

WALDEN WOODS CONSERVANCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, January 31, 2018

STATUS OF THESE MINUTES: FINAL 2/21/18

1. ATTENDANCE:

Directors in Attendance: Fitzgerald, Towers, Hoffman, Cocoran, Tracy, Lattimer, Webber, Palladino, Onessimo, Raupach, Boccuzzi and Brand

Directors Absent: None

Elite Property Management Representative: Chris Kohnle, Property Manager.

2. CALL TO ORDER:

President Lattimer called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE PRECEDING MINUTES:

After some discussion and changes to the previous Minutes, a ***motion*** to accept the Minutes for November 29, 2017 as amended was moved by Director Webber seconded by Director Tracy. Motion passed unanimously.

- 3. FINANCIAL REPORT:** Mr. Kohnle, referring to the financial information that was provided to the Board by Elite for month ending 12/31/2017, briefly summarized the financial status of the Conservancy, as well as, the various Councils (*see page 8 of the Board Packet provided to the Board prior to this meeting*). Director Boccuzzi asked that if there is any concerns with budgets to shoot him an email.

It was noted that all the Councils will be under budget. Director Lattimer made the comment that as for the finances, it seems like the Conservancy is playing “catch up” all year and then suddenly the end of the year everything is balanced again. Further commenting that the Conservancy is spending more money and it seems like it is always in the red but December hits and suddenly it is balanced again. Director Webber asked if owners were obligated to pay monthly or yearly. Mr. Kohnle comment that monthly is expected but there needs to be research done to confirm.

Mr. Kohnle reported that he had the insurance plan shopped around and found good news that he was able to find better pricing for the insurance coverage. Bouvier Insurance in West Hartford was approached. He stated that they haven't be able to compete with the current company used, but there has been a change in CAU which

opened the door to be able to bid competitively the insurance for the Conservancy. Initial review shows that their policy would save the Conservancy about \$20,000 a year (see *Risk Control* in the Board Packet). Director Cocoran asked if there were any risk issues from the assessment. Mr. Kohnle stated that there needs to be “no skating” signs on the ponds, but that’s in the Rules per Director Boccuzzi. Mr. Kohnle said that will need to be addressed to be sure it is enforced. Mr. Kohnle said he wanted to review the Rules and the proposal a little more to see if there are more savings.

4. MANAGER’S REPORT (Pg. 20):

- a) Inspection Reports: (see page 22) Mr. Kohnle stated that overall fairly quiet.
- b) Boundaries Update: Mr. Kohnle reported that as of the week prior to this meeting that there was still about 25 short of what is needed for signatures. Director Lattimer asked that another email/ mailing be sent to remind people to sign. Director Tracy asked “*does that go to the owners*” (referring to the fact that renters may not forward to owners). Mr. Kohnle clarified that the owners are getting the Notices (not the renters). Director Palladino asked to know who hasn’t responded yet. Mr. Kohnle stated he would obtain that information and share with the Board.
- c) Landscaping, Snow Removal, Fert. Contract: Mr. Kohnle reported that Mark from Russo was in attendance to discuss the approval of the contract now that the changes have been made as per the Board’s request. After discussion, some additional changes were noted. Mr. Kohnle asked Mark to get him a clean copy of the final contract with the final edits and then have it signed.

MOTION: To approve with all changes made from tonight’s meeting was made by Director Tracy and seconded by Director Towers. All approved. No abstentions. Motion **passes** unanimously.

Discussion re proposals would be issued in writing for approval. Mark will work with Mr. Kohnle to prepare and would like that resolved before March (this includes the pond weeds, etc.). Discussion of bridge repair too needs to be included. Mr. Kohnle will address that in the proposals.

