHD or CSB.



**The Alzheimer's Association** – Formed in 1980, the Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Their 24/7 hotline number is 1-800-272-3900. For more information about the National Capital Area's programs click on [National Capital Area Chapter \(alz.org\)](http://alz.org).



## Centenarian Celebration

The City of Alexandria and the Successful Aging Committee will celebrate and honor Alexandrians who have lived a century or longer at the September 28 City Council meeting. Do you know someone living in Alexandria who will be 100 or older by December 31, 2021? We want to honor them. Click on [Celebrating Our Centenarians - Senior Services of Alexandria](#) ([seniorservicesalex.org](http://seniorservicesalex.org)) to find out more and how to nominate someone. The deadline for the applications is July 30. **[Maybe they'll take your nominee if you can get it in really promptly!]** If you have any questions, contact Senior Services of Alexandria at 703-836-4414, ext. 110 or email [admin@seniorservicesalex.org](mailto:admin@seniorservicesalex.org).



## Volunteer Guardians Wanted

The Division of Aging and Adult Services is looking for individuals who can assure the well-being of an incapacitated Alexandrian living in an Assisted Living Facility or Nursing Facility. Volunteer Guardians are appointed by the Court to make decisions for older Alexandria residents who have lost the capacity to understand the consequences of their decisions. The volunteer will visit the resident monthly and follow the person's wishes as much as possible. Contact Pamela Austin, Resource Coordinator at 703.746.5999 or email [Pamela.austin@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Pamela.austin@alexandriava.gov).



## Medicare 101 Presentation – August 11 at 10 am

Are you new to Medicare or a caregiver for a Medicare beneficiary? Learn the basics of Medicare coverage and choices. This presentation is given by Medicare counselors from the Division of Aging and Adult Services. **Advance registration is required for all webinars.** Click on [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#) to register.

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## Landscape Update

By Rick Treviño

If we could travel back in time to 1975 when AKW was brand new, the landscape probably looked a lot different. Many of the plants and trees we see today were probably here, but much smaller. Since then, other plantings were added while others disappeared, but the grounds remained in beautiful shape. Did you know that for two years in a row AKW even won the City of Alexandria Beautification Award? But that was many years ago. Time has now taken its toll on our grounds. One thing is sure – it's time to refresh and spruce up the landscape and improve our curb appeal again!



The Landscape Committee has begun to develop a long-term plan to make our grounds beautiful again. We have divided our grounds into zones which we will prioritize for improvements each year and ensure these projects are planned for in the budget. Through our partnership with the landscape company, we will design new and colorful beds for everyone to enjoy. If you would like to be part of this effort and join the Committee, let us know. This will be a multi-year effort but it will be great to see it transform our grounds.

### ***We are still Recruiting!***

Yes, we are still recruiting some Residents who can open the office when some emergency keeps Capri and Judy from coming in. Please put a note in Michael's Board box in the office and he'll get back to you. ***Oh, BTW, this is a paid position!!***  
Thank you!

## Budget & Finance Committee

At our meeting on July 6<sup>th</sup>, we welcomed Charles Wilson and Armando Avendano to join with Larz Pearson, Wendy Shelley, and Treasurer Laura Rodriguez. We reviewed the Garage Project spending thus far, as well as funding sources. In addition, we also reviewed information from Morgan Stanley on available CDs, and discussed whether liquidity allows additional purchases of non-liquid assets (CDs). There was also discussion of going outside Morgan Stanley to obtain better investment opportunities.

Our July 20<sup>th</sup> meeting began the process of creating the 2022 Budget. President Sullivan also participated in this meeting. We will meet again, still on the initial phases, following the regularly scheduled B&F Committee meeting on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, beginning at 6pm.



If you'd like to join us, put on your calendar the Tuesday prior to the Board Meeting as our "regular" get-together. It will also be announced via BuildingLink and on the lobby video screen.



## What are AKW's Reserves and Why Should I Care?

By Larz Pearson

The recent tragedy in Florida has focused attention on prudent maintenance and repair of a high-rise residential building and the role of an Association's Board in ensuring the upkeep and replacement of essential building components.

