

NEW MARK COMMONS HOMES ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, January 2, 2020

New Mark Commons Clubhouse, 7:00 p.m.

Minutes Taken by Shireen Ambush

Attendees

Board Members: Alex Belida, Joe Jordan, Kathleen Moran, Karin Boychyn and Ron Tipton

Abaris Community Management: Shireen Ambush, Henry Leung and Kaitlyn Ambush

1. Call to Order

Kathleen Moran called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Community Forum 1 and Board Response

None

Board Response:

None

3. Agenda and Prior Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting Agenda, 1-2-20: Alex Belida moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Karin Boychyn and carried unanimously.

Board Meeting Minutes, 12-5-19: Joe Jordan moved to approve the minutes as amended. Alex Belida seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

4. Appeals

None

5. Hearing

None

Committee Reports

Architectural Control Committee (ACC) –

Alex Belida reported that the ACC met today and approved several new applications. The Committee discussed the survey of all homes which has been completed and listed over 100 violations, many of which pertain to front doors.

The CCOC has processed the complaint the Association filed against the owner of 238 New Mark Esplanade for the unauthorized roof and the owner has been requested to respond within 30 days. The CCOC has not yet responded to the complaint that the Association filed against the owner of 13 Tapiola Court for the unauthorized shed.

Communications Committee – Pat Reber reported that Kirsten Hall is busy updating the website photos which will be placed in a photo gallery organized into categories. Typos will also be corrected. The deadline for the next newsletter is January 17, 2020 and the digital newsletter will be issued on January 22, 2020.

Landscape Committee –

The Committee meets next Tuesday. There were some leaf blowing complaints from residents that were all addressed by AW Landscapes. The 2020 grounds maintenance contract has been executed and the Committee is looking forward to another successful season with AW Landscapes this year.

Lake Committee –

None

Pool Committee – Joe Jordan reported that the Committee will meet this month. We have saved \$1500 on the pool management contract for the 2020 season due to the change in the MCPS

Governance Committee – John Daroff reported that Dan Amodeo sent an email earlier today with an update as follows:

The Association's legal counsel has commented on the proposed amendments to the Declaration of Covenants. There are differing opinions among the members of the Committee as to how much authority the Board should have. There will be a Listening Session on February 1, 2020 to give residents an opportunity to be heard and for the Committee to collect ideas for incorporation into the new documents. A newsletter article needs to be included in the next issue providing an update and the deadline for the draft to be submitted by the Committee is January 14, 2020. Shireen Ambush commented that the Association is one of the oldest in the City and County, thus the governing documents were written without the benefit of knowing the logistics of how to effectively run community Associations. As time elapsed and Associations evolved, so did their governing documents to address issues that arose or to avoid problems that were experienced. Shireen encouraged Board members to review the governing documents of some of the other similarly styled, newer communities Abaris manages to see how the language has

evolved which could give some ideas to the Governance Committee as they are conducting their work on the new documents for NMC. John Daroff advised that once the documents are revised, new policies and procedures must be implemented.

Welcome/Social Committee – Madeline Gupta reported that the Welcome Committee has welcomed 5 new residents to NMC in recent months. As they welcome the new residents, they are also asking for their feedback on what they like or don't like about the community since moving in.

The International Dinner will be held on February 8, 2020 and the deadline is January 25, 2020 to RSVP.

Ron Tipton inquired as to how any planned community social events we have a year. Kathleen Moran responded that the 4th of July event is the biggest of the year. There is a Board open house in October. The International Dinner has been well attended but the Adult Pool Party has not been very well attended. Joe Jordan suggested trying National Night Out which was successful in the past.

Ron Tipton volunteered to organize a pickle ball tournament in the spring.

The swim team's social events have been open to the entire community.

6. Treasurer's Report

Karin Boychyn reported that the December 31, 2019 financial statement has not yet been prepared by Abaris since the month just ended. Year-to-date so far as of November 30, 2019 the Association appears to be running within budget. The Board must decide what capital improvement projects need to be undertaken this year and then prioritize the list. The Board has requested a meeting with Abaris CFO, Tom Kunjoo as soon as the December financial statement has been prepared in order to go over the unaudited year-end numbers.

Joe Jordan inquired why we appear to be so far over budget on the secretarial services line item. Abaris will provide a list of all invoices paid under that budget line item.

