

**ASHTON VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES -- September 12, 2023**

1. The **Regular Council Meeting** was held at the Sullivan House, Hershey's Mill, on Tuesday, September 12, 2023. Council members present: Mike Trio, Linda Force, Ron Vaughn, Lanita Kemezis via phone from California and Debbie Marchiano, PENCO. Kirk Leighton called in, unable to attend. Mike called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

2. **Today's Agenda and Minutes:**

Lanita approved the **Agenda** for today's meeting. Mike seconded.

Minutes from July 10 were ratified, having been reviewed and accepted electronically and posted to Ashton Village, Hershey's Mill website. Both Linda and Mike made a motion to ratify the Minutes. All in favor.

3. **Financial Report:**

Linda gave the **Treasurer's Report**. Total **Revenue** for month ending July 31, 2023 was \$60,397, actual income. Total **Expenses** ending July were \$60,688. Net income, negative \$294.90. Linda noted General Maintenance spending was \$2940, a variance of negative \$1,523 with our bills for asphalt repairs above budget. Landscape Renovation & Drainage was \$1,400 above budget.

Finance Committee met to discuss asphalt spending, \$5,800 paid from reserves. We need to call asphalt company to come out and look at the curbs. It was noted that a pothole was reported and not repaired.

A catch basin in the area of #107-108 was completed by Paul Day, Jr, billed at \$3,800. Council discussed the need to review the job by a qualified engineer. We'll request documentation that the work was completed. Discussion moved to a suggestion that Council create a Maintenance Committee, made up of resident maintenance engineer professional(s).

It cost \$1,400 to install river rock, #43 and #106. This work was done without control of the Finance Committee. Noted, President can respond to emergency situations, but must yield to spending controls in place in other situations. Ron reminded us that emergency spending under \$1,000 was approved in June. Deb will contact contractors to remind them not to initiate other activity without proper approval, coming from Deb on behalf of Council's oversight.

Aging/ Delinquent accounts: #76 owes more than \$2,000.

Lanita made a motion to approve the Financial and Treasurer's Reports. Ron seconded. Reports were approved.

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4. Landscape/ Architectural Controls:

-- New applications submitted:

#78 - windows, approved via email. Lanita and Linda made a motion to ratify. So moved.

#75 - landscaping, new plants, river rock, fabric have not been approved, Linda and Lanita making motion.

#88 - doors and windows approved, they comply with Ashton standards. Lanita and Linda making motion.

#48 - new alert, cracks in walkways, damp garage, noted.

#52 - overgrown tree, noted, HML only prunes new growth.

Lanita made a motion to approve applications as submitted. Linda seconded. All approved, noting landscaping in this area will be open for discussion.

5. Violations:

#60 - continued complaints about makeshift fence around patio, cluttered and unsightly. Owner appealed request to remove fence to contain feral cat; request denied. Owner has not complied and fined. Attorney letter will follow, by unanimous decision.

#109 - fine for violation has been appealed. Resolution, fine will stand until owner is in compliance.

Linda made a motion to close discussion. Mike seconded.

6. New Business:

Council Members discussed the process of full Council approval before funds for corrections or remedies are released. Our effort is to be diligent of budget expenditures and agile in our responsiveness at the same time to situations that arise. Debbie presents issues to full Council and Officers respond to her, copying each other via email.

We looked at this approval process. We discussed the fact that our Treasurer is in charge of overseeing the budget, and expenditures. Lanita made a motion to formalize a new, hopefully more streamlined process: Deb will contact the Treasurer, Linda, who is responsible for overseeing the budget. She will have authority to approve/disapprove requests/situations, especially those that involve the immediate safety of our residents, coordinate with Council and report to Council as needed. She will be the "point person." Ron seconded this motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

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-- **UPCA Amendments** regarding PA Act 115, regulated condo owner/ association, UPCA, responsibilities and operating procedures. Additional requirements have been adopted, added to State House Bill on May 2 of this year and published. These updated regulations will require that we do an amendment to our documents and declaration. Deb sent attorney literature/explanation to Council.

