

HERITAGE HILLS SOCIETY
Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes – July 19, 2023

Meeting commenced at 1:30 pm

Motions:

- To approve the appointment of The LaGumina Law Firm PLLC as the attorney for Society – motion passed.
- To approve the appointment of Grady CPA PC as auditors for Society – motion passed.
- To approve the named signers for bank accounts: Dom Rubino, Bruce Prince, Gene Archer – motion passed.
- To approve bank depositories: Webster Bank, Peoples Bank, Citibank, Putnam County, Tompkins, KeyBank, and M&T Bank – motion passed.
- To approve the pickleball etiquette, outdoor court rules and the one guest limit – motion passed.
- To approve a three year contract extension for Westchester Properties Group – motion passed.

Board members in attendance: Gloria Anderson, Gene Archer, Annette Bensen, Ann Harper, Dorinda Haskell, Jack Mattes, Karl Milde, Patricia Ploss, Dom Rubino, Deica Ruiz, Art Singer, Alan Tepper, and Jay Wright. Bruce Prince was absent. John Milligan, Dave Jacobsen 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 June 21, 2023 Regular Board Meeting. Motion passed.

Dom Rubino, President, announced that Bill Harden, Society Board Treasurer has resigned from the Society Board of Directors. Gene Archer has accepted the position of Treasurer as of July 1, 2023.

Financial Report – Gene Archer, Treasurer

- June income was \$482,315.42 and expenses were \$490,347.35, leaving a deficit of \$8,031.93.
- The items to keep an eye on are unanticipated expenses. The cleanup following the most recent flash flood wreaked havoc on our budget. Cleanup effort for a sink hole could result in a \$40-50,000 payout depending on the severity of the problem.
- This pool season, as of the end of June, pools have cost us just under \$75,000. Our annual budget for pools is just under \$372,000. Looking forward to our next Finance Committee meeting.

Gene made the following motions:

To appoint The LaGumina Law Firm PLLC as the attorney for Society – motion passed.

To appoint Grady CPA PC as auditors for Society – motion passed.

To appoint named signers for bank accounts; Dom Rubino, Bruce Prince, Gene Archer – motion passed.

To appoint bank depositories: Webster Bank, Peoples Bank, Citibank, Putnam County, Tompkins, KeyBank, and M&T Bank – motion passed.

Willow Wood Gun Club – Gloria Anderson, 2nd VP

The Town of Carmel Planning Board has approved the application by the WWGC to allow the installation of 14 new clay shooting stations planned for the beginning of September. The Somers Land Trust has filed an Article 78 proceeding asking the Supreme Court in Putnam County to overturn that decision. Condo 22 has also filed a letter of objection to the decision with the Town of Carmel Planning Board. The WWGC is due to file a response to that article 78 proceeding by July 28th. The date for the Court to respond is August 4th.

Activities Committee – Ann Harper, Co-Chair

- The Pickleball Committee has created a set of outdoor court rules to be approved by Society and which will be posted at the courts. The rules consist of proper etiquette, outdoor court rules, and the one guest limit. A motion was made to approve the Committee's recommendations. Motion passed.

Newsletter Committee – Gloria Anderson, Chair

- The Newsletter Committee has recently been recategorized as a Standing Committee, with Gloria appointed Chair. The Newsletter Committee volunteers are dedicated, talented, and professional individuals who dedicate time to writing articles. The August issue is in production with a beautiful cover photo. The email address to submit an article or photo is hhillsnewsletter@gmail.com

Audit Committee – Jack Mattes, Chair:

- Our Audit is complete and is with the Finance Committee for review. Copies will be made available for residents at the Society office.

Communications/Website – Annette Bensen, Chair

- The Activities office is working on building a cloud-based scheduler. We are in beginning stages and hope to have it up and running by the 2024 reservation season.

Fitness Center – Annette Bensen, Chair

- We urge residents to be careful and respectful of the new equipment.
- Appointments for introduction to the equipment are still available, please see staff for an appointment. Consultations are 30 minutes long and are free.

Welcome to HH Committee – Dorinda Haskel, Co-Chair

- Saturday, September 9th from 3 pm – 5 pm is the Welcome to Heritage Event. New and old residents are welcome to attend. Invitations can be found in the Newsletter, the mailroom, and both the Activities and the Society office. We urge Activities and Clubs to reserve your table and look forward to seeing everyone.

Meadowlark Park – Patricia Ploss, Chair

- Alan Tepper is working on updating our maps to show the new MLP Trail extensions for this year.
- We are happily accepting donations of books at Park Place.

Landscape – Patricia Ploss, Chair

- The Landscape Committee will be meeting in early August to discuss mums, peppers, kale, and cabbage. Please enjoy our beautiful flowers.

Community Affairs Committee – Jack Mattes, Chair

- No news to report this month.

