

SACHEM'S HEAD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Members
June 13, 2018 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Midlothian Branch of the Chesterfield County Public Libraries
521 Coalfield Road, Midlothian, VA

Board of Directors in attendance:

Karl Grimsley, President
Carol Horner, Vice President
Barbara Havens, Secretary

Guest in attendance:

Mr. Brent Epps, Chesterfield County Department of Transportation
Mr. Glenn Chappell, James River Soil and Water Conservation
Officer Matt Rogers, Chesterfield County Neighborhood Watch Coordinator

Seventeen (17) homeowners were in attendance and 19 homeowners' proxies were received for a total of 36. **There was no quorum.**

Agendas and Homeowners' Questionnaires were distributed as members arrived prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Welcome

President Karl Grimsley welcomed everyone and introduced the Board of Directors. Karl noted that **a quorum of members had not been attained by those in attendance as 53 or more of the homeowners were not present.** He asked that the questionnaires be completed and turned in before leaving.

Lucks Lane Project

Mr. Brent Epps from Chesterfield Department of Transportation was introduced and spoke about the Lucks Lane widening project. He noted that the project is approximately 15% behind due to weather and difficulty with rock removal. All trees designated for removal have been cut down.

- Over the next few months the plan is to build out and widen the Evergreen side of Lucks Lane and to build two retaining walls – at Gladstone Glen and Cottage Mills area of Lucks Lane. The grading out of the hills, etc. will continue.
- The temporary sediment basin located near Reedy Grass will be there until most of the project is complete. VDOT will not clean the whole lake but only the part that is being confined.
- **Mr. Epps stated that, from what he has been told, Chesterfield County's Environmental agency (Environmental Engineering Department) is responsible for the upkeep of Lake Evergreen. Mr. Epps was told that Lake Evergreen is designated Best Management Practice and is the County's responsibility.**
- In response to a question, the center median of Lucks Lane will run all the way from Rte. 288 to Courthouse Road, with turn lanes.
- In response to a question, the trees were cut down on the Sachem's Head side of Lucks Lane so that utilities could be re-routed and for the future sidewalk and buffer area.
- In response to a question, the traffic signals will be placed late summer/early fall as project is winding up.

- There will be a sidewalk along Lucks Lane on the Sachem's Head side (no streetlights.)
- In response to a question, Sachem's Head HOA has been compensated for the property taken by the Lucks Lane project. This money has been set aside to provide a buffer between those homes impacted by the project and Lucks Lane.
- In response to a question, there is the possibility in the future that Evergreen Parkway will be extended past Evergreen Elementary School around behind Sachem's Head to near Rte. 288 (zoned as part of Centre Point.) There have been some indications by the owner of developing the property from powerlines to Rte. 288 into a mixed use development (residential/commercial.)
- For more up-to-date information regarding the Lucks Lane project go to www.chesterfield.gov/roadprojects/

Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP)

Mr. Glenn Chappell from James River Soil and Conservation was introduced. He is working with Carol Horner regarding the VCAP grant awarded to Sachem's Head. The grant is for lots smaller than farms which must be completed existences. There is a financial cap for each person/HOA each year. Along with Loren Field of Chesterfield County, Mr. Chappell determines the best practices for the project, which then gets estimates from contractors for the work. Mr. Chappell strongly recommends staying away from easements because, if the project is torn up in any way and for any reason, then it becomes the homeowner's responsibility to re-do it to VCAP regulations which can become quite expensive.

Mr. Chappell showed a Power Point presentation which elaborated on various causes of problems so of which apply to Sachem's Head – car washing, overuse of fertilizers, pet waste, run off and erosion. Suggested remedies include rain gardens, permeable pavement, rainwater harvesting, and conservation landscaping. His office has contractors who can provide estimates to determine if applying for the grants is feasible. Mr. Chappell is available to come out and look at homeowner's property to offer suggestions as is the Chesterfield County Extension Agency.

