

Olney Oaks Homeowners Association Board Minutes – October 6, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Dennis Bourque.

Present: Don Beeson, Dennis Bourque, Jay Feinberg, Dick Harris, Carolyn Knight, Marc Meltzer, Theresa Kyne Robinson

President's Report – Dennis Bourque

Dennis said the pool of a resident on Shallowbrook Lane was flooded during the last rain storm because the pipes going under Queen Elizabeth were clogged with debris and the 11 inches of rain one day and more the next. The debris was collected and removed, but sediment at the outlet end of the pipes still needs to be removed.

Treasurer's Report – Jay Feinberg

Mr. Feinberg reports the association is in sound financial shape; since we have not begun any large projects we have started to replenish our capital replacement fund. Chevy Chase Bank is now Capital One Bank, and when the bank converted the two money market funds (general short term reserve and town house reserve), it changed them from a \$2,500 minimum fund to a \$25,000 minimum fund and charged the association \$15.00 for each fund because neither met the new minimum level. Because we had not been contacted about the minimum level change, Mr. Feinberg spoke with the bank representatives and had the fees removed. The bank then transferred the reserve fund to a similar account with a \$5,000 minimum and the townhouse fund to an account with no minimum but a lower interest rate.

On 09/27/10 Mr. Feinberg moved \$945.00 from the checking account into the townhouse fund and on 07/03/10 he received the official letter from accountant Frank Giordano regarding the annual books review completed in July. Mr. Feinberg may call the accountant to see if the review can be done sooner after the fiscal year so it does not conflict with the collection of dues which has been moved to an earlier date. Dennis suggested we move the date to the fourth quarter of the year, and we all agreed that would be fine. Marc Meltzer shared he has some old receipts and Mr. Feinberg said he would be reimbursed.

Below is the current account balance (not including the transfer of \$945 between accounts).

Fall Leaf Removal

Mr. Feinberg thinks residents will request leaf removal soon, and with the dry weather we will want to move the date earlier. We decided for the first pick-up to be on November 8 and 9 and the second pick-up on November 29 and 30. U.S. Lawns picked up all the leaves during the first pick-up last year with four trucks in two days and will use the same number this year for a cost of \$8,800 for both pick-ups. The leaves will be taken to a designated area at the landfill. Dennis will change the dates on two signs and buy three more to announce the pick-ups. The leaves from residents' yards, Route 108, and Headwaters Drive along the gas pipeline will be collected. Theresa Kyne Robinson and Carolyn Knight signed the U.S. Lawns leaf removal contract. Mr. Feinberg said another issue is that the county will cite people for leaving the leaves on the street because leaves in the curb will clog the storm drains, so the website will state that.

Snow Removal

Jay Feinberg said we need a contract to control how much snow we agree to have removed because last winter there was an overlap of work between the county and U.S. Lawns that

resulted in a high cost to the association. The new contract must read that Jay Feinberg, Don Beeson, or Dick Harris must give approval before any snow work is done. Dennis Bourque remarked that by using faxes the association will have a paper trail for reference. An added cost this year will be the clearing of all the newly installed crosswalks. Mr. Bourque will ask U.S. Lawns to provide a running mile clearing rate and measure the property we want cleared. If it snows more than 18 inches, we could hire U.S. Lawns to clear our snow with a right cut and left cut for the price we set.

We discussed the damage to property during snow removal last year. According to Dennis Bourque, the devastation to Verizon resulted in the replacement of all of the above-the-surface Verizon with underground boxes. He said snow removers have insurance for damages.

Don Beeson said we need to discuss using U.S. Lawns to clear the street after a large snowfall at the annual meeting so residents will realize the need for increased dues. A vote will take place.

Dennis will write the new contract that stipulates pre-approval.

Upcoming Meeting Dates Set

1. Annual Meeting Date

The GOCA meeting will be held on January 11 so we chose the 18th or 25th. When Dennis Bourque books it online he will submit both dates and will be assigned one. We will reserve the room for 6:30 to 9:30.

2. Annual Dinner Date

We chose to dine at Dave's in Olney on November 16th at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Bourque will reserve a table for nine.

3. Next Board Meeting Date

The next board meeting will be on December 8th at 7:30 at Dennis Bourque's house.

