

Gray Acres Maintenance Corporation
Annual Meeting
November 13, 2013

Board Members Present: Chris Baldwin, Calvin Alt, John Schuler, Linda Shepherd, Nada Jones

The meeting was **called to order** at 7:15 PM.

Chris introduced the Board members (Sharon, our treasurer, was unable to attend).

Moment of silence: Chris asked all to take a moment of silence in memory of our past president, Phil MacInnis and Board member Ted McDaniel.

Approval of last year's Annual Minutes:

Chris-- Motion to approve minutes
Jeff -- Yes
Member-- 2nd
Chris-- All in favor? Aye (no one opposed)

Treasurer's Report

- Chris presented Sharon's monthly report 11-13-13

<u>Balance forward</u>	10-16-13	
	Checking	34,084.01
	Savings	10,002.36

Income

Assessments (NR)	815.50	
Checking Balance		34,899.51

Expenses

Neighborhood Resources	615.50
Delmarva Power	14.18
Stamps	4.60
Bank fee	<u>2.00</u>
	636.50

Checking balance	34,263.23
Capital Fund	10,002.62

- Chris read summary of the Annual Report that Sharon submitted

President's Report: Year in Review

- The lack of snowfall allowed us to put money (~\$10,000) in a capital fund account, & we have more in checking too.

- Why a capital reserve? Gray Acres has two storm management ponds to maintain. The county has an amnesty program, but it can go away eventually. Ponds last ~10-15 years. Storm Weather Pond #1- Maintenance has issues-- Councilman Dave Tackett will speak later about it.
- It's the second year with Countryside-- 2+ inches will be cleared; we upgraded landscaping contract w/ Countryside
- A memorial tree was planted in the park & 2 plaques will be added in honor of Phil MacInnis and Ted McDaniel. Countryside will maintain the tree.
- Neighborhood Resources (NR) Contract-- Delinquencies-- For the principal alone, we are owed \$5100+, so we have a contract with NR to try to recoup the money. Assessments are mandatory. If we don't do it (collect assessments), the county will take it over, & the yearly amount will probably go up. We use New Castle County billing service and they send up to three notices (Nov. is last). The GAMC Board then gets a list from the county of delinquents. In Jan., the names of delinquents are given to NR. A demand letter & contact is made with the homeowner. The homeowner is charged \$40.00 + 25%. A 2nd letter is sent, but no in-person contact is made. A lien is filed. \$150.00 is tacked onto the delinquent's bill. Then the case goes to JP Court. The homeowner is given a chance to justify their case. If the GAMC wins a judgment, the homeowner is told what to pay. If money still isn't paid as dictated by the court's judgment, the case goes to the Sheriff. In past 2 years we have been able to collect from 12 delinquent households. Payment plans can be set up for people who have the intention of paying. It's important for homeowners to make arrangements when first contacted by NR (not let problem reach JP Court).

Old Business:

- A neighbor, Vladimir, was given the opportunity to speak about two issues
 - 1) He switched to Evergreen for trash removal-- he said it costs \$20/mo. He supports people switching so we can reduce the noise level in the development from having different companies coming on different days. Evergreen picks everything up on same day. Plus we'd get a discount. Vladimir brought a paper for residents to sign to gage interest. **Be aware that GAMC cannot officially recommend a service. The view above is from the homeowner who shared info.**
 - 2) Vladimir expressed his view that Gray Blvd. needs speed bumps or a way to slow down traffic.

Budget: Copies of the budget were made via website prior to the meeting, and hardcopies were available during tonight's meeting.

Motions were made to approve the 2014 budget.

Calvin: 2nd

Questions from the Floor:

- If there's no snow removal, what happens to the money?
Chris: We only pay for what is actually done. If all goes well, we'll roll money into our checking and increase our funds.

- Any money not spent is moved into the capital fund?
Chris: Yes, the Board hopes that eventually \$10,000 more can be put into reserve after this year.
- If we have a lot in reserve, will the allotment be lessened?
Chris: It's possible, and it can be up for discussion if we get to that point. But one bad year of snowfall could wipe us out.
- How did we do on our mowing budget this year?
Chris: It was high. Refer to the report.

Chris: All in favor of approving the 2014 budget as written, say, "Aye."
There were no objections.

