

HERITAGE HILLS SOCIETY
Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes – September 20, 2023

Meeting commenced at 1:30 pm

Motions:

- To approve a write-off for Unit 112C, Condo 3 in the amount of \$8,852 plus any fees accrued this month - motion passed.
- To approve new Jewelry Making Class – motion passed.
- To approve Northern Construction contract for paving in 3 separate areas in the amount of \$243,161 – motion passed.
- To approve SportTech Construction contract for complete renovation of Tennis Courts 1 & 2 in the amount of \$116,000, plus \$6,000 for sand - motion passed.
- To approve K&S HVAC contract for the replacement of the boiler in the Fitness Center in the amount of \$30,000. The existing single boiler will be replaced by two 450K BTU boilers – motion passed.
- To approve the purchase of a new 14 passenger bus from School Lines CT in the amount of \$93,533, with a \$20,000 trade-in allowance for our bus that will result in a net cost to Society of \$73,533 – motion passed.
- To approve D&D Traffic Control to repaint yellow lines & road markings on 13 miles of roads in the amount of \$38,500 – motion passed.

Board members in attendance: Gloria Anderson, Gene Archer, Ann Harper, Dorinda Haskell, Joe Kelly, Jack Mattes, Karl Milde, Patricia Ploss, Bruce Prince, Dom Rubino, Deica Ruiz, Art Singer, Alan Tepper, Carol Vartuli, and Jay Wright. John Milligan and Rob Casasanta 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 July 19, 2023, Regular Board Meeting. Motion passed.

Dom Rubino, President

- Announced that Annette Bensen and Bill Harden have resigned from the Society Board of Directors.
- Announced the appointment of Joe Kelly and Carol Vartuli to the Society Board of Directors.
- Announced current Standing Committee Chairs and reps.

Financial Report – Gene Archer, Treasurer

- August income was \$521,349.83 and expenses were \$571,004.18, leaving a deficit of \$49,654.35 due mostly to the storm cleanup.
- Our committee completed the half-year review and forecast of our budget. In revenue we have \$100,000 from the Employee Retention Credit. Our Purchasers Contribution Policy fund is forecasted to yield about \$90,000 in revenue, and our various CD's interest should total \$16,000 or more. Due to lack of permits from the Health Dept. we still have \$100,000 allocated for Pool 3 equipment. In our contingency fund we budgeted \$150,000 of which 50,000 has been used. In our Landscaping budget we should save \$22,000, Transportation budget \$10,000 due to fewer bus runs, and we saved \$6,000 from only opening Pool 1 after the end of the season.

Finance Committee – Pat Ploss

Unit 112C has been in arrears since 2019, earlier this year the bank foreclosed on the unit and there are no excess funds. We will now bill the bank directly for Society fees. Motion request to write off Unit 112C arrears of \$8,852 plus any fees accrued in the last two weeks. Motion passed.

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. There will be no changes to the look or the content and it will continue to arrive in your mailbox every month. The newsletter will continue to include information on our Activities, wonderful articles, and book reviews by Cindy Kennedy.
- The email address to submit an article or a photo remains the same as it was hhillsnewsletter@gmail.com and we continue to welcome submissions.

Willow Wood Gun Club – Gloria Anderson, 2nd VP

The Town of Carmel Planning Board has approved an application by the WWGC and has given permission to begin using the 14 new clay shooting stations in September. The Somers Land Trust has filed legal action, an Article 78 proceeding, questioning the Carmel Planning Board's approval, which they have appealed. The Somers Land Trust opposition reply is due September 29th, and the court appearance is October 10th. Unless an adjournment is granted, we should expect a decision sometime in mid-October. Condo 22 has also acted in opposition to the shooting stations. Jack Stein, VP of Condo 22, is present and will provide details. Condo 22 has spent \$6,900 on land surveys and testing of the soil and water. They have asked each Condo to make a minimum contribution of \$400 and it is up to each Condo Board to make that decision. The Society Board will be donating \$500 to Condo 22 to help reimburse them for their expenses for their efforts.

Activities Committee – Ann Harper, Chair

Motion request for new Jewelry Making Class. The instructor is highly qualified and will provide instruction on creating bead jewelry. Motion passed.

