

ANNUAL EMPIRE HILLS ASSOCIATION MEETING
October 25, 2014

Called to order at 10:04 am

Members present: Kent Wiejaczka, President; Bernie Meehan, Secretary.

Absent: Cathy Weissblatt, Vice President; and Carlotta Meehan, Treasurer.

Introductions completed.

Approval of 2013 minutes:

Jim Sills spoke about tree removal and he wonders if there has been any clarification about this issue. Dave Wollenhaupt has contacted lot owners regarding tree removal effecting his viewscape and found good cooperation from these Association members. Jeff Peterson asks questions regarding stump removal. Kent stated the best way to handle these issues is with permission from owners. According to the bylaws tagged trees can be removed from individual lots with permission from that landowner.

Jim Sills asked if the Board had taken any action on the request by Barry Bennett regarding outside boat storage for more than 30 days. The Board feels like it would negatively affect lot owners' viewscape if boats, trailers, etc. were out in public view for more than 30 days.

Motion to accept 2013 minutes: Dave Wollenhaupt
Seconded by Dave Hulick. Motion passed.

Treasurers Report:

In the absence of Carlotta Meehan, Dave Hulick presented the report for this fiscal year. EH budget was over budget because of the snow removal costs from last year. The bylaws state we have to put at least 10% of revenue into contingency reserve, but in reality all unspent money goes into the contingency reserve. Increase for next year's budget based on increase for snow removal and the contingency fund.

Jim Sills made motion to accept this report and motion seconded by Jeff Peterson.
Motion passed.

To accept 2015 budget:

Jim Sills made a motion to accept the 2015 budget; Pete Brager seconded it. Motion passed.

Discussion regarding Association Audit:

In January 2014 a law was passed by the State of Michigan regarding condominiums requiring a CPA to review/audit the books.

Dave Wollenhaupt states you don't need a CPA to review, it can be a non-CPA person to do the audit.

Rebecca Deering states best way to safeguard the money is to separate the duties of the treasurer. For example one person writes the check, and the bank statement is reviewed by someone else.

Mike Shaughnessy made a motion to opt out of the CPA requirement for 2014 audit. Peggy Schous seconded the motion and the motion passed.

The Treasurer will have the books audited by a non-CPA person for 2014.

Architectural Review Committee (ARC):

Bernie Meehan spoke: Dave Hulick, Nancy Lindeman, Kathy Wiejaczka, and Bernie Meehan are on the committee. Before you do any architect work for a new home, talk to the ARC. This will help avoid extra costs. There is a Checklist containing bylaws that needs to be followed. ARC has a 28-foot pole available for members' use to help visualize view obstructions within the building envelope. Before you build you must determine the highest existing grade on your lot and the ARC will help you find the highest existing grade. Rebecca would like any information regarding building a house, given to a person before they buy a lot. Kent says: all documents are available at the Registrar of Deed's office. Per discussion, Kent's contact information will be placed on the "current lots for sale" brochure in the EH mailbox to assist anyone with questions regarding building.

Kent's comments:

- Dues increase, see hand-out titled "EH Board Rationale for Increase in Dues."
- Discussion regarding unit members' plowing snow into Association roads from their private drive. This is unacceptable and \$150 per occurrence will be billed to that member.
- Snow plowing: The Board solicited for snow plowing bids and only two responded. The results indicate our current snowplower is more economical.
- Road resurfacing strategy: after conversations with asphalt contractors the roads are estimated to last for 5 years provided that they are repaired annually. For more information contact Kent.
- Call Wiejaczka's for any Association documents that are needed.

- New home construction pre-planning assistance: contact the board or ARC before you build. This may save you time and money. For example setbacks are variable on different lots. Well and septic locations are already pre-engineered on each lot per the county health department.
- Outside burning of trash and building material waste is unacceptable. The village has yard waste or debris disposal for lots within the village limits. Peggy states that you cannot have an open burn in the village per village rules, including an open pit.
- Bylaw regarding Outdoor Lights: how do you tell if your lights don't comply? Stand on your lot line at night and if the light rays cast a shadow onto someone else's lot, then they do not comply. The night sky is important to EH and the Board asks that you use your outside lights respectful of others' views. If you need continuous night lighting, contact the Board for instructions regarding properly shielding these lights.
- Tree brush removal: *you cut it, you haul it*. No disposal on common areas.
- Per previous discussion, log homes can be built in EH.

