

HOMESTEAD IN THE WILLOWS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Annual Homeowner Meeting – March 13, 2023, 7:00 P.M. – Unofficial Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: Homestead Board President, Chris Evans, called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. BSA Troop 373 performed the opening flag ceremony with recitation of the "Pledge of Allegiance." The honor guard included Noah, Nathan and Harrison Kleman and Alex Suarez who led the Color Guard. The audience thanked the Boy Scouts for their service to the community.

BOARD MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS: Mr. Evans welcomed the homeowners present and introduced Board Members James Keating, Kelly McCormick and Michael Garnsey who had been appointed to fill a vacant seat on the Board in February. Mr. Evans thanked Shane Meakim who served on the board for over a year and a half before stepping down due to work responsibilities.

MANAGER INTRODUCTIONS: Mr. Evans introduced the managers employed by the Association: Jill Ellsworth, Tennis Facilities Manager, who introduced the new teaching professionals for the 2023 season, Advantage You. Peter Richman is co-founder with Kristi Janos. Mr. Richman introduced their teaching staff of Bev Tellis, Jason Eckles, and Joey Burkhardt. Mr. Richman said they were looking forward to growing and enhancing Homestead's adult and youth tennis program.

Mr. Evans then introduced Homestead's newest manager, Emily Maxfield. Emily has been hired as the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) Manager because managing the work flow of this committee is too much for a volunteer chair person. Mr. Evans went on to introduce Nancy Parker, ACC Administrator & Covenant Taskforce Manager, Katie Kidwell, Business Manager; and Nancy Bauer, Landscape Manager.

COMMITTEE INTRODUCTIONS: Mr. Evans explained that three committees operated under the Board of Directors: The Swim Team, the ACC and the Social Committee. Swim Team Parent Representative Christie Gammill, introduced herself and her fellow parent reps, Stacy Ford, Caroline Linster and Tiffany Fleming. Christie thanked the community for their support of the Swim Team and patience during home swim meets.

PROSPECTIVE BOARD MEMBERS: The Association had one candidate running for the open Board position, Ginny Karlberg. Mr. Evans explained that Ginny was unable to be present that evening. After summarizing Ginny's background and qualifications he said she was great candidate for the Board and encouraged everyone to elect her and asked that all homeowners to complete their ballots and pass them to the center aisle where they were collected by the managers to be tabulated. He also asked owners to complete the perimeter fence special assessment ballots and return them that evening or by March 15th.

APPRECIATION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBER: Vice President, Will Cryer, has completed his term on the Board and was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Evans thanked Will for his outstanding service on the Board, mentioning his valuable contributions to bring Homestead into the digital via the PayHOA platform for dues payment, his work as liaison to the ACC and his efforts to develop an online ACC application process. Mr. Evans praised Will's calm demeanor and problem solving skills.

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Evans remarked on the warmth the Homestead community extends to new residents. He has loved living here and thanked the community for the warm welcome he and his family have experienced. Mr. Evans, a trial lawyer, explained all board members are volunteers who have full time jobs and other duties besides their board service. To that end, they try to make the best decisions they can for the neighborhood however those decisions are meant for the neighborhood collectively, not individually. After thanking all the board members for their service Mr. Evans mentioned that having a volunteer board and self-management saves Homestead a lot of money every year. Being community driven and volunteer run is what makes Homestead great and sets Homestead apart. Sometimes at community meetings people bring their grievances. If homeowners in attendance have a personal issue tonight is not the place to air it unless it involves the HOA's systems or processes. The board welcomes constructive feedback but Mr. Evans asked that if anyone has a personal grievance to

please approach the board at one of their regular monthly meetings or call the Business Office. Mr. Evans concluded by stating the Board hoped criticism that evening would be constructive.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE: Sec. James Keating reported that the Architectural Control Committee report. The ACC evaluated 323 applications last year. He also announced that the Covenant Review Taskforce, a group of volunteers who walk the neighborhood annually to look property maintenance violations would begin in May. This is a short volunteer commitment that occurs in late May or early June and is conducted because it is an industry wide best practice. The committee needs as many volunteers as possible and he encouraged homeowners to add their names to the sign up sheet in the back of the room.

