

*Message from Terri Lacoff, Council Treasurer
November 2020*

Following is the Beacon Hill Townhomes Condominium 2021 Budget. I am happy to report the condo fee will remain at \$145 for the coming year.

Although a Budget is presented each year to the Unit Owners, Council will still hear comments like, *what am I getting for my condo fees, or I pay my fees each month, so I want this done*. Therefore, to give Owners a better perspective of how the condo fee is applied to our operating expenses, I added a *Monthly Cost Per Unit* column to the 2021 Budget.

Using *General Maintenance* as an example, you will see the monthly allocation is a little bit over \$8 month or \$96 annually per Unit. This expense can fluctuate from one year to another depending on whether Council has slated a maintenance expense that occurs only sporadically. You will also see our two highest expenses, *Insurance* and the *Reserve Contribution*, currently account for almost \$100 of the \$145 you are to pay each month. The *Reserve Contribution* is a requirement under the Delaware Uniform Common Interest Ownership Act. The *Reserve* is separate from our daily operating expenses. The *Reserve* can only be used for major replacements like roofs, paving, etc. Our Reserve Study Report detailing how the *Reserve Contribution* is determined can be found on our website, beaconhillcondos.org.

The Budget estimates a deficit at the end of 2021 to be \$15,454. Any such deficit at year-end will be covered by monies carried over from prior years' surpluses. Furthermore, because much of our cash surplus derives from tangible expenses like *Snow* and *General Maintenance*, if we have little to no snow and repairs are minimal along with no unexpected events, the deficit will not be as high as projected. However, at some point the surplus will be depleted and the condo fee will have to be increased.

Serving as Council Treasurer and the Property Maintenance Coordinator, I try to see to it our community receives quality services at a reasonable fee within a reasonable amount of time. To help achieve this, I converse with owners or make personal visits to get a first hand perspective of what their issues are. In matters that are more complex, Dick Stausebach will sometimes accompany me so we can do some troubleshooting in order to provide the contractor with thorough details. These details are documented into a written *Work Order Request* sent to the contractor. This process reduces the likelihood of miscommunication and repeated service call visits. Furthermore, the contractors' performance is scrutinized by Council, not a 3rd party Property Manager with no vested interest in our community. Accordingly, please forward any of your property issues to my or to the entire Council's attention. Our email addresses can be found on our website.

It has been six years since I was elected to Council and have been serving as the Council Treasurer and Property Maintenance Coordinator. I believe our community has made great strides in our appearance and operations all the while maintaining a healthy balance sheet. However, as I state each year at the Annual Meeting, should I (for whatever reason) cease my work on Council and no other Council Member or Unit Owner volunteers to assume the duties I presently hold, or we lose the services of Peg Savoia and cannot find a comparable replacement, the Association will have no choice but to engage a full service property manager, which would result in a significant increase in the condo fee.