- d) Updated Signature Cards Per Mr. Kohnle, there is a new Board as of 2018 so there needs to have the new Officer’s sign the signature cards. (President and Treasurer are required to sign). (Note – Signatures were obtained after the meeting).
- e) Townhome/Duplex Allocation: Mr. Kohnle stated that page 37-38 of the Board Packet has to do with the Russo Contract. For a number of years, allocation was for billing purposes. As far as the allocations, Russo knows what they manage and Elite breaks that down on the master bill. Recently, that was what the bill rate

included (see page 37 of the Board packet). Prior allocation was based upon the number of Units and Townhomes. That's the way CW (prior contractor) used to bill.

Director Tracy asked, stating that for more than 12 years, allocation was this way, why change it now? Is it in the bylaws? Why has it been done this way for so long? Mr. Kohnle commented that the bylaws have nothing to do with it, the builder made the decision. Director Onessimo commented that as the builder expanded, the more allocation was completed. Now that they are fully built (since 2011), the allocation was never reviewed.

Russo brought up the allocation question (see page 38 of the Board Packet). Per Mr. Kohnle, this is from Russo and breakdown provided by them based upon the way things are currently being done. Prices are in the contract. Russo was asked to check on it based upon man hours and work and this is what they came up with (late summer 2017). Because of the timing, it was left until the new Board was elected to review this issue. Director Latimer asked how do they count the garages (which was used to determine allocation)? Director Bocuzzi stated that Mark counts garage doors (single doors/double doors).

Director Lattimer stated that the budget was passed back in November 2017 but with the idea that this issue will need to be addressed. It was requested that it be asked of Attorney Perlstein: Does the Conservancy weigh in if the two councils can't come into an agreement? Does the Conservancy has the power to make that final decision?

Director Tracy stated that their councils have brought this up (Townhomes). They look at the issue differently. This has been unfair for 12 plus years and they don't own the land; they share the land with Townhomes and Duplexes. Director Tracy stated that her Council believes it should be paid by the Unit Owners, further stating that owners bought with the knowledge of one figure but now it is changed.

Director Cocoran commented that she represents the Duplexes and was asked to relay their concerns and comments. The cost is about \$20 to \$25 per month. That's a lot of money to be added to the homeowner's fees. If it goes up that much, many would probably have to put their properties up for sale. They believe it will affect resale values too. Looking at the fees and the historical trend, continual increases says one thing and then a huge jump with no changes in benefits, is a red flag. Director Fitzgerald asked, if the situation were reversed, would your Council want their fees reduced?

Much discussion ensued. Director Lattimer commented that the budget has already been approved but the allocation must be addressed. Director Webber suggested they go back to their Councils and try discussing a resolution again. Director Lattimer agreed suggesting that there is more conversation needed here within the Councils. He asked that they come to a compromise and if they can't,

then come back to the Conservancy Board for a ruling which may not be in everyone's favor. Mr. Kohnle offered to attend that meeting with the Councils to help with that process. The Councils Directors agreed.

5. UNIT OWNERS FORUM:

- a) 17 Haskins - Diane (last name omitted by error in the undersigned being able to obtain). She attended the Duplex meeting that had the discussion regarding allocations. The property is owned by the Conservancy. She is upset that there is divisiveness on the allocation issue. When you move into this community, you agreed on certain things. She wishes that councils were dissolved. Stressed that this is a community as one.
- b) Jen (owner last name and unit omitted by error in the undersigned being unable to obtain prior to issuance of these minutes) SNOW REMOVAL She asked if there was better coverage for snow removal during the holidays. This past Christmas Russo came out super late which effected visitors and homeowners. Director Lattimer asked Mr. Kohnle to review the contract and see if there was a way to address this in the future.

As for the allocation issue, she wanted to know what happens with new owners moving in? How to sell this unresolved issue to potential buyers? This issue needs to be resolved.