Communications/Website – Carol Vartuli, Chair

I look forward to providing strategies for effective communication within all HH's vehicles and channels, specifically our website, emails, and publications. Interactivity is one of the most important facets of good communication.

Fitness Center – Alan Tepper, Chair

- The two major spaces in the FC are a gymnasium which can be used for pickleball, basketball, and paddleball; and the main fitness area which is a fully equipped state-of-the-art exercise facility. The equipment is clean, up to date and replaced when necessary. We have two fitness personnel who are highly trained and available to help.
- 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.
- FC daily hours are 4 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Dorinda Haskell, Activities Co-Chair

- Our Welcome to HH event on September 9th was a huge success. We had 31 Activities, Clubs and Classes represented here in the HR. Out of the 88 registered residents, 86 attended and viewed each table EXPO style. Thank you to all our staff and volunteers who supported us.
- October 29th will be our very first Trunk or Treat event taking place in our MLP parking lot. Trunks will be decorated and ready to give out candy to trick or treaters. The Heritage Room will have refreshments available and games to play. Due to space limitations, residents will be asked to sign-up. This is a resident only event. Normally for Halloween, residents would sign up to have trick or treaters arrive at their door but with very few or no visitors.

Meadowlark Park – Patricia Ploss, Chair

- Our park has been fortunate to receive gifts from two generous residents. Barbara Kagan of Condo 18 has graciously gifted a numerous amount of irises from her personal garden and thank you to Maxner Landscaping

for sending his truck to pick up the tubers and storing them at the maintenance yard until ready for planting. We are looking forward to seeing those around Park Place and at the entry sign. Bill Colavito of Condo 23 is donating cherry trees in honor of all who suffer from ALS. The intent is to plant cherry trees along the trail next to the playground.

- A 430-foot extension of the Warren trail has been completed. If the weather permits, we should be able to complete another 140 feet which will create a loop at the top of the trail.
- Our beehive has done very well, therefore we have added another hive. We are hoping to have beekeeper Thom Mittag speak to us when he is available.

Landscape – Patricia Ploss, Chair

- Fall plantings of mums, peppers, kale, cabbage, corn stalks, and hay bales are currently being planted.
- This summer's flowers were a huge success and we received numerous compliments. I have asked our landscape designer to duplicate these plantings for next year as well.
- Our committee has made recommendations for sprucing up Pools 4 and 5. At Pool 4, we are removing old shrubbery from behind the cabana and replacing these with deer resistant Andromeda. In the median, we are moving yucca plants and adding bright yellow perennials. At Pool 5, we are adding 13 Ilex and 13 Nepta against the wall along the tennis court and adding a tree in the peninsula.
- Lake Lodge has acquired new chairs in the lobby and is receiving an interior paint job to spruce it up.
- Looking ahead we will be installing holiday lights on trees at the main entrances.

Community Affairs Committee – Jack Mattes, Chair

- The Art Show is scheduled for Saturday, October 14th & Sunday, October 15th in the HR. The submission deadline was last week however, we will continue to accept submissions up until the end of this month.
- The Somers Food Pantry is scheduled for pick up on September 28th from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. in the parking lot of Pool 5. Email blasts provide a list of specific items that they are running short of and to exclude canned vegetables this year.
- Toys For Tots is scheduled for Sunday, December 9th in the HR. Collection boxes will be placed in our lobbies by mid-October. All residents are welcome to attend with or without children.
- General Election voting will take place on November 7th in the HR.
- Sustainable Westchester will have a presentation at the end of October in the HR explaining new rates.

Library – Deica Ruiz, Chair

- Often when I'm in the Library a resident comes in who has lived here for a number of years but had never been in the Library. We welcome you to visit, if only to check out what we have to offer. In October we are adding 15 new books, including Lion and Lamb by James Patterson and Duane Swierczynski, the latest J.A. Jance book and one by the ever-popular Jennifer Weiner. We also have a great collection of non-fiction and biographies, as well as many of the classics - something for everyone.
- A resident recently added to our Children's Book Exchange, and we now have a very nice selection.
- An administrator from The Paramount recently took four boxes of donated books, and she was excited because many of their residents love to read, and these books were new to them. Unfortunately, we are not accepting hardcover book donations at this time and will advise you when this changes.
- Library hours are posted on the door and on hhsociety.org, or you can call us at 914-276-7655. Books can be reserved in person or by calling and leaving the name of the book and your contact information. The full list of books can be found at hhsociety.org, under the library tab.

