

Trails at Brittany Homeowners Association 2019 Annual Members Meeting — Minutes

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, June 4, 2019, 7:30 PM

LOCATION: Lincolnshire Fields Country Club Garden Room, 2000 Byrnebruk Drive,
Champaign, IL

The annual meeting was called to order by President John Gilman at 7:34pm. The HOA board was in attendance, as well as a number of homeowners.

1) **Welcome & Introductions**

John Gilman opened the meeting and thanked and introduced those who serve on the board and head up the committees. *(See list in item 9.)*

2) **Neighborhood Updates**

John presented the status of HOA business:

- a) Architectural Committee: The Architectural Committee has had just a few requests in the past year – mostly fences and small, reasonable requests that have been pretty basic.
- b) Mowing: TAB has used the same company, Darren Ramm, for some time. In addition to the mowing of our large acreage, they also pick up fallen limbs and do other pruning of volunteer trees. Sidewalk trimming is also done by them, but sometimes by another company we contract with when there are specific needs. They recently rescheduled the majority of work they do to Sundays. We asked them to make sure that they mow and trim in the afternoons and to not start too early in the mornings so they don't disturb anyone. We also asked that they be especially vigilant for pedestrians and children since it is the weekend.
- c) Lakes: Our three TAB lakes are in fairly good shape. We began using lake services some years ago, as they had become very scummy and full of algae. We currently contract with the company Aquatic Control, who regularly checks and maintains the lakes, oversees the water quality, and keep us advised of any issues. We have discussed putting fountains, strobe lights, or swans in the lakes to keep algae and geese away, but all are cost prohibitive at this time.
- d) Neighborhood Watch Program: We are a registered neighborhood with the City of Champaign. The board is still seeking a volunteer neighborhood watch captain. [POST-MEETING UPDATE: Katie Newman contacted the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator for the City, John Ruffin. It seems the setup of the program has changed. The police department no longer seeks a point of contact in each neighborhood. Instead, the City works through the registered organization for each area. For TAB, the HOA is our registered neighborhood organization. We will keep our Neighborhood Watch signs up; the President will submit the yearly registration form the city sends to us. Watch for safety-related articles in the TAB Newsletter.

3) **Treasurers Report**

Kim Martin presented the HOA's financial report (*balance sheet for 2017 and 2018 appended at the end of these minutes*):

- a) Assessment Increase: There was a review of the HOA assessment adjustment that rolled out this past Fall. The HOA Board was somewhat dormant for during the first ten years of Trails at Brittany, overseeing minimal on-going maintenance; so the reserves built up substantially. But eventually our beautiful neighborhood needed some work. So, about 5 years ago the Board started to tackle many over-due projects, significantly reducing the reserves. Among the projects that require(d) attention:

- care of the lakes, including new rocks to mitigate erosion
- tree removals due to the Emerald Ash borer
- new tree plantings
- a new water-saving irrigation system for the cul-de-sacs
- beautification of the entrances and energy-saving lighting
- increases in the cost of mowing the Commons areas

Even carefully managed and limited expenditures each year were a bit over the budget available from just dues collection. The Board was very concerned about depleting the reserves lower than \$50K, or of getting to a scenario in which the neighborhood would be reliant on a special assessment in the case of an emergency. There had been no dues adjustment since the creation of the neighborhood several decades ago. The Board felt strongly it was time to get the assessments in line with inflation and current needs, and in accordance with the Covenants and Bylaws, raised them a small, proportional increment for all neighbors.

4) **Beautification Committee Report:**

JoAnn Henneman presented updates:

- a) Tree Planting Program: The tree program has been a huge success. Over the years of this program, we have planted 86 trees in the neighborhood! 21 of these were just planted in the easements. The City of Champaign reimburses the full amount for trees planted via the program in the easements/right of way areas. They are providing 25 trees per year for 3 years. There is a requirement for subdivisions that each lot should have a tree, but some homes in TAB do not. In looking into neighborhood planting history, there was an oversight in inspections during the initial development of TAB. Beyond those trees asked for by neighbors, the balance of trees annually will go into those lots missing trees in their front easements in support of this rule. The owners will have a way in which type of tree is planted.
- b) Entrances: The Mullikin entrance was completed last year. Staley entrances are now being updated and enhanced with new lighting and other plantings and beautification.
- c) Dead Tree Removal: The neighborhood has a number of dead Ash and pines in several of the cul du sacs, and dead pines along Staley and elsewhere. These are in the process of being

removed. There are also some struggling trees on Kirby with bag worms – and the insects will be removed to resuscitate the trees.

