



# SOMERSET TOWN JOURNAL



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Your Original Poem Set To Music

## Somerset Anthem: Call For An Original Poem To Be Set to Music

By Cathy Pickar, Dorset Avenue

The **pool dedication** is scheduled for **June 9**. As part of the dedication, the **Town Council, Mayor** and **Staff** would like to join residents of all ages in **singing** an **original song** about **Somerset**. But, first we need an **original poem** that can be set to music. So, "**sharpen your pencils**" and write

something that you feel would be enjoyable for a community to sing together. *After all, there is little that is more bonding than a community of all ages singing together.*



### Guidelines:

- **8 lines** (or, if multiple verses, multiples of 8) of impressions of Somerset (satire not likely to be selected for this competition, but it might be used in the Sometimes Somerset Singers' repertory.) **Author must be a Somerset Resident. No age restrictions.**

### Submission:

- Send your original poem to Rich or Nicole at Town Hall no later than Wednesday, May 9 via **hard copy** or **digital format** to [manager@townofsomerset.com](mailto:manager@townofsomerset.com).

### Selection:

- The **Town staff** will remove all identifying information and forward the **blind copies** to the **panel of judges**, which will be comprised of two council members, two adult residents and one youth resident (all to be selected by the Mayor).

### Winning Submission:

- Council Member Cathy Pickar will set the winning submission to **music** with input from the author.

## Proposed Changes To Noise Ordinance

By Marnie Shaul, Council Member

Council Members sometimes hear from residents expressing their concern about **noise**, especially from **construction**, and sometimes from **leaf blowers** and other **lawn equipment**. In researching how to change **Somerset's Code** regarding construction on **Federal holidays**,

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### Calendar

#### Saturday, May 5

Household Goods Curbside Pickup

#### Sunday, May 6

Donation Nation Pickup

#### Monday, May 7

Bulk Trash Pickup  
Town Council Meeting

#### Monday, May 21

MVA Mobile Office

#### Friday, May 25

Swim Team Sign-up

#### Monday, May 28

Memorial Day, Office Closed

Don't forget to check the Town website throughout the month for an up-to-date calendar. Go to [www.townofsomerset.com](http://www.townofsomerset.com) and click on **Town Calendar**.

The Preliminary Agenda for each month's Town Council meeting is posted on the Town website ([www.townofsomerset.com](http://www.townofsomerset.com)) seven days prior to the meeting. A copy is also posted on the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch.



## On My Mind

By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin

The Council and I often refer to the fact that Somerset is a “tree city” when making certain decisions or setting specific policies. In addition, there are a number of signs around Town to this effect. Often I am asked: “What does this really mean?”

Actually, this important designation is an official one because there is a national **Arbor Day Foundation** connected with the **USDA Forest Service**, which bestows this honor yearly, based on tough criteria. In fact, Somerset recently received this award for the **30th time**, and it has become part of our history and culture.

In order to get the award we must meet four standards: have a **tree department, a tree-care ordinance, and a community forestry program with annual expenditures of at least \$2 per capita, and issue an Arbor Day proclamation.** As our **Council and Parks and the Natural Resources Committee** know best, trees are a vital part of the Town. Among other benefits they provide, we know they promote public health by **filtering the air**, serve as a **vital habitat for wildlife, reduce energy use, and increase property values.**

I continue to take **great pride** in the way we treat our trees, and boast about it as I travel around the **County and State.** I have no problem when kiddingly called a “**tree hugger**” and urge other municipalities to go after this significant honor. I am glad that once again, in the upcoming fiscal year, the Council will **fund programs** to continue the vital promotion of our significant arbor assets.

More information about **Tree City USA** can be found at [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org).

