

EE HOA Board Meeting Minutes Date of meeting: 7/31/24

Present: Dean Dey (President, '26), John Smeallie (Treasurer, '25), Jim Azato (VP, '25), Courtney Sunborn (former Secretary), Denise Hiner, Michele Hensey

President's Report:

- Dean called the meeting to order at 1:10pm.
- Dean welcomed Michele and Denise to the Board. We are still looking for one more Board member, so we continue to post on the website, the FaceBook page, and the Nextdoor page. One open position is the Secretary role and the other open position is the Communications role (which includes creating and distributing the RipRap).
- First order of business is to approve the meeting minutes from our last Board meeting in May. The May meeting minutes were approved. The minutes have passed.

Treasurer's Report:

- Financial status- \$15,383.55. Money market: \$24,092.54. Total assets are: \$39,476.09. We are showing a net gain of \$545.5. Financial statements were approved.
- We currently have 22 outstanding dues. 2nd notice will go out this week. After 2nd notices go, we will then take reasonable explanations into consideration and waive the \$35 late fees on a case-by-case basis. The next step is to wait until next year and add it on to what they owe. With significantly outstanding dues, the next step is to put a lien on the property to collect what's owed and cover attorney fees.
- Our bylaws allow us to collect any monies spent to collect dues. We do notify homeowners of our process.
- Updated invoice: John brought copies of the updated invoice and solicited feedback from the Board. Michele made great suggestions about the current invoicing system. Michele suggested adding information onto the 2nd notice about late fees and attorney fees. John explained that we are not able to accept electronic payments like credit cards or PayPal due to the costs associated with such transactions. We accept paper checks, online billpay checks, money orders, or in-person cash payment (when requested individually).

Architectural Review Committee Report:

- Dean said we don't have anything new other than the house that has been torn down. Michele asked about replacing the siding on her home. Dean said that the only thing they need approval for is something that changes the footprint of the property, including new fences.
- Jim asked how much we need to spend before we ask the community permission? That threshold is \$5,000. The fence on the boat ramp cost \$4,999. We got a \$4,000 discount, which is awesome for the community. Michele suggested that we don't make decisions on behalf of the community without first at least communicating. John said we could have done things differently and agrees that we can do better with communication.
- Jim suggested that we put one or two picnic tables down on the boat ramp for people to go down and enjoy the boat ramp. Michele has suggestions for water plants to be placed along the swale.
- Dean encourages homeowners to use the ARC form on the website.

Building and Grounds Committee Report:

- Jim explained there are odds and ends for the boat ramp costs.
- Denise and Michele both brought up the concern that there should not be a Board member being paid for grounds work. Michele stated: "For reasons of conflict of interest, there should not be a Board member with a paid position. Best practice on a Board, there should not be a Board member paid by the Board because it is a conflict of interest." Dean said he thinks it is a valid point. Dean explained that at one time, we would hire someone who lived in Edgewater.
- DNREC/boat ramp update by John: Verdantis has been basically non-responsive to our queries. John is in communication with Jesse Baird with DNREC. Jesse told John that DNREC was scheduled to do work on the Oak Ct boat ramp swale in the fall. Their plan was to re-route the swale to the other side of its current location if that works out to be a better solution. DNREC was told about the fence, but didn't understand that the fence was going in within a few weeks. DNREC is working with a contractor with Sussex Conservation.
- John moved to move the meeting into Executive Session due to legal issues. Motion was seconded by Dean. The Board moved to amend the agenda. The Board moved into Executive Session to discuss matters that involve potential litigation.
- John moved that we move back into open session. Motion passed.
- Dean said the outlot tree is still a concern because the tree is dying, but he hasn't been to view it yet. There are two lots and there is a 20-25 foot outlot between two houses. One of the homeowners next to the outlot has

complained that one of the trees is dying. Dean will report on this issue at the next meeting.

- Michelle asked about planting trees on the boat ramp. Jim said that if we plant any more trees on the boat ramp, boaters will have a hard time turning around on the boat ramp.

Communications Committee Report:

- Regarding, keeping the directory updated: John gets information from Settlement Attorneys. Then he sends the information to the Accountant and the Communications Director. Dean is the person who monitors.
- The Communications Director is also the person who takes care of distributing boat ramp keys, in charge of the yard sale (advertising the yard sale and posting the signs), and keeps up with the website and posting on our social media sites.
- Michele commented that we have some serious issues with communication, so she would like to take on the Communications Director position. She has suggestions for formatting of the Directory.
- John got a letter that has routinely been sent to new owners when he became treasurer and has continued to send it to new owners when he receives settlement inquiries and he will share that with us. The Board should review and consider opportunities to improve that first communication to a new resident.
- Courtney will meet with Michelle Denise to go over all of the Communications issues.

Old Business:

- Dean explained that there is a section of Oak Ct (past the boat ramp) and all of Sycamore that belongs to Edgewater Estates (going back to 1979). The state pays for all of the snow plowing, but if we need to do blacktopping, we (EE) are responsible.
- Michele asked if it is on their titles or deeds that their roads are owned by the Property Owners Associations. Do we fund the road improvements with Property Owners Funds or do we ask homeowners to fund those “community-maintained improvements”? Michele suggested that on future sales of these properties, we can offer the new home-owners shared responsibilities of these roads. Michele suggested that we get ahead of ourselves and get estimates on how much it might cost to improve these roads. John suggested that we seek legal advice on this matter. Jim suggested that we raise the annual dues for the entire community. John said that he thinks that this will be a community

responsibility. Dean said that we need to start planting the seeds because asking the community to raise the rates got the previous Board voted out. Michele suggested that we put together a proposed budget for 2025-2027 and explain what improvements we are looking to make to the community. We could ask for a 1-year capital-improvement.

- Dean said for sewer work we've used Teal Construction.
- Jim said that the signs at the entrance are rotting and that we will need to invest in new signs in the near future. Dean said that the last entrance sign replacement cost us \$14,000.

New Business/Open Floor:

- Michele and Denise introduced themselves. Denise has lived in EE for 3 years. Michele has lived in EE since March 2024.
- The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 pm. The meeting was held from 1:00 pm - 3:28 pm.
- We will meet next in 8 weeks on Zoom on weeknights.
- The next Board meeting is currently scheduled for August 14th at 1pm. Our bimonthly
- meetings are for Board members only.
- *Questions/comments/changes: please email edgewaterestatesboard@gmail.com.