

# **Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Crescent at Cherry Lane Homeowners Associations, Inc.**

**July 22, 2014 7:00 PM  
First Baptist Church of Laurel**

Board members present: S. Michael Chittenden, President  
Jeff McFarland, Vice President  
Robin McCormick, Treasurer  
Officers present: Jacquelin Johnson, Secretary  
Board members absent: None

## **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm.

## **II. Approval of the Minutes from Prior Meeting**

There was a motion to approve the minutes from the May 8<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. There was a small correction to the \$1250. The motion was seconded and approved.

## **III. Old Business**

### **A. Financial Review**

The HOA continues to be over budget. A late invoice was provided by the snow removal company, so we are further over budget on that item than listed at the last meeting, but contingency funds will cover most of the fees for the snow removal.

Generally on target for both expenses and income. We are over on legal fees, but most of that has been covered by the fees from delinquent members. There has been a decline by about \$5000 on delinquencies. We have had significant progress on a few large accounts over the past few months.

### **B. Review of AMG Services**

A homeowner has asked to opt out of mowing services due to belief that the grass is being cut too frequently and damaging the grass. Mr. Chittenden stated that he has not observed this. A member stated that there have been a few times when they cut it when it should not be.

Members have observed the landscapers using the weed whacker occasionally. Members also stated that there needs to be a better judgment call on if the grass needs to be cut. Mr. McFarland stated that he has ridden around looking for a supervisor on 2-3 occasions without locating one.

Mr. Chittenden reminded the members that they need to water their yards to help keep their grass looking nice.

Mr. McFarland redirected the conversation back to the member who has asked to opt out. The board discussed that there are likely many limiters and considerations. The original intention of the landscaping and the community was to maintain a uniform look. With one member opting out, there is significant risk of losing that uniformity.

Mr. McFarland proposed that perhaps there is a way for AMG to provide advanced warning of action. Mr., Chittenden stated that he would talk with AMG. Once we find a solution for that, we will seek out those members who would like the information to be distributed to them.

There is a proposal for AMG to replant \$5,000 of dead trees. The split of that cost will be determined between the developer and the HOA.

A member also brought up a tree that needed to be trimmed.

### **C. Collections Policy**

The policy aligns with current practice and covenants, but it delineates the details specifically and clearly. The main items are the handling of late fees in item 2 (waiving fees automatically in specific situations), item 7 (waiving fees in specific cases), and item 8 (applying a lien to a property when necessitated). Mr. Chittenden reviewed the policy at a high level for the board and members present.

Members expressed a concern that the bills are often not received in advance of the due date by as much as it seems like it should be. The board and members discussed the issues with the April billing from Tidewater.

A member discussed the mailings coming from Tidewater, stating that the mailings seemed excessive and printing is not optimized either. Mr. Chittenden stated that all mailings that come from Tidewater are based on direction from the HOA.

Nancy from Tidewater recommended signing up for the portal to receive electronic notifications. To sign up for the portal, go to [Tidewater.com](https://www.tidewater.com) and login via the lower left. To sign up for an account, contact Joanne ([jrobinson@tidewaterproperty.com](mailto:jrobinson@tidewaterproperty.com)).

Mr. McFarland discussed item 7 to determine if it should be the Board (instead of by the Board or by the President). Nancy brought up the potential to have a quorum vote of the board via email. However, there is question of the law. The Board brought up the issue of providing notification in order to have any sort of meeting, except in the case of an emergency. Mr. Chittenden recommended that perhaps there is a middle ground with setting a certain “not to exceed” amount where the president can waive if below that amount, but otherwise, require the Board. Nancy from Tidewater recommended that this being taken back to the attorney.

Mr. McFarland made the motion to accept the policy if item 7 is amended to state “or by the President for amounts up to 1% of the Association’s budgeted.” It was seconded and approved.

### **D. Application for Exterior Alteration (7205 AL - Fence)**

No communication was sent to the homeowner within the 60-day window, so the homeowners were within their rights to complete the construction.

