

# Coleson Board Meeting Minutes: May 7, 2019

## **Board members in attendance:**

- Katharine Bowerman (1660)
- Joseph Gems (1682)
- Catina Jay (1678)
- Kari Uman (1658)

## **Officers in attendance:**

- Jonathan Miller (1614), Treasurer

## **Residents in attendance:**

- Kerri Bundy (1652)
- Rebecca Wingert (1600)

## **Board members absent:**

- Tanya Mazarowski

**Location:** Kari Uman's residence at 1658 Wainwright

*Meeting began at 7:14 pm*

### **1. Opening Remarks**

- a. Katharine (heretofore referenced as Kate) opened the meeting by mentioning her intention that Robert's Rules of Order be utilized at our meetings, and she also expressed her appreciation to all present for contributing their time and effort for the benefit of the cluster.

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

- a. The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the previous board meeting on April 2. Joseph (heretofore referenced as Joe) moved that the April 2, 2019 minutes be approved as written. Catina (heretofore referenced as Tina) seconded. By unanimous vote, the minutes were approved.

### **3. Election of Fifth Board Member**

- a. Kari had graciously offered her home to host the meeting, but it was also the case that Kari had been approached about filling the vacant one-year term left by Chad's resignation and had agreed to do so.
- b. Joe suggested that, prior to conducting any further business, Kari be formally elected to the board, thus filling it to the required five residents.
- c. Kari was then elected to the board.

### **4. Upcoming Board Meetings**

- a. Dates for the June and July board meetings were then decided upon. The June meeting will be at Lake Anne Elementary School (LAES) on June 7 at 7:00 pm, and the July meeting will be on July 10, also at 7:00 pm, location TBD (though a room at LAES will be reserved).

## 5. Financial Update

- a. Treasurer's Report – Jonathan briefly outlined the two products he provides each month: a financial report and a budget report. He further explained that the financial report is a simple overview of our accounts and the expenditures made during the previous month, and the budget report is a comparison of actual spending-to-date versus budgeted amounts for each line item in the budget.
- b. In addition to the regular monthly expenditures for lighting, grounds maintenance, and trash and recycling, he reported that the annual insurance bill of \$2944 had been paid. The total expenditures for April were \$5070.98.
- c. He further reported that, although it is very early in the fiscal year and therefore quite preliminary, expenditures seem to be in-line with the annual budget.
- d. Banking Signatories - Only current board members are supposed to be authorized signatories to the CCA checking and savings accounts, currently held at SunTrust. However, some current board members are not currently signatories, and some signatories are no longer board members.
- e. After some discussion, it became obvious that the requirements levied on us by SunTrust for updating the signatories were unduly complex, and there was a sense that moving our accounts to another financial institution was justified.
- f. As a result, Jonathan was asked to examine the possibility of moving our accounts from SunTrust to some other institution, and to explore various ways of maximizing interest on savings accounts and CDs, including investing with an online institution. Joe agreed to work with Jonathan on this effort.

## 6. Expenditure Procedures

- a. Kate led a discussion of the recommended procedures she had previously documented, dealing with the approval of expenditures, and their reimbursement.
- b. These are all summarized in a document that Kate handed out, currently titled "Draft for Review & Comment." This document, once finalized and titled, will be uploaded to and maintained on the cluster website.
- c. After discussion, Kate moved that these procedures (pages 11, 12 and 13 of the handout) be approved. Tina seconded, and the motion passed.

## 7. Committee Reports

- a. Infrastructure
  - i. Retaining Wall Repairs – Kate reported that the previously selected contractor, David Ricard Masonry was projecting performance of the repairs around mid-May. There was a discussion of property lines, since the cluster is only responsible for repairs to retaining walls on cluster property, and not those on property owned by homeowners.
  - ii. Wrought Iron Railing Repairs – Kate reported that she has had discussions with Herndon Ornamental Iron Works about repairing railings

around the cluster. They are extremely busy, and the repairs are not likely to happen any time soon. However, the railing near 1604, which Barbara Szczepanski was concerned about, has been repaired.