Two noted specifics are: 1) In the event that 3 or more members-in-good-standing are running for HOA office, the HOA will have to conduct a "candidate's night," and, 2) It is now legal to conduct meetings, record minutes and communicate with residents **electronically**.

-- **#88 - Repair walkway**, an old repair, the patch sunk, and asphalt is puckering. We need a proposal for repairs.

Linda added her comments, We need to repair tripping hazards for the safety of our residents. We need to solicit estimates and make the needed repairs.

Ron commented that we need somebody like Tom Varallo to do light repairs and sprucing up. We agreed. Such help is invaluable.

-- **Ashton Community Party** - Ferdie Lamb, Joanne Henderson and the wonderful volunteers of the "Social Committee" will continue with organizing a neighborhood Summer/Fall Party. Party, with a band for entertainment, will be scheduled for September. Committee will produce a flyer and distribute. Ferdie asked for an email list of Ashton residents.

-- **Ashton Community Volunteers** -- Council again acknowledged the volunteer work done by residents and committees and wanted to invite new volunteers to participate. Linda Green offered to serve on a Welcome Committee with Ferdie Lamb and others. Linda Force made a motion to approve Linda Green and Ferdie to renew a Welcome Committee, and bring others in as appropriate. Mike seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

Council noted Active Committees and invite other residents to step up.

An informal list of **ASHTON VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES** follows:

Social Committee - Ferdie Lamb and Joanne Henderson, along with others, have been handling Events and Holiday Parties for a long time. Congrats again!

Welcome Committee - reviving this committee, with gratitude, nominating Linda Green to coordinate, to cover Newcomers, Movers and notifying of those who have passed on. (With the sad passing of Irene Gallagher and the long interruption caused by COVID, we want to reactivate this committee.)

Finance Committee - monitoring operating and budgetary issues, Linda Force, Mike Trio and Ron Vaughn.

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Gardens / Landscape Committee - entry way, and holiday decorations - Sam Blank, Ferdie Lamb, Joanne Henderson, John Davis, Don Martin and several other Ashton Neighbors who pitch in. Thank you!

Lewis Garden - ad hoc committee Kirk Leighton and Christine McCormick co-chairing, Lori Goodz, Paul Day Jr, and Mike Trio, Sam Blank and Lanita Kemezis joining as needed, revitalizing and refurbishing this community garden.

Communications Chair and Committee - Ashton News, with the passing of Irene Gallagher, Council is seeking new volunteers to participate. This could involve the preparation of an informal Ashton newsletter. Debbie Marchiano has been covering the community with news and important info E-blasts. The posting of our monthly Council Minutes to the HM Website adds to the info of "what's going on."

Maintenance and Engineering Committee doesn't exist, but Council would welcome resident volunteers to serve as advisors to Council related to the contractors we hire and the jobs completed.

Community Volunteers are invited to step up. Email intentions to our Property Manager, Debbie, who will forward. Thanks to all, in advance.

Mike made a motion to close discussion of New Business items. Lanita seconded. Approved.

7. Old Business:

-- **Annual Meeting and Election of 2024 Council** - November 6th in the Cove. Mike Trio is the only incumbent running. Kirk and Lanita are not running for new terms. Three slots will be open. To verify the election results, the Secretary, Lanita, and two volunteers will be involved. We may look for the involvement of Ashton's Attorney. Candidates' deadline to submit their candidacy and data sheet is September 29. We will look to schedule Candidate's Night, October 17 or 18th. Questions to ask Attorney, How do we address the counting question; and, Are we obligated to have an independent counter? We also talked about the Attorney's representation of neutrality. The Firm of Marcus & Hoffman, Esq., represents the Village of Ashton, our 100 Homeowners, not the sole interests of Council as some have accused.

Linda made a motion to set the date for Election and Annual Meeting, November 6th. Lanita seconded. Accepted.

-- **#103 - Garage Rebuild** - Insurance money was received, put into escrow. Curt is following up with repairs needed. Garage was damaged, hit by owner.

