

HERITAGE HILLS SOCIETY
Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes – October 18, 2023

Meeting commenced at 1:30 pm

Board members in attendance: Gloria Anderson, Gene Archer, Ann Harper, Dorinda Haskel, Joe Kelly, Jack Mattes, Karl Milde, Patricia Ploss, Bruce Prince, Dom Rubino, Deica Ruiz, Art Singer, Alan Tepper, and Jay Wright. Carol Vartuli was absent. John Milligan and Rob Casasanta were also in attendance.

Gloria Anderson, VP, greeted everyone in attendance and those watching on Channel 21.

Deica Ruiz asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the September 20, 2023, Regular Board Meeting. Motion passed.

Financial Report – Gene Archer, Treasurer

- September income was \$513,239.27 and expenses were \$527,395.28, with a variance of \$14,155.96 due to unanticipated expenses from storm clean up.
- Our committee has finalized the proposed 2024 budget. We have a scheduled meeting this Friday with the Society Board for review. The budget will be approved at our November Board meeting.

Willow Wood Gun Club – Gloria Anderson, 2nd VP

The Somers Land Trust has filed an Article 78 proceeding hoping to overturn the Carmel Town Planning Board's decision to allow the gun club to operate a series of skeet shooting stations that are pointed toward the Somers Land Trust and toward HH Condos 21, 22 and 30. Documents have been submitted to the Courts as of October 10th. As of this morning, no decision has yet been rendered, we will keep you updated as we receive more news.

Activities Committee – Ann Harper, Chair

- We have a new Spanish Conversation Class taught by a retired Spanish Teacher. This class is not to educate you in the language but to have a place to engage in it conversationally and to improve your Spanish. It will meet monthly, and it is free.
- Returning are Ted Talks, which are videos of speakers on various topics followed by a discussion. It will meet monthly, and the first session is Friday, December 15th from 3 pm – 5 pm in the HR. It will be led by Karle Milde and Ami Stokhamer. There will be light refreshments, and it is free.
- I encourage residents to come out and try one of our ongoing activities and/or something new.

Communications/Website – Carol Vartuli, Chair

- HH would benefit from a user-friendly, easy to navigate website where residents can stay up to date on community news, register for activities and events, participate in forums/discussions, and interact with the Society Board as well as their individual Condo communities.
- A cell-phone version of the website would enable non-computer users' quick access to activities, registrations, and other information tailored to a small screen.
- A vendor created software would provide a turn-key interface for internal administrators to keep a large volume and variety of information current and accessible.
- A proposal will be presented for the Board's consideration in the near future.

Fitness Center – Alan Tepper, Chair

- A “No Private Trainers” sign has been installed. New residents are entitled to a complimentary 30-minute personal training session. After that, Mary and Jonathon are available for a small fee by appointment. Outside personal trainers are not permitted. You may call the FC to schedule a session.

- Equipment consoles are not designed to carry weight and can damage the equipment. Please use the proper handles designed for this purpose.
- Our 2024 budget has been submitted to the Finance Committee. It includes replacement of equipment as it reaches the end of its useful lifetime, preventive maintenance and repair of broken equipment, with additional funds for replacement of consoles on stationary bikes that have been used improperly.
- The new A/C units have been installed with no interruptions.

Newsletter Committee – Gloria Anderson, Chair

- Society has contracted with a new publisher for the HH Newsletter called Halston Media Group which will begin this December. Residents, clubs and activities groups should continue to submit their articles to the same email address: hhillsnewsletter@gmail.com.
- If you would like to place a classified ad or place an advertisement for your business, please contact Brett Freeman at 845-208-8151 or email at freeman@halstonmedia.com.
- There will be no changes to the look, or the content of the Newsletter, and it will continue to arrive in your mailbox every month.

Dorinda Haskell, Activities Co-Chair

- This year we will be having a Trunk or Treat event on October 29th taking place in our MLP parking lot. Trunks will be decorated and ready to give out candy, followed by a parade of trick or treaters. Please sign up to participate to decorate your trunk, forms can be found at the Activities Center and on the Family Network. Time of the event is 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm. The Heritage Room will have refreshments available and games to play. As a reminder, on Halloween there will not be any trick or treaters arriving at our doors.

Meadowlark Park – Patricia Ploss, Chair

- 10 cherry trees have been planted at Meadowlark Park along the Heritage Trail (the center trail) and thank you to Bill Colavito of Condo 23 for his generous donation.
- The second trail extension is complete. It's a 140-foot extension which creates a loop at the top of the trailway.
- Earlier this year we completed a 430-foot extension of the Warren Trail.
- The bee hives continue to thrive as we now have added a second hive.

Landscape – Patricia Ploss, Chair

- I hope you are enjoying this fall's plantings and once these need to be removed, you'll be greeted at our main entry, once again, with holiday lights.
- The landscaping upgrades at Pools 4 and 5 are complete. We've removed some old and tired shrubbery, repositioned some existing plants and added some new perennials.
- At Lake Lodge, we're removing old and tired shrubbery to allow for a clear view of the gazebo and the pond.

