

HERITAGE HILLS SOCIETY
Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes - December 16, 2020

Meeting commenced at 1:30 pm

Dom Rubino, President, greeted everyone watching the Zoom meeting on Channel 12. Dom advised that Board member Richard Tortorella has resigned from the Board, and thanked Richard for his years of service. Frances Cicogna will become a Board member January 1, 2021. In addition, Mary Lou Martelli will return to the Society Office on January 4, working from 9:00 am-1:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

Board members in attendance: Gloria Anderson, Gene Archer, Annette Bensen, Bob Ettinger, Ed Goldfarb, Bill Harden, Ann Harper, Jack Mattes, Mark Packer, Patricia Ploss, Bruce Prince, Dom Rubino, Deica Ruiz

Dom Rubino asked for a Motion to approve the Minutes of the November 19, 2020 meeting. Motion made and approved. The minutes were released at the Board Work Session on December 9, allowing them to be posted on the website and in the Newsletter earlier in the month.

Treasurer's Report – Bill Harden, Treasurer reported the November financials: income was \$445,213, expenses were \$468,530, with a deficit for the month of \$23,317. Surplus year to date is \$295,001, with several large invoices coming due.

We anticipate a possible bank closing date of December 22 for the East Hill Golf Course property. We will be obtaining the loan from PCSB, borrowing \$995,000 for seven years at 3.5% interest rate.

Bill Harden reminded everyone that early in 2021 a new phone directory of HH residents will be published. The January Newsletter will have a form requesting resident information. Please fill out the form and submit it to the Society Office to ensure you will be included in the directory.

Activities Reopening – Gloria Anderson, Chair: The COVID numbers in Somers are still increasing, and the Activities Reopening Committee has agreed to hold steady with the current guidelines in place at the moment. Reservations will once again be needed for pickleball play.

Comcast Committee – Gloria Anderson, Chair: An edited draft of the Comcast franchise agreement was sent to the Town attorneys for review and this Committee will meet with the Town on December 17 to review the new franchise contract, which is expected to be similar to the existing contract. In addition, we have requested that Comcast replace the HH broadcast equipment used to televise on Channel 12, at an estimated cost of \$15,000. The equipment is at the end of its lifespan, and the cost of the equipment is charged back to the consumer in a small monthly fee.

Golf Course Development Committee – Patricia Ploss, Chair: The eight members of this committee are Patricia Ploss, Larry Daitch, Marti Lowenfeld, Mike McBride, Alan Tepper, Bob Ettinger, Bill Harden and Bruce Prince; they will convene in early January. In anticipation of discussions about the design and use of the course, Committee members will receive topographical maps of the 62-acres, and will also tour the property.

Activities - Ann Harper, Chair: No new clubs are being approved at this time. A Pickleball Committee is being formed and we will follow up regarding Officers and members. The Board will formally approve the committee once this information is received.

Security - Dave Jacobsen, Head of Security – We are not allowed to disclose information about HH residents who have tested positive for COVID.

Library – Deica Ruiz: The Library is open Mondays and Fridays from 1:00 pm-3:30 pm, and closed on December 25 and Jan 1, both are Fridays. To request a book, please call the Library at 276-7655 and leave a message with your name, unit #, phone and the name of the books you want to borrow. A volunteer will return your call to confirm we have the books, call when you arrive in the parking lot and a volunteer will bring the books to the side door. Books may be borrowed for two weeks at a time. Please wear your mask when picking up your books. There are ten new books for the month of January. Books being returned can be put in the large red drop box outside the Library – books will be quarantined for three days. A list of all the books in our Library is on the Society website, just click on the Library tab.

Community Affairs – Jack Mattes, Chair

We have advised the Town that we are prepared to use the Activities Center as a warming center, not a sleep center, in the event of a snow storm. They are not anticipating major power outages but if we do lose power in our homes then we will have a warming center available. Notifications will go out to all residents of Somers as well as HH residents because the AC is considered a “Somers Town Shelter” once it is activated. Please be mindful that you will not know everyone, be polite as we are representing HH. We will need volunteers (around 6) to work different shifts, for welcoming people and to staff a table for sanitizing and providing masks. The Town will provide a supply of masks, gloves and sanitizing solution. You may come in and charge your device. Again, it will not be a sleep center, and there will be no cooking or food allowed. If you wish to volunteer, please email me at mattesjack@yahoo.com.

