

HERITAGE HILLS SOCIETY
Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2023

Meeting commenced at 1:30 pm

Motions:

- To approve Veolia Agreement allowing HH residents to continue to use the Garden Area – motion passed.
- To approve Veolia Agreement to allow Veolia to utilize a small space at HH Maintenance Yard for debris – motion passed.
- To approve Purchaser’s Contribution Policy as written – motion passed.

Board members in attendance: Gloria Anderson, Gene Archer, Annette Bensen, Bill Harden, Dorinda Haskel, Jack Mattes, Karl Milde, Patricia Ploss, Dom Rubino, Deica Ruiz, Art Singer, Alan Tepper, Jay Wright. Ann Harper and Bruce Prince were absent. John Milligan and Dave Jacobsen were also in attendance.

Dom Rubino, President, greeted everyone in attendance and those watching on Channel 21.

Deica Ruiz asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the April 19, 2023, Regular Board Meeting. Motion passed.

Willow Wood Gun Club – Gloria Anderson, 2nd VP

The WWGC has applied to the Carmel Planning Board to install additional shooting stations. At a public meeting regarding this application, HH residents expressed reservations and objections concerning increased noise and potential water pollution. According to the Secretary to the Planning Board, the Carmel Planning Board will approve the application at its May 24, 2023 meeting.

Financial Report – Bill Harden, Treasurer

- April income was \$463,286 and expenses were \$422,055, leaving a surplus of \$41,231. The first 4-5 months of the year are when we build a surplus. Pool season, June, July, and August are when we run deficits, and major projects happen toward the end of the year.
- At the end of the year, we will be able to pay back our savings account the funds that were borrowed to balance this year’s budget.

Communications/Website/Newsletter – Annette Bensen, Chair

- Updating of our website is in progress, we are requesting that Clubs and Condos continue to submit updated contact information to the Activities office.

Newsletter - Bill Harden, Editor

- The June issue is on schedule with new information on Activities, Classes, and Clubs.

Fitness Center – Annette Bensen, Chair

- A new massage table has been purchased.
- Preventative maintenance has been performed throughout the facility, along with a thorough cleaning.
- New equipment has been ordered and will be arriving in a few weeks.
- A new operable window is scheduled for installation.
- Appointments for introduction to the equipment are still active, please see staff for an appointment.

Activities Committee – Dorinda Haskel, Co-Chair

- Friends in the Hills Group will hold “A Night at the Races” in the HR on Friday, June 9th at 6:30 pm.
- Theatre Group presents a staged reading of “Harvey” on Friday & Saturday, June 23rd and 24th at 7:30 pm, Sunday, June 25th at 3:00 pm in the HR.
- We continue to request updated contact information from our Clubs and Activities groups. Please submit forms to the Activities office.

Welcome to HH Committee – Dorinda Haskel, Co-Chair

- Saturday, September 9th is the Welcome to HH Expo in the HR. New and old residents are welcome to attend. More information to arrive in the coming months.

Digital Records Retention - Jay Wright, Committee Chair

- Society’s historical records are under a review process to transfer over to a digital format.
- Our committee meets every other week and we are auditing and renaming each file of approximately 27 boxes for proper storing.
- At the completion of this process, we plan to have all records professionally digitized for safer storage.
- We plan to finalize the contract with a vendor who will do the digitization shortly.

Resident ID Card System Committee - Gene Archer and Dorinda Haskel, Co-Chairs

- During our kickoff meeting we explored the scope of the project. We are in the process of gathering information and vetting companies to see who can best provide us a new card system.
- The resident ID card system we now use is outdated, and we look forward to updating it with a new version.
- The new ID cards will be phased in slowly, as we phase out the old.
- We have money in the budget for this large project.

Ad-Hoc Committee / Alternate Energy Committee - Energy Sources for Society facilities – John Milligan:

We are exploring alternate energy sources for Society facilities in the form of solar panels, and specifically for Lake Lodge a geothermal or hydrothermal system. We’ve investigated this idea before. New grants are offered every year and technology has moved forward at a great pace. As more information becomes available, we will provide more details.

