

Okehocking Hills Civic Association Election and General Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2016, 7:00PM
Edgmont Township Building

1) Introduction

- a. The meeting was opened by Mark Wise at 7:00.
- b. Board Members in attendance were Mark Wise, President; Steve Brook, Vice President; Eric Asalone, Treasurer; and Annie Thorne, Secretary. Absent was Jack Dooley, Vice President.

2) Election and Board Members

- a. Two open Vice President board positions were up for reelection. Nominations were received from Steve Brook, of Nicole Drive, and Katie Knee, of Beverly Lane. Steve and Katie were unanimously accepted onto the board.
- b. The issue of generating more interest from the community in volunteering for the board was discussed. The board proposed a waiver of annual HOA dues for active board members elected to the board starting in fall 2017. This measure was discussed and voted on by those in attendance and passed with 13 households in favor and 4 against.
- c. **Agreed: Board members elected to office starting fall 2017 will be waived from paying the annual Civic Association dues during the period that they are actively serving on the Board.**

3) Financial Discussion and Budget Planning

- a. Treasurer's Report: Eric Asalone presented the Association's financial status including YTD Income/Expenses, current account balances, and a comparison of the 12 month periods ending 10/26/16 and 10/26/15.
 - i. The Association's sole source of income is annual homeowner dues. The typical annual expenses are landscaping (largest expense by far), insurance, and fees related to post office and mailing.
 - ii. In summary, the Association has \$8,126.52 in the bank with YTD income of \$8,948.63 and YTD expenses of \$3,437.00. The association expects additional expenses of approx. \$1,450 in the next 3-4 months, which will leave approx. \$6,600 in the bank account for the start of the 2017 landscaping season.
 - iii. In 2017, and going forward, the Board may elect to prepay the landscaper in order to qualify for a discount. This payment would be due in early spring, several weeks before dues notices have been sent to homeowners over the past several years. The Board considered moving dues notices earlier in the year to better align with timing of expenses, but after a review of current cash reserves it was determined that the Association can cover the upfront landscaping cost for 2017, and no changes to dues timing are needed at this time. The Board will re-evaluate in 2017.

b. Unexpected Expenses – Reserved Funds

- i. Concept of reserved funds was discussed. The reserve would be for unexpected expenses such as drainage basin repair or clearing a fallen tree in a common area.
- ii. The Board will investigate and decide how to best plan the 2017 budget to ensure the Association has sufficient funds to cover unexpected/unplanned “common expenses”... such as tree cleaning or drainage basin repair/maintenance, as well as any possible or likely increases in existing expenses such as landscaping or insurance. A recommendation was made to always have at least an additional 10% of the annual expenses in the Associations funds. The Board will review and provide a follow-up announcement for 2017 budget planning.

c. Other Spending

- i. The Board reserves the right to allocate Association funds as defined in the By-Laws, Article V. Any ongoing expenditures, or items for community “improvements” would fall into the “Common Expenses” category.
 1. Based on feedback from the meeting, the Board will solicit input and feedback from neighbors on Facebook to assist in the process of investigating the feasibility of the following improvements:
 - a. Surveillance cameras for the area near Stackhouse Mill Road and Beverly Lane. The intent would be to notify people with bad intentions (theft, drug activity, etc) that their vehicles will be recorded on video. This could act as an effective deterrent, and can assist with law enforcement if any criminal activity occurs.
 - b. Speed bumps. This was investigated long ago, but it was requested to investigate again.
 - c. Stop sign on Beverly at intersection with Nicole
 - d. Solar and/or electric lighting at the Okehocking Hills signs at the corner of Stackhouse Mill and Beverly
 2. After investigation, the Board will hold an open Association discussion to present options and to collect community feedback before deciding any improvements to implement.
- ii. **Charitable Contributions: It was agreed that Association funds should not be donated to a charitable organization such as the Edgmont Fire Company. Anybody wishing to donate to any charitable organization should do so privately.**

4) By-Laws and Covenants

- a. The Association is run in accordance with two governing documents:
 - i. By-Laws, revised 4/28/93, which defines the association purpose, powers, and structure, including officers, elections, meetings, etc.
 - ii. Covenants and Restrictions, dated 5/28/81, which defines the rights and restrictions of the association and members, including general restrictions on certain improvements to lots within the development.
- b. The Board solicited volunteers to review and consider potential revisions to these documents with the intent to modernize them.
 - i. A discussion ensued regarding whether or not the Covenants already may have been updated in the 1990s but no one present at the meeting had a copy of or the ability to definitely confirm the existence of this revision. Steve Brook suggested that a copy could be in the file box of original papers that he transferred to Eric Asalone and Mark Wise in 2015. If records cannot be found, the latest known revisions will apply.
 - ii. Therese DiCarlo, of Stackhouse Mill Road, and Leslie Petruzzi, of Beverly Lane, volunteered to look into the issue of reviewing the Covenants.
 1. The Board will contact the volunteers to determine the interest in setting up a small sub-committee to review and propose changes, which would then need concurrence and any changes implemented per guidelines of the by-laws and covenants.
 2. Any additional people interested should contact the Board.

5) Neighborhood Safety

- a. Presentation from Pennsylvania State Police Troopers Greene and Maturo
 - i. The neighborhood has recently experienced a series of thefts from and, in one case, of a vehicle. Trooper Greene explained that the rise in crime is not just happening in Edgmont Township; thefts have also spiked all over Delaware and Montgomery Counties.
 - ii. Thefts have been isolated to items removed from unlocked vehicles, and in a few cases, the vehicles themselves if keys are present. Thefts have generally occurred overnight between the hours of 2:00AM-5:49AM.
 - iii. Trooper Maturo explained that PSP has a suspect, described as a white male with a gray zip-up hoodie, khaki pants or sweatpants, dark shoes, drawstring backpack, and scarf covering his face. This suspect was caught on video footage checking for unlocked vehicles (he bypassed a locked vehicle on the video). If you see this man please call 911 immediately to report.

- iv. In response, PSP has increased patrols with both marked cars and plainclothes officers. PSP also recommends that homeowners consider the following actions to help prevent future crime:
 - 1. Lock your doors – cars and houses. At this point the suspects are just looking for unlocked doors.
 - 2. Leave lights on at night.
 - 3. Communicate with your neighbors.
 - 4. Consider investing in a home security / home surveillance system.
 - 5. Start a Neighborhood Town Watch, which reduces crime and improves community-police relationship.
 - a. Requires a group of neighbors to register at www.nnw.org . Then Tpr Greene will meet with the watch and help develop an action plan.
 - 6. Consider investing in surveillance cameras at the entrance to the neighborhood.
 - 7. **Call PSP “Early and Often”** by either dialing **911** for an emergency or **484-840-1000** for the PSP Media Barracks. If you don’t get satisfaction, contact Trooper Greene (call general barracks line and ask for him).
- v. Continuing Action: Conversation threads will be initiated on the Association’s closed Facebook page for further discussion by community members of the following issues:

- 1. Formation of a Town Watch**

- 2. Camera System research for neighborhood entrance**

- b. Speeding and Driver Behavior

- i. Trooper Greene explained that PSP can offer help in a few ways:
 - 1. Temporary Electronic Speed Sign
 - 2. Radar / Speed Trap – this requires that a neighbor give PSP permission to sit in their driveway.
 - ii. Neighbors discussed other methods of slowing drivers for consideration including adding an all-way stop sign at the intersection of Beverly and Nicole and researching the feasibility of speedbumps.
 - iii. **A Conversation thread will be initiated on the Facebook page for further discussion of options to stop speeding in the neighborhood.**

6) Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Thorne, Secretary