Nominations of Board Members: Chris called for nominations to the Board for 2014.
The following names were listed as nominees:

Chris Baldwin
Sharon McDaniel
Joe Yanoka
Calvin Alt
Nada Jones
John Schuler
Linda Shepherd
Bhavik Shah

Chris: Last
All for nominations to the Board (No response)
Chris: Is there a motion to close nominations?
Member: Motion
Chris: So moved... Second?
Member: 2nd
Chris: All in favor? Unanimous

Chris: Motion to elect those nominated to the Board.
Member said: 2nd
Chris: All in favor say, 'Aye.'" (No oppositions)

Other New Business:

- How long can a car be on a street before it's towed?
Representative John Viola: If tagged and without flats, it is legal. If in doubt call the county police.
- Faye MacInnis: Her husband Phil died in March. Phil loved the neighborhood and she appreciates the memorial for Phil. He was diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis in June of 2012. The medical community was not very helpful. She was also diagnosed with breast cancer, but a lot is known about her condition. Pulmonary fibrosis is 100% fatal at this point. So she is working to get information out to people so others won't have to experience what it was like to be alone and misunderstood. Faye left information about the condition for others to learn more.

Chris: Last call for *New Business*.

- Trash cans left out between trash pick-up days— One community member brought up this concern to the assembly. She cited deed restrictions.

Once again Chris explained that the Maintenance Corporation is not able to use assessments to fight these issues in the courts. The deed restrictions are agreements between neighbors and can only be handled by neighbors filing complaints with the county. Civic associations are allowed to organize to enforce deed restrictions.

Nada: Communication is important. So, try talking to neighbors before filing complaints. Some just might not be aware of all the restrictions, although every homeowner is supposed to get a copy at settlement.

Chris: The Recorder of Deeds has the official copy of our deed restrictions.

Nada: We've had problems converting the format for our website in the past, but we'll try again so the document is available to all residents.

- 1) A lot of kids are ringing doorbells and running away according to one homeowner Mr. Shah). He has tried to talk to the parents of those he recognizes. It's getting annoying because his talk with the parents doesn't seem to do much good. 2) Another homeowner has seen kids running through yards and has noticed some increase in vandalism. It usually happens at nighttime.

Homeowner 1 said, "I've become frustrated. We need to work with unity to solve this problem." Those who are here can make the effort to be aware and pass information around. We can go door to door perhaps, "I'm willing to help with that."

Visiting Elected Officials:

- John Viola—He has been our representative since November of 2012. He has been a representative in the House of Representatives for 15 years. He has been a resident of Delaware for all but 30 days of his life. He has been in the fire service for 40 years, and he has participated in many volunteer programs throughout his life.
 - In reference to deed restrictions— It's true GAMC has to be careful about the enforcement of deed restrictions. He knows of a case where a maintenance corporation was sued \$10,000 for focusing on one restriction (not trying to enforce all restrictions). So caution is necessary. A lot of communities put the deed restrictions document on their websites. Homeowners should be getting them at settlement or lawyers are not doing their job.
 - Speed bumps on Flagstone or Gray Blvd—He wouldn't support such an idea because not all streets would be treated the same. DelDot decides these things after doing a traffic study. Some neighborhoods are going in the direction of installing speed radars. Reports say they work well. When it comes to buses, every community has a similar complaint. If buses are traveling too fast in the neighborhood, call the bus company and give the bus # (links bus to driver).
 - Calvin: We have 2 sink holes at entrance. DelDot put orange barrels over them, but that was a long time ago (a few months). Is there any word about when they will be fixed? Viola: He will check on this. But it can usually take about 3 months to get such things fixed.
If it's a storm drain, it's a DelDot issue. If it's the sewer (center of road), it's a county issue.

- State Senator Bryan Townsend
 - Speed bumps—A speed study had been requested for Gray Acres at the entrance, but it did not pass. He'll talk to John Viola about this again later. One homeowner asked about stop signs. Mr. Townsend responded, "Stop signs are not for speed control. They're for safety & traffic flow."
 - Any other questions?
One member of the assembly said, "Tell us whatever is interesting."
Townsend: "It was an eye-opening year as a first year senator. There are a lot of needs and so little money. There's a severe drug problem in Delaware. We need to spend wisely and for the best in the long term." He specifically mentioned the need to put money into education and infrastructure.

- Councilman Dave Tackett
 - He shared his public safety newsletter—Smart 911; Text to Tip
 - "Phil MacInnis did have passion for the community/was always working for the community."
 - Storm pond—We will be replacing pond #1
Bids went out already
Calvin: We won't be getting a dry pond this time. It will be lake type—After 4 ft. of water, aquatic plants won't grow.
 - There will be holiday activities at Glasgow Park—Tree lighting, hayrides, caroling, etc.
 - RE: Stone throwing—He hasn't seen much about this in police reports. There have been a few car break-ins. If anything is experienced anytime, report the incident to the police (911). The police can track patterns. Once a pattern is determined, the police can set up times that are beneficial to drive through the neighborhood.
 - Heroin epidemic in DE—It can be bought cheap, so people are breaking into cars for change to buy heroin. Lock cars & store things out of sight. Watch during this time of year especially (shopping, at park, etc).

- Motion to adjourn
Chris: So moved
Assembly: Second
Chris: All in favor say, "Aye." (No oppositions)