Project to Promote Email Blast Sign Up - Alan Tepper, Committee Chair:

- The primary source of communication in HH is email and we are working with Andrew and Anna to help as many residents as possible sign up for email blasts.
- We are exploring ideas on how to promote, educate and assist the community in the process.

Audit Committee – Jack Mattes, Chair:

- Our Financial Audit is currently in progress and our CPA has provided us with a draft. We are working with their office and provide information as they request it. We are ahead of last year's schedule.

Society Board Elections - Alan Tepper, Committee Chair

- The application deadline to run for a seat on the Society Board of Directors was originally April 24, 2023, and was extended to May 1st. No new applications were received, therefore ballots will not be mailed and we will not have a candidates' night.
- At the June 21st Annual Meeting, our incumbents, all five of whom are running for re-election, will be elected by acclamation and their terms will be effective July 1st.
- We welcome residents to consider becoming involved and are hoping for some new interest next year.

Meadowlark Park – Patricia Ploss, Chair

- June is Pollinator Month, and our pollinator gardeners are planning an event for June 3rd. In connection with their goal to offer educational events to benefit our residents, they will host a tour of the gardens for children ages 8 years and older, and the children will create labels for the various plants. This will be led by long-time educator Dassi Citron and expert art teacher, Wendy Podell, both are residents and members of the Garden Club's Native Pollinator Garden Group. It is scheduled for 11 am on Sat., June 3rd. (Rain date: June 4th at 11 a.m.). Register by emailing *dassicitron@gmail.com*.
- Marti Lowenfeld of our committee is working with beekeeper Thom Mittag to arrange one or two talks about bees. Details to follow.
- We are waiting for a price to extend the Warren Trail about 300 feet. If the budget will allow, we're looking at extending the Heritage Trail about 120 feet to connect two existing cart paths. Looking forward, we have plans for another approximately 200 feet that would connect the Challenge Trail to the Heritage Trail.
- The fountain has been installed and the electrical meter at the south end of Meadow Pond is screened.
- At Park Place the pachysandra is out, and grass seed is in; Park Place signs are up, and the awning has been installed.

Landscaping – Patricia Ploss, Chair

- Daffodils have faded, pretty blue pots are in place at Lake Lodge and the three-way stop, and the summer flowers have been planted.
- The main entry is coming to life, and it appears we didn't lose much to last summer's drought.
- Evergreens have been planted at the Activities Center to screen the new generator.
- Plans are in place to enlarge the planting circle around the Meadowlark Park sign.
- The Committee is aware of a dead shrub and a large rhododendron that require attention at Lake Lodge. Waiting for recommendations from John Maxner on whether they need to be replaced or just heavily pruned.
- For the fall we will recommend additional daffodils be planted around the property.

Community Affairs Committee – Jack Mattes, Chair

- The smoke alarm program with the American Red Cross is still active. Please contact the Activities office or the Red Cross directly (845) 673-1198 for an appointment.
- In addition to the above, the Town is communicating with the Somers community regarding the smoke alarm program, with a PSA and an article in the Somers Record. There is also a link on the Town website to make appointments.
- The primary election to be held in the Heritage Room in June has been cancelled.
- Town News:
 - Construction of a commercial storage unit facility is planned on Route 100. It is in the beginning stages of being presented to the Town Planning Board. Current plans show a 2-story building with a residential façade and with limited parking.
 - The Tractor Supply store that is replacing the old Home Goods will soon have new signage.
 - A proposal for construction of condominiums at the intersection of Mahopac Avenue, specifically in area by Tool Nut, has been submitted to the Town Planning Board. There will be more details as new information becomes available.

Library – Deica Ruiz, Chair

- For the month of June, we are adding 13 new books, including ones by Danielle Steel, Susan Isaacs, and Jo Nesbo.
- The Library recently announced it is hosting a Book Club, and the response has been so great that we will have two groups of 15 residents each. The groups, led by Sheelagh Kaplan, will meet the first Monday and

Thursday of every month, after regular Library hours. We also have a waiting list of residents interested in joining.

