

# Trails at Brittany Homeowners Association 2017 Annual Meeting

## Minutes

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, June 6, 2017 7:30pm

LOCATION: Lincolnshire Fields Country Club

The annual meeting was called to order by President John Gilman at 7:37pm. The HOA Board was in attendance, as well as a quorum of homeowners (some of whom were present virtually through proxy forms they had sent in).

### AGENDA

#### **1. Welcome & Introductions:**

John opened the meeting and introduced those who serve on the HOA Board and Committees.

#### **2. Old Business:**

##### *a. Commons Area Maintenance:*

##### *i. Lake Maintenance/paddle boats:*

The maintenance of our lakes is ongoing. A reminder to homeowner's to be aware of keeping their paddleboats in one place. There was also an idea brought up to possibly allow the building of docks on the lakes.

##### *ii. Irrigation:*

Bill Mays takes care of irrigation and repairs. Cul du sacs are irrigated twice per week.

##### *iii. Mowing/weed prevention/clean-up:*

Merle Eisenman sprays herbicides to take care of the dandelions on our 11 acres of common areas. If you see an area that has weeds or needs fertilization, please let us know. Daren Ramm takes care of all the mowing once per week. Again, if you know of areas that should be mowed and are being missed let us know. It takes about 3 days to mow the full 11 acres.

##### *b. Beautification:*

##### *i. Tree planting program:*

a) JoAnn Henneman reported on the Champaign/TAB tree planting program. Many trees have been planted in the easements between the sidewalks and the streets, through the Champaign/TAB tree planting program. The City has guidelines as to which kind of trees may be planted and the space required between trees. For the past several years the HOA has taken care of half of the cost of purchasing and planting the trees, with the homeowner paying the other half. Information will go out in the fall with information for participating in the program. The Board has

recommended that the tree-support program should continue for trees in the right-of-way.

- b) TAB planted seven trees in the common areas (primarily around the Kirby/Mullikin street entrance). All but one tree thrived; Onarga Nursery will replace the one that did not flourish at half price.

ii. *Flower Islands:*

The flower islands at TAB entrances are maintained by the City as part of the Champaign Park District Flower Island Program. In return for a fee that we pay, they plant and take care of them.

### 3. Budget:

Kim Martin presented the HOA financials.

- a. We are healthy and doing well financially.
- b. We have amassed reserves of just under \$100,000 in the association reserves. About \$128,000 is in the bank currently, because most dues for the year have already been collected; however, the balance will go down throughout the year as we have not incurred all of the expenses for this year.
- c. Last year we budgeted for an \$8,000 loss. This year, the budget calls for a \$5,000 loss.
- d. This led to a discussion, but no decision, on of what how low the reserves should be allowed to go.
- e. We have collected most dues this year totaling \$57,600. Some follow up is required with few stragglers.
- f. Mowing is one of the biggest expenses for the amount of area we cover.
- g. We currently are running parallel to last year's budget.
- h. Please refer to the attached profit & loss budget/financial statement PDF. (Provided at the meeting; please request a copy from Kim Martin, if you didn't receive one at the meeting.)
- i. A question was asked if the Board had considered raising assessments so the expenses would be fully covered. The answer was no, that as of now we feel comfortable working within the totals & budget and that the ample \$100K reserves would be used as needed.
- j. Dredging lakes may be needed at some point in future at a cost of ~\$30,000 per lake, with three lakes. Mr. William Sheridan (<http://devonshirerandolph.com/dev-sheridan.html>) was the designer of subdivision; we will research with him when/how lakes may need to be drudged. It is good to investigate ahead of time so we know what may be needed — and when — for future budget planning purposes.

#### 4. Committees:

If you have any interest in being on a committee or the Board, PLEASE let us know!

a. *Architectural Committee: John Gilman*

There were many requests for fences that were reviewed and approved. Otherwise there were no out of the ordinary cases that caused difficult issues.

b. *Social Committee: John Gilman*

This year is the year for the TAB party. In order to increase attendance we may move the date of the party from October to the August/September timeframe when everyone's schedules are less busy with school activities. We need to find out who is willing to lead this initiative, soon.

c. *Welcome Committee (Katie Newman, Chair):*

- i. Katie Newman gave a report on the welcome baskets. Baskets are delivered when someone new moves into TAB, thanks to our three hard working welcome committee members. A number of folks have recently moved in. Baskets were delivered to nine new neighbors since the last meeting and at least four baskets will be delivered later this summer.
- ii. Sarah Lee has stepped off committee, with thanks for her leadership. Anyone interested in serving on the Committee should contact [trailsatbrittany@gmail.com](mailto:trailsatbrittany@gmail.com).

