

**MEADOWS AT SHAWNEE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES**

**October 4, 2017**

Directors present: Michael Boyle, Kate Leith, Daniel Marabello, Dave Markowitz,  
Bob Shinholt, Linda Steiner and Richard Vehlow

Absent: Ellen Miller

Meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. at 4 West Bullrush Drive, Milford, Delaware.

President Michael Boyle opened the meeting by asking board members to approve the Minutes from the last board meeting held on July 26, 2017. A motion was made by Bob Shinholt to approve the Minutes and Dave Markowitz seconded it. All were in favor and none opposed. The minutes will be posted on the HOA website.

**Report of the Officers:**

**Mike Boyle, President,** reported that a tractor had been parked on the side lawn of a rental home located on E. Bullrush Drive for 10 days. An email was sent to the tenant advising them that if the tractor was not moved by September 26, 2017, fines will be imposed at the rate of \$5.00 per day until the violation is corrected. The homeowner will be copied on all notices.

Grounds Committee Chair Kate Leith received a quote of \$395.00 from Lou's Lawn Service on 8/1/17 to repair the drain entrance from the filter pond into the small pond which included replacing fabric and restacking the stones. The board approved the quote and Kate contacted the landscaper in September to proceed with the repairs.

Kate also obtained a quote of \$85.00 from Lou's Lawn Service in September to clean up the large pile of yard waste that has been laying on the ground for more than 3 months on Kirby Road behind a W. Bullrush Drive home. The homeowner who dumped the yard waste there will be advised of the cost to remove the debris.

Mike mentioned that Lou's Lawn Service recently lost 2 workers and hired a few new workers. It was noticed that some parts of the common areas were not being cut and workers did not clean up properly after laying the new Rip Rap/fabric and restacking the stones in the Little Pond. He asked Kate to relay this information to Lou.

There's a row of tall bamboo trees behind a West Bullrush Drive home that backs up to Rehoboth Boulevard. The trees are in the way of cutting the grass in the common area.

**Dan Marabello, Treasurer**, reported on the HOA's financial status as of today's date as follows:

- Balance Sheet – Current balance in the checking account is \$12,411.17 and all bills have been paid. The total amount in the eight (8) CD's is \$ 64,665.86 and that figure includes interest as of June 30, 2017. Approximately \$200 to \$250 in CD interest has been earned in the last quarter and 65 cents has been collected for late payment interest. Total current assets equal **\$77,077.68**.
- Profit & Loss - The assessment fee income collected as of October 4, 2017 is \$22,915.00. To date, 176 homeowners have paid their Fiscal Year 2018 annual dues of \$130.00 and one partial payment of \$35.00 has been paid. Nineteen assessments were collected by personally visiting homeowners whose payments were overdue. Total paid for expenses to date is \$5,835.92 for the following items: collection related costs, administrative expenses, grounds maintenance, insurance and legal fees. Federal Income Tax of \$276.00 was paid for interest earned on the CD's. Net income equals **\$16,829.73**.
- Aging Summary – A list of homeowners who have not paid their annual dues were listed on the Aging Summary. As of latest count, there are 2 homeowners who have not paid this year's assessment fee which was due by July 24, 2017. Liens have been filed against both properties. There are 4 homeowners who owe multiple years of dues and liens have been filed against all these properties. One homeowner has made a partial payment and the remainder of the dues will be collected in two more payments. One homeowner owes \$95.00 in fines for a violation of the deed restrictions.

A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's Report and it was seconded.

**Linda Steiner, Secretary**, reported on the following administrative matters:

- In July, August and September, seven (7) violation letters were mailed to homeowners on East Bullrush Drive, Big Pond Drive, Meadow Lark Drive and West Bullrush Drive for various violations of the Restrictions;
- On 7/29/17, 48 late notice letters were mailed to homeowners who had not paid their annual dues by July 24, 2017;
- On 8/11/17, a letter was faxed to the Sussex County Sheriff's Office with a breakdown of monies owed to the HOA for upcoming Sheriff sale on a foreclosed property on W. Thrush Drive;
- On 9/5/17, liens were filed against two (2) homeowners' properties for non-payment of the annual dues;
- On 9/13/17, a letter was faxed to the Sussex County Sheriff's Office with a breakdown of the monies owed to the HOA for upcoming Sheriff sale on a foreclosed property on Kirby Road;
- On 10/3/17, contacted real estate brokers regarding three (3) new home sales in the development to get the names of the new owners.

Linda also reported that Joe Palermo had recently called her about a meeting he attended in Lincoln about emergency preparedness. The presentation was given by the Delaware Emergency Management Association (DEMA). The speaker gave helpful information and suggestions on important items to have on hand in your home in the event of a natural disaster or accident involving hazardous materials. Joe contacted Mayor Bryan Shupe to suggest that DEMA hold a similar meeting in Milford.

Mike mentioned that the home at 11 West Thrush Drive which has been vacant for years is in the hands of a realtor as a distressed property. Dave Markowitz suggested that the HOA should contact the City to declare a vacant and neglected home in the development a nuisance property. Dave also mentioned that the home at 4 E. Thrush Drive recently sold.

