Carderock Springs Citizens Association

Minutes from Board Meeting on November 14, 2022,

Held via Zoom.

Board Members present: Jack Orrick, Ashkan A. Malayeri, Maja Husar, Ashish Goel, Katalin Roth, Susan Eastman, Meaghan Sullivan Curry.

Board Members absent: none

Community members present: Katherine Stifel, Kimberly Young, Gary Ratner, Nancy Everett

Jack Orrick called the meeting to order around 7:30 pm.

Agenda:

1. Approval of October Board meeting minutes
2. Treasurer's report
3. Tree Preservation Guidelines – Discuss Survey results – see Google Drive for the comments: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1u1uaWyd8AtOYc_uJqbZxw8Y7liZ-9o5xiBbTNkQUbjc/edit?usp=sharing
4. Budget for 2023 – Changes needed from 2022
5. Old Business – Village, Beltway widening; Knob sign rehab
6. New Business
7. Next Meeting - January 16 – no newsletter planned until late January

Item 1: Approval of October Minutes

No comments on minutes. Deemed approved.

Item 2: Treasurer's Report

Comments on expenses: Insurance paid and newsletter printed in October. $3,250 was spent for the welcome dinner, below $3,500 that was budgeted. There were no big expenses in Nov and Dec other than the landscaping bill. After all the expenses, $7,000 can be put aside, pretty in line with previous years. Ashish will look at options for investing the $7,000 - checking with Edward Jones for CDs and their rates - Ashish will send over rates for comparison. At the beginning of December one of the CDs rolls over. The board did not spend as much on the Beltway-Widening project as anticipated. Also revenue was higher than planned. As a result, the board is putting aside 40% more than planned for. This calls for revisiting the next year's budget.

Item 3: Tree Preservation Guidelines – Discuss Survey results

There were 55 responses to the survey.

- 31 in favor of the guidelines
- 7 supported in part
- 16 opposed

Gary Ratner analyzed open-ended comments. He was impressed with the thoughtfulness of responses, clearly people reviewed guidelines. There was a mix of positive and negative comments, as well as some suggestions and concerns. 6-8 comments were regarding the size of the trees – that was the most common comment. The main objection was the proposed shortening of diameter by 6 inches from 12 inches. Many made comments that that was too much of a change. 12-inch diameter is an old tree – if younger trees are allowed to be cut we will not preserve the canopy. 6 inches was ambitious but committee agrees to compromise to 9 inches (a tree that is 20-25 yo or so, approx. 40 ft tall.)

Discussion about the process of appealing a decision by the Tree Committee followed. Anyone could have the right to appeal to the committee's decision, via a special meeting. Jack suggested that the board could review the appeal and make a decision and then negotiate with residents. It is very unlikely that there would be a restraining order against an owner. If the tree is removed it needs to be replaced with two hardwood trees in case they violate rules and don't ask for approval. Typically the ask is 1:1 replacement in a preferred location. Making it the same process as with ARC makes sense. Jack suggested drafting an opening statement reflecting a good will vs sounding quite strict - conveying the sense that the board and the Tree Committee want to work together with residents to preserve the canopy.

There is a need to educate the new residents. It could be accomplished across a number of touchpoints: a welcome packet, information shared by block captains, education of real estate agents (to ensure notification of prospective buyers), and the newsletter. The bylaws need to be presented to new homeowners. There was a comment that syncing with ARC on home renovations that impact trees may be a part of the solution.

Maja proposed an annual marketing budget to support techniques mentioned in the guidelines. $500 a year for arborists is already assigned, whatever is not spent could be used for education, yard signs, etc. Karen and Maja to work together on the education initiative.

The guidelines can be implemented in January 2023. Amendment to the bylaws – adding the appeal right -- would have to be voted by citizens during the April meeting (should be non-controversial). Proxies will be distributed prior to the meeting for those who want to vote.

Item 4: Budget for 2023 – Changes needed from 2022

Ashish took the board through the proposed 2023 budget. Dues will be kept the same, all agreed there is no need to increase them. If more budget is needed for events, event attendees will be charged more. Newsletter is planned for 8-9 issues for 2023.

Proposed changes to the annual budget:
Increased miscellaneous cost to cover cost of event signs.
Discretionary expenses:

- Tree Committee - $500 arborist + marketing
- Contests - $250
- Beltway Widening support budget ended up being $250 – hard to predict what it may be in 2023, will keep $500 for now

Note that the Intergenerational Village Committee/Cuppa Carderock has been asked to present a budget for their work in 2023 which is not yet included in the draft budget.

According to the CSCA Board Guidelines, 30% of the annual dues should be put towards contingency (possible lawsuits.) Final approval of the 2023 budget will take place in the January meeting. Ashish will send It out for review and some extra info should come within a month.

Item 5: Old Business

- The Intergenerational Village project is well underway - CUPPA attracts 30-50 people on avergae
- Beltway widening - on hold for now
- Knob sign rehab - Neighborhood sign projects (for the smaller signs knobs) - $300 for now, will revisit with Sue

Item 6: New Business

No new business was raised during the meeting.

Item 7: Next Meeting - Discuss next meeting date – October 17; Newsletter deadline

The next Board Meeting will take place on January 16 at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashkan A. Malayeri and Maja Husar, Secretaries