

Homestead Homeowners' Association Board of Directors
January 17, 2011
Minutes

The regularly scheduled board meeting was held January 17, 2011, at The Homestead club house. The following board members were in attendance:

Ty Albright
Kathy Vargo (briefly by phone)
Charles LaFleur
Mike Gray
Erin Pottebaum

Quorum was established.

The meeting was called to order by Acting President Ty Albright at 7:00 p.m. Mike Gray moved to approve minutes from the December 20, 2010, board meeting and Erin Pottebaum seconded. Board approved unanimously.

The board welcomed Karen Rayl Bassham, the Association's new Administrator.

The following actions were approved by the Board of Directors (BOD):

- I. **Club House Usage Policy.** Ty Albright proposed that The Homestead Club House be open free of charge to all groups that are exclusive to and open to all Homestead residents. Mike Rogers motioned, Charles LaFluer seconded the motion and the Board unanimously approved the following policy regarding use of the community club house.

Policy: Any group comprising primarily/exclusively Homestead Residents, and has an unlimited (no games with restricted number of participants allowed such as Pokeno or Bunco) open invitation to all Homestead Residents (which includes open invitations in the newsletter and community e-mail discussion lists), may use the community club house free of charge limited to the following:

- Prior paid-for reservations always take priority.
- Not available free for commercial purposes (no sales).
- May not block out consecutive dates (e.g., every second Tuesday at 6 p.m.) since paid-for reservations take priority.
- One individual must take responsibility for the group, pay the security deposit fee (fully refundable if the club house is returned in "as received" condition), and cooperate with the availability of the Club House committee.

- In the event of scheduling or volunteer availability conflicts, the availability of the club house for use is subject solely to the discretion of the club house volunteers (if a volunteer is not available to assist the requestor, then the club house is not available).

II. **Landscape Rejuvenation Effort.** Ty Albright reported that Southern Botanical has begun work on this effort.

Background:

Based on direct feedback from residents, there was a general desire that the quality of our common area landscape and lawns be improved. The Board also wanted to implement a cost-saving, ongoing planting system to reduce costs for replacing “seasonal color” plantings.

A team of volunteers, along with consultants from Southern Botanical (our landscape maintenance provider), developed plans for our entire neighborhood. For those who may be concerned, the Board had access to a licensed horticulturalist, arborist, etc. to ensure the work would be done in accordance with sound landscaping practices. The Board received multiple bids, negotiated the contracts and had individuals in the landscape business review the bids for reasonableness.

It was ultimately decided to go with Southern Botanical to do the majority of the work since it was possible to negotiate a sound price with them, plus there were benefits to having the same company that maintains the property also do the installation of the additional / new plantings (they have no one to blame but themselves if the new stuff is not properly cared for). Unfortunately a number of trees (primarily red buds) and shrubs have died or are struggling and need replacement. In other areas additional landscape was needed to balance out what was already in place.

Ty thanked the many volunteers who helped with this project, including Bob and Kay O'Brien, Rusty Nejd, and others who prefer to remain anonymous.

The landscape plan is being implemented in 3 phases:

- **Phase 1** (underway) includes removal of dead or dying trees and under-performing shrubs. Preparation of planting areas (to be planted in spring), and planting of new trees and shrubs. Southern Botanical has started work on this project. A separate crew, Lindsay Tree Trimming, has started tree trimming on all common area trees.
- **Phase 2** (to take place in the spring) involves planting perennial plants in locations that historically had been planted with seasonal color, or in locations that have not had adequate plantings in the past.
- **Phase 3** (to take place next fall) involves planting daffodils that will provide spring color in future years.
- The full plan includes planting:
 - 32 Trees
 - 164 roses

- 24 Crepe Myrtles
- 44 Shrubs
- 2,057 perennial plants
- 4,815 Daffodil bulbs

Expectations:

The full impact of this new landscaping will not be fully realized for at least 3 years. When planting perennials, the old saying is they sleep (roots grow in year 1), they creep (year 2 begin upward growth) then they leap (year 3). In other words, what residents will see this summer is not indicative of ongoing years; it will continually look better in successive years.