- The Library is open weekdays from 10 am to 3 pm. Call us at (914) 276-7655 to reserve a book. The full list of books can be found at hhsociety.org, under the library tab.

Health & Safety – Flo Brodley, Chair

- This year's first holistic program, Beauty and the Beast, on environmental estrogens and their effects on the body went extremely well and I was glad to see a few hardy male souls in the audience!
- Friday, May 19th at 10:30am, Frank Turchioe, Somers chiropractor will speak in the Heritage Room on proper ergonomics for your home and workplace as well as sports injury prevention, particularly for neck and back issues, applicable for all ages. Hope to see you there!
- Monday, June 12th brings our second holistic program, called Vision and Lifelong Learning offered by optometrist Dr. Samantha Slotnick. Dr. Slotnick will explore the hidden signs and symptoms of visual stress that can range from becoming sleepy or skipping words or lines while reading, being easily distracted especially at work, or squinting when shifting focus between near and far, all signals of stress at any age. This interactive presentation will show how your daily vision can become more efficient.
- Just a note: Speakers on holistic topics offer a vision different from mainstream medicine (even though they may be regular M.D.s). The aim of these programs is to bring information forward that present new perspectives to common issues. It took many decades for chiropractic services and the benefits of vitamins to be accepted by the mainstream medical community and so may these topics we present today. We hope you'll attend these programs with an open mind to learn new ways of addressing established procedures.
- Blood pressure screenings will continue on the second Friday of each month by Nurse Ellie Eidam who always reminds us that you may bring your blood pressure machine with you for a quick checkup.
- As always, we encourage residents with health and safety backgrounds to contact me at flo613@comcast.net with their resume, if they wish to join our committee.

Security – Dave Jacobsen, Prosecur Supervisor

- April stats: 53 security calls, 67 medical calls, 1 car accident with injuries, 50 service calls, 4 parking violations, 11 maintenance calls including 1 water main break, 8 fire alarms for a total of 194 for the month, year to date 721. Calls to the Security office should be for security, medical and safety related emergencies only.
- When to call 911 – If you have a Police, Fire Dept or EMS emergency, your first call should be to 911. These dispatchers can map your call to your address in case of a lost call. Our security office does not have the capability to map your call to your location. Our office monitors all 911 calls and will be present as well for those emergency calls.

Operations Report – John Milligan, Property Manager

In earlier Board meetings we have highlighted expenses for insurance and for utilities. This month we are focusing on four of the largest budget categories. The Society budget is roughly \$6 million dollars a year, which works out to \$500,000 per month, with 98-99% coming from Society fees.

- The costliest single budget item is the contract with Prosecur (Security and EMS) at \$1.2 million dollars per year.
- The second most costly budget category is salaries for the 19 Society employees, at \$907,000 annually.
- Third is the landscaping and snow removal contract with Westchester Properties Group, at \$770,000 annually.
- The fourth category is our pools at nearly \$400,000 per year to operate our 5 pools with a pool season of a little over 100 days. Much more is spent on pools alone than on paving, insurance, or utilities. Pool costs include lifeguard salaries, pool chemicals, electricity, propane, pool supplies, and repairs.

- Since 2014 (9 pool seasons), we've spent \$3 million on operating our pools, with three quarters of a million on repairs alone. The largest portion of those repairs was on Pool 3 for 500k. We've since replaced equipment for Pools 1 and 2, and are awaiting approval for equipment replacement for Pool 3, expenses of about \$100,000 each time equipment is replaced.

These four items alone represent over \$3 million dollars, half of our entire yearly budget.

Pools

- Maintenance is busy with all 5 pools open 7 days a week, 10 hours a day. Last year, lifeguards cost us \$180,000, with this year being a little more expensive due to having a gate attendant on the weekends to relieve the burden on the lifeguard by helping with signing people in. Lifeguard salaries have increased upwards of \$20/hr.
- Pool 4 received temporary repairs to get us through this season. An engineering firm has begun work on developing a repair strategy for Pool 4 and soon we should have a set of plans ready to submit to the Dept. of Health for approval. We will then evaluate costs, line up contractors and determine timeframes for repair work.
- Pools are ready for the season. Memorial Day weekend Pools 1, 3 and 4 will be open until Father's Day weekend when Pools 2 and 5 will open as well. Furniture and cabanas are ready for use and adjusting the pool temperature is a work in progress with these very cool mornings.