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## Somerset Election

By Phyllis Weisenfelder, Chairman,  
Board of Supervisors of Elections

Thank you to everyone who voted in the **Town Election on March 20.** We received **fifty-one ballots**, which included **36 votes** for **Jeffrey Slavin** for **Mayor**, **46 votes** for **Cathy Pickar** for the **Town Council**, and **48 votes** for **Barbara Condos**, the newly elected member of the **Town Council.**

**Congratulations to our newly elected officials.**

Thank you also to the members of the **Board of Supervisors of Elections** for their efforts in updating the voting rolls and conducting this year's Election. The members are **Sherry Bindeman** (Essex), **Ellie Fink** (Dorset), **Bill Marmon** (Cumberland), **John Stewart** (Dorset), and **Phyllis Wiesenfelder** (Cumberland).

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Please let us know if you prefer to receive the Journal via email.  
Please provide your email address to the Editor at [maxinea@comcast.net](mailto:maxinea@comcast.net).

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### TOWN HALL

Open: 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Monday thru Friday  
301-657-3211  
Fax: 301-657-2773  
TTY users call Maryland Relay

Maxine Finkelstein, Editor  
Deadline for ads and copy is the 15th of the month at 4:30 p.m.

our **Town Attorney** and I discovered that our current Code does not permit construction before **9:00 a.m.** on **weekdays**. Town officials and staff thought that the start time was **7:00 a.m.** on **weekdays**, the same as **Montgomery County's code**. In addition, **noise restrictions** appear in two different parts of the Code, making it more difficult to determine what restrictions apply.

The Council discussed what to do and decided that we should look at **other jurisdictions' start times** so our construction practices are in line with others. All the nearby jurisdictions allow construction to begin at **7:00 a.m.** on **weekdays**, which accommodates the work schedule that most construction firms follow. Our research also showed that nearby jurisdictions have **shorter hours on weekends and Federal**



Proposed Changes To Noise Ordinance

**holidays**. They allow **exterior construction work** on **Sunday**, which the current Somerset code **does not allow** if it can be heard by neighbors.

To reduce the noise from landscape work, the **Town of Chevy Chase** specifically regulates the use of **power tools** for landscape work and limits the time when they can be used. On weekdays they can be used from **8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.**, with the exception that one piece of power equipment can be used at one time between **7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**, presumably to allow residents to cut their lawns in the early evening. It **restricts** the use of **power equipment** for landscape work on **weekends and Federal holidays** to the hours between **9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

The noise level of **leaf blowers** is regulated through a **County ordinance** that allows a **higher decibel level** if the equipment conforms to specific manufacturing specifications.

At the **May Council meeting**, there will be a **public hearing** to consider changes to the noise ordinance. I encourage residents to **share their views** about limits to noise in our community. I think this is a **sensitive topic**, and regulating when activities that generate noise can occur requires balancing the interest of neighborhood quiet with the interest of completing construction in a timely fashion and the desire to have our yards maintained by businesses or residents themselves.

The ordinance I am submitting for Council consideration contains the following provisions and can be amended during the public hearing.

- **Allow weekday construction from 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.** (current Code is **9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.**)
- **Allow Saturday and Federal holiday construction from 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.** (the current code allows **9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.** on **Saturday**, and currently treats Federal holidays as weekdays, **9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.**, if they fall on a weekday)
- **Maintain the current Sunday prohibition** on construction by contractors unless it is **interior work** that cannot be heard by neighbors
- **Allow power equipment** for landscape activities on weekdays from **8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.**, with the exception that only **one piece** of power equipment may be used from **7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.** on **weekdays**; on **weekends and Federal holidays** allow power equipment from **9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

## Somerset Green Salvage Event

By Iris Amdur, Warwick Place

Somerset has planned three great opportunities to divert unneeded items from the **landfill** before the upcoming **bulk trash day**. Please check the **Town of Somerset website** for periodic updates on additional resources for **donation, electronics recycling, and hazardous waste disposal**. If you have questions about the event, please contact **Iris Amdur** at [irisamdur@greenshape.com](mailto:irisamdur@greenshape.com) or **301-654-1713**.

### Furniture and Household Goods, Saturday, May 5, 9:00 a.m.



**A Wider Circle** will redistribute **mattresses, furniture, home goods and baby items free of charge to families** transitioning from shelters or other homeless circumstances, or who are otherwise living without basic needs.

