

The Woods Garden Club Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by President Donna Dozier at 6:01 p.m. The board members in attendance were Richard Patteson, Ken Wheeler, Jr. and Ron Stutes. Also present was our Certified Property Manager, Dawn Smith, with East Texas Community Management. Eli Crow and Russell Williams were absent. There were no visitors present.

II. Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes for October 19, 2022, were approved by email.

III. Attorney presentation

The attorney presentation was tabled to our next meeting.

IV. Property Management Report

Dawn began her property management report by telling the board that work on the pool gate post is yet to be done. Welding will be required, and our handyman will need to drive his truck onto the area as close as he can get to the gate, since his welding equipment is located on his truck. He plans to do that as soon as it is dry enough to not get stuck on our greenbelt (again).

The pool was closed for the season on October 31st, and a secondary lock has been attached to the gate for the duration of time the pool is closed.

The board heard that seven residents owe dues for 2022. Only one resident owes for 2021 and 2022. Our lawyer is handling this

situation. One resident owes multiple years, and fines. A lien and foreclosure process has begun for this resident, who has retained an attorney.

One resident, who had owed multiple fines and dues, has now paid the entire amount. Yet another resident, who had received demand letters, paid half of their owed dues and fines, with plans to pay the remaining half next month.

There are several notable violations, including parking in the street, unkempt yards, an ongoing problem of a resident who does not park his three vehicles in his three-car garage, as well as not shielding his numerous trash bins, etc., and unapproved lighting at a house near one of our entrances. Donna reported that she gets regular complaints about these ongoing violations. Dawn said a certified letter has been sent to one of the residents who continues to violate the covenants.

We had all entrances and the pool house evaluated for electrical issues. In order to get one of the bids accepted before the Christmas lights were due to go on, the board had to vote by email to choose a bid. The board made their decision, and the work is to begin November 21st. At this point, all the Christmas lights are installed. Our installer noted that when the lights were tested, they were tripping the GFCI switch, which further underscored the need for the upgraded electrical system. The lights will be turned on Wednesday the 23rd of November. All sprinklers are off.

V. Financial Report

Things look about as expected. We have gone over our projected budget for water bills and for tree costs, but our overall spending is below budget. Our operating account has a total of \$29,063.52. Our Savings account has \$103,691.87 for a total of \$132,691.87.

VI. Old Business

Donna reported that the extensive, costly work on the drainage problem on Woods Blvd will begin on December the 6th. She asked Dawn if she had been able to contact the resident who lives next to this area about fixing his portion of the problem. She has not. She will try to contact him.

Ron worked on defining where the areas that have the most exorbitant water bills are located. He studied the usage of each meter that covered the course of a 14-month period. He found one that had usage of 171,000 gallons in the last month. The board discussed possible reasons for this, and Dawn is going to check on this particular meter with the City of Tyler. Ron also noted that there are two meters that are showing no usage. This is also going to be checked.

As was already discussed, the electrician is set to start work on November 21st.

The board discussed the budget again, trying to determine if there are any places we can cut expenses, since almost every category has increased in costs. The board discussed that every single HOA they know of (all the ones Dawn represents, as well as others) have raised their dues. The board discussed disallowing the 10% discount as the first option to have enough money to pay for all the ordinary bills that have increased for us. Donna mentioned that she could let people know, in their annual dues letters, that they could choose to pay the full \$300, and not take a discount, if they were able to do that. Because we offer this discount, we forfeit about \$12,000 per year to this option, but we receive a great deal of the total dues early in the year.

The board is well aware of their duty to maintain property values and keep our same level of services throughout our large neighborhood. At the same time, we are all aware that an increase in dues for people already facing increases in every other facet of life might be a difficult burden.

But our costs have also increased. The board discussed the reasonableness of raising dues, since the dues have never been increased for over 30 years. The board decided to try to go another year without raising the dues but are also in agreement that it may be required to happen next year, or in the near future.

Ken is going to talk to TruGreen about their costs, as well. Donna asked him if he might inquire about a “loyalty discount.”

The board further discussed the budget, adjusting some figures down in light of low costs this year. The budget will be finalized at our December meeting.

VII. New Business

Donna reported that the room formerly known as “Galilee Room” has been booked (and paid) for our Annual Meeting in January, for the 24th at 7:00PM. Our same sound technician will help us, and the board is relieved that the room rental is secured.

Donna reported that Grinchmas, sponsored by Crutcher and Hartley, will be December 8th, tentatively set for 6:00 to 7:00, but it may change to 6:30. Crutcher and Hartley are providing refreshments, in the form of cookies and hot chocolate. They plan to begin decorating the area on November 23rd, which should be just in time for our electrical work at the pool to be finished.

Donna said that the popular Holiday Lighting Contest was scheduled once again, with people being asked to let us know of their intent to participate by December the 10th. We will have at least two non-residents as judges, so they won't know anyone who is in competition. (The prize will be a \$50 gift card once again.)

VII. Miscellaneous Non-Action Items

Donna made note that our next meeting will have a quick turnaround because of the traveling board members' schedules for December. The next meeting is December the 7th. There will be the final vote on the budget at that meeting.

VIII. Visitor Comments

No visitors were present.

IX. Adjournment

Ken made the motion that we adjourn. Richard seconded the motion. We were adjourned at 7:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald D. Stutes