In response to a question regarding standing water in yards from the "river" that develops between Needle Rush and Spring Cress during rainstorms. Mr. Chappell stated he would be happy to come out and review the situation.

Neighborhood Watch Program

Officer Matt Rogers from Chesterfield County Police's Neighborhood Watch Program was introduced and spoke about the Neighborhood Watch Program. Sachem's Head involvement with the Neighborhood Watch program lapsed. The petition signatures have been gotten so the next step is for Officer Rogers to do a training presentation for those interested. He stressed that the Neighborhood Watch program is not vigilantes, but just residents being aware of what they are seeing around them and contacting the police if something suspicious or unusual is happening in the subdivision. Neighborhood watch is informal and not a patrol. Officer Rogers gave several examples including loud parties, strangers wandering the neighborhood, and people looking in cars. The non-emergency phone number (804.748.1251) should be called and caller may remain anonymous. If not anonymous, police will visit you to report the end result. Officer Rogers' job is to start the Neighborhood Watch program but not to run it. He will bring Crime Solvers and the Emergency Response Team with him for the training. Monthly meetings of the Neighborhood Watch members are recommended.

- In response to a question, solicitors are exempt if religious, political, BSA/GSA, "not for profit." The "No Soliciting" sign at front entrance is not enough. The homeowner needs to have a sign for no soliciting posted on their house. Those people coming through the subdivision to offer services need to have a permit signed by the Chesterfield County Chief of Police and be able to show it to resident if requested.
- In response to a question, it does make a difference if there are lights on outside a home as it does deter crime. The lights should be motion-activated. Officer Rogers and two other officers are available to do home risk assessments of security if asked.

Financial Report

Karl reviewed the five-pages handout of the HOA finances. The HOA account as of March 31, 2018 has a balance of \$127,492.29. The SunTrust Money Market has \$74, 279.32 of the total balance. This is the compensation money from the Lucks Lane widening project that has been set aside for restoration of the HOA areas impacted by the project. The agreement is that we cannot do this until the Lucks Lane project is completed so the money will stay in this account for at least another year.

The proposed budget developed by the HOA Board of Directors was presented by Karl. The amount that will be brought in by HOA dues, VCAP grant, and Verizon lease is projected to be \$33, 300.00. The bulk of this income goes towards maintenance and repairs of the common areas including tree removal (If a tree falls from HOA property onto a homeowner's property, then we have to remove it which can run \$2000-3000.) The amount of \$11,500 is for operating expenses; those things that are required or needed to run the HOA such as accounting services, insurance, and taxes.

- In response to a question regarding taxes, even though the HOA is non-profit it is generating income through the Verizon lease.
- In response to a question regarding maintenance costs, Karl stated that Cliff's men mow the grass, blow the leaves, cleaning debris from lake, emptying pet waste stations, etc. The Board had asked him to assist in removal of plants and trees from front entrance and relocate to other parts of subdivision. Cliff's men also built mulch beds in preparation for the VCAP plantings. The price we are being charged has not increased due to Cliff doing yardwork for some of the residents. Discussion followed as to what Cliff does monthly and what he is paid monthly. What he does, in addition to common areas, is decided by the Board on a monthly basis.
- For the VCAP grant, the HOA spent \$7000 for 105 plants/plantings to decrease erosion along the lake with \$3500 of it being reimbursed to the HOA through the grant.
- Several possible projects were brought up but will be listed below under "New Business."

Karl brought up the increase of the Quarterly Homeowners' Association dues. Currently the dues are \$54 every three months. This is very low compared to other subdivisions in the area. As Sachem's Head ages, repairs and improvements need to be done to keep it vibrant. At the same time, prices and labor costs are going up. Our budget is tight, with little left over for needed improvements. The Board of Directors, through the bylaws, has the power to increase the HOA dues by up to 20% yearly. The Board has discussed raising the Quarterly HOA dues by \$9.00, making the dues \$63 every three months. During the existence of Sachem's Head, the dues have only been increased once before from the original \$45 quarterly. With the increase, there would be approximately \$3700 for additional projects, etc. Another idea under consideration is a one-time assessment each year (in addition to the quarterly dues) for leaf and snow removal.