- **What to Donate**—**Mattresses** are the most-needed item, but **kitchen/dining tables, dressers, living room furniture, end tables, lamps, gently used linens and towels, dish sets, baby items** and **children's clothing** up to **size 4T** are always helpful. All donations must be in **good condition** with no rips or stains. See [http://awidercircle.org/wish\\_list.html](http://awidercircle.org/wish_list.html) for details. **Drop-side cribs** are not accepted.

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- **Preparing for Donation**—Bring your item to the curb by **9:00 a.m.** on **Saturday, May 5** and label your donations **“A Wider Circle.”** You will receive a receipt for your **tax-deductible** donation. If you have questions, or your items are too large to bring to the curb, contact **A Wider Circle** at **301-608-3504** or **furnish@awidercircle.org** by **Tuesday, May 1** for an in-home pick-up that morning.

### Building Materials, Saturday, May 5, 2:00 p.m.



**Community Forklift** aims to lift up communities by making repairs and renovation more affordable for everyone—**homeowners, small businesses, and charitable groups**—while

reducing construction industry waste and keeping reusable materials out of the landfill.

- **What to Donate**—Community Forklift will take: **appliances, cabinets, ceiling fans, doors, fencing, flooring, some furniture, glass & mirrors, hardware, HVAC, lighting, landscaping materials, lumber and trim, masonry, medicine cabinets, paint, paneling, radiators, roofing, shelving, shower doors, siding, sinks, stone, tile, toilets, tools, vent covers, windows, window treatments.** For more details, please call **Community Forklift** at **301-832-0781** with questions or visit <http://communityforklift.com/donation.cfm>
- **Preparing for Donation**—Bring your item to the curb by **2:00 p.m.** on **Saturday, May 5** and label your donations **“Community Forklift.”** You will receive a receipt for your **tax-deductible** donation. Contact **Katherine Nehring** at **301-832-0781** or **donations@communityforklift.com** in advance if possible (**not required!**) to help us gauge the number of trucks needed. If your items are too large to bring to the curb, arrangements can be made for an alternate pickup date.



Your Donations Can Change Lives

### Items Requiring Repair, before 4:00 p.m., Sunday, May 6



**Donation Nation**—Our mission is to reduce our **Nation’s environmental footprint.** We are creating **green jobs** and taking steps to secure

our **Nation’s economic future.** The Items we collect are **redistributed** to local non-profits, recycled, and reused.

- **What to Donate**—Many of the loved but damaged items that are not accepted as donations by other charitable organizations groups can still find homes. **Donation Nation** will pick up your **unwanted items** and get them to a needy family.
- **Preparing for Donation**—Bring your item to the curb before **4:00 p.m.** on **Sunday, May 6.** Label your donations **“Donation Nation.”** If you want a receipt to receive a **tax deduction**, please fill out the online form at <http://www.donationnationusa.org/Donatenow.html> and enter the promotional code **SOMERSETGREEN.** If you have questions or your items are too large to bring to the curb, contact **Donation Nation** at **301-502-3392** or **Donationnationinc@gmail.com** to make **alternate** arrangements.

## Donate Furniture, Change Lives

By P. K. Hanifee, Falstone Avenue

In preparation for the **bulk trash pick-up** on **Monday, May 7,** **A Wider Circle** will have a truck driving through Somerset on **Saturday, May 5** starting at **10:00 a.m.** to pick up **mattresses, furniture, home goods and baby items.** All donations must be in good condition with no rips or stains. **A Wider Circle redistributes** these items **free of charge** to families transitioning from **shelters** or **other homeless circumstances,** or who are otherwise just living **without** their

basic needs. **Good mattresses** are the most-needed item, but **kitchen/dining tables, dressers, living room furniture, end tables, lamps, gently used linens and towels, dish sets, baby items and children’s clothing** up to **size 4T** are always helpful. **Drop-side cribs** are not accepted at this time.

