

Westmont Homes Association Minutes ~ August 15, 2022

The following meeting was convened via Zoom due to high levels of Covid transmission in Johnson County.

Board members present:	President – Ian Morris Vice President – Nancy Kocourek Treasurer – Michelle VanMill Secretary – Jan Hodgson Social Chair – John Ziegelmeier	Identified as: Ian Nancy Michelle Jan John Z
Board members absent:	Grounds Chair – Linda Stogsdill Communications Chair – Sam Harpalani	Linda Sam

Homeowners present:	Carol Barlau Jake Schulzinger	Carol Jake
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President's Report: Ian called the meeting to order at 6:31pm and began recording. Ian commented on the recent road repairs and how the new material seemed to have settled down.

Gas Line: Michelle shared her recent experience with the gas line workers in the neighborhood. She wasn't sure how she got picked but maybe they identified houses that needed updates. She learned that some of the gas lines need replacing because houses are pulling away and causing gas leaks so repair crews were reassigned to our neighborhood, perhaps on an emergency basis. Her experience was positive in that after they dug a big hole in her yard and ran a line underground, they filled it in and laid down seed and covered it with a straw mat and a plumber came to restart her gas.

- Nancy shared that Sue Rogers saw people in the street on Hemlock recently and found out there was a gas leak on Hemlock. That's probably what caused our neighborhood to become a priority.
- Ian was glad they were dealing with it.

Board Changes: Ian noted that he, Michelle and Sam are scheduled to go off the board at the end of this year after serving their 3-year term and called for suggestions. There was some discussion about how to communicate the openings to homeowners and a review of past practices.

- Nancy noted that three members are due to go off the board this year and three next year and then one the following year and asked if there should be some adjustment to get back to the 2/2/3 rotation or just keep going this way.
- Jan asked how the adjustment would work.
- Nancy suggested some board members might stay on for one more year or longer to balance it out. It's good to have some people continue on to keep things going with some continuity. The documents originally called for 2/2/3 for board member rotation, but it doesn't always work that way.
- Ian recalled that before his joining, Beverly was doing two jobs because there weren't enough board members, but the first thing we need to do is notify homeowners and give anyone who wants the opportunity to join the board. From there we can make a judgement.
- Ian and Michelle are both willing to stay on another year if necessary, but more out of a sense of duty than desire.
- Carol shared that when she was president, there were only two left on the board at one point and it made things quite interesting for a while. Length of service is not something you can predict as things come up in people's lives. You could try to rebalance but 3/3/1 is not a bad rotation either.
- Jan volunteered to draft some notices about the board openings for Ian and Nancy to review.

Minutes: Michelle and Ian moved and seconded that the minutes from the July meeting be approved and Jan noted that Nancy had caught a typo in the last paragraph and that had been corrected.

Treasurer's Report: Michelle thought the meeting was next week and she just recieved the HAKC statements Thursday and had not had a chance to review them until today. She sent them out to the board just before the meeting.

- The July statements were typical of what we expect with mowing and the shrub pruning invoices. We were also billed the prorated amount of \$210 to increase in the insurance premium from now until November when the two insurance policies renew. The fence insurance coverage was raised from \$50,000 to \$90,000.
- Two properties were late with their dues payments. It was the second month in a row for one property owner and they are new in the neighborhood so she will reach out to them. A second homeowner was late for the first time and she'll keep an eye on the account.
- Nancy asked if there was a delay in payment for new homeowners if they go on autopay and Michelle didn't think so. Some autopays go through their banks instead of HAKC and bank cards can expire, so there are all kinds of reasons for delays.
- Ian thought it was under control and we were in a good place. He shared that he would keep his Excel spreadsheet going.
- Jan moved we approve the financials and Nancy seconded the motion.

Grounds Report: Linda is out of town and did not designate anyone to manage lawn care in her absence.

2023 Precision Contract Proposal/Budget Discussion: Ian shared a screen shot comparing last year's contract with Mark's proposed contract for the coming year. He noted changes or increases over the current contract by line item. Overall, the proposed contract is just under \$4000 more than last year for a 7% increase.

