



**Homeowners Association**  
**Regular Meeting - HOA Board of Directors**  
**July 17, 2023**

**MINUTES**

Minutes are meant to reflect a summary of the Board's actions and not as a transcript of all discussions. This is a virtual meeting; members were notified on our website and by email of the time and provided the link.

The purpose of this meeting is to conduct regular board business in an open format. Board members will provide each other with updates on action items.

The meeting was called to order and a quorum was established. (3 out of 5 directors) Board members present: Acting President: Doug Moore; Secretary: Beth Morris; Treasurer: Diana Johnson; and Member-at-Large: Kevin Cavanaugh

Joining the meeting virtually were committee members Renee Jacobs, Jim Taylor, Jim Dunlap, and Sarah Whitney. Members joining were: Sam M., Cynthia K., Jeff and Nanci L.; Don G.; Rock M., Chis P.; Tina Y.; Rudey M.; Barb and Bill C., Ryan B., Roberta R.; Jeanne and Kenneth H.; Nick J.; Tina Y.; Chris P. Kristen Ledbetter, a representative from an association management company, is also joining and will be presenting to the board in executive session.

Acting President, Doug Moore made opening remarks and introduced our chair and zoom master.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Secretary, Beth Morris moved to adopt the meeting minutes from July 10, 2023. Board members were provided the minutes prior today's meeting and given an opportunity to note errors or omissions. The motion passed with 4 votes. An executive session was held following the regular board meeting to discuss steps to have a special meeting in August for a new budget ratification and how to add board members. There was a discussion about our management company and changes that may follow. Beth reports that a lot of work is going into developing protocols in writing to provide consistency, learning new technology, drafting correspondence to contact members using our new email feature, and keeping track/recording our activities.

Active President, Doug Moore updated us on the status of the consent forms allowing email to replace US postal service. He reports that we have collected nearly 80% of the owners' consent forms. Owners without any internet devices or who prefer, are able to opt for post office delivery.

Treasurer, Diana Johnson reported current balances without benefit of her prepared slide. Our CD has \$9,830, our checking 13,761, and our reserve savings account 86,876. She has further details to share when the technology gets straightened out.

Doug reminded members to submit comments and inquiries using the website as they arise from this meeting. He also encouraged members to use those forms to let us know if they are interested in joining a committee or participating in some other way.

Beth reported on today's drive-by. Unlike the May check-up, Landscaping Board Member Ann Zimmerman was not available today. Beth introduced Jim Taylor and touted his credentials for landscaping skill and eye for fine

landscaping as he joined her on today's walk through. As in May, the most common blemishes noted are excessive weeds and dead or dying plants/bushes/trees. Also observed in our aging community are some fences that are getting "tired" and in need of paint/stain or repairs. Although board members received copies of the emailed "need of upkeep" that were sent to some members, we are unsure if they went out to our non-email members following May's drive by. For this reason, Jim and Beth agreed to give a "pass" and issue our own in-house "heads-up" with our new email capability. A first notice is to call attention to the needed improvement with a due date and the fine schedule attached. After a second walk-through fines will be issued.

Violations Committee Chairman, Jim Taylor shared some photos of our beautiful neighborhood and some statistics about drive by violations. Of the 28 violations identified in May, 46% of them have been resolved, with or without receiving a letter. Twelve violations were not resolved and there were 17 new "need of upkeep" that we will reach out to. Jim hopes to be able to have a database to manage infractions in the future, hopefully with a management company's software.

Diana got her slide to share showing the current breakdown of our balances as of May 30. She explained that the financial reports have about a three-week delay before we received them, therefore, June's numbers are not shown. She hopes to change that lag-time with a new management company.

## NEW BUSINESS

Doug shared that our Landscaping Board Member has resigned as of yesterday. He notes that Ann is moving to New Mexico to be with family. Doug praised Ann's contributions to the board in the months she has been with us. He described Ann's work towards beautifying the main gate and notes that is on hold as we move on with a replacement. At this time, a motion was made to fill Ann's vacancy with Jim Taylor; the motion passed with 4 votes.

Communications Committee Chair, Renee Jacobs explained how the board wants to improve community participation in outcomes the board votes on. To this end, new business will include items up for consideration, such as landscape plans or variances, shared in an open meeting allowing members to form opinions and give feedback using online tools. The following week, such items would be raised as old business with the input from the community included before the board takes a vote.

Another area for improvement was identified when a committee's presentation to the board evolved into a lengthy discussion. While the board meeting is the place to introduce new business, it's not the best setting for back-and-forth discussion. Going forward, we're asking committees to hold an open forum, live and inviting members who are interested to join, and seek input so community voices can be heard. Then, when we hear from the committee in a board meeting, our members can feel they have participated.

Renee shared an anecdote about walking through the neighborhood and encountering some law enforcement activity at the intersection of Castlerock and Cambridge Loop. A questionable person was being confronted by the sheriffs at that time. Later, a phone call from a concerned neighbor at that corner, inquired into the development of a Neighborhood Watch. A call to action was voiced by Renee in hopes that one of our members would be willing to investigate establishing such a program in our neighborhood by reaching out to the national organization and getting us started. Nick J. volunteered to head the effort.

