

Minutes of the Green Trails Improvement Association, Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, November 10, 2020

In compliance with Covid-19 pandemic guidelines, Peter Bakas called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. via teleconference. Board members participating: Peter Bakas, Joe Broda, Marg Hough, Les Lavin, Chris Lotysz, Mark Munoz, George O'Hare, Michael Olson, Pavel Snopok, Alden Snyder, Liz Sullivan, John Warrington and Beth Zigrossi. Board members excused: Pat Coughlin-Schillo and Bob Klaeren. Management: Laurie Barker. Paula Gleason was Recording Secretary. A quorum was available.

Open Forum – A Green Trails resident was in attendance to observe.

Minutes of the Prior Meeting

Minutes of the October meeting were presented for review.

Board Motion: Les Lavin motioned to approve the October meeting minutes, Alden Snyder seconded. Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Management Report

Financial reports for October 31, 2020 included: residential delinquent accounts, general ledger investment report, operating vs reserve balance sheet, budget comparison report, accounts payable cash disbursement, accounts payable vendor history report and residential receipts statement. The ACM maintenance inspector, Tyler will meet weekly with Les Lavin to inspect and review maintenance concerns; Laurie will start to spend time on-site with Tyler to better understand the maintenance needs. A September, October and November-to-date list of closings was included.

Treasurer's Report

Joe Broda reviewed the October Balance Sheet and Income and Expense Statement. Joe and ACM continue to meet weekly to resolve accounting processes and new management reporting. In the interim, Joe recommended that Charles Andrew input into Quickbooks the GTIA financial data for the last quarter of 2020 to assure a clear financial backdrop for the 2020 audit.

Board Motion: Alden Snyder motioned to approve hiring Charles Andrew to input GTIA financial data into Quickbooks for the last quarter of 2020, Liz Sullivan seconded. Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Board Motion: Liz Sullivan motioned to approve the check register expenditures presented of \$15,318.32 for November plus an additional \$572.41 for impending refund checks to be issued to two residents, for a total of \$15,890.73, Beth Zigrossi seconded. Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

President's Report on State of Green Trails 2020

Section 1 - Financial

The assessments collected for the year 2020 of \$393,408 represent a collection rate of 99% of the total assessments due of \$397,008, leaving an outstanding balance of uncollected assessments for the current year of \$3,600. However, in 2020 GTIA collected an additional approximate \$55,000 in the way of past due assessments, admin fees, assessment letter income, ComEd rebate, interest income and other assorted fees and reimbursements, bringing total yearly revenue to about \$448,000. The cumulative uncollected balance in the past due account which includes administrative late fees, collection fees, interest and lien filing costs is approximately \$32,000, which is a 28% decrease from last year. This significant decrease in the past due balance is due to the consistent and repetitive efforts to collect by our treasurer Joe Broda, which in the later phases of the process were enhanced by the utilization of legal counsel to support such efforts.

Once again, the 2020 annual assessment remained at \$180 and no increase is scheduled for 2021. The last annual assessment increase was in 2012, when the rate was adjusted \$10 from \$170 to the current rate of \$180. The GTIA Board of Directors' concerted effort to maintain a stable assessment rate in conjunction with enhanced services is attributable to competitive bidding, diligent project management with a particular emphasis by the GTIA Board on cost containment on both maintenance and administration.

2020 was an unusual year for the Association as most of the year was spent without a management company with those duties handled by the Board until the hiring of ACM Community Management effective September 1, 2020. Accordingly, management fee costs are down substantially from 2019. Further, it was not necessary in 2020 to do any trail replacement and overlay due to our paths lasting longer than anticipated so Board efforts in 2020 focused on path sealcoat and crack fill. The rest of the 2020 expenditures were in line with previous years which include the seasonal trail maintenance program, general common area upkeep, continuation of upgrades to the five (5) entry sign locations and the provision of seasonal plantings in the eight (8) primary accent areas.

Section 2 - Maintenance

As in previous years, the aging inventory of trees throughout Green Trails continues to be impacted by a number of natural pestilence diseases and environmental factors. Subsequently, the cost of tree removal, pruning, storm damage repair and tree replacement will continue to impact the maintenance budget in the foreseeable future. In 2020, we are expecting to close out the year having spent approximately \$50,000 for tree removal, trimming and brush clean up in the natural growth areas along the trail system.

The turf maintenance contract will enter its final year of a three-year contract in 2021. ACM and the Maintenance Committee will modify the contract scope and seek competitive bids for the same over the course of this coming year.

Our colorful signage and accent area landscaping has received many compliments from residents and passers-by alike, however costs for maintaining these areas have grown. The Board will consider alternative proposals to minimize costs while maintaining the aesthetic appeal of these areas by incorporating more perennial species which are less sensitive to climate variability.

Continuing mention needs to be made of the installation at the end of 2019/beginning of 2020 of the replacement of all 198 existing GTIA lights with LED fixtures. What a nice fresh look for Green Trails with significant energy savings and directionally appropriate to GTIA becoming more "green". Kudos again to the Maintenance Committee led by Les on this significant capital improvement to Green Trails.

Section 3 - Trail Paving

Green Trails owns approximately 14.66 miles of asphalt trails and 1.43 miles of concrete sidewalks throughout the subdivision. Trail maintenance costs for the paths are generally the Association's single highest expense item. The typical annual program for trail maintenance includes the following services: crack filling, sealcoating, asphalt paving-overlay, trip hazard repair and trail restoration. We continue to see unanticipated benefits from the trail upgrade/replacement program in prior years in the form of higher useful life expectancy and lower annual trail maintenance costs than had been initially projected. Approximately one-third of the trail system was seal coated and crack filled in 2020 with total costs coming in for about \$13,000, significantly lower than Budget which had anticipated also some trail replacement and overlay work. The 5-year plan for future trail work has been adjusted for 2021 to reflect the recent favorable experiences from prior years.