A member brought up a concern regarding the fence being built within 2 feet of the property line per Laurel City regulations. The homeowner affirmed that they received the approval of the city and submitted

A member asked that we have a map of the community to assist in these conversations.

#### **E. Street Lights**

Request for a streetlight at the mailbox at the end of Archsine Ln. where the road intersects with First Baptist Ln. Installing a streetlight would be about \$3,500, and the HOA would also need to pay for the electricity for it. The Board has gone through both Public Works and the city to try to get the light installed.

A member brought up the potential to budget for this or apply a surplus if there is one. The member also asked if the church would be willing to chip in. He also brought up the potential to use a solar light, LED or some other option that would reduce the costs. Mr. McFarland took the action to look into lighting options and Mr. Chittenden took the action to discuss the possibility of installing our own light with BGE.

#### **F. Fine Waiver (7322 Archsine Lane)**

Mr. Chittenden provided an update to the board regarding the settlement agreement with the owners of the property. Based on violations of the first or second agreement, the lawyer entered a motion for the owner to be accountable for the full value.

#### **G. Property Management Agreement Contract**

The Board reviewed the discussion from the previous meeting regarding the two proposals received for property management in the upcoming year. Mr. Chittenden solicited three reviews of Harford Property Services from presidents of other associations, which were all positive. Mr. Chittenden also reviewed the issues that have been experienced with Tidewater Property Management.

Mr. Chittenden disclosed that Harford does manage two properties for him personally and does a very good job. We put requests out to three property management companies for bid and received responses from two companies.

Members expressed a concern that they want to ensure there is a means to pay online. The contract would be for a base year with two option years at the same price.

Mr. McFarland expressed concern regarding the size of the company, but has been reassured that there are contingency plans. A member brought up the question of whether there is a quality assurance plan in place. Mr. McFarland stated that this can be solicited of Harford Property Services. A member further stated that we should ensure that all the appropriate items are within the contract so we may hold the new provider accountable, such as response time for calls and adhering to

Ms. McCormick motioned to negotiate an agreement with Harford Property Services, the motion was seconded and passed. Mr. Chittenden clarified that this gives him authority to negotiate for the HOA, but the board would have the opportunity to review.

## **II. New Business**

### **A. Applications for Exterior Alteration**

The board and members discussed that there is a need for members to participate in the Covenants committee. This would enable the more expedient approval of exterior alteration applications and enforcement of other covenants.

#### **i. 7242 Cherry Lane (Deck)**

The deck has already been installed and is consistent with the general look of the community. There was a motion to approve that was seconded and approved.

#### **ii. 7203 Archsine Lane (Driveway expansion)**

The request is to expand the driveway where there is currently grass towards 7205 Archsine Lane. A member expressed the concern that allowing such modifications breaks up the uniformity of the community.

The members and board discussed concerns that once a precedent is set, what is to stop others following suit. Members brought up concerns that the expansion abutting the neighbors' fence would make the area look very busy.

Ms. McCormick motioned to reject the application, it was seconded and approved. The Board asked Tidewater to send a notification to the owners.

### **B. Increasing Member Involvement**

It seems that pizza has assisted in attendance and we will likely continue this. It was also positive to receive interest in the covenant committee.

### **C. 2014 Social Committee Planning**

Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup> is the planned date for the picnic, with Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup> as a rain date. Mr. Chittenden asked anyone who would be interested in assisting meet with Ms. Johnson following the meeting.

### **D. Upcoming Annual Meeting & Budget Meeting**

The October 7 meeting is for the entire HOA. November 13 is the Board meeting to approve the budget.

## **III. Member Discussion**

A member asked who is responsible for cleaning the fence and brickwork along Cherry Lane. The Board asked for Tidewater to contact AMG to see if they can power wash the items.

A member brought up receiving mail for other members of the community. Other members agreed that they have the same experience. The only recourse is to contact the postmaster, but there may not be much in the way of response.

A member brought up the collection of garbage because multiple cans and trash being left in front of his property. Mr. Chittenden asked that if the member would take an image, he will contact Public Works. Other members stated that you can call Laurel directly and they will come out and collect.

#### **IV. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 pm.