

MEADOWS AT SHAWNEE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

P.O. BOX 475

MILFORD, DE 19963

Website: meadowsatshawnee.com

Email: HOA@meadowsatshawnee.com



NEWSLETTER

October 2022



The Meadows at Shawnee HOA Board of Directors:

Mike Boyle, President
Bob Sheats, Vice-President
Dan Marabello, Treasurer
Linda Steiner, Secretary
Taylor Shunk, Member (Grounds Comm. Chair)
Tom Chilton, Member (Architectural Comm. Chair)
Ellen Miller, Member
Bob Shinholt, Member

HOA President's Remarks

Since our last Newsletter in April, we have seen nearly a 10% turnover in home ownership in the Meadows at Shawnee (MAS). We said goodbye to some friends and welcomed new neighbors soon to become friends. This summer we held a series of Thursday Food and Ice Cream Truck Nights that were a success. We are planning to do the same next year and are interested in your feedback so we can improve upon the events. So far, the Tipsy Flamingo and Cup 'R Cone trucks are expected to return with the possible addition of one or more other trucks. We will provide more information in the Spring 2023 Newsletter.

Our HOA's finances remain strong as our Association's Treasurer, Dan Marabello, states in his report. The Board Secretary, Linda Steiner, has listed the HOA meeting dates through June 2023 in her report. The common areas are looking better than they have in years and the front entrance has a new look as reported on by the Grounds Committee Chairperson, Taylor Shunk. The Architectural Review and Neighborhood Watch Committees have also been busy as reported by their respective Chairpersons, Tom Chilton and Dave Markowitz. Linda and Tom have also contributed to a report on home sales in the neighborhood so far in 2022 and provided some tips to address like removing mold, moss and algae from house siding in the *Appearance Matters* section.

As homeowners in the Meadows at Shawnee community collectively, we are the HOA. As such, I urge each homeowner to become involved with the HOA by volunteering or keeping in touch with what is happening in our neighborhood by connecting with the various social media options discussed in the *Stay Connected* sections for the MAS and the City. Participate in the Fall clean-up as presented in the *Fall 2022 Clean-Up* section. As always, the HOA also needs members to participate in the Grounds and Neighborhood Watch Committees. See the *Volunteers Needed* section for information.

Finally, responding to homeowners' questions about what is an HOA and what does it do, we address these and other questions in the *WHY AN HOA? – QUESTIONS & ANSWERS* section. I hope you find this Newsletter informative. Thank you.

Mike Boyle, President, MAS Board of Directors

HOA Vice President's Report

As Vice President, I am required to perform duties of the President in his absence and perform other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors. I am a member of the Grounds Committee and helped with the overhaul of the front entrance and with past Spring and Fall cleanups. I also serve on the Architectural Committee and assist with the review and approval of architectural requests.

Bob Sheats, Vice President

HOA Treasurer's Report

Our financial position remains strong. Of the 183 homeowners in the Meadows at Shawnee, 3 remain delinquent in the payment of their FY-2023 annual assessment (dues) for a total of \$420 plus administrative charges and interest. The total amount outstanding (fees for all years) is approximately \$800. Our goal is to collect this balance due by the end of 2022.

In addition, we have sufficient funds on hand to complete the remaining landscaping and lighting work at our front entrance.

Dan Marabello, Treasurer

HOA Secretary's Report

HOA 2022 – 2023 MEETING SCHEDULE:

The remaining Meadows at Shawnee HOA Board of Directors meeting dates for FY-2023 are as follows:

November 9, 2022	March 8, 2023
January 11, 2023	May 10, 2023

Board of Directors meetings are held at 7 PM in board members' homes. Any homeowner wishing to attend a scheduled board meeting should first make arrangements through the HOA's Board President, Mike Boyle, by email at: HOA@meadowsatshawnee.com.

The **2023 Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 14, 2023** at 7 PM at the Milford Senior Center, 111 Park Avenue, Milford, DE 19963. Reminder postcards will be sent to all homeowners in March 2023. Please save the date and plan on attending this once-a-year event!

