

**MEADOWS AT SHAWNEE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
PO BOX 475
MILFORD, DE 19963**

**TENTH ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING
June 14, 2018
Milford Senior Center – 7:00 PM**

Board Member Attendees: Michael Boyle, Kate Leith, Dan Marabello, Dave Markowitz,
Ellen Miller, Bob Shinholt, Linda Steiner and Dick Vehlow

OPENING REMARKS:

President Michael Boyle opened the meeting by welcoming all homeowners who were in attendance and reminded attendees that all proxies should be handed in at the proxy table in the front lobby. Before beginning the official Annual Meeting, Mike went over the guidelines for tonight's meeting. There is a time constraint on the length of the meeting and it must end by 9:00 PM. The main purpose of the annual meeting is to elect, by vote, a Board of Directors, hear the Treasurer's Report and vote on the Fiscal Year 2019 annual budget. We will also hear reports from the Architectural, Grounds and Neighborhood Watch Committees and transact other business that may come before the meeting. There will be a question and answer period for residents at the end of the meeting.

Mike asked homeowners to review the packet that was handed out to them which includes tonight's Agenda, a ballot sheet to vote for a Board of Directors, the Treasurer's report with proposed budget, a ballot to vote on the budget and a handout regarding algae and how to clean it off vinyl siding.

Before calling the annual meeting to order, Mike asked Neighborhood Watch Chairman Dave Markowitz to announce tonight's guest speaker. Dave introduced Sergeant Robert Masten from the City of Milford Police Department. He is the School Resource Officer assigned to the Milford School District and he will be talking about crime statistics in the City and the Neighborhood Watch program.

Presentation by Sergeant Robert Masten, Milford Police Department

Sgt. Masten began his presentation by reporting on the various types of crime and complaints that occur in the city.

- Break-ins of vehicles have risen this year. Many residents are leaving their vehicle doors open at night. Thieves do not want to make noise and will pull on the handles to see if an auto is unlocked. Electronics and cash are the most common items stolen from the vehicles;
- Criminal mischief – damage to private property;
- Disorderly conduct – complaints of loud music.

He talked about the importance of having a Neighborhood Watch program in the community to hold down crime. He mentioned that the “Hearthstone” community does a very good job with their Neighborhood Watch program. Sgt. Masten recommended homeowners to develop a “9:00 PM routine” in their homes. Every night at 9:00 PM, car doors should be checked to make sure they are locked and garage doors should be closed. Cars should be parked in the garage if possible and all windows and doors in the house should be checked also. He suggested having ample lighting outside the house as well.

When planning your vacation, do not advertise on social media that you are going away. Residents can notify the police department when they will be away and a member of the Patrol Volunteer Unit can check on your home. It would be a good idea to ask a neighbor to park their car in your driveway so it looks like someone is home. Join the “Next Door” social network for a good neighbor connection. The MPD is always available and he asked residents to be sure to report all crime.

Sgt. Masten then asked if there were any questions or comments from the audience:

- 1) One homeowner asked if there were any plans to install a traffic light on Rehoboth Boulevard at Kirby Road. Bryan Shupe, former Mayor and resident of the Meadows at Shawnee, stated that DELDOT is gathering information regarding this matter and it is in the planning stages to consider a new traffic light. DELDOT does listen to complaints and will report them to the police. With the new hospital opening, it will create some traffic issues on Business 1 with people going to the emergency room.
- 2) A second homeowner suggested installing motion lights on their property. Good lighting outside your home does help to deter crime.
- 3) The Milford Police Department does drug take backs in partnership with CVS. Prescription and over the counter pills and patches can be dropped off 24 hours a day in the lobby of the police department located at 400 NE Front Street. Liquids or sharp objects are not accepted.
- 4) The Milford Police Department parking lot is open 24 hours a day. Residents can use it for child exchanges in custody matters or for Ebay sales transactions.

Sgt. Masten handed out “Connect with the Milford Police Department” postcards with contact information. The phone number for non-emergency matters is 302-422-8081, the tip line phone number is 302-422-1121 and residents can follow the MPD on Facebook and Twitter at: @MilfordPoliceDE.

Sgt. Masten concluded his speech at 7:40 PM. President Boyle thanked him for attending this year’s Meadows at Shawnee Annual Meeting and for his informative presentation.