Mr. Keating then introduced Olivia Phillips and Kelly Kane who chair the Social Committee. The Board thanked the committee on behalf of the entire community for the terrific events they have organized. Olivia Phillips spoke for social the committee, mentioning the upcoming events: Saturday coffee mornings, the annual egg hunt in April which would have a coffee truck and treats as well. Olivia asked for volunteers for the July 4th activities which is their largest event and needs many helpers. She reported that the Christmas carriage rides were so well received they have already reserved more carriages for next December.

PERIMETER FENCE: Treasurer, Kelly McCormick, introduced herself as the board liaison who guided the fence committee. She explained that the ballot to approve a special assessment was likely to fail. 284 ballots have not been turned in but over 75 would have to be in support of the measure for it to pass. Kelly summarized the Perimeter Fence history, the previous loan for the original fence at 8% interest, the research by the fence committee who concluded that Trex was the best material and affordable choice. She explained the Board investigated both a loan and a special assessment. During 2022 loan interest rates went from historic lows to over 4.0%. The newly seated Board will meet in April and will have to come up with a new plan for the fence replacement. Over the last few years while saving for the fence the Board made no repairs to fence and sections are in extreme disrepair. Options for the Board are to increase the 2023 dues the full 10% permitted under the Governing Legal Documents. The Board may need to present a new budget to community mid-year. The Board will also look into loan options. Another idea is for a homeowner to volunteer pursuing a Government Improvement District (GID) with city of Centennial which funds the fence by selling bonds. Kelly spoke to the volunteer from Willow Creek who said it was a 40 hour a week job and took him 5 years to get it accomplished for Willow Creek. It's a significant process so if someone wants to take that on Board would be delighted.

Questions:

- 1. Why is the amount of the Special Assessment is more than needed to cover the \$2.8 million fence bid?** As explained at the community information meeting in December there are unknown costs such as traffic control, landscape removal and repair, moving irrigation lines, etc that the Board had to estimate. It's easier for the Board to refund to homeowners if the project cost less than expected or the Board could put the funds toward other expenses Homeowners have requested such as an ADA compliant ramp from the parking lot to the North Pool,
- 2. There are consulting companies who can handle the GID process for the HOA. The HOA should hire a consultant to obtain a GID.** Thank you for the suggestion.
- 3. At the community meeting I remember the Board saying they would reduce the assessment to \$3,200 but it stayed at \$3,600.** The Board does not remember agreeing to reduce the amount of the assessment and reiterated that to not collect enough money and have to halt construction would be far more problematic than refunding surplus funds.
- 4. Does the Board know why the ballot failed?** The Board has heard a variety of reasons, all anecdotal, that seem to point toward the assessment being too expensive and a preference to pay a smaller amount over a longer period of time, or that a homeowner didn't plan to live in Homestead long enough to justify the expense.
- 5. How is a GID paid for?** Bonds are sold by the City of Centennial at a lower cost than typical loan rates. Homeowners are charged through their property taxes.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Treasurer Kelly McCormick announced that the budget presented that evening was revised due to some adjustments: Front Range Recreation, the pool management company, had to raise their contract price due to increased labor costs and three line items were changed to re-classify expenses. Despite these changes the bottom line on the budget is the same. In addition, the 2022 financials will be audited. Kelly reviewed the reserve fund expenditures from 2022 and cautioned that the existing 2023 budget may change to add the 10% needed to repair the fence mentioned earlier. The currently stated income of \$1,342,000 and expenses of \$1,053,097 will result in a surplus of \$288,953. With scheduled reserve fund expenditures of \$259,632 there won't be \$100,000 to deposit in the reserve fund.

Questions: Do we have a minimum reserve balance? Yes, the HOA has a Reserve Fund Policy and Kelly believes the required minimum is \$100,000.