- Jan noted the added line item of the blanket turf spray for \$4500 that was not in last year's contract. We did just have that done in July at Mark's recommendation but it was separate from the contract, and a mowing was dropped to help pay for it.
- Jake questioned the cost of the holiday lighting (\$900) and wondered if that was a place we could cut back by just having the wreaths. With increasing prices, couldn't we cut back somewhere? Lawn care has gone up. Trash will be going up. Do we need to spend that extra money?
- Ian continued that we need to pull together the budget for where we think we'll need to be next year. We know there's an insurance increase. We have to talk about the fence. We need to understand what the overall costs are. He noted that last year when we approved the budget, we forecasted more than we were actually bringing in. The only thing that saves us year to year is snow.
- Jake asked about the increased insurance costs we've incurred this year. Michelle checked and the increased fence coverage is \$600/yr. and the \$210 is the prorated amount until it renews in November. The new liability insurance is \$250/yr. So, reducing some of the holiday decoration costs would help balance that out. We can spend money until the well goes dry, but he doesn't think it's the right thing to do.
- Nancy suggested that if we don't use the lights we don't need to pay for storage. And if it's just the wreaths, maybe board members could take turns storing them in our garages. The new wreaths at both entrances blew down last year and she had to go reinstall them. They're not hard to put up. The lights that are on the trees only go so high and then there are some ornamental balls.
- Michelle noted they were all new last year and Nancy said the lights don't take up much space either so maybe we could store the lights ourselves for a year if we wanted to cut back and see if we can afford to put them up next year.
- Ian said let's pull it into the budget and see where we are. Costs are going to be increasing across the board. Ian asked about the status of the waste contract.
- Michelle reported that we're on a 3-year contract and there's an adjustment each year and the contract ends next year.
- Jake suggested there might be a fuel adjustment.
- Ian appreciated Jake's input about the value of cutting back and asked Michelle to start pulling together the budget for next year and he could help.
- Michelle is working on the budget for next year and already has the template, but questioned the blanket weed control just added this year.
- Jan followed up with concerns about that and acknowledged that there are some mowings that have been canceled so that will help cover the cost. But we were also having mowings canceled to cover the water bill for the summer so she doesn't know if we've canceled enough mows yet to cover the

extra expenses. Additionally, we didn't have time to process the blanket weed control application and we haven't had enough time to process if it was effective. An option could be that people sign up to do that individually rather than having the HOA pay for the treatment everywhere. Not everyone is doing the same level of watering and lawn care. How many people put signs out saying no chemicals so why are we paying \$4500 for something that not everyone is benefiting from? Or wants. She didn't have a position but was just throwing it out there.

- We acknowledged that we were trusting Mark's recommendation that it was needed, but how many opted out or how many yards didn't have crab grass (like Michelle's).
- Nancy pointed out that there are quite a few that don't maintain their yards at all and wondered if it might be an add on that he could set up with people directly.
- Ian pointed out it's a big number.
- Michelle suggested it's doing a service for all the residents that we don't have to do.
- Jan said we don't have the data. We don't know how many people opted out, how many people watered it in and there's probably no way to ascertain that. Something to think about.
- Ian thought these were valid points.
- Michelle wants to set some boundaries and ground rules with Mark that would include not swapping things around. We want to take his advice but the decision was rather quick on the recent blanket spray, but she didn't want to make an issue about it since others seemed okay with it. Jan agreed that she was still processing when the decision was made.
- Jan asked about the longer contract from last year and Michelle thought the legal verbiage would be added once we agree on the numbers.
- Nancy agreed that it's good to get some suggestions from Mark but we need to process it because he doesn't know our budget or our circumstances.
- Ian thought that if we could save \$4500 on that item and if he can get away with 26 mows, it would help the overall budget.
- And Nancy wants to make sure it's a number Mark can live with, too.
- Jan had a question about snow removal in that there is a section pricing snow removal for 1-3 inches but the contract starts at 4 inches so she was wondering why that's even there.
- There was considerable discussion about snow removal. Jake thought it was 3" and because of the confusion, a previous board tried to change our documents to say 3 inches. The website and original documents set it at 4" before the HOA pays for snow removal. Anything less is navigable and usually melts fairly quickly Nancy suggested. The more snowfall we get, the higher the removal fees.
- Ian clarified that one of the biggest things that gets misunderstood is that it's 4 inches in one pass and people see 2 inches one day and another 2 the next and expect snow removal.
- Jan wants us to make that more clear to homeowners somehow.
- Nancy noted that the city requires the homeowners to shovel their walks in front of their house.
- Carol drew a chuckle when she said "Thank goodness for global warming."
- Jan suggested we won't have any lawns with increased global warming because we won't be able water them. They are already doing that in California and Las Vegas. They're banning watering and switching to gravel yards and cactus, etc.
- Nancy said they were doing that when she lived in California.
- Ian said there were watering bans all over the UK at the moment.
- Ian noted that snow removal can help us or kill us (in terms of the budget). We looked back at his spreadsheet on all our expenses and in 2013, we paid \$29,157 for snow removal. And \$9,200 so far this year. We need to share the rules again when snow season comes. And we don't have 12 months in reserves now.
- Nancy had some calls last year but once she explained the rules they were fine with it.
- Jan suggested that since Sam wasn't there tonight, we all need to remind each other when fall comes, to put something in the newsletter.