Digital Records Retention - Jay Wright, Committee Chair

- The auditing of our files is in full swing. Society's historical records are under a review process to transfer over to a digital format. At the completion of this process, we plan to have all records professionally digitized for safer storage.

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

- The Co-Chairs had their first demonstration with vendor Verkada and they checked all the boxes of our requirements. We were provided with the product on a trial basis and plan to conduct a demonstration of the process as soon as schedules allow.

Library – Deica Ruiz, Chair

- For the month of August, we are adding 15 new books, including *The Collector* by Daniel Silva, and titles by Ann Patchett and Danielle Steel just to name a few.
- The Library is open Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 3 pm during the week and 10 am to 1 pm Saturday. Reserve books in person or by calling 914-276-7655 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.
- We have a Children’s Book Exchange and a Paperback Book Exchange located near the Library door, as well as puzzles in the Library that you can borrow for as long as you wish. We also have a puzzle on the table in the Library that is already half finished!
- Just a reminder that at this time the Library cannot accept hardcover book donations, and will advise you if and when this changes.
- As always, we want to thank our wonderful volunteers that give of their time so generously to make sure we can open every day.

Health & Safety – Flo Brodley, Chair

- The Veterans Administrative Services program last week was co-sponsored by the Health & Safety Committee and 10-A-Men, a cooperative venture with excellent outcomes. Dan Griffin, Executive Director, discussed health services of the VA and how to use each of them, compensation claims and what’s available to veterans’ spouses and families. Because there are differences between VA benefits and those offered by Medicare, it is critical for those who have been in the service, including the National Guard, that members hold both plans.
- On Wednesday, August 9th at 7pm, in the Heritage Room, Dr. Victor Khabie, Orthopedic Surgeon and co-chairman of the Department of Orthopedics at Northern Westchester Hospital, will speak comprehensively about the anatomy of the shoulder, common injuries, prevention and treatments. Considering all the residents who play pickle ball, tennis, bowling, etc. here in Heritage, this event should be well attended.
- Thursday, August 17th at 10:30am, in Rooms 2/3, Professor Emerita Tayna Drake, a community educator with the Hudson Valley Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, will speak on the differences between memory loss and normal aging. Attendees will learn how to identify risk factors and other common dementias.
- The second Friday of each month finds nurse Ellie Eidam in the Game Room ready to screen your Blood Pressure amid quiet conversation about your health. You may bring your home blood pressure machine to be checked. Kudos to Ellie who’s been doing this service caring for our community for many years!
- Health & Safety Committee members are always on the lookout for topics that interest our residents. If you’d like us to produce a program on a particular topic, please contact me at flo613@comcast.net or leave a note in our mailbox and we’ll do our best to follow through. Should you care to join our merry band of nurses, social workers, and health educators, please email me at flo613@comcast.net

Pool Committee, Joan Sotille

- In the past several weeks the pools have been closed a few times for thunderstorms.
- Pool #2 was closed for a few hours due to paving, which also coincided with a morning storm.
- Pool #4 was closed for several days due to a mud slide from 2 sides of the pool that resulted in having to drain the entire pool.
- Several pools were closed due to the water main break causing restrooms to be inoperable.
- In all cases, when there is a maintenance issue, pools will remain closed until repairs are complete.
- If there are issues on weekends or after 5 pm on a weekday, there is a strong possibility that there will be NO email notification of a pool closure. Upon arrival at the pool, there will be a sign with information.
- The few issues with Lifeguards have been addressed and we are looking into head lifeguards vs supervisors for extra help.
- Reminder, jumping into pools is not permitted and food is to be kept outside our gates.
- Bring your ID with the 2023 sticker and enjoy.

Operations Report – John Milligan, Property Manager

WPG Contract Extension

For the last 5 ½ years the company responsible for the summer landscaping as well as keeping our roads safe in the winter is Westchester Properties Group. As their contract with Society is expiring, members of the Board have just finished renegotiating a new three-year contract extension, based on a 3% increase for the 1st year, 3% increase for the 2nd year and 2% for the 3rd year. Our current contract amount is: \$717,980.04 annually, which includes snow removal as well as landscaping. A motion was made to approve three year contract extension – motion passed.

July Storms

The weather in the last three weeks or so has been very challenging and very expensive for Heritage Hills. We've had roads covered with mud and debris, a pool filled with mud and debris, sinkholes in the road and alongside the road, as well as downed trees laying across the road, trees struck by lightning, and sections of asphalt washed away. A walking trail washed away not once but twice, and hundreds of feet of curb was undermined. The good news is that we have been able to take care of it all, sometimes in the middle of the night.

The bad news is that when all the bills arrive, it will likely cost Society between \$75,000 to \$100,000. This includes the replacement of the 30-inch drainage pipe in Condo 12 that will cost between \$40-50,000.