If your items are too large to bring to the curb, please contact **A Wider Circle** by **Tuesday, May 1** to request an **in-home pick-up** the morning of **May 7.** Someone from the in-kind donations team can be reached at **301-608-3504** or **furnish@awidercircle.org** to get you on the schedule or answer any questions.

**In 2010,** **A Wider Circle** furnished the homes of **2,765 families,** and **in 2011,** they furnished **3,272 homes.** With your help, they can help even more families in **2012.**

# Swim Team Open House May 17 At The Pool

## New Swimmers Welcome!

By Ann Brown, Trent Street

Calling all **new swimmers, returning swimmers, mini swimmers** (4-7 year olds), **undecided swimmers** (and their parents):

Somerset's swim team "*The Dolphins*" will kick off the season with a **Pizza Party and team sign-up Thursday, May 17th from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** at the pool.



Swim Team Open House

*Meet the coaches* – **Bess Pickar**, Somerset resident and long-time Dolphin is returning to the team this

year as our **Head Coach!** And returning from last year are **Isabel Sacks, Andrew Jackwin and Joey Kathan!**

## Buy Team Swim Suits and T-shirts!

### What is the Somerset Swim Team?

- **For those new** to the neighborhood, the swim team is Somerset's only town-sponsored sports team. The team is open to all town residents ages **18 and under** who can pass the deep water test. **No try outs!** The emphasis is on **having fun and developing** each swimmer's skills.
- **Swim practice starts Tuesday, May 29 (Mon-Friday 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.)** *Can't make every practice? Don't worry!* Come as often as your schedule allows.
- **Morning practices** will begin **June 13 (8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.)** and kids can come to one or both practices.

- **Swim meets are every Saturday morning** from **June 16 to July 14**. We also have *four Wednesday night meets* and *two big relay carnivals*. The season ends on **July 21st** with **Divisional Championships** in the morning and the *team banquet* that evening. **All Star events** are the following weekend. *Going to summer camp? Family vacation?* That's okay – swim when you're in town!
- **The Minis is our developmental program** for kids **4 to 7 years old** who are able to **swim 15 yards**. They practice **3 days a week** for half an hour starting after **MCPS schools** let out. There is also an end-of-season **Mini Meet**, and Minis are encouraged to come to all team social events.
- **Weekly social events** include the *spaghetti dinner, laser tag, breakfast* with the coaches and more!

So when you're making your summer plans, leave some time for the swim team. Whether you're here for **3 weeks** or *the whole season*; whether you can practice **3 times a week** or *everyday*, we want you on the team. You can't have a **community team** without the community participating. Stop by the **Open House**, or call/email **Ann Brown, [abrown@annbrowncommunications.com](mailto:abrown@annbrowncommunications.com), 301-633-4193**, for more information.

## Tennis Fees For 2012

By Matt Fink, Dorset Avenue

**Mayor Slavin** appointed a group of residents to make *recommendations* to the **Town Council** regarding the **tennis courts**. Members are **Sue Besharov, Matt Fink, Frank Joseph, Tracey Laslo, Abby Nolan, Bob Siegel, Nancy Sussman, and Howard Waltzman**.



2012 Tennis Fees

The group conducted a *survey* in order to obtain the views of as **many residents** as possible. We would like to thank the more than **60 residents** who responded.

### 2012 Tennis Fee

Based on responses to the survey and the group's recommendation, the Council established a **fee** of **\$20** for each household wishing to play on the courts in **2012**.

*If a member of your household wishes to play on the courts in 2012, please come to the Town Hall to purchase a 2012 tennis identification card.*

### Use Of Tennis Identification Cards

Somerset tennis regulations require that *"to discourage ineligible persons from using the courts, a player in each game must . . . display a valid identification card on clip inside fence."*

In recent years, this requirement often has not been followed. The result seems to be that an increasing number of **non-residents** are using the courts.