Impact:

- Cost savings: Anticipated annual savings from no longer having to have multiple planting of seasonal color will save the association between \$18,000 - \$24,000 / year (seasonal plantings average about \$6,000 / planting).
- Better lawns: The savings we realize will help offset the costs of the increased scope of work the new landscape company will provide in efforts to improve the quality of the lawns. Please note that due to the condition of common area lawns in some locations, it will take some time to accomplish this (1+ years).
- Neighborhood quality: we anticipate the improved landscaping will increase the overall desirability of our community, and contribute to maintaining our collective home values.

Budget:

The total budget for this work is \$82,000. This work is being paid for with available proceeds the association has in its reserves. We continue to have adequate reserves in accordance with the reserve study that was prepared in the past. This work will not contribute to any future dues increase.

III. Homestead Homeowner mailing for notice of annual meeting and call for proxies. The bylaws call for 50-day notice of the Homeowner’s annual meeting. The first notice was mailed January 12th for the March 28th General Meeting. An additional notice will be sent in mid-February. Plans were discussed for obtaining quorum and nominations for BOD membership, including:

- A mailing to residents with a list of issues to be discussed to encourage participation plus a request for board nominations. [Two board positions will become open at the March meeting from terms ending for Kathy Vargo, Board President, and Ty Albright, Vice President-Common Areas. Erin Pottebaum also plans to step down from her role as First Vice President-Social.]
- A drawing for gift certificates for those who participate.
- Frequent reminders in person and on the Homestead email to send in proxies if not attending.

IV. Drop Box Installation. A Drop Box has been installed at the Club House entrance and is available for use in collecting proxies and other items. Karen Rayl Bassham has been given a key and will check the drop box regularly.

V. Update Report on feedback from Real Manage regarding the violation notices of tree obstruction of public sidewalks. One-third of residents were in violation and received notices to provide a 7-foot clearance on sidewalks. Most residents have taken action as a result of the notices. Others will be notified with a letter at the end of February that non-compliance will result in a \$10-a-day fine until the matter is handled.

VI. Discussion of key goal recommendations for next term's Board. These included:

- "Welcome" package/document which includes all by-laws, CCRs, Pattern book, "how to get involved" information in PDF format that can be easily provided to realtors, title companies, prospective home owners, new and existing homeowners. This can be posted on the website and made easily accessible.
- National Night Out: As part of Crime Watch goals, include adjacent neighborhoods to collaborate on all crime / life safety issues.
- Consider encouraging social groups, such as a Men's Club.
- Discuss what HOA dues can be used for, e.g., social activities since they enhance the neighborhood.

VII. Prepare an agenda and informative PowerPoint presentation for March HOA General Meeting. All board members will participate in developing this information.

VIII. Discuss responsibilities of Karen Rayl Bassham, the Associations' new Administrator. The Board discussed the following assignments to start with:

- Procure dedicated cell phone for exclusive use of HOA. Karen will check with Real Manage and start the process of getting an account set up.
- Work with Erin Pottebaum to get access to Homestead g-mail. Work with Becky Brown regarding announcements and adding Board minutes to the Homestead website.
- Develop a calendar of yearly activities to ensure proper lead time is allowed for events such as the annual meeting, Easter Egg Hunt, Fall Festival, and July 4th parade.
- Work with Board members to develop PowerPoint presentation for the annual meeting.
- Take custody of all proxies for the annual meeting to keep track of quorum requirements.
- Develop a short list of trusted contractors to use on special projects.
- Obtain a copy of the Real Manage contract and review for next Board meeting.
- Work with Real Manage to validate policy for assessing liens on homeowners who are delinquent on homeowner's dues by \$1,000 or more.
- Work with David Gatz to determine current process for handling ACC requests and how the committee works with Real Manage on this. The Board would like to ensure these requests are handled within a 30-day time period with an automatic rejection letter

produced if no reply has been given. [Subsequently, an automatic rejection letter has been found to go against DDCRs, which says after 30 days the request is approved. Therefore, no rejection letter will be sent. *KRB 1/21/11*]

- Take over custody of the box of Board documents currently held by Kathy Vargo and organize/index contents, especially the minutes from past Board meetings.

Discussion

The following details discussion concerning the above approved actions and other business, and is provided in an effort to assist residents who wish to understand:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.