

## **Minutes of the Green Trails Improvement Association, Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, November 11, 2014**

Peter Bakas called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM at Kennedy Jr. High. Board members present: Peter Bakas, Lou Beccavin, Vern Goering, Marg Hough, Bob Klaeren, Les Lavin, Betty Long, Michael Olson, Roger Sassen, William Swiderski. Board members excused: Pat Coughlin-Schillo, Tony Dolinar, Linda Gilbert, Christy McGovern. Management: Julie Maschmeier. Paula Gleason was Recording Secretary. A quorum was present.

**Open Forum:** Two GTIA residents were in attendance to present an update on the proposed bike path running along College Avenue allowing for access to downtown Lisle and connecting on the other end to Naperville on Hobson Avenue. The proposed path called the Benedictine Connector would connect to Green Trails' paths for less than 1 mile. The residents requested Board approval to connect to the GT path system as indicated. The consensus of the Board was to further review maps and submit their decision in a timely manner.

### **Minutes of the Prior Meeting:**

Minutes of the October meeting were reviewed.

**Board Motion:** William Swiderski moved to approve the October minutes, Vern Goering seconded. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Michael Olson reviewed the October Balance Sheet and Income and Expense Statement.

**Board Motion:** Bob Klaeren motioned to accept the check register expenditures of \$102,514.65 for November, William Swiderski seconded. Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

## **President's Report on State of Green Trails**

In 2014, the annual assessment remained \$180; total to be collected \$397,008. To date, we have collected \$390,433, leaving us with an amount of \$6,575 uncollected for the current year. Adding in the uncollected balance from past years, which also include admin late fees and associated costs for filing liens, the total uncollected is \$27,862 which is up from last year by \$10,342.

As stated in last year's overview of 2013, Management will be offering a new online Annual Assessment payment option for resident's who would like to pay via a credit card or ACH. The service will be activated November 30, 2014 through BluePay. A convenience charge of \$5.00 will be assessed at the time of payment which covers the cost of the transaction. A link can be found on the recently updated Green Trails Website which was launched in October.

The year, 2014, like those in the past, presented some new challenges to the GTIA Board of Directors. The extremely harsh winter was a prelude to the record breaking rain accumulation experienced in the spring and summer months. As a result, several maintenance programs were delayed including the asphalt work of the Trail system due to unstable soil conditions.

The primary expenses for 2014 included the implementation of the signage replacement program of all five (5) entry locations throughout the Green Trails Subdivision. Concurrently, it provided the ideal time to refurbish all of the eight (8) accent areas by incorporating the new branding site elements consistent with those featured in the entry locations.

Unfortunately, the scourge of the Emerald Ash Bore disease continued to decimate the population of Ash trees throughout Green Trails and surrounding communities. To date, approximately 45 plus Ash trees have been earmarked for removal.

The Board decided early in the year to solicit competitive bids concerning all contract services which include the following: Turf maintenance, Fertilization and Landscaping. The result, as reflected in the 2015 Budget is a 28% savings or approximately \$35,514.00 net gain to the Turf maintenance/Weed control line items. However, the savings from this program is not a reduction in services. The evidence to date suggests that services may have been enhanced by reducing the number of service providers and effectively taking advantage of economies of scale.

Green Trails owns approximately 77,411 ft. (or 14.66 miles) of asphalt trails and 7,596 ft. (or 1.43 miles) of concrete sidewalks. In 2014, we expended \$84,974 for crackfill, sealcoating, overlay, trip hazard repair and trail restoration. Moving forward, we will continue our concerted efforts to preserve and, ultimately, extend the life of the trail system.

Moving into 2015, additional funding will be allocated to the continued removal of Ash trees and a selective (definitive) program to replace the diseased foliage with a diversity of species. The Board is also reviewing the possibility of replacing the Gazebo located in Woodglenn Village. Considering the age and increasing cost to maintain, the Board will reach out to the residents for their input on designs or a possible reinvention of the area. The trail lighting system will also be under review. The advances in technology coupled with the derived savings from various LED alternative systems warrants the continual research for future lighting options.

The Green Trails Subdivision features approximately 42 islands throughout the community streets which are owned by the Village of Lisle. Due to budget constraints, the Village of Lisle has not been in a position to allocate funding for the upkeep of these islands other than lawn cutting. As an Association, the Board is committed to enhancing the aesthetics of the neighborhood which can often lead to higher property values in the long term. With this thought in mind, the Board is reviewing the feasibility of taking an active role in removing the old growth and, in turn, creating a more manageable (manicured) green space for adjoining residents. A plan of action will be determined as the dialogue with the Village of Lisle evolves.

The 2015 Budget anticipates spending of \$440,694 in comparison to \$490,836 in the 2014 Budget (the Reforecast of 2014 is \$493,384 so in line with the 2014 Budget). The key differences between the Budgets are the reduced costs for turf maintenance/fertilization/landscaping mentioned earlier and the costs for the new signs which were only in 2014, offset in part by increased costs for plant material for the accent areas and new signs and increased amounts budgeted for tree planting, removal and trimming. Overall, the 2015 budget draws down on GTIA reserves by approximately \$45,000.