*Please display your card when you play on the courts.*

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# Notes From The Manager's Desk

By Rich Charnovich, Town Manager



## Town Hall Top 10 List

Each month I will attempt to do my best to inform our residents on **10 important issues** I currently see happening within the Town of Somerset. As always, if anyone has any questions regarding Town operations, please feel free to contact me at Town Hall at [manager@townofsomerset.com](mailto:manager@townofsomerset.com) or 301-657-3211.



## FY13 Budget

The **Town Council** will be acting on the **FY13 budget** at the **Council Meeting** on **May 7, 2012**. There will be a public hearing on the **proposed budget** at this particular meeting as well. The proposed FY13 budget can be viewed on the **Town website**. If any Town resident has any comments,

FY13 Budget

questions, or suggestions they would like to see considered in the Town's FY13 budget, feel free to email or give me a call.



## Bulk Trash Pick-Up

The next **bulk trash pick-up** will take place on **May 7, 2012**. The Town will again be partnering with **A Wider Circle**. A Wider Circle will be driving through the Town on **May 5, 2012**. On **May 5**, please place your items by the curb by **9:00 a.m.** On **May 7**, please put your items curbside by **7:00 a.m.** Please

Bulk Trash Pick-Up

check for further updates on the **Town e-blast**. There is a detailed article on this topic in this month's **Journal**.



## Tennis Cards Available

**Tennis cards** are now available at the **Town Hall**. The fee for a card is **\$20 per household** for calendar year **2012**. If you use the Town courts, you are required to **purchase and post a card** while you are playing on the courts. Please contact or drop by the Town Hall to obtain your card.

2012 Tennis Cards

## Town Directory

The **new** and **updated Town Directory** will be **mailed** to you during the month of **May**. Thanks to everyone who provided us with your updates. **Please look out for it in your mail!**

## Town Pool House Celebration

Please save the date of **June 9, 2012** at **1:00 p.m.** on your calendar. The Town will be hosting a **celebration** at the **newly renovated pool** to **celebrate** the first full year the **brand new pool house** has been open. Further details will be provided regarding the event in coming months. **We look forward to seeing you there!**

## E-Journal Sign-Up

We would like to urge as many residents as possible to receive their Town **Journal electronically**. As a **Tree City USA** and a **PLANT Maryland Community**, Somerset

wants to reduce its impact on the environment by encouraging residents to receive their copy of the Town Journal by email. If you are not currently on the **Town Journal email distribution list** and would like to receive an **electronic copy**, please contact **Town Hall** at [manager@townofsomerset.com](mailto:manager@townofsomerset.com), or 301-657-3211.

## Public Safety Information

Please report all **suspicious persons** and **vehicles immediately** to the **Police** at 301-279-8000 or 911. This would include **solicitors** going door to door who appear to be suspicious. Never allow anyone who appears suspicious into your home. **Reminder:** Free home security surveys by Officer **Denise Gill** at 240-876-1277 by appointment to **assess** security risks of your residence. Here are some safety recommendations for those of you who do a lot of **walking** for either work or leisure:

- **Walk briskly**, with your head up, eyes scanning, and alert to your surroundings.
- **Avoid using** ear buds or headphones, and **avoid talking** on a cell phone while walking.
- **Walk in groups** whenever possible
- **Trust your instincts**; if someone makes you feel **uncomfortable**, avoid them by changing your direction and increasing your pace; go directly to a **well-lit** public place if possible.
- **Call the police immediately** and report any suspicious person or circumstance.

## Construction/Parking In The Town

Town Hall staff recognize the difficulties right now with the

*continued on page 8*

# Council Meeting Actions

*The Town Council met in regular session on April 2, 2012. The Council took the following actions:*

