

Westerlies Council of Co-Owners

February 25, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Roll Call and Introductions

Chris Rossillo called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. at Mclean High School. Mr. Rossillo welcomed the owners and reported President Chuck Walley was unable to attend. Ms. Fries reported owners in attendance and valid proxies represented a total of 44 units. Co-Owner business could not be conducted since a quorum was not achieved. Mr. Rossillo introduced the Board members and informed owners a Board meeting will be conducted to provide owners several reports and then hold an owners forum for owner questions and suggestions.

The Board members present included: Chris Rossillo, Vice-President; John Sterling, Treasurer; Tim Brazell, Member at large; and Nancy Ploss, Member at Large. GHA Portfolio Manager Camellia Fries was also present.

Proof of Notice of Meeting

Ms. Fries reported the meeting notice, proxy and agenda were sent to the owners on January 29, 2014 as required by the bylaws. The Annual Meeting was originally scheduled for January 22, 2014 but rescheduled due to a snow storm and school closing.

Approval of Minutes of Preceding Meeting

There was no preceding Owners Meeting on January 8, 2013. The minutes for the Board meeting and community forum held on January 8, 2013 were previously approved by the Board.

Reports by Officers and Members

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer John Sterling presented a Treasurer Report and reviewed 2013 operating results. We ended the year with a small surplus. We had overages in our water and sewer expenses and legal fees. These increases were more than offset by sizable savings in administrative costs, contract expenses and pool expenses. The savings also enabled the Board to approve the go ahead with painting Courtyard VI buildings last fall. Mr. Sterling also noted the water and sewer costs rose for the 3rd year in a row. These costs should decrease in 2014 since Fairfax County has now taken over these services from Falls Church.

Our reserves continued to increase as we were able to make our full reserve contributions during the year. Our owner's equity has now increased from \$67,000 at end of 2011 to \$281,000 at end of 2013.

Several owners suggested ideas for lowering water consumption, such as using low-flow shower heads. An owner also noted owners are also wasting water by overwatering flowers and cleaning off walkways.

Vice President Report: Mr. Rossillo presented a report on the 2014 budget approved by the Board at their November 19, 2014 meeting and sent to all owners with the newsletter in December, 2014. Mr. Rossillo reported most of the 2014 income and expense estimates are consistent with the 2013 Budget. There are no increases in co-owner annual assessments so owners continue to make the same monthly installment payments as last year. This is the second year in a row with no increases.

Each year the budget serves as our operating plan for managing our funding and priorities throughout the year. The Board will again review our monthly financial reports and, when necessary, make adjustments so operations continue within our budgeted funds. As the Treasurer reported, we had good results last year using this approach. Some of the 2014 Budget highlights include:

- There are no owner charges for dryer vent cleaning; the next cleaning is in 2015;
- We are finally projecting lower water and sewer costs as Fairfax County has now taken over these services from Falls Church;

- Additional funding is included for painting the building siding in several courtyards; our plan is to paint the remaining 6 courtyards within the next two years. If operating results warrant a change in priorities, we will defer some work into the 3rd year;
- The new master insurance policy obtained in October lowered our insurance expense estimate for 2014 by \$4,000; later this year there will most likely be increases and an impact our 2015 budget;
- The Replacement Reserves contribution remains at the increased \$138,000 level made in 2013;
- The Operating Reserves contribution is now lower as this account and our retained earnings are now at a sufficient level. This is good news since more funds are available for other needs.

Mr. Rossillo noted our reserve funds and owner equity should continue to rise over the next several years as our current reserve study forecasts low expenditures through 2017. Barring any unexpected costly event, our reserves should increase \$100,000 by the end of this year.

Committee Reports

There were no Committee Reports.

Old Business

Project Updates: Mr. Rossillo provided a brief update on our ongoing projects. Last year we replaced poor caulk joints and repaired concrete walkways in all courtyards; replaced a damaged sewer pipe; and repaired all downspout and drainage problem areas. No water infiltration issues were reported since these improvements were completed. This year we plan to repair retaining walls and waterproof brick walls in several courtyards.

Siding repair and painting of all buildings in Courtyards III & VI are completed. This year's painting schedule will be determined in the spring. Last year we planted trees and shrubs in several courtyards as part of a 3-year plan. This year we completed our annual tree maintenance work in January. Tree planting and landscaping will resume later this year. Our grounds contract now includes one lawn aeration and seeding in the fall at no additional cost.

Last summer, the Board obtained a bulk rate for owners to complete their dryer vent cleaning requirement. The Board also obtained special pricing from a vendor for owners interested in replacing their old, rusted windows. Several owners have already installed more efficient windows. The Board is encouraging other owners to do so. New windows can save owners money in the long run and will definitely improve the appearance of our buildings.

Committee Volunteers: The Board again asked owners to volunteer to serve on one of the three Committees that support the Board. Owners willing to serve on the Finance, Building/Ground Maintenance or Communications Committee should express their interest to any member of the Board.

