

Gray Acres Maintenance Corporation  
Annual Meeting Minutes  
November 9, 2012  
Salem United Methodist Church

**Board Members Present:** Calvin Alt, Sharon McDaniel, Ted McDaniel, Chris Baldwin, Nada Jones, and Jeff Owens (Landscaping Committee Chair)

**Community Member Present:** Phil Iadiszrnia, Vanessa, Candice Green, Beverly Green, Lehrmans, Diane Finucan, John Kelly, Nancy Ruhland, Ray Krout, Barbara & Rick Provell, Denise Williams, Nancy Kling, Andrea Procak, Frances Cheek, Robert Krause, Jagan Devisetty, Sandra Owens, Linda Shepherd

**Proxy Statements Submitted:** Kelly Brennan, Frederick & Judith Rost, Ming Gong Jin, Evelyn & Harry Olszweski, Patel Mukesh & Patel Alkaben, Dorothea Ferguson

**Visitors Present:** Representative John Viola, Councilman Dave Tackett, Senator Bryan Townsend

**Call to Order:** Chris Baldwin, Board President, called the meeting to order and introduced the Board members. The meeting was a little late starting (~7:30) because a member of the church was late in coming to open the facility for the GAMC.

**Treasurer's Report:** Sharon informed the GAMC that she was prepared to offer information on the balances only (not an itemized list). The report given was as follows:

Checking Account has a balance of ~ \$26,824.00

Capital Fund has a balance of \$5,000.00

All bills are up to date at the time of this meeting.

We were in the red early last year. We had less snow last year, so we have plenty of savings in case there's an emergency this winter.

**President's Report:** Chris gave information about what has occurred since the last Annual Meeting.

- Reestablishment of web presence  
The Communications Committee has set up a new cost free website with neighborhoodlink.com. Posted on the site are:
  - Board minutes
  - Bylaws
  - Proposed 2013 Budget
  - Contact information for Board members
  - Map
  - Local events and news on a calendar

The website can be found at [neighborhoodlink.com/Gray\\_Acres\\_Maintenance\\_Corp](http://neighborhoodlink.com/Gray_Acres_Maintenance_Corp).

\*\*Community residents can also find it by typing Gray Acres Maintenance Corporation into any browser (Yahoo, Google, etc.). It's hoped that GAMC will expand the utilization of the website. More will hopefully be added, and the Board welcomes ideas.

- >\$4,000 in assessments was collected by Neighborhood Resources over the past years.
- The GAMC Board is currently negotiating with Countryside for a multiyear, multifaceted contract.
- The GAMC Board will be maintaining fiscal discipline; for example, we have developed a capital fund to be used if any emergency arises (repair the front entrance, repair storm weather ponds, shortfalls during years with excessive snow events).

Chris ended his report by talking about the storm weather ponds.

- The neighborhood inherited them when the development was formed.
- We did have a recent inspection done and there are some things to correct. It could cost \$1,000/day for a failure to correct the problems.
- If we lose the amnesty program, homes could end up being assessed for ponds' maintenance. Chris said that it could end up costing the neighborhood \$10,000 to fix and maintain the ponds.\*\*\* *See Dave Tackett response below under Guest Presenters.*
- Ted McDaniel and Chris Alt went to a storm pond maintenance workshop presented by New Castle County. It was very informative.

**Old Business:** There was no old business to present this evening.

**New Business:** A motion was made to approve the 2013 budget. A discussion was held to answer questions and raise any concerns related to the budget.

- The proposed budget shows that the GAMC plans to maintain assessments at \$130.00/household.
- *Question:* "What is we don't use the money for snow removal?"  
*Answer:* It stays in our budget. We do have money available if there is a bad winter. It will allow us to avoid "special assessments."
- *Question:* "The playground looks bad. Is that part of our landscaping job?"  
"This year has been the worst. Previous years were not as bad."  
"There is a lot of trash and there isn't a lot of good mulch."  
"We're worried about the children's safety."  
*Answer:* "That is a county park. We need to ask a county official about that."\*\*\* *See Dave Tackett's response under Guest Presenters.*
- *Question:* "I'm estimating that we *should* get about \$32,000 in assessments. How much do we *actually* get?"  
*Answer:* "The budget does account for the fact that some don't pay."

A vote on the budget was taken. All were in favor (no objections). The budget for 2013 was approved.

Nominations made for new Board members.

One nomination was put forth: Linda Sheppard. The nomination was accepted by all present.

**Guest Presenters:**

- **Dave Tackett** (Councilman 11<sup>th</sup> District)
  - People can sign up for "blind copied" e-mails regarding county events and information about what's happening in the community (alerts).