Plantings by Route 108 Entrance Sign

Dennis Bourque recommends we remove all the plants, which have died due to a lack of watering and have the landscape architect decide what evergreens we should plant. He offered free labor from his company after the association purchases the plants. Mr. Bourque suggested we plant shrubs that have a gap beneath them enabling leaf blowing and advised us to purchase holly shrubs and grasses rather than junipers. Carolyn Knight suggested we provide maintenance for the shrubs, and Mr. Bourque said that watering would be included in the U.S. Lawns contract. He stated we need to improve the Morningwood Drive entrance and will also consider providing shrubs at the Morningwood/power lines entrance next spring if we have sufficient money.

Olney Oaks Website

Mr. Meltzer said he has been making the website more administrator friendly by installing Word Press, a blog management system, and still needs to add content to pages. A benefit is that all of us can maintain it from anywhere. Theresa Kyne Robinson verified that anyone on the GOCA board can upload or post information on that Word Press website.

Gas Pipeline Safety

Carolyn Knight said she recently heard a news report about the California pipeline disaster and a pipeline safety trust. She does not know who funds it, but the manual shut-off contributed to the problem. The pipeline safety trust recommends an automatic shut off.

Carolyn asked about the two pipeline companies for the pipelines running through Olney, and Jay told her they are:

1. **Transco** – an underground super high pressure line from Texas to New York owned by The Williams Companies and operated by Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Corp. It is tested by sending a signal through it that is picked up by airplanes overhead every three nights. If the helicopter-like signal is interrupted, the company will come to service the pipe. There are four pipelines in the ground, all 36" or 42". Two are high pressure, and two are low pressure. Carolyn Knight said one of her neighbors receives a mailing from Transco every year, but Ms. Knight has not received very many letters from the company. Mr. Bourque said that the company sends mailings to all who live within 50 yards of the pipeline. Mr. Feinberg is interested in receiving information from Transco for the association.

2. **Columbia Gas Transmission** – an under street, lawns, garages, and along the creek line that goes into a tunnel under the Intercounty Connector. Mr. Feinberg showed safety information he and Mr. Bourque recently received from Columbia. Don Beeson also receives mail from Columbia because he lives next to a pipeline; Mr. Bourque said the line next to Mr. Beeson's property line is an introductory line that runs to Morningwood Drive near the pavilion where it meets the main line. Starting at the creek and Cashell Road, Mr. Beeson said, it crosses Morningwood Drive under the power lines and across Skymist Terrace through the woods. Mr. Bourque said there are four lines which all come together at the junction in the field behind Magruder High School. The pipeline company made the ICC build state of the art tunnels for the pipeline. When asked about the letter he had received last summer, Mr. Beeson stated the company would come for an on-ground inspection and stated many rules about what cannot be in the right of way, which is 50 feet wide. Mr. Beeson said all trees, shrubs above five feet, sheds, and buildings must go, and many trees behind Bilney Drive are in the right-of-way. Fences must have gates at least 18 feet wide and have a lock furnished by Columbia. Mr. Bourque thinks the letter is a harbinger of work the company plans to do.

Carolyn Knight said she does not remember any information about the pipeline when settling on her house in the 1980s. She suggested we have a speaker come to our homeowners meeting, but Theresa Kyne Robinson and Jay Feinberg suggested GOCA have a speaker from one of the pipeline companies since the pipelines are so prevalent in the Olney area.

Sports Usage of Field over Pipelines

Dennis Bourque stated he had received calls from the Olney Boys and Girls Club and the Olney Athletic Association asking if they can use the fields by the pavilion, and he had told them the association did not permit anyone to play on the field unless they live within the community and a parent and coach are present while the children play. The liability for injury is on the team not the home association. Jay Feinberg explained there are levels of liability. If someone comes on our property without giving any notice, unless there is gross negligence on our part or intent to harm, the association is not liable. If someone lives here they are allowed to use the field but he does not want to have anyone sign a document because that would give specific permission.

