**Sunset Shores Property Owners Association**

**Spring 2024 Meeting, May 31, 2025**

**New Buffalo Public Library**

**Board members present**: Ron Watson, Missy Goldberg, Sharon Kelly Kenny, Cheryl Istvan, Rich Bogusz, Kathy Rohan, Arlene Pokuta

**Board members absent:** Conrad Rickoff

**Members present:**  Kathy Frankel, Cy Rohan, Cathy & Jon Gilfillan, Julie & Fred Mattioli, Ed & Nancy Oldis, Melissa Smith, Victor & Elisa Suarez, Bill & Ann Zeiler

**Called to order by Ron Watson at 11:02 am ET.**

**OFFICER REPORTS**

**President:**

Board Introductions: Ron introduced the board members and invited them to stay a few words about their position and responsibilities.

East Beach/Creek Update: Ron explained the layout of the East Beach easement and dedicated walkway. He shared the events of the last year regarding the proposed stone revetment on Lot 25. The latest update from the New Drain Commissioner and City Manager is that there are no plans to install a revetment wall.

**Decision:** Ron and Rich will investigate options for economically purchasing or building something of perhaps wood and rope to make walking down to East Beach less treacherous.

Ron updated everyone on the plans for dredging the harbor and related agreement that material needs to be placed in a specific area. Ron shared the history of the beach nourishment agreement, loss of government funding halting the promised nourishment and the effects from that loss.

New Buffalo Shoreline Alliance and Great Lakes Coalition (GLC) Update: Although not SSPOA committees, these non-profit organizations work to address the shoreline issues so their work is impactful to our members. Additionally, several of our members are involved in these organizations. Ron distributed copies of their newsletter to anyone who wanted one.

The Great Lakes Coalition is a not-for-profit group with over 1200 members mostly in the state of Michigan. The Great Lakes Coalition is having a meeting on August 9 in Holland, MI. Ed and Ron encouraged everyone to attend and added that there will be informative speakers presenting.

**Secretary:**

The approval of the Fall 2024 meeting minutes. Several hard copies were distributed at the meeting.

**Decision**: Ed Oldis made a motion and Kathy Rohan Kelly seconded. All in attendance approved so the motion passed.

**Treasurer:**

Cheryl provided the printed and oral Treasurers report. Out of 170 homeowners, 76 members have paid to date. The 2025 budget was presented based on 100 paid members. A discussion ensued on ways to educate home owners about the need to pay due to support the association and the ramifications if the association dissolves

**DECISION**: Sharon Kelly made a motion to approve the budget as presented and Missy Goldberg seconded. All in attendance approved so the motion passed.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Beach & Creek**:

Ron shared that homeowner surveys show that they own to the middle of the creek, but as the creek narrows and flows, its boundaries change over time. Ron advised members to stay to the eastside of the creek when access the beach to avoid having Mrs. Wormuth accuse property owners of trespassing.

Kathy provided an update that she will revisit with those property owners who were willing to donate to the purchase of removable aluminum stairs for the West Beach. There is more sand there now and it is expected to grow. These stairs would be financed through owner donations and gifted to the SSPOA.

**Bylaws:**

Sharon shared that there were no updates proposed. She asked for input/suggestions. The question of becoming a non-profit organization whereby donations would be tax deductible was raised. Although, this has been investigated previously, there was interest in revisiting options, including creating a second entity that is tax deductible.

**DECISION:** It was proposed to add a formal statement about accepting donations without joining the association. Sharon will bring that back to her bylaws committee for consideration.

**Park:**

Arlene provide a report that we will continue contracting the grass cutting with the same vendor as they agreed to continue the terms of our agreement - $97 per cut, weekly when the grass is growing rapidly, and bi-weekly later in the summer. The dog waste bags have been replenished.

The mulch needs to be replenished and Ron offered to price shop the black rubber mulch that is longer lasting and provides more cushion under the park equipment. Sharon voiced concern over the soft spots in the grass as a tripping hazard and proposed treating for Grubs as a way to take away the food source for the Moles as they create the shallow tunnels.

The waste pick-up company asked that the garbage can be placed further from the tree so they don’t hit limbs when picking it up. Sharon and another neighbor tag team to drag it out on garbage days and will keep this in mind.

Mike Shannon generously donated two heavy-duty corn hole games to the park. To prevent wear-and-tear and theft the group decided that the association should acquire a small, lockable shed to store the game equipment. Ron shared that they were reasonably priced and should be placed on a foundation of stones or wood for stability. Ed Oldis said he owned such a shed that he would be willing to donate.

**DECISIONS:**

1. It was also agreed that some low hanging limbs should be trimmed and Ron/Sharon will ask the landscaper for a quote.
2. They will also investigate is treating for Grubs would discourage mole tunneling.
3. Ron will work with Ed to determine the donated shed would be large enough to accommodate the new games.

**Communication/Membership:**

Arlene shared that knocking on doors is the best way to increase dues paying members. Other options for making membership information readily available were discussed. It was proposed that we have brochure holders and/or a QR code on signage to encourage home owner’s awareness about the benefits of being a due paying member.

The group discussed updating our entrance signs so announcements could be added. A proposed design was shared. Kathy shared that she has begun to reach out to vendors for quotes.

**DECISIONS:**

1. Jon offered to work on developing a new approach to educating our community on the benefits of membership. Kathy Rohan offered to assist.
2. Kathy will bring back sign quotes to the group for consideration.

**Public Relations:**

Missy Goldberg encouraged everyone to update their emails. Ron shared some of the past philanthropic events SSPOA has organized such as Blessings in a Backpack.

Sharon asked the members to think about volunteering for the nominating committee. The positions of President and Secretary will be up for renewal.

**DECISION:** Missy Goldberg offered to chair the committee.

**Open Forum:**

There were concerns voiced over the long-term rental requirements and Frankel was asking if anyone else found it problematic. She was referred to the City as they manage all rental guidelines. She expressed that she has not been successful in advocating for change. Ron shared some history on how the city came to develop the short-term and long-term rental restrictions. The group briefly discussed rentals and overnight parking on Sunset Shores streets.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.**