- The pond is on a major rebuild list. GAMC shouldn't be putting a lot of money into it. Before spending a lot of money for maintenance, run it by him first. Just do general maintenance.  
The county told us about the things that needed to be fixed after annual inspection.  
\$1,500 is average amount for repair... NOT \$10,000!  
We're due for rebuild... Wait for that before spending a lot of money.  
Mr. Tackett assured the GAMC that we won't get kicked out of amnesty program.
- Mr. Tackett said that he was sorry to hear about the park's condition.  
In 2015, Gray Acres is slated to receive new equipment installed at the park.  
He'll *get on it*... to put lay mulch and fix up the area.
- The neighborhood needs to let him know when problems happen in the neighborhood so he can try to help.
- He brought Police DNA ID Kits for people to use. DNA is preserved in the event that a family member goes missing.
- *Question:* About garbage "It has gotten worse in the park & street. Who do we complain to?"  
*Answer:* It is a county worker's job to pick up trash. Mr. Tackett will visit Gray Acres tomorrow (11/10/12) to assess this and other situations.
- There is only one open code violation posted for Gray Acres (an untagged, unmoving vehicle in the community). The county police can identify abandoned vehicles and file for a tow. Homeowners can call the county for extensions on tags, but they must do so before the police visit the property.
- *Question:* "What about cars on the street? It's dangerous and hard to get through sometimes."  
*Answer:* "If they're tagged, they're legal."  
"It's a state street, and a car can be on a street if tagged. However, it cannot be commercial."
- *Question:* "What is the status on building projects along Reybold Road?"  
*Answer:* "It is still on hold." Tackett wasn't aware of new work coming now. With the economy the way it is, the developers just aren't moving forward at the moment. But that could change in the future.  
*Question:* "But what about the flags near the trailer park?"  
*Answer:* "It could be a wetland study. I'm not positive.  
*Question:* "So the left side is out for development?"  
*Answer:* "I think so, but I'm not 100% sure."

- **Bryan Townsend** (State Senator)

- He just found out he became senator on previous day. He will work with Dave Tackett and John Viola. He will be looking into traffic issues on Reybold Road.
- His phone number is 302-709-1516. Call day or night.
- *Question:* "Who is responsible for removing signs?"  
*Answer:* "The law says that they have to be removed within 30 days. But my signs will be down by end of next weekend."(11/18/12)  
He has a 2 year term, but he plans to run again. So he will try to reuse some signs.

- **John Viola** (Representative 26<sup>th</sup> District)
  - Snow? The state does reimburse up to a point. At least 4 inches are needed during a snowfall to receive reimbursement. Ranges are used (4-8 inches, 8-12 inches, etc.)
 

Higher snow means more money. The rates are adjusted based on average rates of contractors. If it doesn't meet the state's standard, the state doesn't pay. Sand and salt is not reimbursable.

75% of set fee is paid if snow level reaches the amount needed for reimbursement. Mr. Viola said that there is paperwork that shows miles in any given neighborhood, so the state knows the distance the 4 inches + is plowed. More money is paid for cul-de-sacs.
  - Mr. Viola agreed with Mr. Tackett with regard to his comments about the cars on the road.
  - Paving? Road paving on Charcoal Court is expected to occur between March and November, 2013.
 

Legislators get a road rating list for streets within districts. The rating is 100-0; a lower number signifies worse road conditions. Charcoal Court was given a rating of 31!
  - Democratic Caucus—e-mails are sent to those who wish to receive them. Information about the surrounding community and alerts are included. No e-mail addresses or other personal information is sold or shared with other organizations.
  - New Law: There is a new law (as of August 2012) that requires solicitors to carry IDs. The ID must include information such as the person's name, company's name, Business Number, phone number.
 

The light blue plaques need to say that the company is registered with the state. The license is issued by the Division of Revenue.

*Question:* There is an ongoing problem with ads being left in driveways and on front yards. "We can't seem to stop it. It's against the law to litter on the roads outside the neighborhood. Is there anything that can be done to stop this?"

*Answer:* Officer Gladney suggested that people call the Consumer Affairs Unit through the Attorney General's Office (577-8400).

Some groups are exempt from solicitation regulations: religious organizations, girl scouts, utilities.
  - Mr. Viola left business cards for people to take. He welcomes calls anytime.
  