In closing, the GTIA Board continued to be prudent in its spending and the new signs and planting beds for all of the accent areas once complete will present a new fresh look for Green Trails. The new website will add to this appearance and the additional tree planting and trimming scheduled for 2015 will improve both the feel and utility of the paths. Both the Board and Management worked for the betterment of Green Trails and expect 2015 to be an even more successful year. Thanks to all of the Board members for the different talents that each brings to the table but all with the unity of purpose to be prudent with the residents' money while improving Green Trails as a great community to call home.

### **Election Results**

Marg Hough reported the following election results:

Area C – Marg Hough	Area K – No Candidate
Area D – Tony Dolinar	Area M – No Candidate
Area H – Pat Coughlin-Schillo	Area O – No Candidate

On behalf of the Board, Peter Bakas extended congratulations to the newly elected Board members.

### **Management Report**

Telephone log line items were reviewed.

Management sent out nine assessment and four refinance letters in October.

Management will send out six welcome packages for sales completed in October.

Assessment income received in October was \$330; assessment income from prior years was \$1,125.

There have been 43 ballots received to date after election ballots were mailed on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

Management created a new concept of taking and submitting to Board members, photographs of areas in need of major brush clean up in 2015. Management requests that Board members walk these areas and submit their recommendations to prioritize clean-up. In the interim, cost estimates will be secured for each area's proposed clean-up. Additional photographs of Green Trails' islands were distributed for Board member's use in discussion with VOL management and/or trustees.

Pictures were shared with the Board of damage by Illini Suburban Asphalt while paving in wet ground areas. Their final invoice increased from a \$4,740 proposal to actual cost of \$6,873, as a result of unforeseen difficulties encountered and addressed.

Sign installation is scheduled to begin November 14.

Management has been requested to develop additional policies starting with a "Violations and Fine Policy". The Board requested William Swiderski and Peter Bakas work with Management to draft an initial policy which the Board will review and submit to the Association attorney for his opinion.

In response to a Communications Committee request, Management supplied an informational article that provided an overview of the purpose and contents of the typical association's governing documents.

Management requested approval to purchase eleven red/green holiday spotlights for all sign locations; the consensus of the Board was in the affirmative.

As instructed by the Board, Management sent a second letter to the GTIA owner of a “community library” requesting the structure be removed from the common area. The resident has yet to comply.

The GTIA Attorney has requested a GTIA property owner remove a compost bin from the common area, as well as remove nuisance signage from the property.

Management requested approval to submit a letter of engagement to Robert Ripp & Associates for 2014 tax preparation; the consensus of the Board was in the affirmative.

Management requested approval to amend the format of the 2015 Income Statement with some minor changes; the consensus of the Board was in the affirmative.

Management suggested a review of current GTIA insurance for evaluation of coverage and costs; the consensus of the Board was in the affirmative.

Management provided a list of October newcomers. Board Directors are encouraged to call on newcomers in their respective areas.

**Finance Committee** – Michael Olson reported there were no changes to the proposed 2015 budget as presented in the Pathfinder.

**Board Motion:** Michael Olson motioned to approve the proposed GTIA 2015 budget as presented, Roger Sassen seconded. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

**Maintenance Committee** – Les Lavin presented the Maintenance Committee year-end report. 2014 has been one of our highest activity years for new maintenance initiatives which include changes with regard to main contractors, replacement of signage, accent area redesign and preparations, removal of infested ash trees, and revision of the trail maintenance program schedule as well as normal ongoing activities. Management is to be complimented for their execution of these initiatives. Peter has addressed these items in his report so there is little need to address them again.

Looking forward to 2015 we will need to complete the signage and non-signage accent area renovations, closely monitor the performance of new contractors to ensure that they meet the quality, timeliness and economic expectations of the Board, consider a prudent long term course of action with regard to tree replacements due to the EAB infestation as well as the life-cycle aging of our tree inventory (including restocking of the nursery area with tree species that will best be able to meet anticipated changing environmental conditions), and consider alternatives for dealing with deterioration of the Gazebo.

Close cooperation between the Board and Management will be critical to continued success in these matters. Board members are encouraged to make frequent surveys of their areas and to assist Management with identification of items of concern.

**Communication Committee** – Marg Hough noted that the Green Trails website has been updated and is online for all to review; however, the committee will continue to review and monitor GTIA governing documents on the site. Pathfinder ads may now be submitted on line.

**Parks Committee** – In Pat Coughlin-Schillo’s absence and at her request, Marg Hough distributed a sign-up sheet for board member assignments to attend 2015 Park District Board meetings. Pat Coughlin will give a synopsis of the October Park District Board meeting next month. Christy McGovern will attend the November Park District Board meeting.

**Nominating Committee** –Peter Bakas noted that the unsuccessful candidate for Area D will be asked to fill a one-year appointment to Area K. Linda Gilbert and Michael Olson will be asked to confirm their one-year appointments to Area M and Area O respectively.

**Old Business/New Business** – Management suggested Board members complete area evaluations, similar to the parks evaluations.

**Board Member Area Reports** – None

#### **Executive Session**

**Board Motion:** Marg Hough motioned to adjourn to Executive Session, Michael Olson seconded. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote at 9:27 p.m.

**Board Motion:** Michael Olson motioned to adjourn from Executive Session, Marg Hough seconded. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote at 9:37 p.m.

#### **Adjournment**

**Board Motion:** .There being no further business, Michael Olson motioned to adjourn the meeting, Bob Klaeren seconded. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote; the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Paula Gleason, Recording Secretary, Signature on File