## MISSION AND TIMELINE PRIORITIES

Renee explained the board's big goal of holding a special meeting August for the purpose of ratifying a new budget. Following the budget ratification meeting in March, where our property management company wasn't prepared to talk about it, there was a general sense of uneasiness that maybe our budget isn't square up. And also, we're worried about running into arrears wondering if we have enough reserves. Your board committed to developing a new budget that's defensible and allow us to determine whether to raise dues or issue a special

assessment. The board has to pass a budget before they schedule a special meeting, so there is time for members to comment.

In addition to ratifying a new budget, a special meeting will address the need for additional board members. HOA board members are feeling overwhelmed and overworked as we begin trying to be more interactive and responsive. An election for the board will be included in the August special meeting, and members are encouraged to consider what role they would like to run for in a free and fair election.

The third purpose of a special meeting will be to amend our by-laws. Attempts to change them have failed because it is a cumbersome endeavor, so the ability to amend makes sense. Specifically, we'd like to allow for allowing for member-volunteers with a waiver.

Emergency – Elite Management has informed the board in writing that they no longer want to represent us. At first they said they would stop support at the end of July, but have since agreed to work with us until the end of August. They have also agree to assist the onboarding of a new company, saying they don't want to cause any hardship on us. Most management firms need 30-60 days to onboard and we're sitting at 45 days at this time.

Diana notes that this is a window of opportunity. Our current situation is not up to speed with modern solutions and there are multiple options out there for change. We've got demos from several firms lined-up and we've identified the most important functionalities and support we're looking for. Members are encouraged to give their input on line about what they see as priorities in a management firm. As we meet with Ms. Leadbetter in executive session, we will record her presentation and any members interested in seeing her presentation can contact us and we will share the video.

Urgency – Several items have been identified as needing attention in our neighborhood; their cost will impact our budget and needed reserves. Stormwater, gates, pavement, and trees are all on our radar at this time. We realize there will be surprises that we don't anticipate and aging infrastructure that will become problematic in the near future.

Trees – Committee member Sarah Whitney shared reports from two arborists about specific trees that are experiencing significant die back. Her recommendation to the board, based on professional input, is to remove the trees in question. Should the board decide to remove threes, it would seem that an arborist is not needed for this, so other removal bids will be sought.

Current state of our finances by Diana Johnson [slide show presentation] We need to know is what is the appropriate amount of savings what is the appropriate amount to have in our reserves, in addition to the infrastructure changes that have to be made over the short term and the long term.

Diana shared a pie chart with our expenditures for 2022. The purpose is to see where are our big categories are, where we are spending all of our money. This also gives us an opportunity to number crunch and reduce some of our costs. We definitely have opportunities to reduce some of our overhead. Landscaping is our largest expense at 46% of our budget. While it's not an emergency, it is an area of spending concern and we are looking forward in improving that. Our investment in a grate for stormwater is our next largest category along with management services. We have a stormwater committee following up on that item., but it was a huge hit to our reserves and only covers half the solution; concrete pilings (\$10k) are needed for the grate to function. The committee is still exploring whether this solution is really a solution at all, so the expense for stormwater relief could be exponentially higher. More investigation and information will be forthcoming.

Note that “additional” management services are beyond the basic accounting service they provide. Printing, mailing, going to the bank, anything like that is billed extra. This will be another place we will look for savings as we consider different management companies.

Asked what was the biggest surprise in the finances, Diana noted that WRS does not own landscaping equipment but has to rent it. They charge us to pick it up and then deliver it before they go home. Another surprise was the cost of \$180 per month for landlines at the gates for folks to use. Average use was 3-4 times monthly. This is another area for savings. Surprisingly, the payment coupon books that Elite prints for us cost \$25 per household, and less than 5 households use them. We want to do better with our money – homeowners' money - and board members are homeowners too.

Another slide showed our upcoming expenses in a bar graph showing urgent an emergency expenses are the lion's share of our costs. There are things that were not included in our budget last year which are not included in this graph, so we know our expenses are going to be higher.

Future repair – neighborhood walkabout with photos - Renee Jacobs Our roads need attention.there are cracks. The real concern is if you seal it, you prevent the freeze thaw if you don't seal it then they have to come in and cut out a chunk of road and then do a big patch. We save money in the community if we maintain our roads. Our storm drains are half full of debris. Mailboxes are looking shabby. Our front sign announcing our beautiful neighborhood are in disrepair; paint is peeling, and tile slates have fallen off. Our islands have dead shrubs and are overgrown. We continue to look for additional gate companies for quotes and have to determine is repair or replacement is needed. Kevin shared that in speaking to our gate company, he was told that our gate is working well and should continue to do so for many years.

Diana has found invoices from previous work that we've had in the past, so we're confident that we'll have good bids. We'll have numbers well before the end of the month with the big goal to have the budget ready enough that the board can pass.

Research on our reserve account shows we are depositing \$900 a month to our account. We added 10,800 last year, and we're on target at the same amount this year. The reserve analysis we paid for back in late 2017 set a target goal to contribute 11,700 a month to our reserve, but the previous board reduced that.As of today, we should be close to \$145,000 and today we're at\$ 86,000, so that leaves us with a deficit of \$58,000 from our target barring any large surprise expenses.

We either put money in the reserves slowly but surely and consistently month after month or month. That way when we need it, it's there. If we don't do that, then if we have a \$20,000 bill that comes up when we don't have enough in our reserves, we're going to have to have a special assessment.

Acting President made closing remarks.

**Discussion ended and motion made to adjourn the meeting.**

Board announced its movement into executive session to hear from Ms. Ledbetter what the management company she represents can provide.

And to discuss HOA Board Member Engagement