

**2018 Annual Meeting**  
**Crown Estates Homeowners Association**  
**January 13, 2018**

The 2018 annual meeting of the CEHOA convened at 2 pm in the meeting room of the Cascade Park Library. A total of 18 members, representing 11 households, were in attendance, presided over by Sam Bateman, President. A quorum was present at 39%.

Members Present:

*Phase I:* Tina Del Dotto, Willie DeLong, Lanny Hubbard, Joseph & Thavy Hing

*Phase II:* Don & Sharon Kroeller, Roy & Beth Gravley, Larry & Linda Jones, Amy Campbell, Bob & Nancy Marsh, Jack & Noreen Williams, Sam & Judy Bateman

Changes in Membership:

*New member in Phase I:* **Sheryl Johnson** (12503 NE14th Circle, who bought Jane Austin's house). Sadly, we lost one member on 14<sup>th</sup> Circle, **Sid Sidaros**, who passed away after a long illness.

*New members in Phase II:* **Gary Alm** (12604 NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way, who is renting the house to a young couple, Bethany and Shawn); **Larry & Linda Jones** (12615 NE 13<sup>th</sup> Way, who bought Kirk & Ruth's house); **Amy Campbell** (12611 NE 13<sup>th</sup> Way, who bought Barb Straub's house).

Changes in Officers:

Amy Campbell has been elected to replace Sharon Kroeller as Treasurer and Board Member (Sharon resigned due to busy travel schedule).

Willie DeLong has been elected to replace Bill Bato as a member of the ACC (Bill resigned due to a busy work and travel schedule).

Current Officers:

*President:* Sam Bateman

*Vice President:* Beth Gravley

*Secretary:* Jack Williams

*Treasurer:* Amy Campbell

*Board Members:* Four officers above, plus Bob Marsh, Willie DeLong, and Lanny Hubbard

*ACC Members:* Sam Bateman, Beth Gravley, Bob Marsh, and Willie DeLong

These positions will expire at the end of 2018 and new appointments will be made at that time for the next two-year period. Anyone interested in serving in any of these positions is encouraged to come forward. We need to be reminded that the long-range success of the HOA ultimately will depend on the participation of all members. We see evidence all around us in the Fircrest Neighborhood of the consequences of lack of an HOA. We don't want that to happen to our fine community.

### Old Business:

*Secretary's Report:* The finalized Minutes from the Jan. 14, 2017 Annual Meeting were approved without correction. The Minutes had been distributed by email earlier to all members, asking them to read the draft before today's meeting. The procedure for producing the minutes is as follows: the Secretary takes notes during the meeting, then soon afterward works up a draft of the proceedings. That draft is then sent to the President, and he meets shortly with the Secretary and the two of them reach a consensus on what they regard as a correct record of the proceedings. That draft is then soon put onto the website, usually within a few days of the meeting. Since it is difficult to recall what happened a year earlier at the last meeting, members are strongly encouraged to go to the website early on to look at the draft Minutes, not wait until a year later. If any errors or omissions are found, the members should bring those to the attention of the Secretary or President as soon as possible. Then, at the next annual meeting, the final approved version of the Minutes can be voted on in a more meaningful way.

*Treasurer's Report:* The Treasurers Report and 2017 Budget were distributed by email to all members before the meeting. There were no corrections or questions, following a brief review by Amy Campbell the report was unanimously approved. Dues for 2018 were raised to \$65 for households in Phase I, and to \$300 for those in Phase II. These increases are necessitated by increases in existing and anticipated costs, based on best-effort estimates and budgeting, and are still very modest compared to most HOA's.

*President's Annual Report:* Sam read his Annual Report for 2017, which is being emailed in complete form to all members. The report summarized the accomplishments of the HOA as well as the problems encountered during the past year. Fortunately, problems were few, and the HOA made good progress in firming up its organization and administrative functions, culminating with today's voting on revisions to the Bylaws and CC&Rs (see below). Accolades were given to Beth Gravely for her efforts with the recent tie-in to the sewer line on NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way. The budget remains tight, but is gradually building up a reserve for future emergencies. Sam stated what all of us living here know, and that is, a neighborhood where pride is evident in property maintenance, where people look out for their neighbors and promote safety, and thus we feel proud to live in Crown Estates.