The Somers Food Pantry at St. Luke’s has been doing very well. The demand for their services increased as the year progressed. The shelter has been able to provide for more people due in part to the generosity of our residents here in HH. At this point, they have received so much in the way of food donations that they have asked us to hold off until January with any additional food donations. They are currently out of space even with the additional space provided by the Church. The Food Pantry did receive a grant from Westchester County last month along with several other food pantries throughout the County. With that grant money they are able to outfit the additional space within the Church to accommodate more varied food donations, including items that need refrigeration and freezing. By the end of January they hope to begin to accept toiletries, household and bulk items. There is always room for monetary donations. Please remember them as we enter the holiday season.

At a meeting with the Somers Community Council, the major agenda item was police reform discussion, as mandated by the State of New York. The overall input is that our police force does a wonderful job. They provide a great service to Heritage when there are emergency calls, they are extremely helpful and courteous to us. There has only been one use of force in the last 20 years by the Police Dept as a result of a shooting incident.

Toys for Tots has been very successful thanks to everyone in the community who has donated so far. There is still time between now and Friday to donate. Please make sure it is an unwrapped toy. The Marines will pick up on Monday. Thank you again for the generosity of the residents of Heritage.

Fitness Center – Annette Bensen, Chair wishes everyone a safe and healthy holiday. The Fitness Center will be closed on December 25th and will reopen on December 26th at 8:00 am for regular hours. January 1st the Fitness Center will be closed and will reopen on January 2nd for regular hours. In order to protect the workout equipment from damage, no street shoes are allowed in the Fitness Center, only sneakers. Do not wear your sneakers to the Fitness Center, change into them when you arrive. There are two seats designated for changing from street shoes to sneakers under the outdoor heaters, and one seat in the vestibule area where one person is allowed in addition to the compliance attendant. Shoes will be stored in the cubbies next to the vestibule, one cubby per person. Jackets can be hung in the locker room. Residents are asked to sign in so we can contact them in the event someone tests positive for COVID. It is important that the community understand why we do this.

Website Study/Communications Update – Annette Bensen, Chair: We are currently on a live feed. We are in the process of updating equipment and the manner in which we broadcast. Andrew and David are being very proactive in this regard. We will update everyone on possible changes to the website at the next meeting.

Transportation – John Milligan for Mark Packer: We suspended our shuttle bus operations for the time being and will continue to COVID cases both in the Town of Somers and HH. We will not consider starting service again until COVID cases have leveled off in the Town of Somers.

Newsletter Committee Report, submitted by Susan Statkowski-Rivalsi, Chair:

There will be no COMING EVENTS section in the January issue of the Newsletter—a first, and evidence that our community is doing the right thing to stop the spread of the Coronavirus by not hosting any events that could contribute to its spread. We are hopeful that the numbers will change for the better soon, and we will once again be publishing information on the usual enjoyable activities our residents are accustomed to reading about, participating in, and then writing about.

We thank the many residents who have submitted items throughout 2020, and we look forward to receiving more of the same in 2021.

Property Management – John Milligan

Due to predicted inclement weather tomorrow, the Fitness Center will open at 1:00 pm in order to give our contractor on the property the opportunity to clean up the roads for our employees to arrive safely. In relation to weather, we don't expect anyone will be playing outdoors, therefore tennis court nets have been removed from courts 1 through 5. We will leave nets up on courts 6 and 7, however, snow must be melted before playing can resume. These courts cannot be shoveled nor can any de-icing materials be placed without damaging the surface.

We are now nine months into a partial shutdown of HH. During this time we've done our best to keep our buildings open for limited use, the FC was available, pools were opened and shuttle buses were kept running when we felt it was safe to do so. We shut down beginning March 23rd, and in the nine months since then, we saved about \$121,000.

Some of the savings are related to opening the pools up one month later than normal, which saved about \$40,000 in lifeguard costs. We opened three pools and had a gate attendant in addition to a lifeguard at each pool, resulting in the same number of personnel as we have in a normal season, except that we only needed one outside pool maintenance person as opposed to the normal crew. Since our shuttle buses had limited attendance and limited operation, we made do with two drivers for the rest of the year, as opposed to five drivers. We used less gas, going from 300 miles per day to 40 miles per day.

