

THE HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC.

ANNUAL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 25, 2012

The Highlands Community Association held its annual meeting on Tuesday, September 25th 2012 beginning at 7:00 PM at the Country Club at The Highlands. Board members Scott Claus, George Emerson, Mark Endries, Terry Patterson, and Keith Shaffer were present.

Pre-Meeting Event

Prior to starting the formal meeting, Chesterfield County Police Department crime prevention officer Corporal Scott Gordon presented to the assembled group on neighborhood watch programs. Officer Gordon started by giving some statistics on the county:

- 316,000 residents
- 437 square miles
- 283 active neighborhood watch programs in the community

Officer Gordon went on to provide many important tips around how to keep from being the victim of a crime, what to do if you are the victim or witness a crime, and what to watch for as an ordinary citizen just being a part of your neighborhood and community.

The Highlands resident Mr. Kevin Smith, also responsible for inviting and setting up the presentation, asked Officer Gordon what would be involved in starting a formal neighborhood watch program in The Highlands? First and foremost CCPD is looking for commitment by 60% of the residents via a petition that they want the program and will support the program. Officer Gordon went on to say that it is important to develop a network of block/neighborhood captains to facilitate, hold start-up meetings, keep neighbors informed, train volunteers, and build participation. CCPD will provide training materials, expertise, guidance, and signage for the neighborhood to post declaring their participation. Officer Gordon concluded by extolling the benefits of a neighborhood watch program including:

- Uniting a community
- Improving crime reporting
- Increasing surveillance
- Enhancing homeland security
- Increased police presence
- Prevention and reduction of crimes
- Monthly newsletter and crimes stats specifically for the neighborhood and surrounding area

President Keith Shaffer thanked both Officer Gordon for his time and presentation and acknowledged the work of Mr. Smith pulling the event together and championing the cause. The board agreed to take up the community watch program at its next meeting.

Call to Order

At 7:14 PM, Mr. Shaffer brought the regular meeting of the membership to order. He started by introducing all the current board members and thanking both the residents in attendance as well as the many not in attendance but whom had sent in their proxy. A quorum was established allowing the membership to conduct its business.

Next Mr. Shaffer presented the meeting minutes from 2011 which have been posted on the HCA website since last September. There were no questions or comments, so Terry Patterson motioned to accept the meeting minutes as presented and Mark Endries seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Developer Report – Mr. George Emerson was introduced and stated that the market remains soft for homes in The Highlands. The majority of their development for the remainder of the year will be in two sections of McGlocklin. George asked for questions.

- Why are there zoning signs at the entrance of The Highlands? I have applied to have the \$10,000 per lot cash proffer removed and have proposed improving the quality of the homes built in lieu of the proffers
- What is happening with Lake Margaret? I bought it today.
- How many new homes will be built in 2012? 31-32 new homes will be built.
- What is the minimum lot size? According to information on the Chesterfield County website, there are some lots in Erinton which are less than one acre? There are no lots under one acre. I built two \$319,000 homes that I wish I hadn't and in the future will focus on the higher cost homes.

President Report – Mr. Shaffer started by recounting some of the highlights from the last year.

- Completed a review and rewrite of the ARC Regulations. The previous version had not been completely updated in the previous five years. Given the extent of changes, the Board of Directors decided to publish and send out the new ARC Regulations to all members at their homes. Small changes going forward will be communicated to the residents via newsletters, emails, and/or notices on the website with the official copy of the current ARC Regulations housed on the association's website.
- Re-established the grounds committee to review the grounds and put together a long term plan for improvements. The committee will present their plan to the board for funding and will oversee the improvements. Some focus areas will be the entrances at Woodpecker and Applecross, grass on the hillsides, and tree replacement.
- The dam recertification inspection was completed and a request for extension was submitted. This extension gives the association time to find the right contractor to complete the relatively minor issues identified and to properly fill out and submit all required paperwork.
- Improvements to the tennis courts this year included windscreens were added around the perimeter, benches, nets, and additional trash receptacles. It was noted during the meeting that the developer no longer owns the courts so users no longer need to be members of the pool in order to take advantage of the facilities.
- Annual assessments were lowered by 10% for those paying annually and stayed the same for those paying quarterly. Nearly 50% of residents paid annually and took advantage of the lower rate.