1. Approval of the February 27, 2012 Special Council Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of the March 5, 2012 Regular Council Minutes
3. Approval of the March 26, 2012 Swearing In/Election Results and March 26, 2012 Organization Meeting Minutes
4. Approval of the Election of Marnie Shaul as Council Vice President.
5. Approval of the following permits at 5820 Surrey Street: Building Permit, Curb Cut Permit, HVAC Unit Permit, Dumpster Permit, and Tree Removal Permit.
6. Approval of a 30-day building permit extension for 4909 Essex Avenue.
7. Approval of a generator permit extension for 5712 Warwick Place until September 4, 2012.
8. Approval of the planting of the following Town trees: 4510 Cumberland Avenue, Willow Oak; 4902 Cumberland Avenue, Dogwood; 4911 Dorset Avenue, Yellowwood; 4804 Falstone Avenue, Yoshino Cherry; 5525 Warwick Place, Dogwood; 5711 Warwick Place, Northern Red Oak; 5811 Warwick Place, Northern Red Oak.
9. Approval of a Gift Donation Policy as recommended by the Town Parks and Natural Resources Committee.
10. Approval of the donation of a park bench by Lucy Freeman, Dorset Avenue, to be located near the entrance of the Town Pool parking lot.
11. Approval of the donation of a pet disposal receptacle from Jeff and Janet McGee, Surrey Street, to be located at the corner of Warwick Place and Cumberland Avenue.
12. Approval of the Parks and Natural Resources Committee and Environment Committee's stream clean up and invasive removal day to be held on April 14, 2012 in the Town Parkland.
13. Approval of the nomination of Debbie Heller as Chairperson of the Town Swimming Pool Committee.
14. Approval of the pool guest fee rate for calendar year 2012. The guest fee rates will remain the same as they were in calendar year 2011.
15. Approval of the Pool Management Contract with Georgetown Aquatics for the 2012 Pool Season.
16. Approval of the Swim Team Rules for Calendar Year 2012.
17. Approval of PCO 81 for the Town Pool House which includes the entrance sign to the Pool parking lot as well as a refuse and recycling addition to be located near the current refuse and recycling area.
18. Approval of the bulk trash pick-up date of May 7, 2012. It would be looked into to determine if A Wider Circle could come to the Town on May 5, 2012.

In addition to the items approved at the Regular Meeting, the Council also heard the Financial Report from the Town Manager, Richard Charnovich, and a brief Pool House renovation update from Lou Balodemas, Project Manager. Manager Charnovich and Mayor Slavin also introduced the FY13 Budget. Several Town residents spoke on matters related to gift donations, the Mayor's 5-year budget plan, and the Town's bulk trash pick-up dates and procedures. The Council, Mayor, and Manager also discussed the Town's current noise ordinance in relation to construction. It was determined that the Ordinance is likely going to need to be amended, and an article would be done for the next journal and reviewed by the Town Attorney. Mayor Slavin had his monthly report available at the meeting for anyone who wanted to review it. He also stressed to make sure to vote on April 3, 2012.

# Permits Granted



## Fence Permits

4817 Essex Avenue, *4-foot wooden picket fence* to be located in the backyard

4815 Essex Avenue, *40-inch equestrian cedar fence* to be located across the north property boundary

## Wall Permit

4525 Dorset Avenue, *modification to existing wall permit*, additional wall extends 23 feet along the rear of the house, 18 to 24 inches in height, and 8 feet from the house.

## Tree Removal Permits

5812 Warwick Place, *Holly tree was dead* and needed to be removed

4809 Falstone Avenue, *Flowering Cherry*, more than 50 percent of the tree is dead and needed to be removed

## Storage Pod Permit

5707 Surrey Street, *one storage pod* to be located in the driveway

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Notes From Manager's Desk from page 5

*significant* amount of **construction** occurring in the Town. The Town will continue to *enforce its Code, monitor construction projects*, and ensure that construction regulations are *reinforced* with **applicants, contractors, and sub-contractors** for all projects. It is important that the Town do its best to enforce its regulations to *minimize disruptions* to existing **property owners**, while *welcoming* those who are moving into the Town. The Town is currently in the process of considering *amendments* to its **Construction Noise Ordinance**. Should you have any comments or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me with them for consideration.