The reality is, we did incur a lot of expenses to be able to open up our facilities to the extent that we did. There were modifications done to our HVAC systems, individual stand-alone air purification units that are in both the Fitness Center and the Activities Center. We have purchased an inordinate amount of cleaning and sanitizing products and equipment, specifically an electro-static machine which cost \$4,000 that allows us to sanitize spaces very quickly. We spent almost \$102,000 in COVID-related improvements to the property to allow us to open. Part of that expense is related to our two door attendants in the AC and the FC (six days a week), that cost us about \$10,000 per month for both individuals, and is an ongoing expense. From March through the end of November, the net difference between what has been spent due to the crisis and what we have saved by limiting some services is about \$19,000. Going forward, we will now spend \$10,000/month more than we save. By the end of December, that number will decrease to \$9,000. If you would like more information about how we have been tracking these costs, or have other questions, email me at jmilligan@heritagemanage.com. Despite the unusual nature of this year, we didn't have significant savings.

For residents who use Fred's Way, you'll notice next to the maintenance yard there is a collection of empty trash containers being stored. This property is owned by the West Hill Golf Course, and the owners have made an arrangement with a garbage carting company to allow storage of these containers on their property. The Board feels this is an unauthorized use of that property, due to zoning and the DRD. We have received complaints related to the traffic and noise caused by trucks entering and leaving the property all day long. We are currently working with the Town of Somers to address this issue.

NYSEG is finishing their work in Condo 10 and will not be doing work over the winter. They will begin again in the Spring.

In terms of projects, we are finishing up at Pool 2 and hoping the weather allows us to do some minor roofing work at Lake Lodge. It was a good year in that we didn't have any unanticipated large expenses.

Dom Rubino: Four email questions were received prior to the meeting; two will be answered by John Milligan and two by Bruce Prince.

Emails:

Patty Galon, Unit 284B – Why is NYSEG allowed to shut off electricity for 3.5 hours during winter months? These Condos get cold very fast.

John Milligan – We have been working with NYSEG, who are in their third year of a multi-year, multi-million dollar project, to replace infrastructure within HH. Ultimately, this should result in much more reliable electrical power with fewer and shorter outages. They are replacing underground wiring, transformers and switching cabinets. When it's time to hook up this new equipment, notices are sent to all affected HH residents of the planned power outage, with specific dates and times. NYSEG gives themselves a 3-4 hour window but rarely does the outage exceed two hours. NYSEG is not doing work on the property this winter because they are aware that residents would then lose their heat in cold weather for a period of time.

Gwen and Diane Covert, Unit 58A – There are cars speeding up and down the East Hill. It's getting dangerous to walk outside. Will there be speed bumps installed?

John Milligan – As we have said many times, speeding is a problem in HH. The speed limit is 30 mph throughout HH, and lower around turns. We purchased a speed machine and determined that we have a problem everywhere. We installed two "speed humps," one by Condo 4 on HH Drive, and one by Condo 29 on the West Hill. Two additional "speed humps" are in the budget for 2021. A portion of East Hill Drive will likely

receive a “speed hump.” There are restrictions on where we can place them, the area must be a straight and level stretch of pavement. They cannot be placed near a turn. We are aware of the problem and we are doing our best to address it.

Denise Alexanian, Unit 592A – Roadside garbage and dog droppings being left behind by residents.

Bruce Prince, Chair – A&B roads are maintained by Maxner, but occasionally something drops off the carting truck during their runs. HH does not have a sanitation crew for pick up around the property, landscapers do pick up around their specific Condo. Please do not litter.

Norman Freimark, Unit 610E – Why we are converting Tennis Court #3 to pickleball use; can we can add a tennis court on the East Hill Golf Course and/or use the overflow parking lot.

Bruce Prince, Chair – I spoke with Mr. Friemark and explained in detail the studies and research that we’ve completed regarding Court 3; he understood although he did not agree. The conversion of Tennis Court #3 to four pickleball courts will cost about \$30,000. Building a tennis court on the golf course would cost in excess of \$100,000, and may not be approved by the Town, the DEC or the DEP because it involves an impervious surface. The overflow parking lot is needed for parking since it is not feasible to expand the large parking lot because we border wetlands.

Dom Rubino, President – The next Society Board meeting will be February 24, 2021 at 1:30 pm. There will not be a Board meeting in January although the Board will hold a Work Session. As always, all residents’ calls and emails will be responded to as quickly as possible. Have a safe holiday season.

Motion to adjourn, motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 2:27 pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Deica Ruiz

Secretary, Heritage Hills Society, LTD