Mr. Shaffer went on to talk about work already underway for the coming year.

- The board is planning to add a fifth reader board sign at the Woodpecker entrance. The original sign builder is no longer in business so the board is searching for another vendor who can copy the other signs.
- One of the largest expenses of the association is landscape maintenance. The management company has sent out an RFP to several local companies who have expressed interest in our landscape contract. Similar to the past, the board expects to appoint a small group of residents to review the RFP responses, interview the companies, and provide a recommendation to the board for the successful provider. Our current contract expires in January.
- The annual dues payment process will differ in the upcoming year. Due to the positive response and feedback for the annual dues payment process last year, and taking into account the costs associated with continuing to offer a quarterly dues process, the board has decided to move everyone to a single annual payment for their dues. Dues will be \$320, the same amount as last year if you had paid annually. Additionally, the board has decided to send out invoices for the annual payment on January 1st but make the payment due on March 1st. Payments will officially be late at the end of March. It was the board's hope to work our due dates after the holiday shopping bills but before the tax and pool membership bills came due.
- Each year we struggle to reach quorum for this meeting so we can conduct the business of the association. The State of Virginia only requires 10% but our current standard is 25%. The board continues to study how to possibly move toward the state standard and will have more to communicate on this subject in the future.

Treasurer Report – Mr. Mark Endries provided an overview of the draft 2013 budget. Assuming the new dues structure, income is projected at \$333,420 (3% increase), expenses projected at \$329,348 (2% increase), and reserves at \$4,072. Our two biggest budget areas are landscaping and management, both of which are expected to be flat or just slightly increasing for the new year. The question was raised as to how money is captured for the reserves, and Mark commented that monies are both budgeted and any extra dollars at the end of the year are moved to the reserve.

Elections

Three board seats were up for election with President Keith Shaffer and Vice President Terry Patterson stepping down at the end of their terms after 5 years and 3 years respective on the board. Seats up for are regular elections included (1) two year term and (2) three year term(s) one of which was a special election to replace the seat vacated by Giovanni Tonti who resigned shortly after the last HCA membership meeting. Mr. Patterson introduced candidates Scott Claus, Matt Cullather, and Terry Petze who had properly submitted applications for the open board positions. It was noted that Scott Claus was appointed to the board after Gio left and until an election could be held to fill his vacated seat. The candidates spoke briefly on their qualifications and visions for the HCA. Mr. Patterson opened the floor for nominations and none were noted. Joanne Barrea moved to accept the three candidates by affirmation and Terry Patterson seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously by a voice vote.

Scott Claus was elected to a two year term on the board

Matt Cullather was elected to a three year term on the board

Terry Petze was elected to a three year term on the board

Constructive Comment

- Resident received a letter from Chesterfield County saying their home is now in a flood plain and as such must provide insurance. Mr. Endries reported the FEMA redrew the flood plain maps recently. Insurance is not required but suggested and lots of info is available on Chesterfield County website.
- What can be done about all of the deer? On back of packet handed out tonight is a letter from DNR regarding feeding wildlife and was also previously sent out to all residents subscribed to the website.
- How are violations running? Martha Year reported violation about the same with no major issues or trends to report.
- Resident reported calling police 3 times for teenagers ringing doorbells.
- Membership would like to have a balance sheet available for future Annual Meetings.

New Business

IRS Ruling 70-64 allows not for profit businesses (including our association) to move annual excess income to a reserve account without incurring income taxes. Mr. Shaffer motioned, and Barbara Howell seconded, that the association utilize the ruling once again this year. The motion passed on a voice vote with no opposition.

Adjournment

At 8:25 PM Mr. Shaffer motioned, and Mr. Endries seconded, the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed on a voice vote with no opposition.