### New Business:

- (1) *Amendments to Bylaws and CC&Rs:* The most important new item of business was a vote on amendments to the Bylaws and CC&Rs. Sam had mailed detailed information on the suggested changes to all members back in November, in order to give members sufficient time to carefully study the proposal and be prepared to vote on Jan. 13. The purpose of the changes was to make the administration smoother, clarify some existing ambiguities, and to fill in gaps in both the Bylaws and CC&Rs. As Sam has repeatedly reminded everyone, these rules and regulations are required by Washington State law for HOAs and must be clear and strong enough to stand up in court, if ever required in a lawsuit. Hence, they should not be dismissed or taken lightly. Thus, many hours were spent by officers of the HOA in developing just the right wording for the changes, and providing crystal clear rationales for them. Some changes were minor improvements in language; a few changes were more substantial; some were new but simply putting onto paper what most residents have already been doing (e.g. landscape and fence maintenance). The hope and intent is that these changes will last us now for a number of years without further changes needed. The final vote ended up with 23 households (out of the 24 votes

cast) approving all proposed changes, a strong majority approval. The officers of the HOA extend their appreciation to all those who participated and voted affirmatively.

- (2) *Parking*: Sam brought up yet again the vexing problem of on-street parking, which is particularly important for Phase II with its narrower streets. Sam encouraged everyone to be more mindful of obeying the signs and asking guests to do the same. Not only is it a violation of City Code (possible \$150 fine and towing), but it is also important to note that on-street parking is not allowed per our CC&Rs, Article V, Section 5.10.

There was no other new business. Hence, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:45.

The next annual meeting will be in January, 2019. Time and date will be announced at the end of 2018.

## Board Meeting

Crown Estates Homeowners Association (CEHOA)

April 4, 2018

The Spring meeting was called to order by President Sam Bateman at 7 p.m. A quorum was present with 7 Board members attending. There were, from Phase I: Willie Delong and Lanny Hubbard; from Phase II: Sam Bateman, Amy Campbell, Bob Marsh, Beth Gravely, and Jack Williams. Also attending was Larry Jones (Phase II).

**Secretary's Report:** The minutes from the last Board meeting (Oct. 28, 2017) had no corrections and were unanimously accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:** Amy Campbell presented the Treasurer's report, indicating that all households had paid their dues for 2018 on time, except for one house in Phase II. However, because of the death of the homeowner, the payment was delayed and the Board agreed that no penalties should be assessed in that instance for late payment. The report was unanimously accepted.

### **Old Business:**

- (1) The Bylaws and CC&R changes approved at our annual meeting in January have been filed with the Clark County Auditor's Office. The updated version of these vital documents is now available on our website.
- (2) There was follow-up discussion in regard to Sam's suggestion of a kind of "Neighborhood Cleanup Day", especially for Phase II. This would involve all 12 households in Phase II having to agree to coordinate their power washing of driveways and sidewalks on the same day (or two), in order to flush all the dirt down to the drains on NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way and NE 13<sup>th</sup> Way at roughly the same time, thus sparing households at the lower end of the two streets from having to clean up the mess washed down from households further up the street. While everyone agreed with the idea in principle, the difficulty of getting all 12 households committed was recognized. No final decision was made. Further consultation with immediate neighbors was recommended.
- (3) Six HOA members attended a 3-hour breakfast and forum at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Vancouver on March 10, sponsored by the VF Law Firm. Participants included: Beth and Roy Gravley, Jack Williams, Bob Marsh, Larry Jones, and Sam Bateman. The forum proved very worthwhile and informative, with useful impact on some of the new business items reviewed below.
- (4) Sam briefly reported on the experience of Joseph and Thavy Hing's sidewalk repairs in Phase I, necessitated by the growth of tree roots under a portion of their sidewalk. The process proved very complicated bureaucratically, and very expensive. It was a reminder to each of us what happens when tree roots grow under the sidewalk in front of our house.
- (5) Sam reported on his recent visit to our bank (US Bank) and negotiating with them to excuse our HOA from having to pay the normal \$10 charge for business accounts. The manager was very cooperative and relieved us of the charge by requiring us to print our own bank statements in the future.
- (6) In the interest of transparency, Sam has drawn up a complete list of all 28 households and their addresses. Anyone wanting a copy may contact him.