Social Report: Ian sent out a fence report summary earlier in the day and a decision was tabled because some board members were absent and some had not had time to read it before the meeting.

Directory Spot: John reported there are 166 Directory Spot users/email addresses. Some homes have more than one user/email address. He will send a reminder this week to the people who still need to log in if they want to access the directory.

- Over half the neighborhood has logged in and only one household has blocked their information.
- Carol shared that she really likes the email notification system and appreciates that.
- Nancy asked how much Directory Spot cost and it's \$200 annually.

Garage Sale: John reminded everyone that the garage sale is scheduled for September 8-10 and timed to coincide with two nearby subdivisions garage sales. He'll get the signs up earlier that week.

Annual Meeting: John shared that he wants the annual meeting to be in person this year and that he's heard a lot of complaints from homeowners that they can't always get on the call. They would like to see us face to face.

- Jake asked if John was aware that the infection rate in Johnson County is over 20% now?
- John said it was 2.3 as of today.
- Jan and Jake both said the infection rate is currently 20.3%.
- Ian shared one of his biggest concerns is that it's summer right now and we're all outside so there are not a lot of activities where people are going inside. Predictions are that the numbers will go up in the fall because crowds will go inside. He appreciates that the homeowners didn't like that we didn't have it in person last year, though he thinks it was for the right reasons. He still avoids big crowds and thinks we should watch the numbers and see what happens in the next month or so before we make that call. No matter what we do, we'll upset some people, but he doesn't want to put anyone at risk.
- Ian shared that, as we know, his father-in-law died a month ago and that after the funeral, all his family caught Covid. And they had all been exceptionally careful, double masking, even at the funeral. He hears what John's saying but thinks we need to watch the transmission rate and see what happens.
- Nancy shared that a lot of her young adult family have gotten it for the second time and some are having issues that carry on. It's still pretty risky. The numbers of people who come to board meetings in the past are not big and as long as we keep the homeowners informed, she thinks they will be okay with that. She shared that Linda was interested in meeting in person, too, but since she got Covid on her recent cruise, she is being more careful and has ordered more masks.
- John and Jan exchanged some numbers and information about the current transmission rates, the all-time high in February and what the World Health Organization considers the safe rate and we're far from it. John thinks we're being unfair to the homeowners. He suggested we're here to represent the homeowners and we're hard to get a hold of. He said we don't communicate as well as we should and a lot of people don't know what's going on.
- Jan asked what he meant by we're not communicating as well as we should. John said we didn't do anything on the gas line.
- Nancy pointed out it was up to the gas company. And her calls from homeowners about ARCs and how we're handling them have all been positive.
- Jan suggested that if we do have an in-person meeting, people can decide whether or not to go. Maybe we could set it up to be both Zoom and in person and we can require masks. Michelle was thinking the same thing.
- Michelle pondered the technical logistics. The need for a strong internet connection. We'd need a microphone and speakers. Jan shared that Michelle had convinced her it wasn't feasible.
- Michelle suggested maybe it would appease people if we had an outdoor social event in the summer, but she hasn't heard any complaints herself.
- Ian returned to the thought that, sadly, we're never going to please everybody.
- Michelle rallied that if people want to force change in our little neighborhood, they should join the board and see how hard it is to try to please everybody.
- Carol agreed it's a thankless job and she knows that from experience. But she shared that she enjoyed seeing people at the in-person meetings. She shared that she sees a lot of people walking her dogs and thought it was one of the things that kept her sane during Covid. She agrees with Ian

that we should watch the numbers and that the goal could be that we get back to in-person meetings. We can require masks and people can decide if they want to come. She thinks the church would welcome us back with open arms. They have lovely facilities and they're so nice.

- Jake suggested that if we're going to a mixed meeting, we might want to ask what they have in the way of AV equipment because they probably went to mixed services as well. Everyone thought that was a good point.
- Ian has the contact information for the church and will follow up.

Communications Report: Sam asked Ian to share that the newsletter deadline is 8/22.

Adjournment: With no further business to come before the board, Ian adjourned the meeting at 7:28pm

Next regular board meeting: Monday, September 19, 2022, at 6:30pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted, August 29, 2022

Jan Hodgson, Secretary