Linda Steiner, Secretary

Grounds Committee



With the help of board members and friends, we have been able to do a complete overhaul of the front entrance. It was a huge undertaking and we are thankful for all our volunteers. East Gate Nursery in Milford was a huge help with the design! Tom Chilton has been extremely dedicated with watering all our new plants multiple times a week. We are still planning new stone retaining walls and an irrigation system in the near future!

The retention ponds are still looking great. Coastal Tributaries does our pond maintenance but we need your help!

Disposing of any yard waste or grass clippings into or near the ponds can cause algae to grow, in turn, costing the HOA money for remediation. More importantly, this is a violation of Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) regulations which could lead to fines for the offending party.

If anyone would like to assist with the grounds, please email our Grounds Committee Chairperson -- volunteers are always welcome. For information, contact Taylor Shunk, at: taylorshunk@gmail.com.

Taylor Shunk, Grounds Committee Chair

Architectural Committee



Planning to install solar panels, a fence, a patio, shed, deck etc.? You first must submit a completed Architectural Request Form detailing the scope of the planned project to the HOA's Architectural Committee. The fillable form is available on the HOA Website at: www.meadowsatshawnee.com, under the Committees/Architectural tab.

Complete the form, include a sketch of the project, use your plat (survey) map or an accurate drawing, indicating location and the dimensions of the object, and submit as indicated. You should also speak with your neighbors advising them of your plans. The application will be reviewed and you will be informed of the decision within a few days.

Tom Chilton, Architectural Committee Chair

Neighborhood Watch Committee



So far this year things have been quiet in the neighborhood and there have been no incidents to report.

However, the Neighborhood Watch is still in need of more volunteers to help keep the Meadows at Shawnee safe. Neighborhood Watch volunteers patrol throughout the neighborhood at various times during the day and night looking for unusual activity. If they encounter anything suspicious, they immediately notify the Milford Police Dept. If you are interested in signing up, please contact the *Neighborhood Watch Committee Chair, Dave Markowitz, at 302-422-8003.*

Meadows at Shawnee Newsletter

The MAS HOA publishes two newsletters annually (spring and fall). A copy is mailed to our homeowners and residents, and is also available on our website www.meadowsatshawnee.com.

Residents are encouraged to submit articles of interest, neighborhood news, requests, photographs, suggestions of general interest to all residents, related to MAS, our city, the wonder of nature and perhaps even our pets! We welcome your ideas for our Newsletter. Email ideas/articles to: Taylorshunk@gmail.com.

HOA Corporate Documents

Curious about how our HOA is structured and managed? The answers are in the HOA's Corporate By-Laws. Planning to add a deck, fence, or a shed to your lot? Before you do, check the HOA's Declaration of Restrictions to ensure that your plan will comply with HOA guidelines. Both documents are available on line at our website: www.meadowsatshawnee.com.

Milford City Council Meetings

The Meadows at Shawnee is located in the City of Milford's Ward 1. Milford Mayor, Archie Campbell, and our two Ward 1 City Council members, Mike Boyle and Dan Marabello, all reside in the Meadows at Shawnee.

Milford's City Council normally meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month at **6:00 PM** in the Milford City Hall, 201 South Walnut Street. Agendas are posted on the city's website at: <http://cityofmilford.com/Archive.aspx>. All meetings are open to the public and live streamed on line at: <http://www.cityofmilford.com/553/Watch-Public-Meetings>.

Milford School Board Meetings



The Milford School Board meets normally on the third Monday of each month. Board meetings are normally held in the Milford High

School Auditorium at **6:00 PM**. Please check the meeting agenda at:

<https://www.milfordschooldistrict.org/board-of-education/meeting-schedule>.

SCHOOL BOARD 2022 -2023 MEETING DATES:

November 21, 2022	March 20, 2023
December 12, 2022	April 17, 2023
January 23, 2023	May 15, 2023
February 27, 2023	

Sussex County Senior Citizen Property Tax Credit

Homeowners age 65 or over are eligible for a tax credit against their regular school property taxes of 50 percent (up to \$500). This credit may only be used against property taxes on a primary residence. To be eligible, specific qualifications must be met.

