



The Message

Issue 286

MARCH 2011

ELECTION BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED FOR MOUNT RAINIER ELECTION

At a special meeting of the Mayor and Council on March 7, 2011, Resolution 3-2011 shall be adopted appointing members to the City of Mount Rainier Board of Elections for a two year term. The next city election is scheduled for May 2, 2011 at City Hall. The polls will be open 7:00 am until 8:00 pm on Election Day. You may be required to work one other day on April 4, 2011 which is the candidate filing deadline date and all candidates running for election or re-election are certified.

Election judges are paid a stipend of \$100 for each day worked (usually 1 or 2 days) and reimbursed for food purchased on Election Day which is usually a 13-14 hour day. If you are interested please contact the City Manager at City Hall at 301-985-6585 or notify either the Mayor or one of the council members.

City Seeks Members for Town Center Design Review Committee

The City is currently soliciting one municipal, one residential and one business member for the Town Center Design Review Committee. The Committee is composed of 2 business members, 2 resident members and 2 municipal members and reviews all new development projects and exterior renovations in the Mixed-Use Town Center Zone. This Zone extends along Rhode Island Avenue from the City limits into the 3400 block and along 34th Street from the 3700 block into the 4000 blocks and includes part of Bunker Hill. Each Committee member will be given a copy of the Mount Rainier Town Center Development Plan. This plan contains the design guidelines which the Committee uses to review applications.

Resident members should possess one of the following areas of interest: local history, architecture, real estate, education, law, and finance, business or building trades. The City is looking for residents who have

IN THIS ISSUE...

Proposed Charter Amendment	2
Message From Chief Scott	2
FY12 Budget Calendar	5
MRTV Channel 21/71	6
Public Works Calendar	7
Directory of Important Contacts	8

a sense of fairness in reviewing applications and who are interested in the on-going revitalization of the downtown business area. Committee members should be willing to help encourage appropriate building alterations and signage among business and property owners and to help educate rather than regulate.

Business and/or property owner members must own either a business or property within the Mixed-Use Town Center Zone or the City. The City would again be looking for members who have a sense of fairness in reviewing applications and who are interested in the on-going revitalization of the downtown business area. Committee members should be willing to help encourage

appropriate building alterations and signage among business and property owners and to help educate rather than regulate.

Municipal members on the committee could be persons with expertise in planning, local history, architecture, real estate, education, law, finance, business or building trades or persons who presently serve on City boards or commissions, or others committed to town center revitalization as described in the development plan.

Applications to be on the Committee are due to City Hall by April 1, 2011. The final selection of committee members will be made by the Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission from the pool of applicants submitted by the City. The City will then select candidate from the pool to fill the municipal representative position.

FAIR SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS

This is to give notice that on January 4, 2011, the Council of the City of Mount Rainier adopted Charter Amendment Resolution No. 1-2010 which amends Article V (Registration, Nomination, and Election Procedures) of the City Charter to provide that a person appointed to fill a Councilmember vacancy shall serve until the next biennial City election when there shall be a special election for that Council office; to provide that if a special election to fill a Council vacancy is required, then the person elected shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacant office being filled; and to provide for nomination procedures for 4-year and 2-year terms of office in the event that, due to a Councilmember vacancy filled by appointment, both Council seats in a ward expire at the same City biennial election.

For further information, contact City Manager Jeannelle B. Wallace, City of Mount Rainier, 1 Municipal Place, Mount Rainier, MD 20712, telephone (301) 985-6585.

Message from Chief Scott

Who Has Your Information?

The Internet is a double edge sword. While it provides us many conveniences, it also opens up our personal information to those who could exploit that information to our detriment. ZABA (<http://www.zabasearch.com/>) is a website that acts as a portal to public and commercial databases. By combing the power of the Internet and relational databases ZABA has made a tremendous amount of information freely available. Indeed, the word ZABA is from the Greek word, "tzaba", meaning "free" or "at no cost." A free search will likely provide your home address, telephone number and possibly your date of birth. And, for a small fee someone can obtain extensive information about you.

- After you visit ZABA's web site, and found out how much information is available about you and your family, take a look at the several steps listed below that you can take to limit the amount of information floating on the net about you.
- Open a post office box. Have as much of your mail as possible directed to the post office box. Be sure you have credit card statements, utility bills and magazine subscriptions come to the box. This is probably the most effective and least expensive long term solution.

- An unlisted number isn't an unknown number. It is simply not in directory assistance or in the telephone book. It can be obtained. And, most of the time, you give it out, especially when you fill out applications, etc. Get a new unlisted number for your home. Obtain caller identification technology and only give the number out to friends and relatives. Consider using a cellular telephone number, with the bill going to your post office box, as a means of controlling the number of people and organizations who have your telephone number.
- Do not fill out any form, for any company or organization that does not have a privacy policy. Make sure that they will not sell your information. If they do not have such a policy in place, do business with someone else.
- You can try to file a written request with information providers, asking that your information be kept private or deleted from their database. Some will comply, many will not.
- Start a family trust and conduct your business through that trust. If you are in a position to do so, you might also consider a corporation or DBA as a means to control the flow of your personal information.
- Buy a shredder. Shred all credit card, mortgage reduction, and charity solicitation mail; and any mail that has your personal information on it.

