

# **Amherst Woods Homeowners Association**

AWHA Board Meeting, February 1, 2024 7:30 PM

Draft Minutes

*Meeting conducted virtually*

Present: Wade Elmore, Jim Barnhill, Doug Gagnon, Martha Hanner, Marc Littman, Jack Mattrey, Denise Gagnon (Landscape Committee)

Absent: Jane Sheffler, Betsy Mullins

Wade opened the meeting via Zoom at 7:30 PM. Martha agreed to record the Minutes, since Jim was still recovering from surgery.

## **Approval of Annual Meeting Minutes**

Minutes from the November 13, 2023 Annual Meeting were approved as written. The Minutes will be sent to AWHA homeowners and will be posted on the AWHA website.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Marc presented the 2024 budget and described the items still pending. He has received the past year's information from Jane, who served as our treasurer last year, and has been assessing our financial status. AWHA pays property taxes on the 3 common parcels. It has taken some effort to get the full ID number for each of the parcels, needed in order to pay the quarterly property tax due Feb. 1. Paypal charges a fee of approximately \$5. (3%) for each online \$150. transaction. This cost is not explicitly included in the budget.

## **Dues Payment**

Marc reported that 36 households have not yet paid their annual dues, as of January 31. He presented the list of households. The Board discussed whether to reinstate a late fee (or a bonus for paying on time). Before we converted to online dues payment, there had been a \$30. late fee. It was decided not to impose a late fee at the present time. A friendly, personal approach seems more appropriate, along with a letter explaining how dues are used and why that's important. As a first step, Marc and Wade will draft a letter, to be placed in the mailbox of each homeowner in arrears.

## **Landscape Committee Report**

Denise Gagnon reported for the Landscape Committee. Spring Valley has been the AWHA landscape contractor for a number of years. She said that Spring Valley has been doing a very good job keeping the common areas mowed throughout the growing season and they keep the entrances, circles and cul-de-sacs mulched and weeded. Charges for tree and branch removal are extra. Since the costs increase each year, the Committee has decided it is time to solicit bids from other local landscape companies for 2024. Five companies were contacted; 3 of them submitted proposals. Denise presented the proposed costs. Omasta was significantly lower than the other two. Spring Valley has not yet submitted their proposal for 2024. Based on the proposals, as well as the discussions with company representatives, Denise recommends

that AWAH engage Omasta for the 2024 landscape maintenance contract. Doug Gagnon stated that he had talked with the landscape company representatives as well and he supports the choice of Omasta. The Board requested the 2024 proposal from Spring Valley, for comparison with Omasta, before deciding which company to select. Denise agreed to contact Spring Valley promptly and request their 2024 submission. The Board agreed that, after receiving the information, a decision could be made via email vote of Board members.

Denise noted that she does not see the actual bills from the landscape company for the work they perform; these go directly to the Treasurer. It was agreed that, in the future, the Landscape Committee should be given a record of the charges submitted by the landscape contractor.

### **AWHA Website**

Jack manages the AWAH website for us. His goal is to make the website functional and attractive. Board members can submit relevant information for Jack to post. The content of the website was briefly discussed. Removing "Neighbors in the News" was recommended, since the descriptions are outdated, and it would take considerable work on someone's part to keep that section updated. We agreed to head in the direction of streamlining, so that the website is not a large amount of work for any one person.

Respectfully submitted,  
Martha Hanner