New Business

Check Valve Installations: Mr. Sterling discussed plans for putting water check valves in lower unit drains. These valves mitigate interior damage by diverting backup water to avoid the unit being flooded. A resolution is being prepared for Board approval. The Board will seek to negotiate a bulk contract for the initial purchase and installation of the check valves. This approach would also assure the check valves are installed properly and without delays.

Bylaws Amendment: Mr. Rossillo reported our Association's attorney has made recommendations to update our 40-year old Bylaws and bring them into compliance with the Virginia code and court rulings. In December, the Board reviewed the proposed Bylaws and posted the full discussion draft on our website for owners to review.

The Board discussed the changes and benefits of the proposed amendments and answered owner questions. The main changes include: strengthening measures for the collection of assessments, reducing operating reserve requirements; deleting obsolete provisions mostly related to the formation of the condominium; updating meeting notice requirements established by law; and numerous edits,

clarifications and updates throughout the document. The Board believes the amendments are necessary to conduct operations in the best interest of all owners.

Mr. Rossillo ended the discussion by asking owners to review the proposed changes that remain on the website and to send any further comments to Ms. Fries. He then outlined the next steps for amending our Bylaws. A letter will be sent to all owners forwarding a clean copy of the proposed Bylaws and asking owners to vote for their approval. A ballot will be enclosed for voting and mailing back to GHA.

Verizon Cable Wires: Progress is now being made to clean up the numerous cable wires improperly hanging from owner units throughout the community. After much delay, Verizon is implementing a plan to install their cable wires through the conduit for each unit. Verizon will closely coordinate their work with the affected unit owners. Owners with any questions or experiencing problems should contact Ms. Fries.

Courtyard 3 Fire: Two units sustained losses this winter when a fire occurred in an upper unit and also led to substantial damage in the unit below. Remediation work is completed and repair work is about to start. A claim has been filed under the master insurance policy.

Master Insurance Policy: Nationwide Insurance is our new master insurance provider as of October 30, 2013. The property coverage remains subject to a \$10,000 deductible.

Homeowner Insurance: Mr. Sterling reminded owners they need to obtain their own insurance to cover personal liability, personal property, loss assessments, deductibles, betterments, upgrades and other master policy exclusions. Owners should review their individual condominium (HO-6) policy and consult with an insurance agent as necessary to make sure they adequately protect themselves. After a discussion Mr. Sterling also noted owners should have a HO-6 policy that covers the Association's master policy deductible that is now \$10,000.

Owners Forum: A number of items were discussed during the Owners Forum:

- Several owners commented on the decks being stained incorrectly in courtyard VII and uniform inspection of decks is not being done. Another owner noted cigarette butts being all over the place. The Board responded that in 2014 we will be concentrating on issues to improve the look of the units as well as the overall property.
- Unit 1811 needs brick work done adjacent to the decks. This will be done during this year's walkway repairs.
- An owner suggested owners use inexpensive metallic washing machine hoses that prevent water leaks and that they install a fire alarm in their unit. These are items owners need to address on a unit by unit basis.
- An owner asked about cable wire violations. The Board started this effort recognizing owners would have difficulties in getting their providers to make the proper installations. That is why extensions were provided and the Board worked with owners and Verizon to make these repairs. Owners now need to contact Verizon to ensure their unit violations are resolved. We will continue to be lenient while this work is being completed.
- An owner brought up concerns about using bait stations at the dumpsters and passed out a handout citing some of the problems that can occur with their use. The same owner was concerned about the appearance of the trash huts and dumpsters. The board is aware of the need to improve the trash collection areas and will look into new dumpster options. The Board will also seek proposals for redoing the trash huts.
- An owner pointed out the snow bobcat has damaged at least one of the speed bumps. Another owner suggested contacting the county about installing a lighted crosswalk between Safeway and the complex on Anderson Road. Ms. Fries will follow-up on these matters.

- An owner asked about the parking policy. The Board will issue the policy later this year before metro ridership begins.
- An owner noted the recently installed walkway at the entrance of courtyard VI is in need of repair. Ms. Fries will inspect the site and contact Brothers Paving to repair as necessary.

2014 Property Improvement: Mr. Rossillo noted during the past two years, the Board primarily focused on getting control of the Association's financial operations and repairing building foundations and walkways. We will continue these efforts but will also pursue initiatives to further improve the appearance of our buildings and common areas. This will include better inspections and full enforcement of architectural policies and rules.

There are a number of existing violations and areas in need of improvement: improperly stained decks, trash and storage outside owner units, poor walkway lighting, etc. As a consequence, our property is not presented in the best light. While violations will be issued and enforced, an equally important solution is for owners to buy in to do their part to maintain the architectural integrity of the community. This may prove to be a difficult, long term effort, but all owners will benefit by working together to keep the property well maintained and to preserve property values.

Adjournment

There were no further items for discussion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Executive Session

After the meeting the Board held a brief executive session and elected the following officers: Tim Brazell, President; Chris Rossillo, Vice President; John Sterling, Treasurer; Chuck Walley, Secretary; and Nancy Ploss, Member at Large.