Resident ID Card System Committee – Joe Kelly

I am picking up where Gene Archer left off. Currently we are in contact with vendor Verkada who contracts with Wall Street Networks for configuration and installation of ID card access systems. We conducted a walk-through of our facilities that would require ID card access. Our next step is to visit one of their existing clients with the product in place and view its functionality.

Somers Town Update – Bruce Prince

- 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.
- An additional 80 townhouses, a community center and dog park are planned for development behind the Somers Commons Shopping Center.

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

We are 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.

Health & Safety – Flo Brodley, Chair

- The holistic program “Preventing Cognitive Decline” last week was given by a team from the organization Sharp Again Naturally, Myra Oney, health coach and Debbie Drelich, elder care social worker. They outlined the reasons for doing something Now to prevent dementia from taking over by making small changes to the foods you eat, the exercises to keep you moving mentally and physically and the stresses you can offset by boxed breathing and meditation.
- Next week, on Tuesday, September 26th at 1:30pm, Donna Bernstein will offer our residents Laughter Yoga, a fun-filled exercise workshop to benefit health, both mentally and physically. Since we already have a wait list, we are considering another program next year.
- The fall season brings our annual programs:
On Wednesday, October 11th from 9am to 1pm, the Health & Safety Committee will sponsor the nurses from Northern Westchester Hospital for the Flu Clinic that will take place in Lake Lodge. If you have Original Medicare, using the red, white, and blue card for your medical procedures, the flu shot is free! If you are young enough for private health insurance or have one of the Medicare Advantage plans, your cost will be \$20, and you will receive a receipt for reimbursement. As in the past, both the regular and high-dose vaccines will be available. No appointment is necessary, just walk in.
- The Medicare Update will take place on two days: the morning of Wednesday, October 18th at 10am at the 10-A-Men meeting and the following afternoon, the 19th, at 1:30pm. Both meetings will present the same information new for 2024, such as benefits changes, how to register for Medicare when you’re 65 or how to choose a health plan and will be held in the HR.
- The flu season, and now both the RSV season and renewed COVID season seem to be upon us. Since all the vaccines will be available shortly, it behooves us to consider strengthening our immune systems to face the winter. Please check with your medical provider for the best way to ensure your continued good health.
- Nurse Ellie Eidam is always ready to screen your Blood Pressure amid quiet conversation about your health on the second Friday of the month. You may bring your home blood pressure machine 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. Should you care to join our committee, nurses, doctors, social workers, health educators, please email me at flo613@comcast.net.

Pool Committee - Joan Sottile

- The 2023 Pool Season is over and now we are all looking forward to Fall and the upcoming holidays.
- Overall, it was a great year. Our Team managed a land slide, several outages and general maintenance in an exceptional manner. Thank you to Marcus and his team for your exemplary work!
- While there was a bit of discussion about which pool to keep open after Labor Day, our community is reminded that extended hours are a privilege that most people in the county and other communities don’t see. The Society Board takes this decision quite seriously and chooses the most suitable pool for this end-of-season extension. It’s generally based on pool usage, mechanical conditions, and the availability of lifeguards.
- The pool committee is officially disbanded for the season and will reconvene under a new team in the spring. You can look forward to refreshed furniture, some other enhancements and of course all five pools operating after Father’s Day weekend.