- **Officer James Gladney, Jr.** (New Castle County Police)
  - There have been a total of 90 calls made (Jan. 1, 2012-Oct. 31, 2012) Since Oct., five more have been made
 

Some of those calls are for theft/burglary: In some cases, the homeowners left their house windows or car doors open. **MAKE SURE TO LOCK ALL WINDOWS!**

The following is a list of calls made from Jan-Oct, 2012:

    - 911 Disconnect = 8 calls
    - Accident Investigation= 2 calls
    - Alarm calls= 7 calls

- Assist Fire/EMS= 1 call
- Assist other Agency= 1 call
- Check on the Welfare= 4 calls
- Civil Dispute= 1 call
- Disorderly Conduct= 4 calls
- Domestic Dispute= 5 calls
- Follow up Investigation= 12 calls (self-initiated= 3 calls)
- Fraud= 2 calls
- Gun Violation= 1 call (found out the gun shot heard was really from the apartments on Old Baltimore Pike)
- Harassment= 1 call
- Missing Person= 2 calls
- Other Property Recovered= 1 call
- Property Check= 11 calls (self-initiated= 1 call)
- Public Relations= 12 calls (self-initiated= 1 call)
- Service Code = 1 call (self-initiated= 1 call)
- Sex= 1 call
- Suspicious Vehicle= 1 call
- Theft= 8 calls
- Traffic Violation= 2 calls
- Warrant Attempt= 2 calls (self-initiated= 2 calls)

The following calls were made from Oct 31-Nov 9, 2012:

- Burglary= 2 calls
  - Property Check= 1 call
  - Public Relations= 1 call
  - Vehicle Theft= 1 call
- Besides locking car doors, be sure to remove residue left from GPS. The thief will go into car if he/she thinks you have a GPS hidden in the vehicle. Keep all valuables out of sight in cars and in homes. People are experiencing break-ins where laptops, purses, etc. can be seen from the window. Another idea is to have wheel locks put on cars so wheels/rims won't be stolen.
  - Call police anytime you notice suspicious vehicles in the neighborhood. Watch your neighbors' homes... help each other and let your neighbor know about suspicious activity near their home—exchange phone numbers!
  - Use outside lights—Motion type flood lights are a deterrent
  - Other Issues
    - Mischief Night: It seems that there is a trend now for people to celebrate *Mischief Night* in November instead of the night before Halloween.
    - Mailboxes and trashcans: There seems to be a lot of vandalism that involves the beating of mailboxes and trashcans. It seems to happen in the hours between 10 PM and 3:30 AM.
    - *Question:* Why don't the police patrol neighborhoods?  
*Answer:* "We're radio driven." One officer is covering a large area. There just aren't enough of them to patrol every neighborhood. People need to report suspicious activity, and 911 will prioritize the calls. If it is not an emergency, use the non-emergency number for NCCo Police.

Watch for “night prowling” (people wandering through yards/woods in dark clothing)--- CALL IT IN!

- One homeowner mentioned that she found a bike next to her house and called the non-emergency phone number to let the police know she had it in her garage.
- There is a survey on the following website to express needs:  
[www.citizenobserver.com](http://www.citizenobserver.com)  
There is a place there to let the police know about problems and to obtain information for the community.
- *Question:* There is a lot of speeding noise on Reybold Road. ~3 AM in the morning we can hear the noise. What can be done about this?  
*Answer:* “I’ll check on the chance to have a radar put there, but I believe that is a state road.”
- Cell Phone Use while driving: After November 20, there will be an aggressive campaign to stop cell phone use on the highways.  
1<sup>st</sup> Offense: \$50  
2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: \$100  
3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: \$200
- Contact information of Guest Presenters:
  - Dave Tackett
    - Office phone number: 395-8351
    - E-mail: [dtackett@nccde.org](mailto:dtackett@nccde.org)
  - Bryan Townsend
    - Phone number: 709-1516
    - E-mail: [bryan@bryan2012.com](mailto:bryan@bryan2012.com)
  - John Viola
    - Home office number: 577-8453
    - E-mail: [John.Viola@state.de.us](mailto:John.Viola@state.de.us)
  - Officer James Gladney
    - Office phone number: 395-8050
    - E-mail: [JGladney@nccde.org](mailto:JGladney@nccde.org)

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and the meeting ended between 8:30 and 9:00 PM.

After the general business, the new Board met for a few minutes and elected officers. The usual process of putting forth nominations and voting procedures were followed.

- President: Christopher Baldwin
- Vice President: Ted McDaniel
- Treasurer: Sharon McDaniel
- Secretary: Nada Jones
- Calvin Alt
- Jim Ferguson
- John Schuler
- Linda Shepherd
- \*Jeff Owens (Landscaping Committee Chair)

NEXT MEETING: JAN 9, 7 PM  
106 W. FLAGSTONE DR