

Trails At Brittany Homeowners Association Annual Members Meeting Minutes — 2020 (held, 2021)

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 7:30 PM

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

The annual meeting was called to order (via Zoom given the ongoing COVID pandemic) by President John Gilman at 7:06 PM. The HOA board was in attendance, as well as a number of homeowners including but not limited to:

HOA Board: John Gilman, President; Kim Martin, Treasurer; Shira Epstein, Secretary; Michael Campbell, Krishna Bhowmik, Janet Peshkin, Katie Newman, JoAnn Henneman, Members At Large
Residents: Imad Al-Qadi, Nani Bhowmik, Richard Crutcher, Bob Cusick, Daniel Epstein, Kristin Feddersen, Michael Henneman, Huihua Huang, Len Lewicki, Robert & Debbie Michaelson, Tom Newman, Minnie & Donald Pearson, David Peshkin, Lei Shanbhag, Luke Sullivan, Mike Yao

AGENDA

1) **Welcome & Introductions**

John Gilman opened the meeting welcoming all of our HOA neighbors and noting it had been quite an unusual year with COVID preventing us from being able to meet in person for our normal Annual Members Meeting in June of 2020. He mentioned the bright note and silver lining of how we are seeing more families and people out & about around Trails at Brittany due to the pandemic. He then introduced HOA board members.

2) **Neighborhood Updates**

John Gilman then presented updates on the status of current HOA business:

- a) Noise and Safety Concerns: There have been a number of ongoing complaints about fireworks being set off in the neighborhood, especially at later hours. The board has tried to get the word out about being respectful and to speak with anyone thought to be setting them off. John asked everyone to be respectful of noise issues, and adherent to the HOA covenants and the Champaign Municipal Code.
- b) Mowing and Maintenance: Mowing and grounds maintenance is the biggest part of our annual HOA budget each year. The Board has requested bids from additional providers to ensure we are receiving the best possible pricing while still maintaining mowing quality and reliability. Work contracted will also include tree trimming, tree and foliage cleanups, and other related services. The new contract this year should be more cost effective.
- c) Architectural committee: Approval requests have been fairly quiet. Neighbors are reminded to submit substantive planned projects to the architecture committee per the HOA covenants.

3) **Treasurer's Report**

Kim Martin presented the Association financial report, including the Profit & Loss Balance Sheet (January through December 2020) and the Profit & Loss Budget Overview (January through December 2021). Please reference these exhibit attachments at the end of the minutes. He explained that the Board always proceeds with diligence over budget and finances for the HOA, but has been trying to be even more careful with expenses throughout the past year to make sure we maintain our reserves. Due to the fact that there was a long lull in HOA activity for about 15 years prior to a few years ago, a significant surplus reserve had been built up. Due to a number of large and needed maintenance projects throughout the time since, that reserve is now down to about \$40,000. This is a good reserve, but the Board wants to ensure that amount is maintained as best possible to make sure any large critical and unexpected projects would be able to be covered without any special assessments, should the need arise.

Kim also noted that the HOA has a checking account and a money market at Edward Jones. Interest rates are low, so these are not contributing a lot to our accounts. The hope is that the rates will increase in next several years. Finally, HOA annual dues letters were mailed in January, prior to this meeting, so the 2021 HOA fees should soon be coming in.

4) **Beautification Committee Report**

JoAnn Henneman provided an update on neighborhood beautification efforts and noted that the Tree program through the City led to a total of 24 trees being planted in the easements. An additional 25 trees will be planted in the easements this year. We will get up to a total of 75 trees provided from the City, and then the program will be done.

5) **Newsletter & Welcome Baskets**

Katie Newman reported that the next neighborhood newsletter was planned for distribution in February. Newsletters generally come out 3 times per year. They are primarily sent out via email to save postage funds, with a printed newsletter often distributed with dues letters.

The Welcome Committee program needed to change somewhat due to the Pandemic. Baskets are now distributed as front porch deliveries, and/or welcome conversations over the phone after a basket has been delivered to a new neighbor's door. The Committee works to figure out when someone new has moved in so that they can write up a neighbor profile for the HOA newsletter, add the family to the neighborhood directory, and properly welcome them from the Board and Association with a basket, friendly conversation, and make sure the new neighbors know about the HOA and who the Board members are.

6) **Old Business**

- a) Annual Ice Cream Social: Neighborhood social events have been curtailed at the current time, due to COVID. It is the Board's hope that we will be able to resume these gatherings as soon as it is deemed safe and possible to do so.
- b) Neighborhood Garage Sale: The Board has discussed if it is wise to return to holding the neighborhood-wide garage sale we normally coordinate with Ironwood and other area neighborhoods in May. The current plan is to wait to see what vaccination, case numbers and guidance from CUPHD and State is in April and May as well as to determine if/when Ironwood will be holding their garage sale. These factors can then help to make a final determination if and when to hold the Garage Sale. The normal date for the Garage sale is the first Saturday in June.

7) **New Business & Questions from Attendees**

- a) Minnie Pearson brought up a concern about neighbors failing to rake and pick up Fall leaves from their yards. Katie Newman said that she would include this topic in the next newsletter.
- b) Robert and Debbie Michaelson brought up their concern about the number of people and kids going out onto the lake ice during Winter. Families and also sometimes unattended children are venturing onto the ice, often well into the middle of the lakes. All agreed this is a worrisome danger. There had been signage, but we may need new signage if no longer posted. Putting up cameras and denoting signage also discussed as potential more effective deterrent. The Board will also review the Neighborhood's liability policy and get in touch with our insurance broker to determine the proper course of action and best plan to prevent this. Notice will also be sent to all neighbors. They also mentioned that many people are throwing the gravel and rocks meant to help with lake health, erosion and maintenance into the lakes. New signage and cameras were mentioned as a possible deterrent again.
- c) New board members are needed! A number of those serving on the HOA Board have been doing so for upwards of 5-10 years and will be stepping down and/or moving out of Trails. All were asked to please get in touch and give back to the neighborhood! The hard work to keep Trails at Brittany special does not happen automatically, and we need more neighbors to be involved. The time commitment is not at all overwhelming. Len Lewicki indicated interest in serving during the meeting. Thanks, Len!
- d) A question was asked about a Neighborhood directory, or to establish a phone tree. A directory exists and is maintained by Katie Newman on behalf of the HOA Board. Privacy concerns dictate that we not share phone numbers or emails, though the TAB Directory with publically available information (names and addresses) is routinely distributed.

The meeting was called to close at 7:59 PM.

Minutes submitted by Shira Epstein, edited by Katie Newman.