The application deadline for filing is April 30th. Please visit the Department of Finance's website at: <https://sussexcountyde.gov/state-senior-citizen-school-property-tax-credit>. Additional information can be found at the Delaware Division of Revenue at: <https://finance.delaware.gov/senior-relief/>.

Milford's Senior Citizen Tax Exemption

A recent change to the city's Tax Code, effective November 3, 2022, raises the maximum income level for property owners age 65 or older and who meet specific qualifications may qualify for a reduction on Milford property taxes. A property owner may qualify if their income is not in excess of **\$20,000** per year, or in the case of jointly owned property or property owned by husband and wife, the income of both does not exceed **\$40,000** per year. Some exclusions may apply.

To find out if you qualify, check details on line at: <http://cityofmilford.com/> search for *Tax Relief for Senior Citizens, § 204-1*.

Eligible owners must apply by June 1st. For additional information, call Milford's Customer Service Office at 302-422-6616.

Fall 2022 Clean-Up

Saturday, November 5, 2022, at 9:00 AM (Rain Date Nov. 12th).



The Meadows at Shawnee will conduct its Fall 2022 cleanup of all common areas in the development, the front and rear entrances, areas surrounding both ponds, streets within the development and the entire strip of grassy areas along Business 1 and Kirby Road.

Volunteers - please meet at either the front entrance or the Kirby Road entrance. Dates and times will also be posted in advance on the HOA website or the **Nextdoor** site.

Staying Connected with the Meadows at Shawnee

Here are a few ways to help you connect with the Meadows at Shawnee to stay "in the know" about what is going on in the neighborhood:

MEADOWS AT SHAWNEE HOA WEBSITE:



Find information on our HOA's By-Laws and Declaration of Restrictions and Covenants on the HOA website. Features how to complete the Architectural Request form (see the Architectural Committee section), the ability to send emails through the website

directly to the chairperson of the Architectural, Grounds and Neighborhood Watch Committees; links to city and

county codes; and more timely posting of meeting minute notes. Please visit the website at: www.meadowsatshawnee.com.

JOIN THE NEW MAS FACEBOOK GROUP:



To join our new **Facebook Group!** Search on Facebook for "Meadows at Shawnee". You'll see a picture of the front entrance sign at the top of the page. Click "follow" to join! If anyone has ideas or pictures that they would like to see on the page, please email them to: Taylorshunk@gmail.com.

JOIN THE NEXTDOOR GROUP:



"Nextdoor" is a private social network site used by 216 of our residents in the Meadows at Shawnee. It's a good way to stay in the know about what's going on in our neighborhood and throughout the Milford area. To join Nextdoor visit <https://nextdoor.com/find-neighborhood/> and sign-up.

Connect with the City of Milford



Keep in touch with Milford. The City's new app, **MyMilford**, enables residents to reach the City online, or using a smartphone or tablet to request services or get help fixing issues **for non-emergency issues only**. You can use this service to report and track issues such as: Damaged Curb, Dangerous Tree, Drainage/Flooding Issue, Loose/Protruding Manhole Cover, Potholes, Power Outage (during major storms only), Sidewalk Issue, Street Light or Traffic Signal or Street Sign Issues and Trash or Recycling.

Issues related to public safety or those requiring immediate attention (wires or tree limbs down, etc.) should be reported directly to the Milford Police Non-Emergency Line at 302-422-8081.

Get the apps. From your Apple device, download the app in the App store, or you also can search in the app store for "MyMilford." And, from your Android device, download the app from the Google Play store. You can also search the Google Play store for "MyMilford."

School's Back in Session



Daylight Savings Time ends on November 6th. It will be dark earlier when you come home, so please pay attention as you drive through our neighborhood.