Community Affairs Committee – Jack Mattes, Chair

- This past weekend was our Art Show which was well attended and a huge success. We continue to have new residents with new talent participate and it was an incredible event. New this year were wooden pens that were created in our Woodshop offered at \$30 each, proceeds to go to the Guiding Eyes for the Blind. Total sales averaged \$1,000. This year we set a record for our youngest participating artist at 16 months old whose painting was set alongside his mom's, who was also a participant. Please consider submitting your work if you enjoy painting. It is not a judged competition but rather an open Art Show for our residents.
- Sustainable Westchester will be presenting their newest program in the Heritage Room on October 19. NYSEG will also be present and following the meeting will have a Q&A for residents in Rooms 2/3.
- General election voting will take place on November 7th in the HR. Early voting begins October 28th and runs through November 5th at the Somers Town House.

- Toys For Tots is scheduled for Sunday, December 9th in the HR from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Admission cost is a new unwrapped toy. Cash contributions can be made out to the Marine Corps Toys for Tots. Toy collection boxes will be placed in our lobbies by mid-October. All residents are welcome to attend with or without children.

Library – Deica Ruiz, Chair

- For November we are adding 16 new books, with titles by favorite authors Ken Follett, Lee Child, and John Grisham, as well as a non-fiction by Walter Isaacson about Elon Musk, currently the richest person in the world.
- Cindy Kennedy, a Library Committee member, writes a monthly column for the Heritage Hills Newsletter called The Book Shelf, where she reviews books that are of interest to our community and are part of the Library. In September she reviewed Crook Manifesto by Colson Whitehead, and the October review was for Tom Lake by Ann Patchett. The reviews are a wonderful way to get a flavor for a particular book, and Cindy never gives away the ending!
- Sheelagh Kaplan, also a Library Committee member, showcases a different author every month - this month it is Elizabeth George. The books by the chosen author are displayed on top of a shelf to your left as you enter the Library, you don't even have to go searching for them.
- Library hours are Monday through Friday 10 am to 3 pm and remember we're open on Saturdays from 10 am to 1 pm. Books can be reserved in person or by calling 914-276-7655 and leaving the name of the book and your contact information. We hope you'll visit the Library soon.

Resident ID Card System Committee – Joe Kelly

- We have had two more meetings with Verkada, our software & hardware vendor of choice, and Wall Street Networks, Verkada's local partner, who will be installing the system. Our focus is the FC, which would receive four new card readers. The first two readers would replace the two existing in the lobby and the second two would be installed on the exterior walls adjacent to the doors of the locker rooms. This product would be Bluetooth ready. Other areas for expansion include pools, tennis and pickleball courts, and Lake Lodge. The licensing fee includes a ten-year product warranty, unlimited users, unlimited cloud archiving, automatic firmware, and software updates, with 24/7 technical support. Both vendors require a 3-week lead time to order and receive parts, with an estimated three-day installation timeframe. We have a site walkthrough scheduled to visit a current client of Verkada's, who is using a similar product to the one we are considering.

Digital Records Retention - Jay Wright, Committee Chair

Auditing the archived files is moving right along. We are looking to finish the audit in 1-2 months and begin digitizing all files.

Somers Town Update – Bruce Prince

- A new townhouse development is planned for Baldwin Place behind the Somers Stop & Shop center which will include a community center and dog park.
- Dish Network has plans to install communication towers providing Somers residents with more options for telecommunications other than the existing providers AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon.

Ad-Hoc Committee / Alternate Energy Committee - Energy Sources for Society Facilities – Bruce Prince

We were exploring ideas for geothermal or hydrothermal systems for Lake Lodge specifically, where the HVAC systems are currently out of date. We acquired an estimate for each installation which John Miligan and I decided was unfeasible. We are now reviewing the idea of a split system similar to what was installed at Park Place. More details to follow as more information becomes available.