Elections of 2015 Board Members:

Bernie Meehan presented the fact that Cathy Weissblatt stepped down from the Board.

There were no additional nominations for the 2015 Board except Kent Wiejaczka – President; Peter Brager – VP; Bernie Meehan – Secretary; Carlotta Meehan- Treasurer .

Motion to accept: Dave Hulick.

Seconded by Mike Shaughnessy

Motion passed.

Volunteer recognition:

- Carolyn Wollenhaupt regarding flower beds. She spearheaded it. Several members helped.
- Barry Bennett- Progressive dinner organization. Dec. 7th at 4 pm at Meehan's house.
- Flower bed maintenance: the Board is encouraging monthly volunteers. After each work session there will be a BBQ for all members present, whether a member helps or not. This will occur May through Oct. The Association will pay for some portion. BYOB. Here are the projected dates for 2015: May 24th, June 21st, July 26th, August 23rd, and September 27th.
- Dave Hulick: working to consolidate the bylaws to include all of the amendments. It will be in three phases with the ultimate goal of having one condensed document of all bylaws. Kathy Wiejaczka will help. Nadine Byrne questioned approval process. It would need to be voted on by all members.
- Kathy Wiejaczka assists Bernie in compiling the minutes.
- Thanks to Cathy Weissblatt for serving 4 years on the Board.

- Excellent treasurer's work by Carlotta Meehan. She performs many hours of work. Delinquent dues follow-up is very time consuming. It would be appreciated if any member could assist Carlotta Meehan. Contact the Board if you can offer assistance.
- Nancy Lindeman is stepping down from the ARC; we need help for the ARC. If interested, send Bernie an email.

Comments from the members:

- Updated owner's list is ongoing and available through Kent.
- Mike Shaughnessy: blocked driveways from snow removal is an expected occurrence. Boone Harriger is available to clear snow from your driveway, contact him directly.
- Peggy Schous: concerned regarding tree on neighbor's lot that is damaged and falling down on the Common easement area. (Action: The Board contacted this person and permission was granted for tree removal.)
- Nadine Byrne: does not want the pile of plowed snow from Common areas stored on her property. (Action: Boone will no longer do this.)
- Jim Sills questioned tree removal on other members' property. The best approach is to obtain permission from lot owner.
- Lot mowing discussion and untagged trees. Comments from Jim Sills and Jeff Peterson. In the past year unit members have been helpful and cooperative regarding the removal of nuisance trees. Association mows the lots and charges the lot owner.
- Pete Brager: Regarding tagged trees, whose responsibility are they? If a tree dies, on common area: Association pays for it. On private property: owner.
- Dave Wollenhaupt: Disagreed with the raising of the dues (\$400 a year, increase of \$100). Discussion ensued.
- Dave Hulick: Black Magic is currently resurfacing the roads. It will extend the life of the roads drastically by preventing the winter damage of freezing water breaking the roads apart.
- General discussion regarding where the excess monies from the dues increase will go. Kent says the Board will establish a road fund in the budget and the excess money will always go into this fund.
- Dave Hulick questioned that the Board did not do research regarding the life of the roads and the cost to resurface them. He was assured the Board did get expert opinions and estimates regarding both of these matters.
- Ron Deering: Water run-off from existing members lots may cause issues with drain basins in the future and it may require larger drain basins.
- Pete Brager: Regarding the dues, he would rather have smaller amounts to pay such as a dues increase rather than a large single assessment. Easier to budget for.
- Peggy Schous: questioned past expenditures of unused revenue. Kent assured members that unused funds from the dues increase would be placed in a road fund and not used for other expenditures.

- Jim Sills: 10 years of inflation when he was on the Board, they were saving the money they needed. The income was incremental to the costs. General inflation: tough to do, a single item can blow the budget up. He commends the board. He feels it is reasonable to increase the dues. In the future if there is too much money, dues could be decreased.

Dave Wollenhaupt asked the members by a show of hands if they supported the dues increase. The majority present agreed by a show of hands to the dues increase provided any unused revenue is deposited into a road fund.

Motion to adjourn: Bernie Meehan; Seconded by Kent Wiejaczka. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 12:13 pm