

# **Minutes of the Green Trails Improvement Association, Pending Board Approval Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, November 14, 2017**

Peter Bakas called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm at Trinity Grounds for Hope. Board members present: Peter Bakas, Pat Coughlin-Schillo, Marg Hough, Les Lavin, Tom Maslanka, Michael Monroe, Mark Munoz, Michael Olson, Susan Quasney, Alden Snyder, Bill Swiderski and John Warrington. Members excused: Tony Dolinar, Bob Klaeren and Residents Chris Lotysz, Management: Tom Maschmeier. Paula Gleason was Recording Secretary. A quorum was present.

**Open Forum** – Interested residents Marie Hesse and Bonnie Carista were in attendance.

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

Minutes of the October meeting were reviewed.

**Board Motion:** Alden Snyder moved to approve the October minutes, Michael Monroe seconded. Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

## **Treasurer's Report**

William Swiderski reviewed the October Balance Sheet and Income and Expense Statement.

**Board Motion:** Michael Monroe motioned to accept the check register expenditures of \$44,995.77 for November, Marg Hough seconded. Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

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

The assessments collected for the year 2017 of \$390,798 represent a collection rate of 98% of the total assessments due of \$397,008. The outstanding balance of uncollected funds for the current year is \$6,210. Combining the uncollected balance from past years delinquent accounts which includes administrative late fees, collection fees and lien filing costs, the total amount uncollected is \$40,865 which is an 11% increase from last year.

Once again, the 2017 annual assessment remained at \$180 and no increase is scheduled for 2018. 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 a number of factors including the bundling of services, favorable vendor contract terms as a result of competitive bidding and improved project management.

As part of the annual billing assessment, Management, per the Boards direction, will continue to offer an online payment option for residents who prefer to pay via a credit card or ACH. The service will be activated on December 1, 2017 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 Green Trails website.

The primary expenditures for 2017 are in line with previous years which include the seasonal trail maintenance program, general common area upkeep and a continuation of the upgrades to the five (5) entry sign locations and eight (8) primary accent areas throughout the Green Trails Subdivision with seasonal plantings. In addition, the former Green Trails Gazebo, located on the north side of College Road Park was replaced in the spring with a new ground level structure using stone pavers and featuring two seat walls for residents to rest while walking by or to just sit and take in the view. The demolition, new construction, landscaping and lighting upgrades were completed within budget. Undoubtedly, the patio provides a fresh and inviting new look to the

community.

The existing stock of maturing trees throughout Green Trails will continue to be impacted by the Emerald Ash Bore disease, Zimmerman Pine Moth, Diplodia and other natural pestilence. As a result, the cost of tree removal, pruning, storm damage repair and tree replacement will continue to impact the maintenance budget in the foreseeable future. In 2017, approximately 60 trees will be removed from the common area in Green Trails. An additional 15 trees were removed due to storm damage. In order to maximize dollars spent, we continue to stage the tree removal program off season and batch the trees by quadrants resulting in significant savings. In 2017, we are expecting to close out the year having spent about \$80,000 for tree removal and trimming. Additional funding has been allocated to this budgetary item for the continued removal of the few remaining ash trees and the larger inventory of Scotch and Austrian pines and other maturing species as we move forward into 2018. A total of eight deciduous trees were transplanted during the spring and four conifers in the fall, all to designated common areas throughout the Green Trails subdivision. The Maintenance Committee restocked the Pine Grove nursery with ten swamp Oaks and two Concolor firs for future transplant allocations. And as part of the fall maintenance program, over 105 separate areas were identified for general brush clearing, tree trimming and the removal of debris.

Green Trails owns approximately 14.66 miles of asphalt trails and 1.43 miles of concrete sidewalks and trail maintenance cost is the Association's single item expense. Per the Board's direction, Management went to the market and rebid the trail maintenance program for 2017. As a result, GTIA achieved a substantial savings of more than 40% versus the original budget for trail maintenance which includes the services of crack fill, sealcoating, overlay, trip hazard repair and trail restoration. Approximately one-third of the trail system was seal coated and crack filled in 2017 which greatly enhances the life of our trails.