### **New Business:**

- (1) Sam read an article by the President of the National Homeowners Association titled “What Is the Value of a Homeowner Association?”, which provides a convincing argument about the wisdom and value of strictly enforcing the CC&Rs within an HOA, in order to protect property values and the quality of life in the community. This was also the key message of the March 10 forum by the VF Law Firm. Anyone wanting a copy of this article may contact Sam.
- (2) Sam and Bob Marsh attended a Recycling 101 class offered by the city on March 15, and learned valuable tips about recycling. Specific information from that class will be included in our next newsletter.
- (3) Sam contacted the office of Vancouver’s Fire Marshall, to inquire about various issues:
  - a. There are two “No Parking-Fire Lane” signs missing, one in each Phase, that need replacing. The Board approved the purchase and replacement.
  - b. Trees blocking the view of the No Parking sign (on NE 13<sup>th</sup> Way) needed to be pruned and that has been taken care of by the homeowner.
  - c. The Board approved the addition of a new No Parking sign near the entrance to NE 13<sup>th</sup> Way, where it would be immediately visible upon entrance into our community.
  - d. Any vehicles parked in driveways which extend excessively into the sidewalk, and clarity regarding street parking, is information included in our new Handbook (see below) which you will receive soon.
- (4) Beth Gravley requested the HOA consider adding lighting at the corner of NE 126<sup>th</sup> and NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way, arguing that the existing streetlights (one at each end of 126 and one in the middle) are not sufficient. After some discussion, the recommendation was that the Gravley’s try a motion-sensor light on the corner of their house to alleviate the problem.
- (5) Beth Gravley requested the HOA consider sprucing up the perimeter fence along NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way by putting new top boards along the entire fence, but not re-staining the fence. Past discussion on this issue, and inquiries with professional fence contractors, ended with a collective sense that trying to renovate the existing fence, in any manner, was a waste of money, and that we had no choice but to wait until the fence absolutely has to be replaced. The plan is to build up the reserve fund to cover that significant cost. Board members were not enthusiastic about doing anything with the fence now, because of the danger of the fence collapsing while trying to replace the top boards. Beth indicated that if nothing else they would like to do just their section of the fence, using their own labor, if necessary. No final decision was made, but Beth was asked to get a quote on the materials cost and report back to the Board.
- (6) The drain at the entrance to NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way appears to need a new “witch’s hat” (strainer). Bob agreed to look into it, and the Board agreed to purchase a new one if necessary.
- (7) Sam made inquiries with several insurance companies about the coverage of our HOA insurance. The issue came up in regard to liability of the HOA with members who volunteer their service to community maintenance and repairs, such as work on the perimeter fence. The gist of his findings is that all members, including officers, have no medical coverage under the HOA insurance, as they would only be covered by their personal health insurance in the event of an accident while performing service within the HOA. But at least we learned that any member is allowed to help (without liability to the HOA) with maintenance or repairs within the HOA even if it is on property other than their personal home or lot.