Generator Noise Regulations

## Enforcement of Generator Noise Regulations

Many homes in Town either already have **generators installed** or will be *applying* to **install emergency generators**. Many of these generators have been *unable to pass* the **county noise level requirements**. I am pleased to announce, however, that we have had several generators recently *pass the noise level requirements successfully*. The Town staff and I will be requesting that **mitigation measures** be taken to meet the noise level requirements if the generator has not passed yet. This is a very sensitive issue, as we realize that many homes need the generators for *various reasons, medical or otherwise*, but we also must be mindful that the noise of these generators *can affect* our neighbors. Please contact Town Hall if you would like information on mitigation contractors we have on file. A list of **Acoustical Engineers** can also be located on the *Town's website*.

## HVAC Unit Permits

A fact I don't think many residents realize is that a **Town permit is required** if you are going to *install or replace* any type of **HVAC unit** for your home. **Noise level requirements** must be met for these units as well, for the protection of your neighbors. Please contact the Town Hall or visit the Town website for specific requirements for the installation of HVAC units. An article is in this month's *Journal* regarding a proposed amendment that would permit the emergency installation of HVAC units.

## Private And Town Tree Removal Process

This is just a reminder that the **Town of Somerset** must *approve* any trees to be **removed** within the Town, whether they are *public or privately owned*. Please make sure you contact the Town Hall to obtain a **permit** in advance of removing any trees from your property. Violators of this **Ordinance** are subject to *fines* in accordance with the Town Code.





By Mayor Jeffrey Slavin

As the **Somerset election** was *uncontested* on all fronts this year, only **51 residents** took the time to vote. While this was *disappointing*, it was *not unexpected*, especially since none of the candidates did any *significant campaigning*, including me. My time was better spent during this recent election season continuing to work on pressing Town matters. In the meantime, the Council and I are excited about the addition of **Barbara Condos** to the elected leadership.

Barbara is already familiar with many of the issues we are dealing with, and her position as **Swimming Pool Committee chair** during the **pool renovation** period afforded her insights into the workings of Town government. In addition, Barbara has already attended a regional orientation for newly elected officials coordinated by the **Maryland Municipal League**, and has received a briefing by Council members **Barbara Zeughauer** and **Bill Farley** (and myself). Council member Condos is, therefore, very well prepared to deal immediately with the work of the Council, and I look forward to her active participation. She had a great first meeting.

**Congrats** to new **Essex Avenue** resident **Morris Panner**, who was a candidate in the recent primary for an **At Large seat** on the **Montgomery County Board of Education**, and received enough *votes* to make the *ballot* in **December**. I urge everyone to study the candidacies of Morris and his opponent so that they can make the most informed decision possible.

**As I walk my dog**, I continue to notice . . . and **pick up** . . . a variety of *wrappers, papers, newspapers* and *cigarette butts* that have carelessly been left in the *lawns* and *streets* of **Somerset**. Given that our Town is so *beautiful*, and we are known to be “*green*,” the amount of *litter* is a disappointment. For dog walkers, I encourage you to bring an *extra bag* and take the time to **pick up the trash** (bending down for it is great exercise), or even the **dog poop** that has not been handled properly and that we continue to get complaints about.

It is my *duty* and *obligation* to remind everyone that as a **Tree City** and as *protectors* of the **tree canopy**, we are therefore very strict about *enforcement* of our rules and regulations about our arbors. Most know that **permits** are required for **taking down** a tree, which is different for those who live in the rest of **Montgomery County**, but sometimes it is confusing to **newcomers** and **off-site property owners**. Recently a **nonresident owner** ordered the removal of a *perfectly good tree* and *failed* to get permission. Once our **Staff** discovered this, our **Code Enforcement Officer, Larry Plummer**, was notified and this eventually resulted in a **\$500 fine**. While that might seem *stiff* at present, knowing that *hefty fines* should prevent needless taking down of trees that could last for decades leads me to my continued *strong support* of our Code in this regard. I certainly hope that all agree and will help spread the word.

Welcome back to all those who were away for **Spring Vacations**, and best of luck to our students at all levels as **exam season** approaches. For the soon to be graduates, remember to let us know about your *commencement exercises* and your plans for next year.