Administratively, several new programs were introduced during the course of 2017. This summer the GTIA Board of Directors decided to permanently move the monthly Board meetings from Kennedy Junior High to Trinity Lutheran Church located on the southwest corner of Maple Avenue and Benedictine Parkway, as a better venue for meeting accommodations. In October, the Board approved a Social Media Policy to establish policies and procedures regarding the use of social media by the GTIA Board of Directors and GTIA Management. In essence, the GTIA social media accounts will primarily be used to share relevant news and information with Green Trails residents and to promote increased community engagement. Management in conjunction with the GTIA Board of Directors will continue its due diligence efforts by evaluating alternative lighting systems for the trail system. As an allocation, \$22,000 has been budgeted in 2018 to install prototypes of LED light fixture options in selected trail sections for hands-on inspection and analysis. Consideration will be given to alternative replacement products and strategies similarly aligned with cost effective and environmentally friendly technologies.

The 2018 Budget anticipates spending of \$433,610 in comparison to the \$449,981 (reforecast) of the 2017 Budget. The primary components differentiating the Budgets are the continual increased costs for tree maintenance, and the allocated funds for improvements to the GTIA Trail lighting program. Overall, the 2018 budget draws down on GTIA reserves by approximately \$30,000. In closing, the Board and Management had another good year of managing costs to below what was budgeted while delivering all planned services. The Association continues to be on solid financial footing and is well poised to continue with upgrades to GTIA property. The renovation of the Gazebo area will enhance the aesthetics while lowering future maintenance costs; and, the continuation of the path lights evaluation with an eye to starting a replacement program in 2018 will substantially improve the "look" of Green Trails. The Board continues to work well together to advance the interests of GTIA residents in the common areas. Management and the vendors continue to up their game so 2017 was a good year and looking forward to a better 2018. Lastly, we want to thank outgoing Board member Tony Dolinar for his many years of dedicated service to Green Trails.

## **Election Results**

Marg Hough reported the following election results:

Area C – Marg Hough  
Area D – No Candidate  
Area H - Pat Coughlin

Area K – John Warrington  
Area O – No Candidate  
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 included in the Board packet.

Balanced Environment completed the fall tree removal of approximately 60 trees of varying species. Also, Balanced Environment completed the brush clearing and tree trimming of targeted areas per the fall maintenance campaign. Stump grinding and seed blanket restoration have begun and should be completed by mid-November. There may be one more grass cutting after Thanksgiving.

Volt electric repaired four trail lights; one of which required a complete replacement. The Metal Halide fixtures are very difficult to find and subsequently, very expensive. Volt used a LED fixture, matching shoe box style which is less expensive (\$228) and more cost-effective than the bulb/ballast/photo eye currently in place (\$600). Light pole #072 Breckenridge Road on the west side of College Road features the LED fixture; the second light before Sun Valley.

Management reported a foreclosure sale on acct #WV1075. GTIA has filed two liens against the property for delinquent amount of approximately \$800. Sheriff sale pushed back to November 27<sup>th</sup>.

Management reported a foreclosure sale on acct #HF1037. GTIA has filed two liens against the property for delinquent amount of approximately \$1,300. Sold at public auction to Deutsche Bank, which will pay one year delinquent annual assessment and \$925 penalty; the foreclosure should extinguish the liens.

Management maintained a tally of all votes received and the elected candidates will be announced at the November 14<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

Management completed thirteen paid assessment letters in October.

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

Management released seven liens, paid in full.

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

**Finance Committee** – Bill Swiderski requested approval of the proposed 2018 budget as presented.

**Board Motion:** Michael Monroe motioned to approve the GTIA 2018 budget as presented, Mark Munoz seconded. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

**Maintenance Committee** - Les Lavin noted no further report.

**Communication Committee** – Marg Hough noted the draft social media policy was given to all Board members for review and comment.

**Parks Committee** – In Pat Coughlin-Schillo's absence, Management noted that five new benches have been installed at Sun Valley, Timberlake and Tangleood Parks. Michael Olson provided a synopsis of the October Park District Board meeting. Bill Swiderski will attend the November Park District Board meeting.

**Old Business/New Business** – Bill Swiderski requested approval of the social media proposed policy as submitted and amended and to designate him as the Social Media Administrator.

**Board Motion:** Bob Klaeren motioned to approve the Social Media Policy as amended, subject to final approval of wording by the Board President, Peter Bakas, Michael Olson seconded. The motion was passed by a majority voice vote of ten affirmative, one negative.

**Board Member Area Reports** – None

### **Adjournment**

**Board Motion:** There being no further business, Michael Olson motioned to adjourn the meeting, Pat Coughlin seconded. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote; the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Paula Gleason, Recording Secretary