- (8) Sam recommended increasing the HOA's liability insurance to protect our bank accounts from fraud. Such an event would be extremely harmful to the HOA because of our limited finances. The additional cost will only be \$1.86 per house, adding \$52 per year to our total insurance bill. The Board approved the additional coverage and renewal of our master policy when it comes due as long as any increased premiums were minimal and do not exceed \$1,000.
- (9) The serious question of whether or not the HOA should change the CC&Rs to prohibit house rentals in the future was briefly discussed. This is a highly controversial issue. Those arguing for a no rental statute point out that rentals can easily lead to lowered property values because renters have little incentive to maintain the property they are renting. Those arguing against such a restriction pointed out that it is the owner's responsibility to strictly enforce the CC&Rs and make sure their renters do so, but it was noted also that landlords may be slow to respond to complaints and might not even live nearby to be easily contacted by the HOA when problems occur. A quick poll of the Board members revealed a roughly 50/50 split between those supporting the ban and those not supporting. Because of time limitations, the discussion was tabled for the time being.
- (10) Numerous members who attended the VF Law Firm's forum on March 10 and other Board members have worked to compile a "Handbook" for our HOA containing a simplified presentation of the key items in our CC&Rs, adding details and clarifications where needed. The rationale was that the CC&Rs are in more legalistic language, lengthy, and available only on the website (unless one wants to make their own hard copy). Members will now have a relatively short booklet to consult on the most important rules and regulations that directly affect the management of their property. The draft copy had been distributed to the Board before the meeting, and some changes were recommended in this meeting, which Sam will now incorporate into a revised version of the Handbook. The Board approved the Handbook, contingent on those changes being made, and the Handbook will then be distributed in hard copy to all 28 households. The Handbook should also prove helpful to owners to show to prospective buyers, renters, and real estate agents.
- (11) Another reason for drafting the Handbook is that it provides a more complete explanation of the whole process of how to complain about violations, informing the violators, and the penalties for not correcting the problem. A formal complaint sheet, obtained at the Mar. 10 forum, is also included with the Handbook, and was revised based on a suggestion at the Board meeting. An important point in the complaint process is that violations can be brought to the attention of the HOA only through the formal submission of a complaint form by any member of the HOA. *No HOA officer, including the President, will engage in patrolling the HOA specifically looking for new violations. There is also the strong hope that violations can be amicably settled without having to resort to more draconian measures. The best course of action for peace and harmony in our community is for ALL members to be thoroughly familiar with the CC&Rs, so that they do not accidentally or intentionally violate them.*
- (12) Bob Marsh resigned his position as a member of the ACC and Board. Larry Jones was appointed to replace him on the Board. We will now be looking for a replacement for Bob as a member of our ACC. Please contact us if you are interested in serving on that team.

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 9 p.m. The next Board meeting is scheduled for July 18.

Minutes compiled by Jack Williams, Secretary

## July 2018 Board Meeting

Crown Estates Homeowners Association (CEHOA)

July 18, 2018

The summer meeting was called to order by President Sam Bateman at 7 pm. A quorum was present with 7 Board members attending. They were, from Phase I: Willie Delong and Lanny Hubbard; from Phase II: Sam Bateman, Amy Campbell, Beth Gravley, Jack Williams, and Larry Jones.

Treasurer's Report: Amy Campbell presented the Treasurer's report which was approved. HOA members may obtain those balances by calling Sam Bateman, President @ 360-314-4030.

Secretary's Report: The minutes from the last Board meeting (April 4, 2018) had no corrections and were unanimously accepted. Those minutes, as posted on the HOA website shortly after the April meeting are now formally adopted.

### Old Business:

- (1) Three "No Parking" signs on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Way in Phase II have been replaced by our HOA. A "No Parking" sign in Phase I has been replaced by the city.
- (2) One "witch's hat" (debris screen) in the street drain on 12<sup>th</sup> Way has been replaced by Bob Marsh, and he was reimbursed for that. One of the witch's hats on 13<sup>th</sup> Way was cleaned out by Sam. Beth reports that she and Roy clean the two on 12<sup>th</sup> twice a year (but any Homeowner is welcome to help with this task!). By periodically cleaning these screens, the hope is that professional full-scale cleaning of the two drains on each street in Phase II can be kept to the minimum necessary and thus save us that cost. Cleaning of the debris screens in Phase I is done by the City.
- (3) The Board revisited the issue of whether or not to try to amend the CC&Rs to prohibit rentals in the HOA. This controversial issue could not be resolved, except to agree by vote to table it indefinitely, with the understanding that if future rentals do occur, the owners of those rental properties will still be held strictly accountable for maintaining the rules and requirements in the CC&Rs, and hope that problems will not occur with rentals.
- (4) The issue of fence maintenance along NE12th Way in Phase II was revisited again. The Board last year agreed by vote not to do anything further with that fence, on the advice of professional fence builders, until the fence absolutely needs replacing. However, the Gravleys have already been improving their section of fence by cleaning off mold and grime, and would like the HOA to consider refurbishing the whole length along 12<sup>th</sup> Way in order to make the fence more presentable and durable. The improvements would include: replacing all the top boards with pressure-treated lumber for greater support, putting steel braces around the base of each fence post to prevent further rotting, and manually cleaning all the boards along 12<sup>th</sup> way to remove mold and grime, and possibly replacing any other boards that need it. Beth did not have a cost estimate of the materials, so was requested again to provide such. Sam pointed out that such a project could not proceed without written approval from the home owners on the other side of the fence. Moreover, the key question of who would do the labor was left unanswered. The Gravleys will do the work on their portion themselves, but hoped other members in Phase II would join in if it is decided to