A motion was made by Dave Markowitz to approve the Secretary's report and seconded by Bob Shinholt.

### **Report of the Committees:**

**Bob Shinholt, Architectural Review Chairman**, reported that one (1) architectural request was received and approved in October as follows:

- Request dated 10/3/17, 5 E. Bullrush Drive, to install a 14' x 30' concrete pad and 5' x 8' deck, approved 10/5/17.

A motion was made to approve the Architectural Committee report and it was seconded.

**Kate Leith, Grounds Committee Chairperson**, reported that she obtained a proposal from Sussex Tree, Inc. for the removal of 4 Weeping Willow trees in the big pond. Sussex Tree will cut down the four trees, shred and remove all wood and limbs and grind the stumps for \$1,881.00. With board approval, she will contact the vendor and set up a date for the trees to be removed.

She also had obtained an estimate of \$395.00 from Lou's Lawn Service to repair the drain from the filter pond to the small pond and the work has been completed. New Rip Rap/fabric was laid and stones were restacked.

Kate informed the board that "Roundup" weed killer can be sprayed in mid to late Fall or Spring and it must be applied by a licensed applicator.

Kate recently drove through the development and counted 34 houses that had vegetation planted near utility boxes in the front of their homes. She suggested that a letter be sent to homeowners to inform them that the City of Milford Municipal Code has a paragraph stating that trees and shrubs must be at least 6 feet away from utility boxes.

Kate also noticed that many houses in the development do not have address numbers displayed on their homes.

A motion was made by Dave Markowitz to accept the Grounds Committee report and it was seconded by Bob Shinholt.

**Dave Markowitz, Neighborhood Watch Chairman,** reported that he spoke with a Sergeant at the City of Milford Police Department about the hundreds of children who come into the Meadows at Shawnee each year for Halloween trick-or-treating. He inquired if there was anything we can do to limit the number of cars and children coming into the development. The Sergeant told him that since the streets in the Meadows at Shawnee are public roads, there was nothing we can do to stop cars and children from coming in.

Dave reported on an incident in the development where a dog broke through a fence in between properties and got into a neighbor's yard. The neighbors will repair the fence and put an electric fence in the yard.

A motion was made to approve the Neighborhood Watch report and it was seconded.

**Old Business:**

The HOA will continue to look into amending the restrictions to limit the number of rentals in the development. Mike Boyle reported that he recently spoke with Madeleine Mandelblatt and asked her if she would research the feasibility of limiting the number of rentals properties in the HOA by using the resources of the Community Associations Institute (CAI). Madeleine agreed to do the research and will report back to the board with her findings.

The subject of setting up a system to take credit card payments for the annual dues came up again. For now, all homeowners are paying their dues by check only.

Kate Leith reminded the board that the Fall Cleanup will be held on Saturday, November 4, 2017 at 9 AM and the rain date will be on November 11, 2017. Kate suggested that four (4) signs should be purchased for the posting of the neighborhood cleanups. For safety reasons, we should also have "Caution – Cleanup Crew Ahead" signs posted during the cleanup along Kirby Road and Business 1 to alert drivers.

Kate Leith asked for the board's approval to have Sussex Tree, Inc. cut down the 4 Weeping Willow trees and grind down the stumps in the big pond at a cost of \$1,881.00. She also asked for approval to have Lou's Lawn Care remove the large pile of yard waste on Kirby Road near Business 1 at a cost of \$85.00.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to authorize the sum of \$1,881.00 for Sussex Tree, Inc. to remove 4 Weeping Willow trees in the large pond. The sum of \$85.00 was also approved for Lou's Lawn Care to remove the pile of yard waste on Kirby Road.

**New Business:**

The subject of the HOA having a contingency plan in case of pond flooding came up for discussion. It was suggested that a pump would have to be rented to move the water from the

Little Pond into the Big Pond in the event of heavy flooding from a storm.

Mike Boyle would like to get a Fall Newsletter out to the development. Possible topics could be plantings around utility boxes, upcoming town events, the usual reminders about parking and trash cans, recruiting volunteers for the neighborhood watch and other committees and any other items of interest.

Kate Leith said she will look into applying for grant money for the planting of wildflowers in the ponds.

Dan reported that there was a drainage problem with the Yoshino Cherry Trees that were planted at the front entrance as a result of the large rainfall during the summer. Holes had to be dug around the tree bases to correct the drainage problem. During the summer, many of the Vinca flowers on west side of the entrance died and it was most likely due to the large rainfall.

Mike Boyle mentioned that the Community Associations Institute, of which the Meadows at Shawnee HOA is a member, will be holding a meeting in Baltimore in October. However, board members will not be attending.

Due to the cancellation of the September 20, 2017 board meeting which was rescheduled to October 4, 2017, it was suggested by Mike Boyle and decided by the board to cancel the next scheduled board meeting on November 8, 2017.

Dan Marabello volunteered to host the next board meeting which will be held on Wednesday, **January 10, 2018** at 7:00 PM at his home at 1 Windy Drive.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Submitted by:  
Linda Steiner, Secretary