Double check to make sure when backing out of your driveways or driving through the neighborhood that you have a clear view of anyone that may be in the street. Be careful, kids will be running to catch buses in the morning and getting off the bus to get home in the early evening and not always paying attention to traffic. As a driver, the burden falls upon you.

Holiday Decorating Contest



The Meadows at Shawnee HOA will hold its Fifth Annual Holiday House Decoration contest to select the best decorated house in the neighborhood for 2022. Judging will take place between December 15th and 18th and prizes will be awarded on December 20th.

Winners will be posted on the HOA's website on December 20th. Lawn signs and gift certificates from a local merchant will be awarded to the top three (3) winners as selected by a panel of judges.

Anyone interested in being a judge can contact an HOA Board member or email the HOA at: HOA@meadowsatshawnee.com no later than December 9th. The only stipulation is that the judges' houses are ineligible to participate in the contest.

Curb Your Dog & Pick-up Waste



Despite popular belief, dog feces is not fertilizer. The EPA categorizes dog waste as a non-source environmental pollutant placing it in the same class as toxic waste. Be aware that all of the rain and run-off water in the MAS drains into our two ponds. So, please curb and

clean up after your dog in all common areas and the streets (including Kirby Road) in the development for a cleaner and healthier neighborhood.

Appearance Matters!

The number of homes sold in the Meadows at Shawnee so far this year is 14 with 3 more currently under contract or pending. Houses continue to sell quickly due in a large part to our neighborhood's appearance. Help maintain your home's curb appeal by keeping trash cans out of



view, lawns mowed, do not leave grass clippings near the ponds or in the streets, remove mold and algae from siding and keep shrubs trimmed.

REMOVE MOSS, MOLD, MILDEW & ALGAE:



Every 2-3 years, I spray the side of my house with "Wet It & Forget It". It eliminates using a power washer which can damage siding and be costly. See before and after pictures of a neighbor's house I

sprayed last November. Once sprayed, it takes about a month to complete the cleaning process.

Linda Steiner/Tom Chilton

City Trash Pick-Up Schedule

The Meadows at Shawnee is part of Milford's Trash Pick-up **Route #4**. Our normal scheduled pick-up days are: weekly household trash and recyclables are collected every **Friday** and yard waste is collected every **Monday**.

For information on the 2022 – 2023 Solid Waste Schedule, bulk service, or brush collection, contact the City of Milford Customer Service at **302-422-6616** or visit the website: www.cityofmilford.com for additional information.

To dispose of alternative or excess waste like: Residential solid waste; White Goods (items such as refrigerators, air conditioners, and other appliances); Tires (no more than 4 passenger-size tires per load at all transfer stations); and, Household Yard Waste (grass, leaves, branches and shrubs), please contact the Milford Transfer Station located at 1170 S. DuPont Blvd., Milford, DE, Tel. No. (800) 404-7080 or visit the website www.dswa.com for additional information and hours.

Trash Receptacles



As a reminder, residents are required to properly store all trash, yard waste and recycling receptacles in accordance with **Article VI, Section 6** of our Declaration of Restrictions: “*Trash receptacles shall be kept in clean, sanitary and enclosed areas, **hidden from view**, excepting that they may be placed temporarily at street side on the regular day of collection if required by the collection agency.*”

Overnight Street Parking



The HOA has always had, **and continues to enforce**, its restriction on overnight street parking. **Article VI, Section 7** of the Declaration of Restrictions entitled "**Prohibited Vehicles**" requires: “*...All motor vehicles owned and operated by residents of the subdivision must be parked overnight in their respective garage or driveway.*”

During the day, please park on the correct side of the street facing the flow of traffic. Parking on the grass is not allowed at any time.

These are primarily for safety! Let’s keep our many walkers and bikers safe.

General Election on November 8, 2022



Polls open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For information on the General Election, the list of candidates, voter registration requirements, voting sites, a sample ballot, Delaware election law and much more, visit The Delaware Department of Elections at: Elections.delaware.gov.

Volunteers Needed !!



volunteer help.