Tennis

- Several seams on Court #1 have come loose and will need to be addressed. Oval Tennis has examined the courts and determined a repair strategy, and we are hoping that this can be scheduled as soon as possible. In the meantime, and in the interest of safety, Court #1 is unavailable for play.
- The platform tennis courts have been repainted and look beautiful. The old halogen lights, several of which were not functional, have been replaced with new LED fixtures, therefore playing platform tennis at night is now an option. LED lights are much brighter, last longer, and consume less electricity, lowering our energy costs.

Activities Parking

- We've mentioned that all parking spaces on the island closest to the bocce and pickleball courts will be converted to handicapped parking spaces. We are working with a contractor to schedule the re-painting of that area. This will be a tremendous benefit to those residents with health or mobility issues as we enter the very busy summer season.
- Parking in the rear of the Activities and Fitness Centers is not allowed. It is a very narrow driveway bordering a pond with no guardrail and residents often walk behind the AC. There are signs that indicate it is limited to service vehicles only, specifically our landscape, security, and maintenance staff vehicles. It is also used for deliveries of our oil, propane, and pool chemicals. There is also a Fire Dept. hookup at the rear of the Fitness Center. Please do not park in this area.

NYSEG/Veolia

- NYSEG is nearly finished with their multi-year, multi-million dollar infrastructure project in HH. They have done extensive re-seeding, including topsoil, throughout several condo areas where they completed work last fall, and restoration work in roadways, driveways, and lawn areas. If they haven't been in your condo, it means that you already have jacketed underground wiring in conduit that does not need to be replaced.
- Watermain breaks and/or repairs: Repairs to watermains require digging 9 feet deep to inspect the issue and it can be difficult to predict exactly when water will be cut off and for what duration. Neither Society nor Security receive advance notice of repairs, nor do they receive updates as the work progresses. This means calls to our Security office about this disruption are not only unnecessary, but they can prevent important

calls from being answered. Not having water for a few hours is an inconvenience, not an emergency; calling about having a heart attack is an emergency. Security has received up to 200 calls per hour during watermain breaks and this absolutely compromises their ability to respond efficiently and effectively to emergencies. In addition, during a situation like yesterday's watermain repairs it is not unusual that the timeframes for repairs and exactly which water valves need to be shut off is uncertain, and changes during repairs are common. Your best course of action – if there is no water, call the water company; if there is no power, call NYSEG. You are more likely to receive accurate information that way.

Fitness Center

- We are expecting delivery of three new pieces of equipment, installation of an operable window near the treadmills and replacement of the roof mounted AC units. A new massage table has arrived and is in place. The new pieces of equipment are a Hoist HD-3900 Pec Fly/Rear Deltoid Machine, an Octane XR6000 Seated Elliptical w/standard console, and a True Upright Bike w/Envision console.

Meadowlark Park

- We have marked out an extension of the Warren Street trail and expect that sometime after Memorial Day we will begin work to complete that connection. It appears that our budget will allow for at least one more section of trail to be extended with asphalt millings, which is the material we are using for trail work. When the Warren Street trail is extended, we intend to address the rather lumpy condition of the trail leading towards Warren Street, near the playground. As a reminder, dogs should be leashed and look for doggie stations for clean-up.

Activities Office

We are pleased to announce that after a long search we have found an assistant for the very busy Activities office. Her name is Catherine Fuller, although most people call her Cat. Great background, fantastic computer and communication skills and we expect her to be a big help to Andrew. She works every day in the afternoons from 1:00 – 5:00PM. If you get a chance, stop by, say hello and make her feel welcome.

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 2:23 pm. Motion passed. The next Board meeting is on June 21st at 1:30 pm and will be followed by our Annual Meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Deica Ruiz

Secretary, Heritage Hills Society, LTD