proceed with this project. The issue was tabled until the next Board meeting when additional information and cost estimates are presented. The ACC would then make a formal recommendation to the Board for a vote of approval or not, since this is a common area, not private property.

- (5) Larry Jones had agreed at the last meeting to look into the possibility of hiring professional street cleaners (with trucks and motorized brushes) to clean the u-shaped street in Phase II, in order to free individual homeowners from the chore. He contacted three such companies in Portland and two in Vancouver; none of them replied (perhaps suggesting our community is too small to bother with). Thus, Homeowners are left with the task of maintaining the street bordering their own property, including pressure washing curbs, street gutters, and driveways, as in the past. Homeowners in Phase I are not faced with cleaning street gutters as the city takes care of their street.
- (6) The matter of putting trash/recycle cans out of sight except on trash pick-up days has improved and the Board appreciates your efforts in this regard. Any new reports of cans being left exposed will be followed up on if needed.

#### New Business:

- (1) The HOA's insurance policy has been renewed for another year, with an increase in liability coverage.
- (2) One of the trees along NE 13<sup>th</sup> Way, that partially blocks the visibility of the "No Parking" sign on the light post, needs further pruning, and Sam will speak to the owner about this.
- (3) Sam received a formal request to the ACC from the Gravleys in Phase II for an extension of their fence along NE 126<sup>th</sup>, in order to provide adequate room for their trash cans, making it easier for them to comply with the issue in #6 above. The members of the ACC were present at the meeting and they were polled individually and agreed unanimously with the request.
- (4) Lanny mentioned that some street trees in Phase I are not doing well and may need replacing. He was reminded that home owners are responsible for all trees on their property, but that the organization "Friends of Trees" is available to help owners in planting street trees and the City has a list of approved trees.
- (5) Current Board member Lanny Hubbard was unanimously elected to be a member of the ACC, replacing Bob Marsh.
- (6) Property tax assessments in our HOA went up by 17% this year, a much larger increase than the average of 10% in Vancouver as a whole. Some members are planning to challenge the increase. Discussion about this strategy followed.
- (7) Lanny Hubbard stated that several Homeowners on the east end of 14<sup>th</sup> are planning on staining the fence that borders their property on the east side to aid in preservation of that fence.

The meeting adjourned around 8:10 pm.

The next Board meeting will be on Oct. 24, 2018.

Minutes compiled by Jack Williams, Secretary.

## Board Meeting

Crown Estates Home Owners Association (CEHOA)

October 24, 2018

The fall meeting was called to order by President Sam Bateman at 7 pm. A quorum was present with six Board members attending. There were, from Phase I: Lanny Hubbard; from Phase II: Sam Bateman, Amy Campbell, Beth Gravley, Larry Jones, and Jack Williams.

Secretary's Report: The minutes from the last Board Meeting (July 18) had no corrections and were unanimously accepted. Those minutes, as posted on the HOA website shortly after the July meeting, are thus now formally adopted.

