

Advocacy Accomplishments, 2017-2020

FINANCIAL

- Fought to have independent audits and financial reviews performed.
- Prevented minimization and concealment of monthly financial information.
- Discovery of incorrect signatories for the HOA's financial accounts that put HOA resources at risk. Consequently, the signatories were changed to better protect the HOA's accounts.
- Discovered checks written in large amounts (over \$10,000) signed by only one person (property manager). No Board member signatures on the checks.
- Guidelines and suggestions originally posted on the Advocacy website are now incorporated into the oversight of the HOA's financial processes.
- Advocates campaigned for a fraud policy to protect the HOA and its members. It was finally adopted by the Board in 2019.
- Performed quarterly reviews of financial records and statements, vendor contracts and relevant HOA documentation.
- Incorrect financial information and records discovered and brought to the attention of the Board.

HOA WEBSITE SECURITY

- 2018: After six months of advocacy effort, digital security was finally added to the HOA official website.

CONTRACTS

- Uncovered questionable contracting procedures, e.g. contracts signed before being read and scrutinized. Errors discovered and brought to the attention of the Board.
- 2017: Discovered lack of contract compliance, no property reports being provided.

TRANSPARENCY

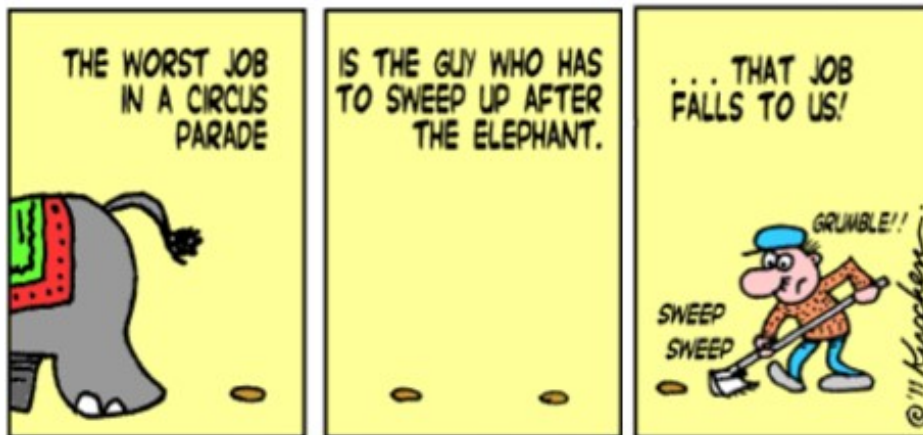
- Compelled the Board to share details of the 2019 "snow removal occurrences."
- The Advocacy website obtained and openly shared the 2019 turf remediation details and priority list with homeowners.
- In 2017, advocates forced the Board to "come clean" about pool contamination and communicate the facts to homeowners.

GENERAL

- Attended Ohio Township Board of Supervisors monthly meetings to stay current on local issues and developments relevant to Sewickley Ridge residents.
- Common property area: worked with Humane Animal Rescue to rescue feral cats, including a mother cat and kittens; helped find foster homes and paid for TNR for feral cats. 🐾🐾

HOA Issues

Shout-out to the three new Board members. Good Luck!



2019 Landscaping Expense Discrepancy

Discrepancy: **\$20,924.21** more was spent on landscaping in 2019 than financial statements indicate. FYI: Since 2017 we have paid over a half-million dollars (\$500,000) for landscaping services.

“Due from Working Capital Fund” Balance Sheet Asset

Discrepancy: **\$152,428** “Due from Working Capital” in 2019 and 2020 (so far).

\$104,604. “Due from Working Capital” in 2019. We were told only \$16,400 would be taken from the working capital fund in 2019.

\$47,824. As of February 2020, “Due from Working Capital.” We’ve been told only \$11,510 from the Working Capital would be spent in 2020.

Reserve Study - Errors and Omissions

Errors and omissions total an estimated **\$417,514.**



The initial Reserve Study (2017/2018) was not thoroughly reviewed by the Board before acceptance. Components were overlooked, incorrectly categorized, and missing. We need an up-to-date Reserve Study.

Suspected Self-Dealing and Selective Enforcement

Example 1: An engineering report and site inspection log indicates a Board member, who is stepping down, constructed a patio that conflicts with the storm water management system causing erosion of common element. Yet this Board member was not held accountable for the construction of their patio, its impact on the community’s storm water management system, and any ongoing monitoring of the property that is required. The Architectural Review Committee has ruled that all homeowners (except this Board member) who request a variance to construct a patio must guarantee their patio will not interfere with the storm water management system and the homeowner is responsible for any damage to the storm water system that occurs.