Security – Rob Casasanta, Prosegur Supervisor

- July stats: 60 security calls, 14 alarms, 89 medical calls, 1 car accident, 80 service calls, 12 parking violations, 20 maintenance calls, and 15 fire calls (fire dept responses).
- August stats: 66 security calls, 6 alarms, 79 medical calls, 2 car accidents, 53 service calls, 22 parking violations, 10 maintenance calls, 14 fire alarms. Calls to the Security office should be for security, medical and safety related emergencies only.
- The high number of parking violations are due to the new handicap spaces in the AC. We distribute courtesy violation notices to every car parked illegally in a handicap space.
- We request that residents complete a resident profile sheet which helps us update and maintain our records. Profile sheets can be found at our office and the AC.
- As our overnight shift circulates Condo areas, Security will reach out to you if your garage door is left open. This is a preventative measure to keep out rodents and the like.
- 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

Motions were made for the following items and passed unanimously:

- Request for Northern Construction contract for paving in 3 separate areas in the amount of \$243,161, work is to begin the first week of October..
- SportTech Construction contract for a complete renovation of Tennis Courts 1 & 2. Courts will be replaced with the same artificial turf and with green sand which will provide a great appearance.
- K&S HVAC contract for the replacement of the boiler in the Fitness Center. The existing single boiler will be replaced by two 450K BTU boilers which cycle on and off on demand, deeming them more efficient using less oil and electricity. .
- Purchase of a new 14 passenger bus from School Lines CT.. The bus will be delivered in next March of 2024.
- D&D Traffic Control to repaint yellow lines on 13 miles of roads & all road markings speed humps lettering at three way stops and main entrances. The yellow lines throughout the community have faded away which makes it a challenge to drive particularly at night. Painting will take place in October.

Members of the Board met with Prosegur to discuss their contract extension for 2024 and beyond. We have agreed in principle to a contract extension of three years and expect a 3% reduction in our annual contract cost for 2024. There are a few minor contract terms that need to be more clearly defined but it is expected that by our October Society Board meeting we will be asking for a motion to approve a new three-year extension of the contract between Heritage Hills Society and Prosegur.

Pools: This was our most expensive pool season. We replaced four pool heaters, one at Pool 1, two at Pool 4, and one at Pool 5, each at a cost of \$10-12,000. The pump at Pool 4 also had to be replaced at a cost of \$11,000. The repairs at Pool 4 that took place before this season have reduced the leakage to a manageable level and a similar effort next year should effectively postpone a major repair expense.

Cronin Engineering will provide a draft set of plans to be ready to review within the next two weeks. Pool 4 will be open for business next year. We also hope to have approval from the Dept. of Health for new equipment at Pool 3, it has been in the budget for some time, fortunately installation will only take a couple of weeks.

July Storm Damage: During the storm, our roads filled with mud, sink holes were created, and erosion on the sides of the road. The total costs for cleanup and repairs amounted to \$138,349. We are not eligible for FEMA or state funds because we are a private community. Funds are intended for public infrastructure. Also, there is no insurance coverage for either erosion or the miles of buried drainage pipes, it is not part of our insurance coverage.

Activities Parking: Security personnel have begun placing [bright orange] warnings on cars improperly parked in handicapped spots, fire lanes or on the grass and will record those violations. Repeated violations will result in a letter to the car owner warning that they may be ticketed by the Town of Somers police.

Paving/Stormwater Basins: Northern Construction will begin paving work starting the first week of October, weather dependent. This year we will be paving three sections of roadway.

Fitness Center/Town: The installation of the (2) 10-ton AC units at the Fitness Center will require a pre-construction meeting to be held early next week to coordinate the efforts of a crane company, our HVAC contractor, and electrician to ensure installation which should be completed in just one day. At the end of this year, the FC will have new boilers and new A/C units.

Meadowlark Park: Work is expected to start shortly on the short trail extension from the “overlook” trail. A tether ball set was installed in the vicinity of the horseshoe pit area and should be ready for play shortly.

Alternative Energy: Bruce and I have met with two geothermal companies, and both provided very rough cost estimates to convert Lake Lodge: Geothermal Energy Options (the same company that did the geothermal systems at Somers Crossing): \$395,000. Geothermal Works (affiliated with Sustainable Westchester): \$364,262. The Geothermal equipment is more energy efficient compared to the nine separate archaic A/C systems we currently have. What we would save in Lake Lodge is the approximate \$15,000 annual heating oil costs with an additional reduction in electrical costs resulting from more energy-efficient equipment. Several alternate energy saving measures were discussed and will be researched (i.e.: additional wall cavity foam insulation, split heating/cooling systems throughout).

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 2:25 pm. Motion passed. The next Board meeting is on October 18th at 1:30 pm.

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