The Annual Meeting of the Meadows at Shawnee Homeowners Association was called to order immediately following Sgt. Masten’s presentation.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Mike Boyle officially opened the annual meeting by thanking homeowners for attending and for their support during the past year. He also thanked all the homeowners who have volunteered their time and efforts to make the Meadows at Shawnee a better place to live and if not the best, one of the most admired communities in Milford.

He announced that a quorum had been achieved with **69** lots represented by those homeowners in attendance and by proxies. The 55-lot requirement (30%) was met as stipulated in the By-Laws and we can conduct the meeting.

Mike introduced the HOA's current Board of Directors to the audience:

Bob Shinholt, Vice President and Chair of the Architectural Committee.
Dave Markowitz, Vice President and Chair of the Neighborhood Watch Committee
Dan Marabello, HOA Treasurer
Linda Steiner, HOA Board Secretary
Kate Leith, Chair of the Grounds Committee
Ellen Miller, Board Member at Large
Dick Vehlow, Board Member at Large

Meadows at Shawnee resident and neighbor Archie Campbell was elected Mayor of Milford in the April 28, 2018 City Election and Mike was elected to serve on the Milford City Council as a Ward I representative. With Archie's election, he becomes the third of the last four (4) Milford Mayors to come from the Meadows at Shawnee community. Both Bryan Shupe and Dan Marabello who are residents of the Meadows at Shawnee have also served as Mayors in prior years.

Mike announced that as a result of him being elected to serve as a City Councilman and upon the advice of the Milford City Solicitor, he can no longer serve as an officer on the HOA's Board of Directors. Serving as an officer could potentially present a conflict of interest should any Meadows at Shawnee HOA related issue come before the City Council. However, if he is re-elected for another term, he will serve as a non-officer member on the Board.

Fiscal Year 2018

Overall, Fiscal Year 2018 has been another good year for the Meadows at Shawnee HOA. The Board of Directors continued to practice sound financial management policies throughout the past year and ended the year within budget. As a result, the annual assessment for Fiscal Year 2019 will remain at the current annual rate of **\$130.00** as long as the proposed budget, as presented, is approved by a vote of the association members. HOA Treasurer Dan Marabello will go into greater detail in his budget report.

Observations and Comments

Houses in the development have been selling at an increased pace and at slightly higher values

than in past years. At one time there were 20 vacant homes in the development and now there are only 2 homes left and they are being renovated.

There are two ongoing problems in the development -- overnight parking on the streets and the proper storage of trash, recycling and yard waste receptacles. These items require constant attention by homeowners. The Board will continue to enforce Article VI, Sections 6 and 7 of the Restrictions, that deal with these two matters. Every house has space for 6 cars -- a 2-car garage and space to fit at least 4 cars in the driveway. Overnight parking on the street on a recurring basis is a violation.

Questions from the audience:

- A homeowner asked if it was okay to park cars on the front lawn.

Reply: Cars owned by residents must be parked in their garage or driveway and may not be parked elsewhere on any lot.

- Another member asked if temporary parking was allowed.

Reply: If a homeowner is having overnight guests during the holidays or for a party, they should contact the Neighborhood Watch Chairman Dave Markowitz and advise him of this. Temporary parking on the street overnight will be permitted in these instances.

The streets in the community are not as wide as they should be. President Boyle added that the Fire Marshall informed him that they need at least twenty (20) feet to get through the streets in an emergency. For this reason, it is important that the overnight parking restriction is enforced.

More questions from the audience:

- A third homeowner asked how the Board of Directors enforce the restrictions.

Reply: It is the policy of the HOA to send a letter to the homeowner advising them of the violation and include the specific wording of the restriction in the letter. If the homeowner does not comply within a reasonable time after receiving the letter, a 2nd letter is mailed out advising the homeowner that fines at the rate of \$5.00 per day will begin by a certain date. If fines are not paid, a lien will eventually be placed on the property.

- A fourth homeowner asked why board members do not visit homeowners personally when they are in violation of the restrictions rather than sending a letter.

Reply: The board has done this in the past but found letters were more effective and provided a paper trail.

The rainy weather we have experienced over the past few months has produced increased visible mold and/or algae on the vinyl siding of many homes in the development. This detracts from a

home's appearance, has a potential health implication and also has a negative effect on property values. Mike urged all homeowners to read the handout on algae and mold that was handed out at the sign-in tables.