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Tennis Fees from page 5

## Other Matters

- The group is *reviewing* the Somerset **tennis court regulations**, which were adopted in **2002**, and residents' views are being solicited.
- The courts were constructed in **1966**, and a *rubber surface* was installed in **2001**. The surface is *separating* from the base, producing *soft spots* and *bubbles*. The group has advised the Council that **renovation** likely will be needed in the next **two to three years**.

*We would very much appreciate receiving your views regarding the courts. I can be reached at [mainsailmd@verizon.net](mailto:mainsailmd@verizon.net).*

# Preliminary Agenda

## Regular Town Council Meeting

Somerset Town Hall – Monday, May 7, 2012 – 7:30 p.m.

The Somerset Town Council will meet in regular session on Monday, May 7, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. at the Somerset Town Hall. Agenda updates are posted on the Town website:

[www.townofsomerset.com](http://www.townofsomerset.com)\*\*

**Regular Meeting of the Town Council  
Council Work Session – 7:00 p.m.**

**Council Meeting Convenes – 7:30 p.m.**

1. Motion: To approve the April 17, 2012 Special Council Meeting Minutes – 7:35 p.m.
2. Motion: To approve the April 2, 2012 Regular Council Meeting Minutes – 7:40 p.m.
3. Discussion: Town Manager's April Financial Report – 7:45 p.m.
4. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider adoption of the FY13 Budget and set the real estate tax rate – 7:50 p.m.\*
5. Comments: Town Residents/Agenda Items – 8:10 p.m.
6. Comments: Town Residents/Non-Agenda Items – 8:15 p.m.
7. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider removal of the following Town Trees as recommended by the Arborist and as listed in the May Town Journal – 8:20 p.m.
  - Town Tree Number 271 at 5809 Surrey Street
  - Town Tree Number 42 at 5812 Warwick Place (on Cumberland Avenue)
9. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider an application to remove the following trees at 4725 Cumberland Avenue as recommended by the Town Arborist: – 8:25 p.m.
  - 70-inch Pine, side of deck (east side)
  - 23-inch Hemlock, (rear yard)
  - Three Leyland Cypress, 19, 16, and 30-inches, next to neighbor's garage (back yard)
10. Discussion: Pool House Punch List Update – 8:30 p.m.
11. Discussion/Motion: To consider adoption of the Pool Rules for Calendar Year 2012 – 8:40 p.m.\*
12. Public Hearing/Motion: To consider adoption of amendments in relation to the Town's Ordinance regarding Noise Control – 8:45 p.m.\*
13. Discussion/Motion: To consider acceptance of Mayor Slavin's nomination of Mark Oxley, Dorset Avenue, to the Town Batting Cage Committee. His term will expire December 31, 2013 – 9:00 p.m.
14. Discussion: Mayor's Report – 9:05 p.m.
15. Adjourn – 9:10 p.m.

**\*\* Please note there will be multiple items added to the agenda after the journal is published. Please contact the Town Manager at Town Hall if you are interested in the topics that may be added.**

### Key

**Public Hearing Item:** Agenda item where public comment is permitted.

**Discussion Item:** Agenda item limited to discussion among the Council, Mayor and Town Staff.

**Motion Item:** Agenda item requesting action, limited to Council discussion.

**Comments:** Opinions and Questions from Town residents.

*This is a preliminary Agenda prepared to meet the Journal press deadline, which typically is two weeks prior to the next Town Council meeting. During this period, there will likely be changes to the timing of items, and some items may be added or deleted. Please consult the bulletin board on the Town Hall porch or the Town website for the most up-to-date Agenda.*

*Residents who wish to be present for a particular Agenda item are advised to arrive 15 minutes ahead of the item's scheduled discussion time as discussions sometimes run ahead of schedule.*

**Items marked \*** have related articles inside this issue of the Town Journal.



**left to right:** Council Members Marnie Shaul, Barbara Zeughhauser, Bill Farley, Cathy Pickar, and Barbara Condos