Health & Safety – Flo Brodley, Chair

- We are happy to announce the addition of three new members to our committee. Thank you to Arlene Hoffman, Sally Slotoroff and Randy Freeman for coming on board with their expertise. They are joining a group of dedicated residents whose only mission is to inform and educate our residents on the most effective ways to live a life of health and wellbeing.
- On September 26th, the workshop called Laughter Yoga was given by Donna Bernstein who made the halls of the Activities Center ring with laughter! Two dozen residents who started out looking quite serious, not knowing what to expect, found themselves dancing around the room in fun-filled exercise mode and making friends. Several of our own Society Board members can attest to that happy hour, so beware Board members as a Laughter Yoga workshop may be on its way to you!
- The Annual Flu Clinic on October 11th was another resounding success! 197 residents had their flu shots, dropped unwanted and expired medications into the hands of the police and left with thanks for making it pleasant and easy to augment their good health this season.
- The first Medicare Update occurred this morning at the 10-A-Men meeting. Marna Schirmer, a DSPS Medicare counselor and I spoke about the new benefits and changes to Medicare 2024, whether you have Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Tomorrow afternoon at 1:30pm in Rooms 2/3 we'll offer a second Medicare update, this time with Julie Woodward, another DSPS counselor. Both meetings present what's new for 2024, such as benefits changes, how to register for Medicare when you're 65 or how to choose a health plan. In addition, I've sent out to those on prior listings, the [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) site on which to reacquaint themselves with the information at the update meeting but able to digest it at their leisure.
- Our last program for 2023 welcomes Dr. Julie Fixman, Medical Director of the South Putnam Animal Hospital, who will offer a program with pet owners and others in the HR on Friday, November 17th @ 10am. Her talk will include but not limited to pet first aid, common household toxins, caring for a puppy, and the health benefits and parallels in aging of pets and people.
- As usual, on the second Friday of each month, Nurse Ellie Eidam is ready to screen your Blood Pressure amid quiet conversation about your health. You may bring home blood pressure machine, as I did recently, to be checked.
- Health & Safety Committee members are always on the lookout for topics that interest our residents, so please contact me at flo613@comcast.net or leave a note in our mailbox.

Security – Rob Casasanta, Prosegur Supervisor

- September stats: 53 security calls, 9 burglar alarms, 86 medical emergencies, 2 car accidents, 45 service calls, 11 parking violations, 9 maintenance calls, and 10 fire alarms.
- We have received (3) brand new Security vehicles (Ford Explorers).
- 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

Paving/Line Striping

- Northern Construction has completed this year's main paving project in three locations where work began two weeks ago. Additional minor curb and asphalt repairs will be marked out by the end of this week and miscellaneous repairs will take place throughout the community on Society maintained roads.
- Line-striping will be underway when the weather permits, and we expect that by the end of this week it should be complete. This project consists of re-painting all 13 miles of yellow center lines, re-painting of all 8 speed humps, all stop bars on Society roads, lettering, and pavement markings. We are going to wait another week before the newly paved sections of road are re-striped. In mid to late November, we will run a street sweeper over the 26 miles of white lines at the edges of the roads for more visibility.

Fitness Center HVAC/Boilers

- The installation of two 10-ton roof top A/C units on the FC is complete and it is anticipated that installation of the two 450k BTU boilers for the FC will take place before the end of October. Both projects are a continuation of an effort to replace aging and critically important infrastructure before it fails and equally important to replace it with new, more energy efficient units reducing our energy and utility costs significantly. Both the A/C units and boilers are around 26 years old.

Lake Lodge Roof Repair

- In Lake Lodge Room 3 has been closed on and off for several weeks because of persistent repair of resistant roof leaks. The Board authorized the emergency replacement of a small section of flat roof at Lake Lodge at a cost of \$23,900, performed by W.A. Kelly Company. Work was completed yesterday and should guarantee that Room 3 is available for use without interruption.

Replacement of Tennis Courts 1 & 2/Pickleball

- The replacement of tennis courts 1 & 2 by SportTech Construction began yesterday and by the end of next week we should have two brand new artificial turf tennis courts with green sand.

Pickleball

- An expansion of the pickleball patio is complete, providing more room for players to sit down.

Holiday Lights

- The holiday lights were installed a couple of weeks ago at our main entrance and at the East Hill back entrance, and we are now just waiting for the holiday season to begin to flip the switch.

Meadowlark Park/Landscaping

- Ten pink flowering cherry trees were planted along the walkway between the playground and pollinator gardens, a very generous gift from HH resident Bill Colavito.
- We completed another trail connection at the top of the middle trail. Connecting all the trails and creating loops is an ongoing process. It will be about 2-3 years before we have a complete set of trails throughout the park.

Assistant Activities Coordinator

- I am happy to report that Lisa Pippa is our new assistant in the Activities office, and she started Monday, Oct. 16th. You may want to stop by to say hello and make her feel welcome. She will be in the office from 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 PM until 5:00 PM.

Pools

- We have received a draft set of repair plans for Pool #4 from Blue Water Pools in the interest of preparing a budget estimate and projected work schedule. This project will take place in the next year or two. The repairs that took place before this season appear to have reduced the leakage to a manageable level and a similar effort next year should effectively postpone a major repair expense for at least one more year. Pool 4 will be open and ready for use next year.

Lake Lodge

- The lobby and Room 3 received a new paint scheme, new furniture and a couple of other changes all spearheaded by Pat Ploss and resident/interior designer, Susan Atwell. We used our own maintenance staff led by Facilities Manager Marcus Lovell.

NYSEG/Veolia/Verizon

- Verizon has assured us that the necessary equipment was on back order, but it has been released and backup power for the Verizon switch cabinet on Warren Street should be in place by fall. Therefore, the Security Office phones will now have backup power in the event of a power outage.

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 November 15th at 1:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Deica Ruiz, Secretary
Heritage Hills Society, LTD