

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

September 11, 2024

Directors in attendance: Tom Chilton, Bob Sheats, Dan Marabello, Linda Steiner, Mike Boyle, Jacob Feist, Bob Shinholt and Taylor Shunk

Place of Meeting: 38 Meadow Lark Drive

Opening Statement:

Newly elected President, Tom Chilton, opened the meeting at 7:01 PM. Before introducing the guest speaker, Burr Monroe from Coastal Tributaries, Tom thanked all board members for their help with the annual meeting held on June 19, 2024. He also introduced newly elected board member, Jacob Feist, and welcomed him to his first formal HOA Board Meeting.

Before proceeding with tonight's Agenda, Tom introduced Burr Monroe, owner of Coastal Tributaries, LLC, who will discuss the status of the Ponds. Mr. Monroe reported that the Bradford trees in the ponds are overgrown and should be cleared out including other trees in the basin. Muskrats were nesting in the ponds and were removed. The overflow by Kirby Road needs to be cleaned out and well as the swell behind Tom Chilton's home so the water can flow freely. A board member asked if the rocks in the Little Pond by Meadow Lark Drive and the Big Pond were in good condition. Mr. Monroe stated that the rocks look fine as long as they are kept clean. Mr. Monroe finished his presentation by 7:15 PM.

REPORT OF THE OFFICERS:

-- **President Chilton** started his report by stating that originally, he did not want to serve as President on the Board. He agreed to take the position because he wants the Meadows at Shawnee to continue to be one of the best run HOA's. By staying on the Board, he has the opportunity to work with an extremely dedicated group of members who only wish the best for our community. Mike Boyle has done a tremendous job in the past and it will be hard to fill his shoes, but he will do his best.

Some of the HOA's accomplishments and goals for this fiscal year were as follows:

1. Annual Dues: For the first time, the MAS had to file a lien on only one (1) household for not paying their dues! That is an accomplishment that took a lot of work by Dan, Linda, Bob Shinholt and others. I would like to set our goal for next year to communicate well enough to our HOA members that the annual dues are due no later than July 31st or a penalty of \$10.00 dollars for administrative fees plus interest will be assessed for late payments. If dues and penalties are not paid by August 31st of each year, an automatic lien will be put on the property. One letter in August is enough and Board Members should not have to run around collecting dues.

2. Restrictions: Approximately 15 letters regarding the violation of various restrictions were sent to homeowners between July 1 and August 8, 2024. It appears that the majority of those receiving letters have discontinued violating the restriction. With the new “Violation Log” maintained by Jacob Feist, it is hoped that a more accurate list of violations will be maintained and followed up. This will be addressed in the new business section of the meeting. The most common violations are vehicles in the street overnight, trash and yard waste containers visible from the front of the house and trailers in the street or yard.

3. Board Membership: I am not sure how, but we really need to recruit new Board members. I am very concerned that we are not ready to turn over the Board to handle the work of the secretary or treasurer. These two jobs require the most technical experience in running the Board. Maybe it’s time to look into turning over the HOA to a management company. At least we should see what’s out there and the approximate cost. The community should be informed of this possibility.

4. Passage of the Corporate Transparency Act section 528 of the IRS Code 1986: We are supporting H.R. 9045 to keep HOA’s and other volunteer groups from having to follow this Act. If we are to follow the rules of the CTA many volunteers would quit their Boards. (The CTA requires personal financial information to be submitted to the IRS). The Community Associations Institute is against the CTA.

Tom asked if everyone had read the Minutes from the last board meeting held on May 15, 2024 and requested a motion to approve them. Mike Boyle made a motion to approve the Minutes as written and Jacob Feist seconded the motion. The approved Minutes will be posted on the HOA’s website.

-- **Vice President, Bob Sheats**, reported on current restriction violations:

Meadow Lark Drive - Van parked on grass for over 7 days;
West Bullrush Drive - trailer stored in backyard
East Thrush Drive - trash receptacle visible from the street for 2 weeks.

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

Balance Sheet as of September 11, 2024:

Assets: The balance in the PNC checking account as of today is \$20,113.31. The total in the Artisans’ Bank CDs as of today is \$110,939.03. Total cash in bank: **\$131,052.34**

One hundred eighty-one (181) annual assessments were collected @ \$160.00 per lot totaling \$28,960.00; Assessments due - approximately \$300.00. (One homeowner made a partial payment of the annual dues and one homeowner is unpaid and a lien was filed).

Accrued Expenses – Federal Taxes due 9/15/2024: \$500.00
Armstrong’s Lawn Service - \$1,400.00
Coastal Tributaries, LLC (Ponds maintenance) - \$1,800.00

At this time, Jacob volunteered to do some research on adding an online payment option to the HOA website so homeowners can pay their annual assessments on the portal. He will check with Jim M. to see if he has prior experience adding a payment portal onto a website.

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

Violation letters:

For the period of May 17, 2024 through July 18, 2024, twenty-five (25) violation letters were mailed out to homeowners for the following restriction violations: exterior alterations (1); political signs (3); prohibited vehicles (4); overnight street parking (9); trash receptacles (6); above-ground pool (1); and basketball goal (1).

On 8/11/2024, a Welcome Letter was sent to the new homeowners on Misty Vale Court.

Other matters:

May & June 2024 - Preparation for the June 19, 2024 Annual Meeting.

June & August 2024 - Mailing of Annual Assessment letters and late notice letters.

September 2024 - Preparation of Assessment Lien document and filing in Georgetown, DE.