AKW's routine repairs and replacements are paid for from our Operating funds. But maintenance and replacement of big-ticket components (think chillers, boilers, and the garages) are paid for from our Reserve funds. 17 cents of every dollar of your monthly condo fee go toward routine repairs and maintenance while 22 cents are deposited in Reserves. But the way in which Reserve funds are accumulated and spent is very different.

AKW's Reserve funds are split between the current year contributions (in AKW's bank account and readily available to pay Reserve items' bills) and an Investment account intended to earn money on funds not immediately needed. Currently the funds outside the Investment Account total roughly \$340,000 (after paying Reserve bills through June 30) while the Investment Account holds roughly \$1.7 million.

To help the AKW Board decide what to spend Reserve funds on and when, AKW periodically commissions a Reserve Study. Our 2019 Reserve Study covers a five-year window of estimated replacement needs as well as estimates of longer-term replacement needs.

The main purpose of the Study is to support long-term financial planning by AKW Boards.

- For the items covered in the inspection, it estimates a remaining useful lifetime before replacement is needed,
- It then estimates a future cost of replacing each item as its useful life is coming to an end.
- It combines these cost estimates by year of replacement in order to estimate how much will be needed in Reserve funds in each year.

Year after year, through a prudent use of Reserve Studies and just sound planning and management of AKW's funds, successive Boards have been able to execute and fund repair and replacement of critical building components without ever having to resort to a special assessment – such as that the collapsed Florida condo was facing.

The Study also alerts the Board of the timing for replacing critical equipment and systems replacement and so allows an orderly process of bidding and evaluation and acceptance of proposals -- as well as identifying additional requirements of the direct project (e.g., supplementary parking).

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It is important to be clear about what was inspected and included in the Reserve Study -- and what was not.

- The inspection was purely visual.
- Most common element equipment and systems were included.
- Some separate structures on the grounds (e.g., garages, retaining walls) were included.
- Some key building components were *not* inspected and so no evaluation of their condition was made nor any estimate of their useful life:
  - ◆ Lobby and Party Room Floor and wall coverings, stone
  - ◆ Structure foundations
  - ◆ Pump, Fire Suppression (annually inspected)
  - ◆ Structural frames
  - ◆ Valves, Large Diameter
  - ◆ The East entrance
  - ◆ Sidewalks

The inspection also did not include non-common elements for which owners are responsible.

Based upon the limited purposes and scope of the Reserve Study, it would be a mistake to rely on it as evidence of the integrity of the foundations and internal structures of the building. A separate inspection, employing other investigative techniques and technologies, would be needed for those elements of our building.



***Interesting article from The Washington Post, safely discarding hard-to-dispose-of items we all have:***

**Batteries:** Regular AAA, AA, C and D batteries are nontoxic and can be tossed in the trash. Lowe's accepts rechargeable batteries! Old lithium batteries --- often rechargeable and found in electronic devices (cell phones, hearing aids, watches) should be placed between two pieces of tape to ensure they don't catch fire. This includes those with higher than 9 volts.

**Lightbulbs:** Incandescent and halogen go in the trash, NOT in recycling. You might try wrapping these in newspaper so they won't shatter. LEDs are also fit for the trash; they're not hazardous. Because LEDs contain valuable metal components, its preferable to recycle them. Compact fluorescent bulbs contain mercury so may go to our City Recycling (on Colvin Ave.).

**Pandemic supplies:** If you have unopened gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer stockpiled all over your unit, try calling local dentist/doctor offices, or charities that are geared to help the homeless or others in our region, and see who can accept our overflow.

## ***The problem with Anonymity ....***

Every now and then we get complaints about something that relates to our building or Association or the Staff or the Board or our condo fees or noisy neighbors or construction or ... *whatever*.

We don't mind getting comments and helpful hints. We also don't mind getting complaints *so long as they have a name attached!* If we don't know who you are, we can't be in touch for further information and consideration for solutions. If it's worth sending a memo, it's worth knowing where it's coming from! **And remember, just carping to someone in the elevator about (whatever your complaint is) doesn't get to the person (i.e., the Office) who can do something about it or give an explanation of 'why'.** *Many thanks!*



## ***Your Volunteering IS a gift to our Community!***

We are (joyfully!) accepting resumes for candidates for election to our Board of Directors for the 2021-22 year. If we haven't received yours yet, please don't delay --- they go out very soon with announcement of our Annual Meeting. Submit to Secretary STEPHEN COLODNER by leaving in the Office for his Board box. *Our Association needs your skills, your experience, and your enthusiasm! Sign up today!*