Treasurer's Report: Amy Campbell presented the Treasurer's report which was unanimously approved. *(Note: Balances for Phase I and Phase II are not posted online but each Homeowner will be advised by separate email and those figures are always available by contacting the HOA President, 360-314-4030).*

### Old Business:

- (1) There was no new information on professional street sweeping costs for Phase II. Larry Jones was looking into the matter.
- (2) There was no new information on fencing along NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way in Phase II. Lanny Hubbard and Beth Gravley were looking into the matter.
- (3) A tree on NE 13<sup>th</sup> Way in Phase II has been pruned for better visibility of the "No Parking" sign, and trees along NE 127<sup>th</sup> in Phase II were also pruned.
- (4) Beth Gravley and Bob Marsh made progress in digging away and disposing of dirt and debris along the bottom of the fence on NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way and contiguous part of NE 126<sup>th</sup> in Phase II. Jack Williams maintains the strip and street along NE 126<sup>th</sup> directly opposite their house.
- (5) The Gravley's completed the extension of their property fence along NE 126<sup>th</sup>, as approved at the July meeting.
- (6) The "No Parking" sign has been replaced on NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way in Phase II, as approved at the July meeting. Fading of signs has been noticed, and hence signs will need to be replaced periodically on NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way and NE 13<sup>th</sup> Way. This item has been added to the budget.
- (7) The HOA received a notice in September from the State Revenue Office notifying us that our account had been closed due to failure to submit annual excise tax returns for the past two years and not reporting earned income. The Secretary called the Revenue Office and was able to quickly resolve the misunderstanding, by pointing out that we had in fact submitted a return each year since 2015, but had no "earned income". Hence, their Office corrected their file to show that we are a non-profit organization and starting next year will be an "Active Non-Reporting" Non-Profit organization, and hence do not have to submit an annual tax return.

### New Business:

- (1) Phase II has a new renter in the property at 12604 NE 12<sup>th</sup> Way. His name is Robert Ficklin.
- (2) The HOA website and domain name will need to be renewed soon. The Board unanimously passed a resolution stating that the President has authorization to handle this action without further consulting the Board unless the rate increase exceeds 20% in any given year.

- (3) It is time to elect new officers for the HOA (it has been two years). Sam requested volunteers from members of the HOA in a previous email to all Homeowners but received none. Per our Bylaws the Board elects officers and they unanimously agreed to re-elect existing officers for 2019 and 2020. Current Board members (Lanny Hubbard, Larry Jones, and Willie DeLong) were nominated to continue in their capacity and will be voted on (along with any additional nominations) at the Annual Meeting in January of 2019.
- (4) The main business item was discussion of the budget for 2019. Sam invested many hours of his time and labor to carefully examine the existing and past budgets and made best estimates of future expenses facing the HOA, for both Phase I and Phase II. Sam presented detailed spread sheets to the Board for discussion. His estimates of reserves needed for key items – particularly fencing, sidewalks, and streets in Phase II, and legal costs for both Phase I and II —revealed a clear need to increase the annual dues in order to accrue sufficient reserves within 2-3 years to handle those projected costs. Without a dues increase, the alternative could be a future large special assessment (especially for Phase II owners) to meet the shortfall. Sam’s estimates are on the conservative side, too, as it is difficult to guess what costs might be in a few years’ time. The Board appreciated the hard work Sam did on this task and unanimously approved an increase in the dues for 2019, so that owners in Phase I will be paying \$78 a year, and those in Phase II will be paying \$360. This represents a 20% increase as allowed by our CC&Rs. Any member wishing to see the detailed spreadsheets or get additional information about this dues increase may contact Sam directly.
- (5) The next meeting will be the HOA Annual Meeting sometime in January (date to be announced later).

The meeting adjourned around 8:15 pm.

Minutes compiled by Jack Williams, Secretary.

After the meeting there was general information shared about rats and other vermin spotted within our HOA. It was noted that pest exterminators suggest removal of bird feeders to help control rat populations that feed on seeds dropped onto the ground from hanging bird feeders. “Safe, No Harm” traps can be used on raccoons, possums, etc. as necessary to relocate them and are available from various sources.