- iii. There was a discussion about excess water and drainage issues. Kate will look into getting bids for addressing drainage problems, and stormwater-related issues.

b. Landscaping

- i. Kerri reported that Spring planting consisted of the planting of flowers.
- ii. The area between 1610 and 1620 was discussed. Merrifield Garden Center has provided a design for that area. The design, which cost \$437, has an estimated cost to implement of \$10000. The intent is to complete the project by September, but the board has only approved an expenditure of \$5000 for the area. There is an issue with sufficient watering for that area, and residents along that area have agreed to keep that strip watered.
- iii. Kerri intends to inform those resident of the specific plants included in that plan before anything further is done.
- iv. Kerri discussed some plans for tree planting along the rear perimeter of the cluster. A total of \$2500 has been allocated for tree planting this year, and it was suggested that \$1000 be used for planting two ginkgo trees. Kate then moved that the procurement and planting of two ginkgoes for \$1000 be approved, and Tina seconded the motion. At that point, there was discussion of whether this motion is required, since the expenditure of \$2500 for trees has already been approved in the budget. A lengthy discussion ensued, after which very little was decided.
- v. Another discussion arose, as to whether a vendor such as Merrifield Garden Center would be willing to do extensive work and then bill the cluster. Joe suggested that most if not all vendors require some money up front to start a project, and it was agreed that this could be dealt with by having the vendor bill the cluster for the required deposit.

- c. Kate reported on how well the Spring Cluster Cleanup went, and on the very positive response from residents to her survey.

d. Trees

- i. Kate reported on emergency tree work that resulted from a tornado. The work, which has been completed, was done well, and at very reasonable cost of \$600.
- ii. Kate reported on a spreadsheet she developed to keep track of necessary tree work. Tanya, as chairperson of the Trees Committee, will manage and update this spreadsheet.
- iii. Kerri suggested that we have an independent arborist review any tree-related actions performed or to be performed by any vendor. This suggestion was met with general agreement.

- e. Social – The Ice Cream Social that followed the Cluster cleanup was successful and well received. Barbara Szczepanski and the Lamkins are both planning to move in the near future. There was a discussion of holding a party for them before they leave.

- f. Covenants – Joe reported that he had received, from RA, a CD addressing the standards that pertain to Coleson Cluster, and indicated that the standards are in disarray. He said that he would like to focus on the standards relating to doors, and would like to develop a standard, far more inclusive of colors and of solid doors and doors including glass.

## 8. **Strategic Initiatives**

- a. Kate provided an introduction by explaining that residents who are interested in getting involved in cluster activities are unsure of what they might be expected to do, and what kind of time commitment they'd be undertaking. She has therefore proposed developing Committee Charters, which would outline the purpose and activities of each committee. She has developed a set of proposed charters, which were included in her handout: "Draft for Review and Comment."
- b. There was a discussion of one of the Social & Culture Committee's three purposes, that of welcoming new residents. There used to be a Welcome Packet that was given to all new residents, and it was agreed that is a good idea. The concept of a "buddy" assigned to each new resident was also mentioned, and it was agreed that is also a good idea.
- c. There was a brief discussion of the Reserve Study Committee. Since the Reserve Study is not an ongoing activity, but rather crops up every five years, Joe suggested that it be a Task Force rather than a committee. This was agreed to, and a brief discussion of the Reserve Study itself (which must be done in 2019) ensued. Kate will be leading the 2019 Reserve Study, with assistance from Rebecca Wingert and, of course, anyone else who volunteers to serve.
- d. The board decided, with no formal motion, to accept the Committee Charters as documented by Kate.
- e. Kate mentioned the need for each committee to develop a project plan for each committee. This will be further discussed at the June (4<sup>th</sup>) meeting.
- f. A discussion of the agenda item: "Building and Strengthening Community" was deferred to the June meeting, except that it was suggested that this could be handled (or at least led) by the Social & Culture Committee.

## 9. **Other Business**

- a. Trash & Recycling
  - i. The issue of the cluster trash and recycling, which has been a significant problem of late, was then discussed. The specifics of our contract were discussed, and Kate pointed out that the contract clearly favors the vendor, with plausible cluster actions quite limited. However, Fairfax County has gotten involved, since American Disposal's problems are widespread and not limited to the cluster, so it is possible that the problems will be resolved in the near future.
  - ii. Kate also pointed out that, if the contract with American Disposal were to be canceled, a new vendor would have to be found, and a new contract signed. There was considerable discussion, but no conclusions were reached.
- b. Cluster Complaint Form
  - i. During the Trash & Recycling discussion, the fact the Fairfax County has a complaint form that residents and HOAs can avail themselves of

reminded Joe of the Cluster Complaint Form (on the cluster website) and the fact that it contained board member names and addresses.

- ii. After some discussion, Kate said that she would add the question of whether this is a legal requirement and, if so, whether addresses were legally required, to a list of questions that she was developing for the cluster attorney.

*Meeting adjourned at 9:32 pm*