**By now, everyone's aware that our very own Happy Hour Club is reconstituted and promises to be one of our favorite times of the week! *But if you forgot the "rules" -----***

In the Bar and Community Rooms, every Thursday evening from 6:30 to 8:30. There's Pizza Night on the last Thursday (everyone chips in an extra \$5). There's a 50-50 drawing "for those who want to win big and retire on Friday morning" with \$1/ticket or \$2 for 3 or \$3 for 5; I mean, how can you lose? The dues are \$15/mo for 'all access'; \$5 for set-ups and nibbles. Your first visit is FREE (how can *that* be wrong???) Stephen Colodner and his wife, Traci are the Hosts and can answer any questions you may have. ***SO, come on down and meet new friends or hug the old ones we've missed so much!***







## Scams and Fraud are unending, so here's help "Protecting Yourself from Cyberfraud" from an Investor letter of T. Rowe Price ...

- **Protect what you keep.** Sensitive documents go to a secure location (rent a vault box at your bank, e.g.).
- **Dispose of what you don't need.** Shred documents; sanitization and recycling services for computers, smartphones and tablets is secure and environmentally sound.
- **Exercise caution with email.** Suspicious links and attachments may contain malicious software; *don't click on anything to open!* Don't give away any personal or financial information – your SS number, your medical IDs, etc.
- **Secure your passwords.** Keep those absolutely confidential!
- **Access information selectively.** Use only your personal device(s) for important personal and financial info. Never use a public WiFi or another person's device.
- **Verify contact information.** Scammers often use nearly-perfect logo imitations, so be suspicious of emails, texts, and phone calls.
- **Be vigilant.** Review your financial accounts and personal credit report on a regular basis to ensure no errors or irregularities are present.
- **Take immediate action if anything is out of the ordinary.** Report internet crime to the FBI ([ic3.gov](https://www.ic3.gov)), and refer identity theft complaints to local authorities and to the Federal Trade Commission ([ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov)).



### **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO KNOLLS NEWS !!!**

Goodness, it's hard to believe that our regular and expanded editions of *Knolls News* have been going on so long! Little did we realize back in August of 2015 that we could turn out month-after-month of news, and we'd be thrilled with what our newsletter has become. Your Editor and Publisher (and the Board) continue to work diligently to produce information and articles that should be of interest to all of our wonderful Residents (Co-Owners and Lessees), building relationships within our corporate Association and Community. We repeat our invitation to any and all to contribute to this newsletter, any time during the year, with timely paragraphs or articles. *SO*, here's to *US* and looking toward another spectacular year for all! *Raise a glass of bubbly to our 6<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!*



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## Important Dates in August

- Candidate Resumes (*due by*) Friday, August 13, 5:00 pm
- Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Tuesday, August 3, 6:00 pm
- Board Meeting Tuesday, August 10, 7:00 pm\*
- Medicare 101 Presentation Wednesday, August 11, 10:00 am  
(see announcement on page 4 for webinar)

The Board Meeting agenda is available in the Office the Friday before the meeting.

\* Information on accessing the electronic meetings will be provided in advance.

## 2021 Board Meeting Dates

August 10                      September 14  
October 12                     November 9  
December 14



## Important Phone Numbers

Guard Mobile	571-565-5591
AKW Office Phone	703-751-7541
AKW Office email	<a href="mailto:office@akwcondo.com">office@akwcondo.com</a>
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

Michael Sullivan, President	<a href="mailto:michael@akwcondo.com">michael@akwcondo.com</a>
Bill Munson, Vice President	<a href="mailto:bill@akwcondo.com">bill@akwcondo.com</a>
Stephen Colodner, Secretary	<a href="mailto:stephen@akwcondo.com">stephen@akwcondo.com</a>
Laura Rodriguez, Treasurer	<a href="mailto:laura@akwcondo.com">laura@akwcondo.com</a>
Joann Wray	<a href="mailto:joann@akwcondo.com">joann@akwcondo.com</a>
Rick Treviño	<a href="mailto:rick@akwcondo.com">rick@akwcondo.com</a>