There is a real need for more residents to get involved with the HOA by volunteering to help with its activities. Our ability to continue with and expand our outreach, to conduct semi-annual clean-ups and develop other community activities depends on

We have always relied upon our member volunteers to help with activities and, consequently, to keep expenses in check and the annual assessment low. There is a need for younger members to become involved with the HOA to provide a more rounded and inclusive view of our community’s needs and interests in order to maintain a viable HOA that is engaged and relevant for all members.

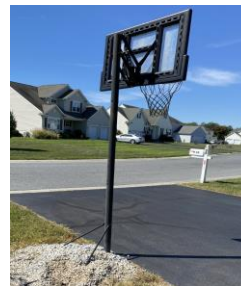
For the Meadows at Shawnee HOA to continue providing the high level of management and fiscal soundness we have come to expect, it is essential for resident homeowners to commit to our community and learn the workings of our HOA.

There is a myth that serving on the HOA Board of Directors takes too much time and energy. While serving as a board member does require some time it’s not as much as many believe. Like any responsible position in an organization it takes a little time to understand the HOA’s operations and requirements.

The HOA’s Board of Directors encourages resident homeowners who may be interested in serving on the Board to attend a few regularly scheduled board meetings to gain an understanding of how it operates and the scope of its responsibilities. In addition, you can learn about the limitations placed on HOAs by its By-Laws and Restrictions and the legal limitations established by Delaware Code. If you are interested, please contact any HOA Board Member or Board President, Mike Boyle, directly at: mjboyle0944@outlook.com.

Get involved! It’s your neighborhood and HOA.

Portable Basketball Goals



If you need to permanently install a portable basketball goal to comply with **Section 18** of the HOA Restrictions, contact Tom Chilton at тчilto44@gmail.com.

He can show you how he installed his 12 years ago!

Are You Prepared? Plan Ahead for Disasters

As we already know, the 2022 Hurricane Season is upon us and winter storms will soon follow. Are you prepared to survive heavy rains, flooding and wind or heavy snow, extreme cold and wind? The Sussex County Emergency Operations Center advises that residents should prepare

by taking the following precautions: Have food, water and medications for each person in the house for 7 days; Be ready for power and phone outages; Keep mobile phones charged; Refill your gas tank(s) and stock your vehicle with emergency supplies and a change of clothes; Bring outside furniture and garbage cans inside; Have cash on hand to last 7 days. Also see: <https://www.ready.gov/>.

To protect Board of Directors members from being held personally liable for actions made in the best interests of the HOA, the MAS HOA carries a one-million-dollar Directors and Officers (D&O) insurance policy.

ARE HOAS LEGAL?

Yes, HOA's are legal corporations having its own governing documents that include its Incorporation Certificate, By-Laws, and Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions.

WHAT ARE HOA RULES AND REGULATIONS?

HOA rules and regulations vary by association and are detailed in each HOA's By-Laws and Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions. When buying a home in an HOA, most people place value on the house and its surroundings. They want to be proud of their community's appearance. The goal of an HOA's rules and regulations is to work in unison to help protect and enhance the community's property values.

If you have any questions after reading this information, contact me at any time at either (703) 859-5609 or at: mjboyle0944@outlook.com and I will try to provide more detailed answers. *Mike Boyle*

Resources:

<https://delcode.delaware.gov/title25/c081/sc03/index.htm>
<https://www.hoamanagement.com>
<https://www.justia.com/real-estate/home-ownership/owning-a-home/hoas/>
<https://www.investopedia.com/articles/mortgages-real-estate/11/forming-homeowners-association.asp>
<https://naeba.org/what-is-a-home-owners-association-hoas-explained/>
<https://homebuyer.com/learn/hoa-meaning>

Useful Telephone Numbers

Police Department (non-emergency): 302-422-8081

Carlisle Fire Company: 302-422-8001

Chesapeake Utilities: 1-800-427-2883

City Hall: 302-422-1111

- Mayor – Archie Campbell
- City Manager – Mark Whitfield
- City Clerk – Terri Hudson

Building Inspections/Permits: 302-424-8396

Code Enforcement/Licensing: 302-424-8396

Customer Service: 302-422-6616

- Tax & Utility billing
- Set up/disconnect service
- Property Assessment

WHY AN HOA? -- QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Some of our newer and longer time residents who may not have lived in an HOA community before, or don't fully understand the purpose of an HOA, have asked Board members questions like what is an HOA and what does it do? We attempt to answer these and other related questions below.