Election of Officers

Having no quorum, the election of officers was not held. Residents in attendance expressed their support for the current Board.

New Business

- Karl explained that the Board is dedicated to transparency which is why Board meeting minutes, the budget, and other relevant information is available on the Sachem's Head website. The website also allows communication via email with the Board regarding any questions, concerns, etc. which the Board will then review at their next meeting before getting in touch with the homeowner.
- Those in attendance expressed their appreciation for the website, message board, and newsletter and also asked that the newsletter be given to all homeowners and residents including renters. A possible way that this can be accomplished is using the street volunteers to distribute the newsletters rather than US mail, and only mail it to homeowners who do not live in the subdivision. An email distribution list has been started but needs more residents to add their email addresses.
- The maintenance of the bridge/creek area as it is overgrown with vines and people are using it for dumping things; it has become an eyesore. Karl explained that it is not a creek, but rather a storm drain from Water Willow to the lake. A possible solution would be to put a pipe through there for drainage rather leaving it open.
- Homes along the lake not being able to see the lake due to trees (including pine trees) and vegetation. A possible solution would be to trim the bushes and remove some of the unwanted vegetation without disturbing those plantings needed for erosion control. Removal of some of the pine trees may keep the path from buckling and keep limbs, etc. from falling into the lake also. Cutting down the trees would cost between \$2000 to 5000 per tree. This is not possible with our limited budget. Trimming them may be more feasible. Residents are not permitted to do this themselves.
- Six homeowners (out of 105) are delinquent on their HOA dues. This is down significantly from previous years, but still a problem. We have a lien against one of the delinquent accounts and are working on the others, but it again comes down to costs.
- Leaf and snow removal. The Board has been reaching out to various companies for estimates on these services. To date there has only been two companies returning the call, one of which will put us on a waiting list for 2020. Residents would be allowed to rake their leaves to the curb for removal. The leaf removal could be paid for through a one-time assessment (yearly), but we would have to wait until late in the fall to be able to clean up most of the leaves. We are waiting on estimates for snow removal.
- Concern for the bending and pushing of the fencing along the lake by fishermen was brought up. It is difficult to enforce this as it does not always observable while it is happening. Reminders have been given to fishermen if seen. Money has been spent repairing and replacing various parts of the fencing in hopes of keeping the geese off HOA and residents' properties, but it is a continuous battle.
- Dredging of the lake was brought up. Tim Dunbar and Karl have researched the costs of doing this. The company Karl contacted would charge \$10,000 to survey half of the lake (including depth, bottom, etc.) before doing any work. To dredge the inlet, bridge area and around there

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would be approximately \$15,00 and if we wanted them to haul away the debris/sludge, there would be an additional fee. Tim has been talking with someone, but they have not given him an estimate yet. The other side of the lake is also interested in dredging the lake. According to what Mr. Epps said this evening, the lake and its maintenance is the responsibility of Chesterfield County. This will be investigated further to find out what the County will and will not do regarding the lake.

- The question was raised if one needs a permit to fish in the lake.
- Karl brought up the idea of renting a dumpster for neighborhood clean-up but those in attendance did not see a need for this.

Review of Action Items

The following items will be reviewed by the Board of Directors for possible action:

- Any questions or concerns should be submitted through the website.
- HOA quarterly dues increase
- Finding out who is responsible for the lake's maintenance
- Possible projects for consideration including dredging, tree and bush trimming, leaf/snow removal.
- "Sprucing up" area where bridge is located as well as other areas of Sachem's Head
- Neighborhood Watch presentation/training

Karl reminded all to turn in their completed questionnaires before leaving and to submit any questions via questionnaire or website. He thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting.

Barbara Havens

Secretary, Sachem's Head Homeowners' Association