Home Safety

Studies have shown that if you can keep an intruder from gaining entry for just six minutes, the bad guy will give up and find an easier target. So please read and practice the home safety measures listed below. **The bottom line is: *you* are responsible for your safety and that of your loved ones and property. Be diligent, be proactive and take the steps necessary to deny the bad guys the opportunity to do you harm and steal your stuff!**

Over the past few weeks there have been a series of burglaries in the Upshur Street, 30th Street, Rainier Avenue and Bunker Hill Road section of the City. These burglaries had several commonalities: the bad guy threw brick or rock through a window to gain entry and went immediately to a bedroom and stole jewelry and other items of value. In two of these cases the residence was alarmed at the time of the break-in. The alarms worked as intended, however the bad guys managed to escape just minutes before MRPD officers arrived. This was due to the fact that the alarm company, upon receiving the alarm, called the homeowner first *before* calling the police. Those few minutes delay may have been the difference between catching the suspect and his/her getting away. The police department recommends that homeowners who have installed and registered residential alarms call their alarm monitoring company and request that the Mount Rainier Police Department is notified first. Many alarm companies will hesitate to do this because they want to reduce the number of false alarms, especially where false alarms may result in fines to the homeowner. This is especially true with newly installed systems. However, if you are comfortable operating your system, a first notification to the police will get us there quicker in the event that a real burglary is in progress.

- Never open your door to strangers. Use peepholes or look out a window. There is no reason that you have to open the door to anyone. Teach this to everyone in your household.
- Never let a stranger into your home. If they need to use the phone, tell them that you will make the call for them.
- Make sure that all doors to the outside are metal or solid 1¾" hardwood.

- Install deadbolts on all exterior doors and use them. Be sure that the screws for the strike plate go at least 3 inches into the doorframe. Consider using deadbolts that require a key both inside and out. In an emergency, you will have to remember that you need the key to get out, but this will prevent a burglar from smashing out a window, turning the inside deadbolt latch and getting into your home.
- If someone lived in your home before you, have the locks changed.
- **Use the locks you have. Always lock up your home when you go out, even if it's only for a few minutes.** You should also lock your doors and first floor windows when you are outside doing yard work or other chores. You should also lock up when you are occupied with personal matters such as bathing/showering or relaxing out back. Older teens that are home alone after school should always lock the doors behind them when they come home; studying, video games and TV always come before home safety!
- Secure sliding glass doors with commercially available bars or locks, or put a wooden dowel or broomstick in the door track.
- Make sure your windows, especially at ground and first floor levels, have good locks *and use them.*
- Close your window shades at night and be sure that the landscape around them is trimmed short.
- ***Make sure all porches and other possible entrances are well lit. Turn your front porch light on at dusk and leave it on throughout the night.*** This is a simple security measure that will not only help protect your property but that of your neighbors as well. You may want to consider using light fixtures that incorporate a photocell. Photocells automatically turn lights on at night and off in the morning. When selecting a bulb, consider switching to an LED (light emitting diode) bulb. LED bulbs use almost no electricity, generate zero heat, and are reported to last for 60,000 hours - that's 12 hours of light every single day for more than an entire decade. They also don't contain the mercury that CFL bulbs do, so they're more environmentally friendly and don't require special disposal when they burn out.
- Trim any bushes or trees that hide doors or windows. Keep ladders, tools, toys, and recreational equipment inside when you're not using them.
- Don't hide your house keys under the doormat or in a flowerpot. It's much wiser to give an extra key to a trusted neighbor.
- Keep written records of all furniture, jewelry and electronic products. If possible, keep these records in a safe deposit box, fireproof safe, or other secure place. Take pictures or a video, and keep purchase information and serial numbers when available. These help law enforcement track recovered items.
- Clearly display your house number, so police and other emergency vehicles can find your home quickly.
- List only your first initial and last name on your mailbox, phone book, or door.
- If you see a screen that has been cut, broken windows, or a door that's been left open, don't go in. Call the police from a neighbor's house or a cell phone.
- If you hear a noise that sounds like someone breaking in or moving around, quietly call the police and wait calmly until they arrive. If you can leave safely, do so. Otherwise, lock yourself in the room you are in and pretend to be asleep.
- Have a telephone extension or cell phone in your bedroom.
- Dogs should be considered primarily as companions and family members but they can also be effective deterrents. Get a dog that barks loud! It doesn't have to be a big, mean, nasty Cujo-type dog; it just has to sound like one when it thinks someone is trying to break into your house. Bad guys don't like to get bit!