WHAT IS AN HOA?

HOA simply stands for **Homeowners Association**, a non-profit corporation dedicated to managing a common-interest development consisting of members of a community. The main reason for creating an HOA is to preserve and **increase property values**. So, by definition, anyone who buys into an HOA community automatically becomes a member of that HOA with an equal share in its ownership.

HOW DOES AN HOA START?

After a developer creates a community, like the *Meadows at Shawnee*, they typically establish an HOA that acts as a non-profit organization. At a certain point when the community starts to grow, as specified in the corporation's By-Laws, the developer (or declarant) relinquishes full control of the HOA to the homeowners who, in-turn, then elect their Board of Directors charged with overseeing the community's operations.

WHAT DO HOA BOARD MEMBERS DO?

Members of the Board of Directors are homeowner volunteers elected by the Association's members with the authority to handle the day-to-day operations of the community—including managing finances, maintaining common areas, enforcing rules and regulations, collecting HOA payments, creating annual budgets and other additional duties. The duties and powers of HOA Boards are described in its By-Laws and in **state law** (Delaware HOAs are governed by Title 25, Chapter 81. Delaware Uniform Common Interest Ownership Act.)

Economic Development: 302-725-2068

Finance Department: 302-424-5140

Parks & Recreation Department: 302-422-1104

Planning & Zoning Department: 302-424-8396

- Building Inspections & Permits
- Code enforcement & Licensing
- Planning & Zoning

Public Works Department: 302-422-1110

- Electric (Power outages, street lights)
- Solid Waste (Refuse collection)
- Streets & Sidewalks (Street drains; sidewalk repairs)
- Water & Sewer (Water leaks, discolored water, sewer back-ups)

Upcoming Fall Events in Milford for 2022

- **Milford Senior Center Annual Fall Bazaar & Craft Show**
Saturday, October 29th, 10 AM – 4 PM
- **Halloween Trick or Treating**
Monday, October 31st from 6 - 8 PM
- **Milford Riverwalk Farmers Market**
Saturdays, May through October; 9 AM – 1 PM.
- **15th Annual Holiday Auction & Tastes of Milford**
Sponsored by The Milford Chamber of Commerce
 - Proceeds to benefit the Milford Museum
 - November 17th at the Milford Elks Lodge, 6:00 – 8:30 PM.
 - For information call: 302-422-3344. Tickets for the event are \$25.00 in advance and if not sold-out, \$25.00 at the door.

- **Fall Farmers Market**

Saturday, November 19th, 9 AM – 1 PM, at the Riverwalk.

- **Small Business Saturday**

November 26th; Support local small businesses by shopping downtown. All Day.

- **Santa House** (Nov 26th to Dec 23^d)

- Santa arrives on Saturday, November 26th at 11 AM.
- Santa House hours: Fridays 5 – 8 PM; Saturday & Sunday 11 AM – 3 PM.
- Santa's Final Day: Friday, December 23rd, 5:00 – 8:00 PM.

- **Riverfront Theater, Downtown Milford, DE**

The Second Street Players present: The Trial of Ebenezer Scrooge

- Fridays **Nov 25 & Dec 2** at 7:00 PM
- Saturdays **Nov 26 & Dec 3** at 7:00PM
- Sundays **Nov 27 & Dec 4** at 2:00 PM

- **3rd Annual Christmas Market & Holiday Stroll**

- Saturday, December 3rd; 3:00 – 8:00 PM
- Activities and special sales in most businesses, live entertainment throughout the streets, and visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus.

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