

BRIARGATE 2ND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 14, 2019

Time: 6:00 PM at the Fireside Lounge at Summit Pointe

Officers: Jim Moeller, President/Treasurer; Janet Powell, Vice President; Sue Green, Secretary; Sue Weston, Assistant Officer

In Attendance

Representatives of 30 households were present. Those households received a bound copy of a digitized version of the Bylaws and a 50-pound bag of ice melt which was delivered to their address.

Approval of the Minutes from 2018

Copies of the meeting notes from 2018 marked “Draft for Approval” were sent to each residence prior to the meeting. A correction was noted regarding the omission of a demonstration by a few during the meeting. Jim explained that it is not necessary to note negative outbursts, unsubstantiated negative or accusatory comments to be included in the minutes of the meeting. Meetings are to be informative, pleasurable. Being accusatory and exhibitions of grandstanding will not be tolerated. The minutes were approved and seconded.

Election of a New Board Member

This is a very important position. Qualifications for this position would expect the individual have integrity, be reliable, transparent, be familiar with the Declaration, the Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations, be fair, consistent, conscientious, have strong people skills, and want to serve our community. Members of the Board have the voting power and the authority to make decisions. They over-see the Officers. The current Board members are Jim, Janet Powell, and Sue Green. Janet is also the Vice President. Her Board position is what the residents will vote on tonight. She will remain as Vice President. Nominations for the Board were made and seconded as follows: Janet Gardner, Sue Weston, and Josh Campbell. The votes were tallied and those in attendance congratulated Josh Campbell, receiving 16 votes.

Project Update

99% of the gutter problems are resolved. There are a few hot spots that remain due to the massive amounts of ground water in Marion. Some of the current projects may be pushed into the future project status. Mother Nature is working against us. Water is sitting on top

of the ground. This is a common problem among other condo associations in Marion. There is nowhere for the water to go. We are looking to our residents with expertise or know someone who has expertise in groundwater and drainage as a resource. A Class Action Lawsuit has been planned by another association. It is our opinion the Attorney's fees are too costly to exhaust our valuable reserve. Attorneys are expensive. \$200 for a phone call. How do we want to spend our reserves? Anyone who buys into a HOA is responsible for following the bylaws. That is, each is responsible to do what is necessary to maintain the property. We could have some big assessments coming up.

The City of Marion and Abode are aware, but non-responsive to our concerns. Abode knew what was going to happen in 2007. The City has explained that Marion is growing so fast they can't inspect everything. These are issues we are facing: wiring is not completed, underground tiling goes nowhere, downspouts are not complete or adequate, sump pumps are constantly running, there are holes where outlets or vents were never patched or covered. These issues, and others will be factors in our expenditures as we move forward with maintenance in the future.

Budget

Briargate Officers meet with the boards from other associations to discuss common concerns. The older our buildings, driveways, sidewalks, and streets become, the more expensive the repair or replacement. As one of the newer associations, we are discovering the need to begin planning for future maintenance. We are the only association in our area that can say we have \$230,000.00+ in our reserve. Other associations, older than ours have less than \$40,000 in their reserves. We need to consider the expenses these associations have faced in regular building maintenance and unplanned expenses, as well. Groundwater is an issue we all have in common. Monthly association fees have doubled to cover attorney's fees to fight developers and the City. Others have been turned over to Management Companies.

In 2020, there are three buildings on the south side of Saratoga Ct that will require reroofing. The estimate for reroofing is \$20,000 per building. We have 27 buildings to reroof in the next few years. Our current reserve of \$230,000 will not last long. There will also be cement work to be done, as well as siding and gutter replacements and repairs to a retaining wall. An increase in monthly dues is eminent. Our goal is to not assess a homeowner for repairs. Stepping up monthly dues to assure our reserves are adequate to cover maintenance costs is necessary so none of us would have to be assessed. There is no magic number or formula for knowing exactly how much we will need to reach this goal, and a \$25.00 increase beginning January 1, 2020 to \$140 per month (or to \$135 for ACH) is reasonable. It will be necessary to increase again in the future. We need to be careful to keep fees affordable and something residents can afford and budget for.

Another important factor in controlling costs is to cut services that are more efficiently performed by each homeowner. We have hired a new snow removal/lawncare company that has promised to reach a higher level of satisfaction each time they come out. Our

previous company charges us outside our original contract of \$48,933.00. They charged an additional \$16,050.00 past the contract for a total expense of \$64,983.38. This alone would attribute an additional \$15.03 to each member each month. \$1000 for additional snow removal; and additional \$6200 for ice melt from your driveway to your stoop. Trying to manage our money and to spend \$6200 for deicer is hard to justify when most homeowners don't even like salt or sand being tracked inside or killing their grass. Jim shopped ice melt and was able to purchase a 50-pound bag for \$11 for each of the homeowners attending the meeting. The bags were delivered to most of their residences that weekend. Our previous vendor was charging us \$37 per bag. The homeowners unanimously approved managing their own ice melt or sand in order to help control our expenses. Going forward, we will be looking at every resource for managing expenses. Is there anyone that might have knowledge or know anyone with expertise in the trades, building or construction, or a financial background. We will be looking to them as our resources. Otherwise, we will have to hire professionals. We will need to work together to keep our reserves. Rita Heffelfinger offered a great suggested to contact the local colleges for resources.

We need more of your good ideas. Our insurance costs increased by over 20% in 2019; the policy will be reviewed by a retired professional and bids for Briargate insurance will be sent out in the spring. All other expenses have been managed with little or no increases. The majority of residents present voted to meet in April for a status update. The date for the meeting will be determined and a notice will be sent 30 days in advance. The momentum during our meeting was exhilarating. All of us have input and the Board will work for the benefit of all within the bylaws. We want to hear what you have to say. We want you to be open and honest. We want you to trust us. Everyone wants to work together and be involved to control expenses and to be the best association in Marion. The clear message from the meeting is there is no time or place for negativity or hostility at our meetings. There is too much of that in the world today. Our meetings will be informative, positive, and productive. We want to hear your issues, but please channel those to us through the briargatesoa@gmail.com mailbox or in writing to Briargate Second Owners Association, PO Box 1049 in Marion 52302. We can promise to get in touch with you nearly always within 24 hours to help resolve any issue.

Announcements

Summit Pointe held a drawing for a double magnum of wine. The winner of the drawing was Pallavi Patel, our new resident on Churchill Ct.

The homeowners recognized Summit Pointe for their hospitality and applauded their chef who prepared several wonderful appetizers.

Next Meeting

April 2020 | Time, Location to be determined

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 8:10PM