c. *Beautification Committee (JoAnn Henneman, Chair):*

- i. We removed a number of trees & ground stumps (approximately 20 stumps), as well as removed/trimmed a variety of bushes. Everything has turned out very nicely so far.
- ii. We removed 5 bushes at the Mullikin entrance and planted 2 hardwood trees. We also added two Emerald arborvitae by the entry houses as well as a flower island through the Champaign Park District Flower Island Program. There is still a significant amount of work to accomplish and research to be done.
- iii. The committee has decided to focus on improving one section of the neighborhood at a time and make it look great before moving on to the next project.
- iv. An idea was brought up that we request bids from professional landscaping companies. The one mentioned was Brown Woods.
- v. There are many Ash trees with Emerald Ash Borer in the Commons areas. We talked about replacing the ashes located in our commons areas (primarily the cul-de-sacs) with new trees and eventually cutting down the dead ones. Lincolnshire Fields have told us that they researched the cost to try to save the trees versus replacing them and found it cost-prohibitive to treat all the trees located in their Commons areas, so they will be replacing 45 ash trees. There are special requirements for disposal of the diseased trees from the city so we will need to pay attention to those when the time comes. The HOA does not cover any expenses related to dealing with diseased ash trees located in the private yards of homeowners. The City covers the cost of removing and replacing trees in the public rights-of-way areas.

- vi. JoAnn has researched street lights to demarcate the entrances, as well as a fountain to circulate water in the small lake by Southford Trace Drive, to negate algae buildup. She will soon present options to the Board.
- vii. We remind homeowners about the 'SeeClickFix' app through the city. We will include info in all newsletters. To use the app, take a picture and upload it into the app that then sends it straight to the city to get a project number. The city engineer gets back to you and takes care of it! Recently a major pothole cluster on Kensington Knoll Drive was taken care of after a SeeClickFix was reported!
- viii. We had a homeowner willing to pay 50% for planting pine trees from Mullikin along Kirby. A plan was created and has been approved by the Board, so we will proceed with contacting the homeowner and implementing this.
- ix. There was an idea brought up about implementing a flag program with the boy scouts to add flags by mailboxes. We will find out about the program to see if neighborhood-wide support exists.
- x. We talked with our attorney about issues with properties that have dandelion issues and his response was that there cannot be specific recourse beyond what we are doing. We will research if it is possible to add something into the covenants; specifically fines to assess.

d. *Neighborhood Watch:*

Kyle McClure has expressed interest in taking over the responsibilities for the Neighborhood Watch. Thanks were expressed to Cheryle Turner for her years of service in this position.

## 5. New Business

a. *Elections:*

There were no elections held this year. All current Board members have agreed to stay on for another year.

b. *Committees:*

Reminder to all homeowners that we are always looking for volunteers to help.

c. *Website revision:*

Shira Epstein will work on figuring out how to update trailsatbrittany.org and make it more user-friendly.

d. *Future projects*

*Kirby Bridge:*

The speed limit has been reduced to 35 mph after hard work from all the HOAs. There will be a push-button speed reduction mechanism going in by September. IDOT does not have Kirby Bridge renovation on the radar until 2023, dependent on state funding!

e. *Be a good neighbor:*

The issue about complaints about yard maintenance was raised again. Weeds in the yard; branches blocking Common walkways; snow and ice on the sidewalks – please be a good neighbor!

f. *Countryside School:*

Stephanie Harman, Head of Countryside School, spoke about a potential new Countryside development plan. As yet unveiled to their Board, she could not disclose too much but thinks that TAB neighbors will be excited to see their plans for trees and other foliage, etc. She also commented that they are more than happy for their faculty and students to work with TAB neighbors to help & volunteer on TAB beautification projects. She also offered that we may be able to use school facilities for annual meeting or the neighborhood social.

g. *Recycling containers:*

Reminder to all homeowners to please purchase recycle containers with lids so that recyclables do not get blown away during windy days.

**6. Comments/Questions:**

The floor was opened to any comments or questions from membership.

a. *Trees and vegetation around the lakes.*

There were suggestions of adding trees or vegetation around lakes. The covenants state that they cannot obstruct a homeowner's views. However, that is a loose interpretation. We will continue to work on communicating with homeowner's to see if anything can be done about this. Possibly contact a professional landscaper to come up with a plan/simulation of what can be done.

b. *Docks on the lakes*

There was some discussion about the possibility of homeowners adding docks in front of their property, as they do in Ironwood. Among other things, this would provide a way to keep boats from blowing away into other neighbors' yards? The Board will talk and think about this idea.

*The meeting was called to an end at 8:44. Minutes submitted by Shira Epstein.*