Joe Jordan referred to his email to the Board regarding the approved budget letter that did not incorporate his suggestions of full transparency of what homeowners were paying over the 2019 dues amount which is anywhere from 38% for a 5 bedroom detached home to 62% for a 3 bedroom townhouse. Furthermore, the letter did not clearly list how much each style of home went up as it was not 50% for every style. Ron Tipton stated that the variance is caused by reserve contributions and it was not easy to explain. Kathleen Moran stated that she has not heard from any homeowner. John Daroff stated that he had a conversation with a townhouse owner, and we did the best we could to explain the tough concept under which the governing documents require us to calculate the dues. Alex Belida stated that the Board would have considered a more gradual fee increase if there had been a substantial outcry after the Board proposed the 2-year plan. The Board certainly hopes to keep future increases to a minimum. John Daroff requested that the most current delinquency report be sent to the Board as soon as possible as he is concerned we must have liens on file for the delinquent homes.

Management Report

Shireen Ambush presented the report from Abaris:

A. **Becht Engineering Drainage & Erosion Update** Shireen Ambush advised that Becht has not been able to obtain 3 bids based on their original scope of work. Since the RFPs have gone out to 12 bidders, several have given similar feedback about the scope of work prepared by Becht. The first concern is the removal of massive trees in order to excavate and run drainage pipes as proposed by Becht. The second concern is entering private homeowner property to tie in downspouts which creates liability for the Association. Shireen further stated that she had conversations with Alan Walcoff, owner of AW Landscapes and Craig Sullivan, Arborist with S&P Tree Care and they had some suggestions on how the scope of work could be revised in order to save as many trees as possible and make all corrections on common area without encroaching onto any homeowner's property. Shireen recommended an on-site walk-around with the engineers from Becht, Alan Walcoff, Craig Sullivan and members of the Board so we can all review the areas together and agree on a revised scope of work for Becht to prepare to send out for bid. Shireen will coordinate the on-site meeting.

B. **Clubhouse Exterminating** Jim Denny reported that Terminix has treated the clubhouse closet twice for carpenter ants. Now that the treatment is done, Abaris will coordinate the interior repairs with handyman, Pat Sharp.

7. Old Business

A. **Gas Company** Jim Denny reported that the Gas Company is getting ready to replace underground gas lines to the clubhouse and 2 homes on Tegner Way. Flags have been placed in the ground marking the location of the lines.

B. **Capital Improvement Projects** The Board agreed that hiring a consultant for the lake dredging is a priority for 2020. Shireen Ambush provided some insight about the many Federal, State and City permits that will be required based on her experience with the Grosvenor Park pond dredging project that has been underway for nearly 2 years now. Shireen highly recommended Bayland as they are the consultants/hydrologists hired by Grosvenor Park. They are also highly recommended by the City of Rockville. Shireen will reach out to Bayland for a phased proposal similar to what they provided for Grosvenor Park. The Lake Committee is also obtaining bids on sediment removal from the lake.

Once Becht Engineering revises the scope of work and puts it out to bid we will have some idea of the cost of the drainage and erosion project at the 4 locations we have identified as priority 1 areas in need of attention.

8. New Business

A. **Annual Meeting and Board Elections** Kathleen Moran announced that the Board elections are rapidly approaching. Shireen Ambush will prepare the official notice of the Annual Meeting which is also the call for nominations and send it to the Board for approval before it gets sent out to all homeowners.

9. Community Forum 2

A. Raj Gupta suggested having the sea walls around the lake inspected as part of the dredging project. The walls should be examined once the lake is drained from a structural perspective by an engineer to ensure the integrity of the walls is intact. Jim Denny suggested this would also be an ideal time to power wash the walls.

B. Ron Tipton commented on an email from Linda Silversmith regarding erosion control that was done in 2001. The cause of the erosion at that time was believed to be caused by geese traffic.

C. John Daroff announced his resignation from the Board effective immediately. He is pursuing a new job and with the upcoming elections, his position can be filled accordingly. John agreed to attend the next Governance Committee meeting and will announce at that time whether or not he is also resigning from the Committee. Kathleen Moran thanked John for his 5 years of service on the Board. Ron Tipton acknowledged the tremendous progress the Association because of John's involvement and leadership.

10. Executive Session

A. None

11. Adjournment

Alex Belida made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe Jordan seconded and the motion which carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.