Walk-Through Action Items

1. Pavilion and tot lot repairs – Dick Harris and Dennis Bourque said Steve Gray completed the work. Because it was assumed to be done last year and this year's budget did not have funds for it, the repair work was over the budget.
2. Overhanging tree branches and notification letters – Julia Fryer had told Jay Feinberg prior to the meeting that she had sent out the notification letters, and the homeowners had trimmed their overhanging branches. Dennis Bourque said a resident at Headwaters Drive and Carissa Lane had recently hired a company to trim her tree's branches that were overhanging the sidewalk.

3. Pavilion storm drain – The root of the tree was cut out, but the association decided to leave the tree stump so the area would not erode. The area will reseed itself.
4. Tree removal – The trees blocking the creek at Headwaters Lane will be cut next week. The tree on the way to the footbridge will be removed, as will the dead trees behind Shallowbrook Lane. The low limbs of the trees behind a house on Darnell Drive will be trimmed by U.S. Lawns because it is on the association's property.
5. Queen Elizabeth entrance – Dennis Bourque said he had called a county representative to ask when the sediment will be cleared from the outflow of pipes and was told the county, which last cleared the sediment in 2005, now has no money, so the association can clear it. According to a recent county inspection, the road has not undermined by the sediment. Jay Feinberg said that because the debris is half-way up the pipe the sitting water is a perfect breeding ground for insects. The county recommended we clear the inside of the pipe, remove the trees, and cut stumps. Dennis Bourque said his company could do that work and remove trees from the outflow side of Headwaters Lane. Joe Ferro will cut the trees on the inflow side. Mr. Bourque said the three foot high debris on the outflow side of the pipe at Queen Elizabeth Drive needs to be cleared.
6. Regrading the repaired area behind townhouses – Mr. Bourque's company regraded and reseeded the area and removed the stumps.
7. Townhouse parking – The repainting of visitor space markings can wait until spring, but we will need to hire a reputable company to do the restriping.

GOCA Update

Theresa Kyne Robinson said all the meetings are open to the public and occur at the Buffington Building the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30. Mr. Bourque said there is a group in Olney concerned that GOCA has not provided for community activities for children and as a result vandalism has increased. Ms. Robinson said GOCA has shown a concern about activities for children but the lack of money means that communities will have to pay for children's activities.

Basketball Court

Mr. Bourque said that Julia Fryer had received information from Sports Systems and JV Cobb about a basketball court for the pavilion area at a cost between \$41,000 and \$53,000. He said we could have a multi-use court and because it is a private area we could mandate who could use it and when they could use it. The area closes at sunset, and the lack of lights would limit the playtime. Pine trees could be planted to buffer the noise, but Carolyn Knight expressed a need for residents to visually monitor the area. Hoops would have to be purchased separately because they vary greatly in cost and quality Dennis Bourque said we are trying to provide an activity for 12 to 17 year old children. This area could have additions such as a small tennis court, four-square, hopscotch, etc.

Continuing the GOCA report, Theresa Kyne Robinson reported that the new Montgomery County 4th District Police Commander John Damskey said the crime is not increasing in Olney and is not caused by people in federal housing but rather is across the board in age, income, and race. He stressed that people needed to report all crimes and be more vigilant – lock doors, close garage doors, use motion lights, and ensure the presence of car GPS is not obvious. Carolyn Knight recalled an officer who visited GOCA last year reported that no one had registered their serial numbers. Theresa Kyne Robinson pointed out that GOCA had voted to extend the bike trail by Lake Frank and Rock Creek Park and said that Olney has a scarcity of bike paths. Jay Feinberg mentioned the 32 acre site and said the county had approved the project and because the two over twos were eliminated the density was somewhat reduced. Theresa Kyne Robinson said that Khalid Afzal would present at next Tuesday's GOCA the contentious possible extension of Buehler Road. She said the Olney Master Plan indicates the road will be extended, but St.Peter's

Catholic Church would lose property and residents strongly oppose it. Jay Feinberg recommended Ms. Robinson email the board members interesting information from GOCA meetings and she promised she would.

Paving of Front Yards

Carolyn Knight expressed a concern about people in suburbs enlarging the area paved in the front yard. Don Beeson pointed out that homeowners association rules preventing parking a large vehicle on the street. Jay Feinberg stated the county has proposed a rule to prohibit people from paving over their front yards.

The next meeting is the annual dinner for the board on November 16, 6:00 p.m. at Dave's in Olney.

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Kyne Robinson