Fortunately, since 2018, the Board has added two-line items to the budget to cover the expense of storm related repairs and cleanup.

Pools

These weather-related issues have made for a very challenging pool season as well. The pools had to close for mechanical issues which were mostly pool heater issues. Pool 4 filled with mud which we drained, cleaned, and re-filled in 3 days. Wildfire smoke closed pools for one afternoon due to hazardous air quality conditions. A water main break which pools must be closed if bathrooms are inoperable.

Depending on when these closures occur and whether they are temporary, like for a thunderstorm or for a longer duration, there may be no ability to send out email notifications.

NYSEG/Veolia

- There are two types of notifications typically provided during a water main break. There are notifications mandated by the Dept. of Health, such as boil water advisories and notifications concerning progress in locating, repairing, and restoring water service. This last category is general information given that in many instances the location of a break, the exact timeframe for repairs as well as the schedule to slowly re-pressurize the system is uncertain or unknown. In either case your best course of action to stay informed and receive alerts directly from Veolia is to sign up directly with Veolia to receive notifications. The Activities office has sent out a PSA describing the steps to follow to receive these very important alerts. Society does not have a hotline directly to Veolia.
- We continue to work with NYSEG on their restoration efforts in several condo sections where recent work was either unacceptable or unsuccessful, or both.

Activities Parking

Now that we have marked out handicapped (HC) parking spaces on both sides of the island nearest the Activities and Fitness Center buildings and recreational facilities, we ask that only those residents with HC license plates or HC placards displayed park in these spots. Security personnel will be placing warnings on cars improperly parked in these spaces and will record those violations. Repeat infractions may lead to a ticket being issued by the local police.

Fitness Center/Town

Now that the operable window has been installed in the Fitness Center, we are ready to schedule a pre-construction conference to coordinate the installation of the recently arrived roof-mounted AC units. This will require a crane, building and electrical permits, and coordination to ensure that it can be completed in one day.

Paving/Drainage/Stormwater Basins

We have completed a camera inspection of drainage pipes under road sections intended for paving work this year and bid packages will go out shortly. We anticipate paving work to take place in September.

We are back doing some work in the stormwater basins, something that will routinely take place twice a year. After last fall's major effort to catch up on neglected maintenance, going forward, this work should consist primarily of weed whacking of vegetation that has grown back.

ERTC

Many of you have probably seen advertisements for the ERTC, or Employee Retention Tax Credit. This is a federal program related to the COVID-19 pandemic available to businesses, and Heritage Hills Society is a not-for-profit corporation, which is an eligible business.

There are basically two criteria under which a business can qualify:

- The business experienced a significant decline in gross receipts or revenue during the calendar year 2020 or the first three quarters of 2021. For Society, the revenue represents the collection of Society fees and there was no significant decline during that eligibility period.

or

- Business activities were shut down, reduced, or suspended because of the pandemic and the employer continued to pay qualified wages for all or part of the eligibility period. Society essentially closed all our facilities and amenities effective March 20, 2020, and did not begin to gradually re-open certain facilities until June of that year and our Fitness Center did not re-open until September of 2020. All Society employees were paid in full throughout that period.

Working with our payroll processing company, Paychex, we filled out and submitted the application in February of this year and Society just last week received two checks totaling \$100,842.54 from the U.S. Treasury Department.

Security

Dave Jacobsen is a colleague and good friend. Dave has been working for HH for 24 years since 1999. By the year 2000 he was named Director of Security, and it was his recommendation that we have both Security vehicles staffed with EMT's, which has been in practice since 2002. He has worked round the clock many times and has cared for the well-being of an innumerable number of HH residents. Dave will be leaving us at the end of July. Please join me in thanking him for his service and wish him the best in his next endeavor.

We are fortunate to have Rob Casasanta, who will assume Dave's role as Director of Security. Rob has been here since the early 1990's. He left for some time and returned part time in 2008. In 2017 he assumed the role of Lieutenant and has been a full-time assistant to Dave Jacobsen for the past six years. He is a volunteer fireman in Peekskill for 20 years and an EMT for 30 years. Please join me in welcoming Rob and offering your support.

Security – Dave Jacobsen, Prosecur Supervisor

I would like to thank the Board for their support as well as my staff and Rob for his leadership of 6 years, I know he will do a great job. Most of all, I would like to thank the HH community for allowing me to lead the most important job that I believe is the Director of Security and welcoming me into the HH family at just 26 years old.

- June stats: 62 security calls, 79 medical calls, 3 car accidents with no injuries, 68 service calls, 6 parking violations, 8 maintenance calls, 8 fire alarms for a total of 234 for the month, year to date 1,149. 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.

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 2:20 pm. Motion passed.
The next Board meeting is on September 20th at 1:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Deica Ruiz

Secretary, Heritage Hills Society, LTD