

February 2015

## *Village Green's Board Election*

### An Interview with Cynthia Cyrus, Chief Election Inspector

By Jeanne Gagnard

The final votes have been counted and a newly constituted board has been seated. Behind each successful annual Village Green board election are not only rules and procedures but the diligence of our election inspectors. Their work begins well before we see them scurrying around on election day, determining if we have a quorum of homeowners casting ballots. To find out more about what our inspectors do, we decided to sit down with veteran inspector Cynthia Cyrus and ask about their work.

Monthly Highlights: *Who were the inspectors of election this year and how were they chosen?*

Cynthia Cyrus: The inspectors this year were newly appointed inspectors Susan Hamric and Steven Keylon, along with myself. I was made chief inspector because of my many years of experience. I began as a volunteer many years ago with a casual offer to help. This year, I was asked by the board to recommend two other residents who I consider to have integrity, intelligence, who are team-oriented and have a respect for rules. The board agreed with those choices and appointed the three of us to serve.

MH: *What are the inspectors' duties before the election?*

CC: We begin by coordinating with the Village Green office to ensure that the guidelines are being followed and all the deadlines are met. The inspectors then contact the nominees to verify their willingness to run, to inform them of the deadline for submitting their candidates' statements, and the dates of the Meet the Candidates' and the annual HOA meetings. We also monitor, in pairs, incoming unopened envelopes to organize and count them and to prep the master list to ensure that the names on the ballots match the recorded names of the owners.

MH: *Describe, if you would, how the ballots are counted.*

CC: The inspectors open the outside envelopes containing the ballots, this year in the Clubhouses' Fireside Room, retaining the inside yellow envelopes that have been vetted and placed in numerical order for documentation. The secret ballots are then opened and prepped for counting, i.e. placed in stacks of 25 each for counting by small groups of resident-volunteers and office staff. I oversee the counting. Once the ballots are counted, each group of counters call the numbers for each candidate. The numbers are then tallied and the candidates are

ranked by the number of votes they received. The results are then announced to all those present.

MH: *Were there any differences between the procedure this year and last year?*

CC: There was one change resulting from the legal challenge last year by a homeowner to our counting procedures. Interested homeowners are able to observe the inspectors as they open both the yellow envelopes and the secret ballots. However, because some of the information discussed by the inspectors is confidential, the process is observed from the clubhouse patio through the closed glass doors.

MH: *Would you be an election inspector again?*

CC: I continue to have a strong commitment to serve our community in this way but, frankly, the process was an exhausting and stressful one this year. I will need time to consider whether to participate again next year.