Example 2: August 2019, a Board member had over \$800 of landscaping work done (at the expense of the HOA) to address a drainage issue. Yet this unit had drainage work identified and repaired by TOA and reported as completed and approved in the Transition Resolution Report presented by the Board in January 2019. Interestingly, the Board member signed the additional landscaping contract hiring MDL in July 2019. While this Board member was having his work done – other homeowners were forced to file an Association Claim to have the common element in the area of their units simply maintained – an area whose maintenance was neglected the entire 2019 growing season.

Inspections and Maintenance

After three years, why hasn't there been a complete quality property inspection of the community and why is there no community-wide, preventive maintenance plan? We're still waiting for an answer...



The Asset Management presentation at the February 29, 2020 meeting was an attempt to excuse and mitigate the Board's carelessness and lack of compliance with the Declaration. The banality of the Board's response to their non-compliance and studied inaction reveal an indifference to homeowners' well-being. It was a poorly presented and unconvincing attempt to justify three years of neglect, indecision, and inertia.

- Throughout the presentation reference was made as to “how difficult and challenging it is to develop a maintenance plan.” **Just because something appears to be difficult doesn't mean it should be ignored and delayed at a cost to homeowners. Certainly, three years is enough time to review a Reserve Study list of components and research the maintenance requirements based on actual, quality inspections of the community.**
- Costs: Inaccurate and unsourced cost figures were presented. No mention or comparison was made of the actual costs of reactive maintenance and repairs versus the long-term savings of a quality property inspection and a well-executed preventive maintenance plan. **In place of a rational cost/benefit discussion, the presenter opted for the tried-and-true tactic of frightening and threatening residents with an increase in their monthly assessments.**
- Monthly property reports since 2017 were not performed or handled properly. They were not quality inspections of community property. The reports contained such items as “trips to Costco”, “replacing wipes in the exercise room” and “putting paper in the printer.” The Clubhouse exterior was not routinely inspected, the non-functioning retention pond was never reported, and other significant common element areas were overlooked. **The only property issues presented were the ones reported by homeowners for immediate, reactive repairs.** No preventive maintenance was performed.

- The discussion of the “Maintenance Matrix” was a red herring. It has **no relevance** to community-wide inspections and maintenance. The Declaration is the binding governing document **not a list created by a small, board-selected group of “Board Buddies” that conveniently SHIFTS RESPONSIBILITY FROM THE BOARD AND PLACES THE BURDEN OF EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE ONTO THE HOMEOWNER.**



Board violations of the Declaration:

ARTICLE 3.3 Maintenance Responsibilities

3.3 (a) “Except as expressly otherwise provided herein, the Association shall be responsible for Maintenance of the Common Elements...” ***There was Common Element area neglected, and no maintenance was performed the entire 2019 growing season.***

3.3 (c) “The roofs and exterior walls of Homes shall be Maintained by the Association.” ***Board has neglected preventive maintenance of unit roofs and siding.***

3.3 (e) “...the Association shall, through a qualified independent contractor, inspect all Common Elements and Limited Common Elements on a regular basis as reasonably necessary, for the purpose of determining the condition of the Common Elements and Limited Common Elements and need for Maintenance work.” ***As of April 2020, no regular, quality property inspections have been performed, as required in the Declaration.***

ARTICLE 6.1 (h) Storm Water Management

6.1(h)(ii) “Storm Water Management System shall be kept in good working order and repair at all times. The Association is perpetually responsible for maintenance of the Storm Water Management System.” ***Retention pond has not been maintained or repaired for over a year.***

ARTICLE 15.1 General Provisions (Insurance)

15.1 (a) “The Board shall promptly furnish to each Unit Owner written notice of the procurement of, subsequent changes in, or termination of, insurance coverages obtained on behalf of the Association, in compliance with the Act.” ***This was never done. No notifications were provided in 2017, 2018, and 2019.***

Committees – Favoritism

One resident serves on multiple committees while another qualified resident is denied, numerous times, the opportunity to serve on one. Some units have multiple representation on two or more committees; yet there are qualified and experienced homeowners who have been denied the chance to serve. Selection and approval of committee members appears to be limited to “friends of the Board.” Participation appears to be restricted to only those individuals who share the Board’s views.