- d) Lake Beautification: There has been a discussion of adding lower-profile natural grasses or other low, non-obstructing shrubs around the lake – to both keep geese out of the lakes and reduce fertilization runoff into the lakes, which in turn creates more need for the lake water management. Such planting would also make the lakes look less sterile. This would be a large undertaking, but may help a great deal with the massive and growing geese problem. There are a number of neighborhoods in C-U with such grasses around their lakes.
 - i) A suggestion was made by a neighbor to get real swans, which keep the geese off.
 - ii) A suggestion was also made to put up strings or other deterrents near the water line.
 - iii) A final comment was made by a neighbor – and discussion ensued – that adding natural plant areas around the lakes would decrease mowing and mowing costs.
 - iv) No one in attendance indicated any opposition to the general idea of planting grasses.
- e) Bald Spots: There was a question about the new bald areas of grass on the big lake. The Board will look into the reason for the new bald areas and think about seeding or another solution.
- f) City street lights: Adding city street lights on Kirby and Staley at the TAB entrances is on the City's radar. The Beautification Committee is meeting with Dennis Schmidt, Public Works Direction for the City, in the next month or so to follow up on an earlier meeting and discussion. Street lights at the entrances would address known safety and navigation issues that have been exacerbated on Staley by the substantial traffic increases caused by the Carle at the Fields development and nearby residential developments.

5) **Welcome Basket Committee Report:**

Katie Newman presented her committee report:

- a) Trails at Brittany has welcomed 10 new families to the neighborhood since last years' meeting. Katie and Krishna Bhowmik make the TAB welcome baskets and deliver them to new neighbors during a welcome visit. A profile of the newcomer's family appears in the next TAB newsletter.
- b) There are five new households that will be welcomed this summer.
- c) There are 15 houses and 2 lots for sale at this time.

6) **Newsletter:**

- a) Katie Newman has been adding a Trails at Brittany Directory to end of the newsletter to help us get to know each other. Let her know of any corrections.
- b) The next newsletter will be coming in August.

- c) Please let Katie know if you have any story ideas, or if you have not been receiving the newsletter, which is dispersed via email and on NextDoor.

7) **Old Business:**

- a) The board is working on updating the bylaws and covenants. They are outdated and need to be brought up to meet current legal and city requirements and fix outdated language. An attorney needs to look over the originals and the proposed changes, and the proper process for passing via proxy determined. It was suggested by an attendee who had recently worked on the same project for a past neighborhood they lived in, that it may be much easier to add an amendment and to make sure the Board knows exactly what we want changed before going to an attorney for review.
- b) Website needs to be redone and is slated to be done this year. Shira Epstein is working on this.

8) **New Business:**

- a) The Board is having the lakes assessed for silt levels and to determine if there is a need for them to be dredged. A question was raised about adding aerators to help with algae and mosquitoes. The Board explained that it is very expensive to bring an electric line to each lake, as well as put in and take out each season for winter, and that there is significant maintenance required to keep the intake clean, etc.
- b) The Fall Ice Cream Social is slated for September 8th. Time TBD.
- c) The bridge over I-57 on Kirby may be widened in 2023.

9) **Election / Approval of HOA Board & Committee Slate:**

The slate of renewing and new HOA board members was presented. A motion to pass was made, seconded, and the slate was passed:

- John Gilman (President, Architectural Committee Chair)
- Jim Kurley (Vice President)
- Kim Martin (Treasurer)
- Shira Epstein (Secretary)
- Michael Campbell (Member at Large)
- Krishna Bhowmik (Member at Large – New!)
- Janet Peshkin (Member at Large, Social/Beautification Committee – New/Returning!)
- Katie Newman (Member at Large, Newsletter Publisher, Welcome Committee Chair)
- JoAnn Henneman (Beautification Committee Chair)

Volunteers are needed to join the Board! Many of the current Board members have been serving for upwards of 5-10 years, and may not be able to continue in coming year(s). Please get in touch and give back to your neighborhood! The hard work to keep Trails at Brittany special does not happen automatically, and we need more neighbors involved.

The meeting was called to close at 8:29pm.

Minutes submitted by Shira Epstein.

Trails at Brittany Home Owner's Association, Inc.
Balance Sheet - Previous Year Comparison
As of December 31, 2018

	<u>Dec 31,</u> <u>'18</u>	<u>Dec 31,</u> <u>'17</u>	<u>\$</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Change</u>
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Checking/Savings				
Edward Jones Money Market Account	11,272.36	11,139.85	132.51	1.19%
Edward Jones Mutual Funds	39,926.56	37,040.08	2,886.48	7.79%
First Federal Savings Bank	<u>1,545.10</u>	<u>38,741.96</u>	<u>-37,196.86</u>	<u>-96.01%</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>52,744.02</u>	<u>86,921.89</u>	<u>-34,177.87</u>	<u>-39.32%</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>52,744.02</u>	<u>86,921.89</u>	<u>-34,177.87</u>	<u>-39.32%</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>52,744.02</u>	<u>86,921.89</u>	<u>-34,177.87</u>	<u>-39.32%</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
Equity				
Retained Earnings	87,717.63	97,661.33	-9,943.70	-10.18%
Net Income	<u>-34,973.61</u>	<u>-10,739.44</u>	<u>-24,234.17</u>	<u>-225.66%</u>
Total Equity	<u>52,744.02</u>	<u>86,921.89</u>	<u>-34,177.87</u>	<u>-39.32%</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>52,744.02</u>	<u>86,921.89</u>	<u>-34,177.87</u>	<u>-39.32%</u>