Section 4 – New Management

2020 was a super challenging environment for the Board as it grappled with finding a new management company while performing the services required for the Association members. Enough cannot be said for the efforts, time, and extraordinary work done by Les on all of the maintenance issues, by Joe on our finances and with Marg and others on her committee (John, Mark, Liz and George) on the transition to a new management company. These efforts kept the train running while we were finding a new conductor for a moving train. The Association could not be where it is today without those efforts and I cannot express enough appreciation on behalf of our residents for all involved for what turned out to be the most challenging year ever for the Association. The transition to ACM continues and as ACM gets up to speed, the plan is for the Board to go back to its traditional role of providing guidance and policy input. Again, thank you to all involved, your efforts have been incredible.

Section 5 – In Closing

The 2021 Budget anticipates spending of \$420,966 in comparison to \$471,913 in the 2020 Budget. Overall, the 2021 Budget builds on GTIA reserves by a net of approximately \$4,000. GTIA's reserves are sufficient to handle any unexpected expenditures and the Association is in excellent financial shape. 2020 was a good build on the Association's reserves due to the lower maintenance costs as described and the partial on management fees. The GTIA Board continues to invest in appropriate capital projects and to make prudent spending all with the goal of keeping Green Trails a premier residential community. I want to thank Chis Lotysz and Beth Zigrossi for their service to the Board and a special thanks to Marg Hough for her 23 years of service on the Board. Marg has led our transition to a new management company, has led our Communications Committee and has been a significant contributor and wise advisor. I have asked Marg to continue with the Transition Committee until we can get ACM up to speed. And last but not least, let me thank this entire Board for continuing to take care of our residents' business (and doing that well) in spite of the headwinds from the pandemic and from being without a manager. I am looking forward as are many others in this group to spending a lot less time on Association business in 2021 than we have in 2020. I know that the Board knows this but I also hope that the residents come to understand to some small extent how hard this Board works for the Association-- all of it to our collective benefit in living in such a beautiful community.

Transition Committee Report

Marg Hough reported that Joe Broda, Les Lavin and she met with Laurie Barker and Cyndi Sindowski on 11/5 to further identify to ACM the needs and open issues of GTIA. Laurie will request Tyler to obtain boxes of GTIA documents during his next property inspection.

ACM will prepare annual assessment bills, to be reviewed by Joe Broda prior to mailing, then mail them to property owners for delivery by 12/1/2020.

Laurie committed to send a weekly E-report to the Board. The E-report will include all open resident email from previous logs, Tyler's picture report and anything else sent directly to Laurie by Board members or residents. Descriptions, status and responsibilities for each item are expected to be clearly articulated.

The committee requested Laurie to submit an article for publication in the December Pathfinder to address recurring resident issues and to remind residents to correspond through the ACM email and phone number.

Phone/Email Report

The second weekly telephone log line item report was included in the Board packet. Laurie provided a copy of the ACM customer care site sheet she has revised and updated on how to respond to a variety of resident questions. Laurie explained the ACM customer care flow chart

detailing how calls are processed and agreed there is still a need to facilitate notes as to the disposition of each issue cited in the calls. Laurie will work with her assistant to update how customer care responses may be included on these reports going forward.

Finance Committee

Joe presented the proposed 2021 budget of \$420,966 and recommended approval of same.

Board Motion: Mark Munoz motioned to approve the proposed 2021 budget as presented, George O'Hare seconded. Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Collection update included nine attorney-demand notices sent; two paid-in-full payments received on two past due accounts and two payments on two smaller past due accounts. Consensus was to table any decision to continue legal action on the balance of identified past-due accounts until the next Board meeting.

Maintenance Committee

Balanced Environment will continue mowing through November, weather permitting. Fall cleaning of accent areas has been completed; tulip planting is scheduled to complete by the third week in November. BE has been asked to mulch as many of the common area leaf piles as possible. For Board consideration, BE also offered to perform winter clean-up of common areas.

Les provided a copy of an R&D proposal for identified November work including trimming, turf restoration projects, removal of several small trees and removing dead branches. Maintenance recommended approval

Board Motion: Joe Broda motioned to approve the R&D November proposal for work as submitted, in the amount of \$5,675, George O'Hare seconded. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Les provided a copy of an R&D proposal for a drainage remediation project within GTIA common area, but for which the homeowner will first need to make modifications within his property. Maintenance recommended approval

Board Motion: Joe Broda motioned to approve the R&D drain tile remediation proposal for work as submitted, contingent on the homeowner first making modifications within his property in the amount of \$1,062.12, Liz Sullivan seconded. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

T&M continues to work on approved removals but will hold off on some work until later in the season to minimize risk of property damage. T&M provided a proposal for removal of 8 dead trees. The proposal includes removal of trees spanning a residential property line and for which the resident has agreed to pay directly to T&M half of the removal costs. Maintenance recommended approval.

Board Motion: Joe Broda motioned to approve the T&M tree removal proposal for work as submitted, contingent on the homeowner's cost-sharing agreement, in the amount of \$2,522.50, Liz Sullivan seconded. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

The Village of Lisle returned much of the water meter deposit.

Light poles ordered through Volt Electric are scheduled for December delivery. Board members as always are encouraged to look for any issues with light poles while walking their areas.

Stored maps/documents were scanned to include into the GTIA Property Database and Stormwater Management files.

Les recently met with ACM maintenance inspector, Tyler to provide a partial tour of GTIA property and identify areas in need of maintenance. A significant part of the inspections involves reviewing concerns expressed by residents and Board members. While ACM is largely