There is a continuing area of concern for the Board of Directors and that is the need for more community involvement by volunteering to help with HOA activities. Consequently, this will keep expenses in check and the annual assessment low. Our HOA has always relied upon homeowner volunteers to help with some tasks and activities such as flower plantings at the front entrance and our semi-annual clean ups. In past years, the front entrance was cared for by a few homeowners on the Grounds Committee who are no longer physically able to do the cleanup and flower planting. As a result, we have had to increase our grounds maintenance budget by contracting with our landscaper to provide the service

A similar state of affairs is having an impact on the Neighborhood Watch Committee. More volunteers are needed to join the Neighborhood Watch in order to provide continuing watch in the community and additional patrols. The value of a good Neighborhood Watch program was addressed by Sgt. Masten in his address.

The Grounds Committee and Architectural Review Committee are also in need of volunteers to effectively continue with their duties. The HOA's ability to expand its outreach and develop other activities is dependent upon homeowner/member volunteers becoming involved. Many of the volunteers in the community are retirees and there is a need for younger homeowners to volunteer. This will provide a more rounded and inclusive view of the community's needs in order to keep the HOA active, engaged and relevant for all of its members. Sign-up sheets for the Architectural, Grounds and Neighborhood Watch Committees can be found in the lobby.

With school out for the summer and not getting dark until nearly 8:30 PM, please make sure to drive slowly in the community and be on the lookout for children playing in the streets. They do not always look before running into the street to chase a ball or a friend.

We are a community of all ages with some elderly neighbors experiencing mobility or other problems that prevent them from getting out on a regular basis. If you have a neighbor with such an issue, take a minute to check on them once in a while.

The Future of the Meadows at Shawnee

Mike reported that when he was running for the City Council seat in the last election, he spent a good deal of time in other HOA communities in Milford (Orchard Hill, Matlinds Estates, Milford Commons and Hearthstone Manor) knocking on doors and speaking with homeowners. It soon became apparent to him how much nicer our community is compared to the others. The Meadows at Shawnee has an unmistakable character as a community with a friendly atmosphere that takes pride in itself and in its appearance. The most visible comparisons were the lack of trees in other communities vs. ours where homeowners have planted trees; some lacked maintenance of the house and lots; and some of the other communities have deviated from their cohesive design schemes compromising their overall appearance and potentially affecting property values.

Later in the meeting, you will hear more of the Architectural Committee's activities in its report and some actions the Board is undertaking to further enhance the community's landscaping as part of the Grounds Committee report.

Mike informed residents that a hotel will be built next to the Royal Farms on Route 1. An office building will be built on the campus of the hospital and we will see an increase in housing.

The President thanked all of the members and residents of the Meadows at Shawnee for the support they have shown to the Board of Directors during the past year. He particularly thanked the members of the Board who have dedicated much of their time and energy serving our community to make it the desirable place to live in Milford.

On a personal note, Mike said that it was a privilege to serve as President on the Board of Directors over the past 4 years. He is grateful for having had the opportunity to serve the Meadows at Shawnee community and he thanked all that were present.

ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Mike Boyle asked all members of the audience to review the packet given to them at the door which included a Ballot with the names of eight (8) Meadows at Shawnee homeowners running for a seat on the Board of Directors. He asked once and then twice if anyone in the audience would like to add their name to the Ballot as a nominee but there were no nominations from the floor. At this point, homeowner Mike Zaremba made a motion that the eight (8) people on the ballot be elected to the Board of Directors. There was a majority of hands in favor of the motion.

The following homeowners were elected to the Board of Directors for Fiscal Year 2019:

Michael Boyle, Marikate Leith, Dan Marabello, Dave Markowitz, Ellen Miller, Bob Shinholt, Linda Steiner and Richard Vehlow.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Dan Marabello referred all members present to the HOA's financial report in the packet. This past year, Dan asked Vice President Dave Markowitz to review the HOA's financial records and all was in order. All checks that are written by the HOA are signed by two officers on the Board. There will be an increase in the cost of the bond insurance for the upcoming year, from \$2,775.00 to \$3,200.00. It is the goal of the HOA to have \$120,000.00 in reserves by the year 2025 for future pond maintenance and we will meet that number. The sum of \$200.00 has been budgeted for the printing and distribution of two (2) Newsletters. The interest rates for CD's have risen. The rates have gone from 1.1% to 2.5% in the past year. The total amount in all CD's is \$65,529.00 and there is \$5,927.00 in the checking account. Total cash in bank equals \$71,456.00. The amount of income over expenses is \$2,295.00. Professional fees were lower this year at \$127.00. At present, there are only two (2) homeowners who have not paid the annual dues for years. Liens have been placed on both properties and there are judgments against both homeowners.