- c) 22 Scarlet - Bonnie Farmer. Duplexes have their mailboxes on Townhome Roads but it really is a driveway issue and the allocation isn't true either. More discussion and more compromise should be made. It isn't as cut and dry as Russo put it. She stated that as a local realtor, the HOA fees are very comparable and if those fees go up properties will still sell.
- d) Jen Inferrera (Owner (and renter) and employee of CTWD) asked if someone from the Board could be at this meeting with the Councils to discuss the Allocation issue. Director Lattimer agreed to attend that meeting once it is scheduled.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a) Director Tracy noted that Board of Director meeting dates are all off. Needs to be reviewed by Mr. Kohnle.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

- a) Hearing Results 535 Hawthorne: Homeowner didn't have the approved light. She is being fined for the first light that was not consistent. She is going to put up an AAI approve light. Director Towers thought she knew about the AAI but Director Lattimer made note that the homeowner thought it wasn't a major issue. Director Lattimer asked the Board, should fine for 535 Hawthorne be enforced or waived?

MOTION: To fine 535 Hawthorne for not complying with AAI Rule made by Director Fitzgerald and seconded by Director Webber. Much discussion ensued including whether it be a lesser fine. **MOTION FAILED.** All opposed with Director Onessimo abstaining.

MOTION: To fine 535 Hawthorne \$75 for not complying with AAI Rule made by Director Webber and seconded by Director Palladino. **MOTION PASSES** with Directors Hoffman and Boccuzzi voting "No" and Director (Brian) abstaining.

- b) **43 Last Leaf** – Failure to put their trash can inside. Per Mr. Kohnle, the fine is \$25 a day since being asked to be removed. They have not done that. Trash can is still in sight. The fine is currently over \$800 and growing daily. They have ignored the requests. It was asked if they were notified with certified letter, yes per Mr. Kohnle. Director Palladino asked if the fine is approved, can they then appeal. Mr. Kohnle would tell them to attend the Board Meeting and then the Board will address it at that time how to handle. Updated Notice letter will include dates, etc. Trash can must be kept out of sight.

MOTION – To uphold the fines for 43 Last Leaf made by Director Towers and seconded by Director Fitzgerald. All in Favor with the exception of Directors Brand and Onessimo opposing. No abstentions. **MOTION PASSES.**

- c) **41 Last Leaf** - Boxes and trash cans issues. Mr. Kohnle reported they didn't move them until the fine letter issued. They have removed the boxes but they are looking for the fine to not be applied to their unit and the trash can before was moved inside. Mr. Kohnle stated three notices, then the fine letter and then finally removed. Fine is \$850 per Mr. Kohnle is calculation. Director Lattimer wants to know why the letters were addressed to different addresses. Per Mr. Kohnle, this homeowner did not report the leasing of the property until this fine letter finally was addressed. Discussion on timing of the letters was reviewed. It took time to find the homeowner as the tenant didn't notify the homeowner as it was addressed to the homeowner and not the tenant.

MOTION – To uphold the \$850 fine made by Director Webber and seconded by Director Towers. Discussion ensued. All in favor with Director Onessimo opposed, no

abstentions. **MOTION PASSES.**

- d) Garden Committee - Director Tracy stated there was some issue about fees; needs to be clarified. Director Rapauch stated that there was an increase in the fee from \$20 to \$25 to pay for water. There is a fee for garden clean up as well. That check will be postdated and not cashed until the end of the year. It will be voided out the week of the removal of the Russo dumpster and return. Discussion on this policy ensued and it was asked that the Garden Committee review their policy of postdated checks.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS (pg 44): The following Board Members have been appointed Committee Liaisons:

- a.) Environmental Committee – John Boccuzi
- b.) Communications Committee – Kathleen Tracy
- c.) Meeting House Committee – Andrew Lattimer
- d.) Social Committee – Brian Onessimo
- e.) Welcome Committee - Glen Brand
- f.) Standards Committee - Lynn Fitzgerald
- g.) Community Garden Committee – Joe Palladino
- h.) Document Committee – Cori Webber

9. NEXT BOARD MEETING: February 28, 2018.

10. ADJOURNED: There being no additional business, it was moved, seconded, and unanimously approved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by
Rebekah Royer-Poppel,
Minute Secretary
(Non-Member)