Update on RE listings and home sales:

There are currently three (3) homes for sale in the development: two (2) on East Thrush Drive and one (1) on West Thrush Drive. In July 2024, one (1) home was sold on Misty Vale Court.

Bob Shinholt made a motion to accept the four (4) Officers' reports as reported and Taylor Shunk seconded the motion. All board members were in favor and none opposed.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

Architectural Committee:

Chairman Tom Chilton reported on two (2) Architectural Review Requests that were received and approved by his committee in July and August as follows:

07/12/2024 – 6177 Kirby Road – Installation of solar panels

08/09/2024 – 23 E. Bullrush Drive – Construction of a 12' x 20' sunroom

Grounds Committee:

Chairwoman Taylor Shunk reported that she obtained some quotes for the removal of a tree that had fallen in the common area in the Big Pond. The best quote was for \$600 to cut down the tree and remove it. Dan, Tom, Bob Sheats and Taylor decided they would take care of the job themselves and saved the HOA \$600.00. Tom called the Milford Public Works Department and had them pick up all the debris. Dan suggested that the HOA plan a get-together for the

neighborhood in the Fall with the money saved from the tree removal.

Taylor suggested that the Board purchase a Gift Card for the owners on West Bullrush Drive that allow the HOA to use their water spigot for watering the plants at the front entrance. It was also suggested by a Board member that a Gift Card be given to the homeowner/member who oversees and manages the website for the HOA. A motion was made by Tom Chilton to approve the purchase of the two (2) gift cards and it was seconded by Linda Steiner. All board members were in favor.

Tom, Fadwa Webster (and children) and Taylor weeded and sprayed the shrubs at the front entrance on multiple occasions. In the Fall, the shrubs will have to be trimmed and there are a few dead plants that have to be removed.

In September, Dan, Tom and Bob Sheats dug a hole at the entrance to the pond off Little Pond Drive and installed the new "Warning - Pond" sign.

The HOA should talk to homeowners who recently planted trees behind their fence and on the common area. The HOA should get something in writing from the homeowners that they own the trees and are responsible for them. If that is not possible, the trees should be removed.

Neighborhood Watch Committee

Due to **Chairman Markowitz's** absence from tonight's meeting, Linda Steiner reported on the Neighborhood Watch on Dave's behalf.

During the month of June, there were two (2) incidents that occurred in the Meadows at Shawnee:

- On June 7, 2024, there was a report of an assault on the 6100 Block of Kirby Road. The police description was intimidation/reckless endangerment/threat/harassment.
- On June 22, 2024, a homeowner on Meadow Lark Drive reported to a Neighborhood Watch volunteer that a person living on the block had walked around her home and property while she was away. She was advised to contact the Milford Police Department and request that they drive by her house when she is away from the house for any length of time.

Mike Boyle made a motion to accept the three (3) Committee reports and it was seconded by Bob Sheats.

OLD BUSINESS

Tom commented that the annual meeting in June went very well and there were only 4 complaints by members about the budget. Holding the meeting at the Milford Police Station was a good location.

The HOA has been a member of the Community Associations Institute (CAI) since 2016. Mike Boyle spoke about the benefits of continuing the HOA's membership in the CAI and he feels it is

a worthwhile expenditure for the Board's use. The CAI provides information, education and resources to homeowner volunteers who govern communities. Mike recommended the Board should have two (2) memberships: one for the Board President and one for a designated member who can monitor the daily Open Forum Digest. This Digest is a daily exchange of Questions & Answers among members that discuss many issues facing Community Associations.

Mike also mentioned that he, Tom Chilton, Dan Marabello, Bob Sheats and Linda Steiner will be meeting with an attorney by the name of Chad Toms from the law firm of Whiteford, Taylor & Preston, LLC. Mr. Toms specializes in community association law and the board members will discuss utilizing his law services and how billing for services will be calculated. The meeting will be held in his office in Lewes, DE on September 17, 2024.

The update on real estate listings and home sales was reported by Linda Steiner in her Secretary's Report on Page 3.

NEW BUSINESS:

Linda Steiner read off the proposed dates for the remaining Board Meetings for FY2025 as follows: November 20, 2024, January 8, 2025, March 12, 2025, May 14, 2025 and the Annual Meeting to be held on June 18, 2025. All of these dates are on a Wednesday and all meetings start at 7:00 PM.

Tom spoke about the new policy on dues collections for next year in his President's Report on Page 1.

As of July 1, 2024, Jacob has been logging all restriction violations on an Excel spreadsheet that he created which includes every street and lot number in the development. He uses a Violation Record Key to designate what type of violation was reported. Tom Chilton, Bob Sheats and other board members report any violations they see to Jacob and he logs the information on the sheet. So far, he has completed July and August log sheets and at the end of each month he prepares a monthly Summary Report with a breakdown of the types of violations that have occurred, such as vehicle, trash, trailer, yard waste, and "other" violations.

Tom is working on making some changes to the Enforcement Policy for restriction violations that was adopted on September 14, 2022. He wants to simplify the violation letter and fine procedure as far as when to warn violators, when to fine homeowners, and when to file a lien.

Taylor has started working on the Fall Newsletter as of the beginning of September. She will need paragraphs from board members or any other information that members would like to add to the paper. She wants to complete the Newsletter by the beginning of October and it will be posted on the HOA website.

Taylor suggested the Fall Cleanup date to be held on Saturday, November 2, 2024 at 9:00 AM, and the rain date to be on Saturday, November 9, 2024.

A motion was made by Tom Chilton to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Bob Sheats.

The meeting ended at 9:03 PM

Respectfully submitted by:
Linda Steiner, Secretary