- Contrary to what some would have you believe, guns *are not* your best protection. Please think carefully before buying a firearm for protection. Guns can be stolen and sold to anyone, or captured and used on you or the police. If you do own a gun, keep it stored out of the reach of children and untrained adults and learn how to use it safely. The MRPD will provide gun locks to you free of charge. Stop by during business hours or call us and we'll have an officer drop one off to you.
- The MRPD has officers trained to do a security analysis of your home or business and recommend effective ways of securing your property. To arrange for a security analysis, please call our Records Section at 301-985-6580.
- If you are going to be away from your home for an extended period of time, such as for vacation or a business trip, please notify MRPD. We do "vacation" checks of your property while you're gone. Let us know the dates and who, if anyone is authorized to check on pets, perform maintenance or be present on your property or in your house for any reason. You should also have delivery of your mail and newspapers delayed until your return. If you are going to leave a motor vehicle on the street you need to let us know that, too so that the vehicle won't be towed under the City's 48-hour parking ordinance.

FY2012 Budget Calendar

Monday, March 7, 2011	Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council; City Manager submits and presents proposed FY 2012 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for" all city departments
Tuesday, March 15,2011	FY 2012 Budget work session and discussion on proposed constant yield tax rate
Thursday, April 1, 2011	Deadline for submission of April 7, 2011 display ad on proposed Constant Yield Tax Rate and notice of public hearing on FY 2012 Budget
Tuesday, April5,2011	Mayor and Council Meeting; special work session on FY 2012 Budget
Tuesday, April 19,2011	Public hearing and public comment on proposed FY 2012 Budget and Constant Yield Tax Rate; Special Meeting for First Reading on FY 2012 Budget
Tuesday, May 3,2011	Mayor and Council Meeting; Second Reading and Vote on FY 2012 Budget and Constant Yield Tax Rate

Summer Job for Youth

DC/VA/MD Summer Commuting Conservation Crews for High School Students
June 27th –August 5th, 2011

The SCA's Commuting Conservation program is a six week program for high school students ages 15-18 from DC, Virginia and Maryland

Students will work Monday – Friday, 8 hours per day on conservation crews completing a variety of projects in DC, Virginia and Maryland's national, state and regional parks. Students will earn an hourly minimum wage. During the last week of the program students will participate in 3 a recreation camping.

To apply:
Contact Ted Miller @ 703-524-2441 ext2014 or tmiller@thesca.org



Comcast Channel 71 Verizon Channel 21

What you need to know...What you want to know... Watch MRTV for the latest in City News, Information, and Updates! MRTV, your local Government Access Channel!

MRTV provides 24/7 scheduled programming on your Comcast and Verizon cable channels. Watch City Council meetings, Work Sessions, City events and a host of MRTV produced programs and shows. Watch for the daily Program Guide for a list shows and times.

What's New on MRTV?

Total Info – Watch the latest News, Weather, Sports Scores, Traffic Info, Stock Market Reports, Trivia Facts and more!

You can now watch "On Demand" all MRTV programs, City Council Meetings and Work Sessions on the City's website: www.mountrainiermd.org Click on



banner and chose your program to watch! Each selection has a title, length of program and a program description. When you select a City Council Meeting or Work Session, you will see the agenda items that will be discussed.

MRTV comments, suggestions, volunteer opportunities and show ideas contact: mrtvchannel71@yahoo.com or call 301-985-6585 ext. 28 voice mail, Graciela Carbonell, Department Director

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS RECYCLE
AND TRASH COLLECTION NOTICE**

All recyclables (aluminum cans, bottles, paper and cardboard) can be put in the same yellow recycle bin which will be picked up Friday of each week. These items will be taken to the County recycle plant as they now have the capability to separate the items.

PUBLIC WORKS CALENDAR

March and April 2011 Schedule

Listed hereunder is the scheduled pick up dates for trash in the City of Mt. Rainier, for March and April 2011.

DATE	PARTICULARS	DATE	PARTICULARS
March 2	Regular Trash Pick Up	April 1	Recyclables Pick Up
March 4	Recyclables Pick Up	April 4	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558) Yard Waste Pick Up
March 7	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558) Yard Waste Pick Up	April 6	Regular Trash Pick Up
March 9	Regular Trash Pick Up	April 8	Recyclables Pick Up
March 11	Recyclables Pick Up	April 11	Yard Waste Pick Up
March 14	Yard Waste Pick Up	April 13	Regular Trash Pick Up
March 16	Regular Trash Pick Up	April 15	Recyclables Pick Up
March 18	Recyclables Pick Up	April 18	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558) Yard Waste Pick Up
March 21	Bulk Trash Pick Up (By appointment only, call 301 985 6558) Yard Waste Pick Up	April 20	Regular Trash Pick Up
March 23	Regular Trash Pick Up	April 22	Recyclables Pick Up
March 25	Recyclables Pick Up	April 25	Yard Waste Pick Up
March 28	Yard Waste Pick Up	April 27	Regular Trash Pick Up
March 30	Regular Trash Pick Up	April 29	Recyclables Pick Up

All bulk appointments must be made before 12 noon on the Friday preceding the pickup day. All bulk and Yard Waste must be set out before 7:00 AM on pick up