President Boyle then asked members in the audience for a vote on the proposed budget of \$25,500.00 for Fiscal Year 2019 and an annual assessment of **\$130.00** per lot. A motion was made to accept the budget as proposed and it was seconded. Mike asked if there were any objections. All were in favor and none opposed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Committee Report

Architectural Committee Chairman, Bob Shinholt, advised homeowners that the rules for installing fences and sheds can be found on the HOA website. An Architectural Request form can be filled out on the website and drawings should be included when requesting to install a fence or a shed. Requests can be hand delivered to his home at 4 West Bullrush Drive or forms can be scanned and emailed to him at: architectural@meadowsatshawnee.com. He works on requests promptly and there is a quick turnaround for approvals.

Question from the floor:

- A homeowner asked if it is permissible to put up a treehouse or install a pool.

Reply: Bob replied that play gyms are allowed since there are no restrictions prohibiting them. Above-ground pools are not permitted except for children's wading pools not to exceed one (1) foot in height. Inground pools are permitted.

Grounds Committee Report

Grounds Committee Chairperson, Kate Leith, reported that DNREC inspected the ponds during the past year and they were in good working condition. The pipes that run in between the 2 ponds were clean with no sediment. Four (4) trees in the Big Pond were removed in November 2017 to prevent erosion. All stray trees growing in both ponds will be removed. The Spring cleanup was held on April 14, 2018 and the common areas along Kirby Road and Business 1 were cleaned up as well as the two ponds. Flowers will be planted at the front entrance during the summer months. The Meadows at Shawnee received a grant in the sum of \$1,180.00 from the Delaware Forest Service to purchase six (6) trees. Flowering Magnolia trees will be purchased because they do not grow too large. The trees will be planted on the plateau of Kirby Road and the first planting will be held on September 8, 2018 after 4:00 PM. All residents are invited to attend the planting.

Questions/comments from the floor:

- A homeowner from the floor asked about the large trees growing near the corner of Rehoboth Blvd. and Kirby Road.

Reply: Kate said these trees do not belong to the HOA and the City of Milford should be called regarding any trimming.

- A second homeowner complained about the tall Leyland Cypress trees growing on the common ground on the south side of the front entrance. They obstruct the view of drivers when exiting the development.

Reply: Kate replied that another homeowner had brought this problem to the attention of the HOA and the trees will be trimmed.

- Another homeowner advised Kate that weeds are growing out of the rip rap in the ponds.
- A 4th homeowner complained about the many stray trees growing inside the small pond.

Reply: Kate replied that the landscaper will be removing all stray trees in both ponds.

Neighborhood Watch Committee Report

Neighborhood Watch Committee Chairman, Dave Markowitz, would not be giving a report tonight since Sgt. Masten gave his presentation on area crime and the Neighborhood Watch program. He did want to make one point. He asked how many people in the audience knew the phone number for the Milford Police Department. There was a small show of hands. He recommended that all residents keep the phone number handy on their home phones and cell phones in case the police have to be contacted. The MPD phone number is 302-422-8081.

OTHER BUSINESS:

President Boyle informed the audience that the HOA would like to post “No Soliciting” signs at both the front and rear entrances of the development. He brought up the incident that occurred a few months ago in the community where a man in an unmarked van walked into a resident’s home through the garage asking the homeowner if they wanted to buy meat from his truck. This person then went throughout the neighborhood knocking on other doors trying to sell the meat. Mike asked for a show of hands of those homeowners who are in favor of posting the “No Soliciting” signs. There was a majority of hands in favor and only 3 hands that were not in favor. The signs will be posted at the two entrances.

A homeowner from Meadow Lark Drive brought up the problem of the green algae on many of the homes in the development and how terrible it looks. A second homeowner commented that he has used outdoor bleach and dawn dish detergent to clean his vinyl siding and it does a very good job on removing the algae.

Mike ended the meeting by announcing that the Fiscal Year 2019 budget was approved and the eight (8) homeowners on the ballot were elected to the Board of Directors.

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM. A transition meeting with newly elected Board Members immediately followed.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Steiner, Board Secretary