-- **"Lewis Garden" Refurbishing** - Lewis Garden SubCommittee, Kirk, Christine and Paul Day Jr, met to review an incremental improvement plan, establish a plan, look at components, plants and shrubbery for year-round attractiveness. Kirk reported that he located four heavy chairs to be donated to Lewis Garden. He indicated he'd like to

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remain involved in this project, even after his term has ended. Further discussion was tabled.

-- **Tree Work** - proposals have been provided prior to meeting for our review. We tabled further discussion at this time.

We're reminded that, at our July 10 meeting, we voted and approved that, for tree work and maintenance issues requiring timely attention we could vote by e-mail then ratify at the following Council meeting.

-- **Reserve Study** - PENCO received copy of full Reserve Study for the Village of Ashton, forwarded to Council. Council met July 18 to review and discuss with Dave Marino, Reserve Advisors. Council responded to RA and sent questions, notes and revisions to RA. Dave, RA, asked questions and clarified details. There will be another pass before Reserve Study is approved for Ashton and shared with the entire HOA body. Council's plan is to post and leave this document in the "good hands" of subsequent Ashton Village HOAs.

-- **Spring Pressure Washing** - 5 Star Power Washers. Work is not yet complete.

-- **HML Spring Walkthrough** - Spring landscaping clean-up included tree trimming and maintenance, detailed in our spring walk-thru with HML.

We discussed the need for general cleanup as several areas are dirty, need to be cleaned and painted. Council also discussed the too frequent lack of responsiveness by HML. Should we be looking to other landscape contractors to serve our community? We will look at alternatives.

-- **Sewer Lateral Cleaning** - This was conducted, with video views of lines, in the summer. We did not get a report or follow-up analysis. Note from July 10 Council meeting: "Sewer Mains and Lateral Connections -- A sewer flush by Greenhill Sewer Authority will be scheduled for end of July-early August to clean and identify weak areas." We have requested documentation and a report.

-- GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Asphalt Paving and Pothole Repairs - Noted from July 10 Council Meeting: Kirk received competitive bids ranging from \$5800 to \$7400. He recommended a paver in Newtown Square, Tarquini, with whom he is familiar. Mike made a motion to go ahead with this project using Tauquini company. Linda seconded. All approved.

Annual Meeting and Call for Candidates - Deb mailed an announcement, dated September 5, for Ashton's Annual Meeting and Election of 2024 Council, with a

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Candidate's data sheet attached. Three terms will expire, Leighton, Trio and Kemezis, leaving three open slots. Deadline for candidates is September 29. Meeting Agenda and Absentee Ballots for the Election will be mailed.

PENCO and Council have the responsibility of proposing a new budget and the fiduciary responsibility of reviewing "members in good standing" and account records of candidates to clear viability for office.

#111 - Electric box fried, an issue for PECO. Mr Simon's electric is illegal, installed incorrectly. PECO has to fix. Council is not responsible for electric panel.

#112 - Bees nest in the wall, approximately \$300. Deb explained to owner that Council does not cover this.

-- **HML Landscape Contract** - We will be looking for bids for this contract, listing scope of services. We look for responses prior to the Hershey's Mill Landscape expiration deadline. Kris and Chris Givens have resigned. As mentioned, we have several concerns about the services our Village has been receiving.

-- **Resignation from Master Association** - After several years of serving Hershey's Mill, **Carl Gretz** has announced his resignation as President of the Master Association. John M__ from Brighton Village will step into this position.

-- **REMINDER TO ALL: Ashton Autumn Celebration, September 19th** - Ferdie Lamb and Crew have been organizing this event. Flyers have been distributed. Thank you to all of the volunteers on behalf of Ashton Village!

Mike and Kirk made a motion to close discussions of Old and New Business.

8. Adjournment:

Lanita and Linda made a motion to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 12:49 PM.

**Next Council Meeting:
Tuesday, October 10, 2023, 10:00 AM in the Sullivan House**

-- Lanita Kemezis
Ashton Village Council