HOMEOWNER COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

1. **Doesn't providing snow removal cause a liability to the HOA?** Chris answered we have hired a professional snow removal company who carries insurance and carries us as an additional insured. The Board believes the HOA is adequately protected.
2. **Why was the snow removal only on east side?** No most public surfaces were plowed on a trial basis. Unfortunately ice formed from a December rain and that was cost prohibitive to clear so not every sidewalk was able to be clear and dry. The Board will provide snow removal on a trial basis next year and see if it is affordable. This answer elicited claps from audience. Chris went on to explain that the Board had to determine the frequency and depth of snow removal and determined the company will come after 3 inches of accumulation and after it has stopped snowing. There will be no shoveling if there is less than 3 inches and the company will wait for the snow to stop before shoveling so actual removal could be the next day. The Board has designated particular sidewalks and greenbelts
3. **There was a vote two years ago to not shovel walks.** Actually that was a survey which took place in 2015. The Board wouldn't have attempted a vote without guidance from the HOA attorney to be sure they were in compliance with the Governing Legal Documents. After consulting the HOA attorney the Board determined it does have authority to contract to remove snow and has decided to try it in response to the numerous requests from homeowners.
4. **I am new to the neighborhood and would like to second everything Chris said about Homestead being a welcoming community. We love Homestead and know it shouldn't take for granted. Our question is about West pool closing week before school. It's harder to have to drive over to the south or north pool once the West pool closes. What can the Board do to keep the West pool open as long as the North and South? Is there any possibility to extend the season?** Mr. Evans replied it is simply the cost of keeping a pool open. There is labor, cleaning, chemicals and utilities. The Board has been able to keep the North pool open past Labor Day because the facility is rented by ACES Swim club and used for their practices. The Swim Club pays a rental fee and the costs for cleaning, chemicals and utilities. Another reason the pools have closed when school starts is the lack of available life guards. However, the Board is very willing to look at the cost to keep the West pool open longer.
5. **Has the ACC looked at allowing xeriscape lawns?** Chris said board open to it and will follow the law but any xeriscaping plans need to go through the ACC to be evaluated on materials and design.
6. **Us there a map that where Ting boxes will go?** The HOA does not have one. If anyone has specific questions please email the office before Wednesday, March 15th because the board has arranged a meeting with Ting. Boring is occurring where streets have recently been resurfaced but micro-trenching is the practice on roads that are still due for resurfacing. If street has been resurfaced in last 5 years Ting will do boring in front yard. The City has contracted with Ting so the city decides how the fiber is installed.
7. **Thank you to the Board for listening to the pickleball players and striping a court for pickleball. Has a pickleball manager been hired? When will striping happen?** Due to the weather it looks like April for striping. A manager has not been hired. There seems to be little interest given the small number of hours. The striping is a trial as West courts get re-surfaced in 2024. The new tennis pros will offer pickleball lessons.
8. **Can the Board send out a questionnaire on why people voted no for the special assessment?** The response has been that they would rather make loan payments. **Trex will go in same place as old fence so there should be no utilities in place. Why would there be utility charges?** The newly seated board will have to start over with all this. The

Board will have to get new bids, so send your comments or volunteer for the committee. The Board thanked Grant Simmons for his work on the committee and for the hard negotiating on the final bid.

9. **A Perimeter fence owner said the fence is failing in her yard. So now what for owners like her?** Kelly agreed the fence is unacceptable in some areas so she suspects the Board will want to put money into repairing the existing fence but that may entail raising dues. Kelly hopes the repairs can bring the fence to an acceptable level.
10. **Why was the fence reserve maintenance fund stopped in 2010?** The Board doesn't know but has reinstated it.
11. **Charlie Rutenbeck announced he was moving after having lived in Homestead for 32 years and will miss his fellow homeowners and board volunteers. He thanked each Board member by name and remembered voting for the first fence assessment . While it was controversial back then as well, he believes the perimeter fence is an asset to all homes.**

ELECTION RESULTS: 127 Homeowners were in attendance. Ginny Karlberg was elected with a combination of 95 ballots and proxies providing enough votes to satisfy the quorum requirement of 90.

CLOSING REMARKS: Mr. Evans thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

BOARD ACTIONS SUBSEQUENT TO MEETING: On Friday, March 31st, the Board voted to decline a request to rent the North Pool parking lot for a homeowners work event