

MINUTES of the REGULAR MEETING  
of the  
WALNUT GROVE HOMES ASSOCIATION

January 9, 2019  
6:30 p.m.

Stark Company Realtors  
702 N. High Point Road  
Madison, WI 53717

Present: John Pinto (President), Katherine Bidwell (Vice President), Elizabeth Albano (Secretary), Diane Littman (Social), Susan Ames (ACC Chair), Liz Fenster (Block Captains), Birgitta Larson Gamez (Treasurer), and Dave Phillips (Greenways).

Excused: Amelia Tastad (Communications)

Convening of Meeting J. Pinto opened meeting at 6:31pm, distributed an Agenda and requested approval of the draft Minutes of the last regular Board meeting previously e-mailed to the Board by E. Albano.

Secretary's Report/Quorum/Approval of Minutes J. Pinto recognized a quorum. J. Pinto moved approval of December 12, 2018 board meeting minutes as presented. L. Fenster moved not to approve based on answer to the following question. L. Fenster asked for clarification about decision on D. Phillips proposal last meeting. E. Albano clarified where noted in meeting minutes that it was not approved unanimously by the Board. L. Fenster motioned to approve meeting minutes. K. Bidwell seconded motion to approve the meeting minutes. Minutes approved unanimously by all members present.

## REPORTS

Treasurer's Report B. Larson Gamez reported met with Summit Credit Union and received all paperwork needed to transfer funds from BMO Harris. First 150 transactions per year are free. Any transaction above 150 is 25 cents. Discussed pacing yearly Walnut Grove Home Owners Association dues. Also discussed ability to get a Visa credit card or debit card.

B. Larson Gamez motioned to transfer funds from BMO Harris to Summit Credit Union. D. Phillips seconded motion. No further discussion. Motion approved unanimously by all members present.

B. Larson Gamez reported a check was cut for the parks foundation for an additional swing bay in new playground area of Walnut Grove Park from the surplus in the Park Fund. About \$800 remains in the Park Fund, a fund that the Walnut Grove Home Owners Association contributed to 30 years ago. The playground will have two structures- one for younger children and one for older children. The park playground area will be out of commission starting Spring 2019 for 6 to 9 weeks while the new playground is being constructed. Wood chips will be used.

New budget proposes increasing dues by \$10 from \$70 to \$80. L. Fenster stated she will check bylaws to see if there is a cap for dues at \$75. B. Larson Gamez reported the increase to \$80 will produce \$24,160 incoming revenue. Currently Walnut Grove account has about \$28,000 now. In 2019 will be using saved funds to partially pave the walkways in Walnut Grove. Proposal to raise the annual dues will help pay for the rest of the walkway pavings in the future.

B. Larson Gamez questioned in 2017 budget stating spent almost \$13,000 on the greenways. Currently have spent \$9,174 for 2018. Noted \$4,000 difference from 2017 to 2018. D. Phillips reported have not prepaid costs for lawn service for 2019 because switching vendors. Typically prepay for the following year.

Total cost for preparing C and D walkways for paving is \$5800 (Arbor Systems) for 2019 budget. In 2018 water and sewer cost increased for environmental fee, went up about \$1000. Electrical went up \$500 in 2018 compared to 2017. Operating costs for 2018 are under what was budgeted. \$11,500 in 2016, \$13,000 in 2017, and \$9,000 in 2018.

K. Bidwell questioned which walkways will be repaved first. D. Phillips reported picked walkways C and part of walkway D as they need the most work. Walkway A is the worst of them all, but it is flat and easily repaved. Walkways C and D have elevation.

K. Bidwell proposed writing a plan how we will repave all of the walkways over the next 2-4 years. Will present plan at the annual meeting to clarify why we are raising the dues. Greenways will be the HOA largest expense. We have 15,000 budgeted for Greenway maintenance in 2019.

B. Larson Gamez reported account will be starting with \$28,000 and \$24,000 would be incoming from dues. Over course of year all money gets taken out for bills and Greenway costs. Greenways is largest expense. 15,000 budgeted for Greenway maintenance in 2019. Water and electricity bills will likely go up as well. Reported concern over next few years with balance of the funds given the added expenses. Balance can dip as low as \$7,000.

D. Phillips reported for the walkway paving, have to pay 50% of bill up front to Bartlett before paving starts (\$7500). Within 10 days of completion need to pay the final \$7500.

B. Larson Gamez reported budget is dependent on everyone paying dues. Could be short around \$1300 based on history of payments. Spent \$897 for social committee. Newsletters only \$92 for cost of newsletters.

K. Bidwell reported greenways are what differentiate Walnut Grove from other neighborhoods. They are unique to Walnut Grove.

D. Phillips reported at one point all of the walkways will need to be replaced. They cannot continually be resealed. They need to be resealed to preserve them or they will fall apart. The paving will last at least 5 years, but thinks we are going to have a problem in the future. Suggested since everyone uses the sidewalks and the pathways, why not put the costs together and share the cost. It will be \$150,000 to replace the pathways in the future. There is an option

to turnover ownership of the pathways to the city, but then owners would still be taxed on them. This has not been discussed with the city yet as a possibility. Walnut Grove Home Owners Association would keep ownership of the greenways.

L. Fenster noted one option is to turn everything over to the city so the HOA is not responsible for the liability, maintenance, and insurance of the areas.

B. Larson Gamez started reason why Walnut Grove has the greenways is because Walnut Grove Square Park wasn't big enough for the community so greenway space was added. She also reported we are in need of a new server to track dues. We were using one the previous Treasurer developed, but he discontinued using it. D. Littman reported her husband offered to help build one.

S. Ames proposed in 2019 one of the members of the Board talks to the city to see if there is interest in taking over the pathways.

B. Larson Gamez motioned to recommend an increase in dues to \$80. D. Littman seconds the motion. Approved unanimously.

President's Report: J. Pinto reported this will be his final full meeting on the Walnut Grove Home Owners Association Board. New officers will be elected during the February meeting. At the annual meeting he will nominate Caleb Van Horn, Hayden McCann, and Rita Black-Radloff who sent written confirmation they would like to be on the Board. Kathy McComb is not interested in jumping back on the Board, but will support it.

D. Phillips suggested Pam Conrad.

Greenways report D. Phillips confirmed have to pay Bartlett 50% of the bill before they start paving the walkways. Suggested get the bill early and take care of it right away.

ACC Report S. Ames reported Eric Kaplan at 7202 Farmington Way wanted to build a fence and it was approved. ACC will not continue to approve fences. This fence was coming off an existing fence. Covenants states fences should be no higher than 4 feet.

Block Captains/Communications Report L. Fenster noted bylaws state nominations can be approved either by written intent or at the annual meeting. Also bylaws from 2012 state annual dues can only go up to \$75.

B. Larson Gamez confirmed she will do a budget based on \$75 annual dues and \$80 annual dues. Will check with Jim Howard the process of raising the cap of annual dues.

Annual meeting notice went out. Annual due notices are sent in February.

Social Committee Report: D. Littman had nothing to report.

**Old Business:**

>No new business to report.

**New Business:**

> B. Larson Gamez reported received a quote for insurance. Will be \$1200 with D&O insurance which is \$300 more than it was last year without D&O Insurance. Will vote on it with the new board.

ADJOURNMENT J. Pinto noted that the next regular board meeting will be Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 6:30pm.

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.

Submitted by E. Albano