



The Common at
Sinnott Farm

www.sinnottfarm.com

Homeowner's Association for:

Quail Run | Spice Bush | Arrowwood | Spring Hill | Timothy Lanes

DRAFT
The Common at Sinnott Farm, Inc.
Annual Meeting
November 9, 2023
6:30 p.m.
Bloomfield Police Department Community Room

MINUTES

President Jonny Baranowski called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

Roll Call:

Jonathan (Jonny) Baranowski, President
Patrick DeLorenzo, Vice President
Wayne Wnuck, Treasurer
Diane Prescod, Secretary
Julius Prescod, Director

Kelli Jackson – Property Manager

Proof of Notice of Meeting:

Kelli Jackson provided proof of notice of annual meeting

Approval of November 22, 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes:

Diane explained that because the then Board Secretary did not attend last year's Annual Meeting, and no one was appointed to take minutes in her place, there are no "official" minutes to approve. She further explained that there are "unofficial" notes so that there is some record of the meeting.

Reports of Officers and Committees:

Jonny reviewed the four goals the Board set for itself in January of 2023 and progress toward each: Initiate paving project – work completed. Solicit input from homeowners on issues they wanted the Board to work on. This was done via a survey and all issues raised were addressed to include improved communication, which has been done via website updates, reinstating the quarterly newsletter and posting meeting minutes within two weeks of each meeting. Detailed information is on the website. Determine ways to reduce expenses which was addressed in the survey responses. Revive annual get-together. The community picnic was held in June with about 25 people in attendance. In addition to these goals, the Board continues to work with Sentry to ensure that rules violations and past due maintenance fees are addressed, and with SJN to ensure that common areas are maintained according to acceptable standards.

Beautification Committee – Chair Deanne Lawrence thanked the committee members and stated that they maintain the beds at the entrance to each lane as well as the main entrance to the community using personal funds. Trimming the lilacs (Spring Hill and Deerfield/Ryefield) will be done this year as well.

Welcome Committee – Chair Jeff Olmstead was unable to attend the meeting but sent a report indicating that he had been informed of only one home sale in the community this year – at 36 Arrowwood Lane. Our new neighbors moved in on September 18th. Jeff was unable to reach them by phone so he sent a welcome letter, along with a copy of the Homeowner Guide via USPS. The letter invited them to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Covenants Committee- Chair Diane Prescod thanked committee members and reported that seven Alterations Requests had been received and approved this year for a variety of projects. She stated that most requests were approved within 2-4 days or sooner and thanked homeowners for submitting the requests. She explained that the request form can be found on the website under the “For Homeowners” tab and that it is easy to complete, but should anyone have any questions, any Board member would be happy to help.

Jonny added that homeowners who started projects prior to submitting a form and receiving approval were contacted, informed of the process and that penalties would be imposed for future violations.

Paving Committee – Wayne Wnuck reported for Chair Clark Winchell. The committee started by looking at 2017 report prepared by a consultant hired by the Board at that time which suggested reclaiming Spring Hill for a life of 25 years. Estimates came in between \$108,000 and \$140,000 and the project was estimated to take 5-15 days. The committee met with the Director of Public Works for Bloomfield resulting in a change in the plan to micro-surfacing and we were able to use the same contractor (indus) the Town was using for a considerable savings to the association. Project completed for \$134,000 - October 2 and 3 – all lanes done. The life of roads has been extended 5-7 years. Spring Hill will likely be the first that needs to be repaved in the future.

Website Committee – Chair Julius Prescod reported that the website is a good place to find information about what is going on in our community. It can be accessed by searching The Common at Sinnott Farm on the internet. The website is up to date and is reviewed on a weekly basis. The committee is open to suggestions and, if possible, will implement them. One suggestion was made by a homeowner that a link should be added near the top of the page for meeting agendas. From now on the word Agenda, in parenthesis, will appear near the date of the meeting. When the link is clicked, it will bring you to the agenda section found further down the page. Due to issues accessing the Gmail account, email contact now goes to Jonny.

Election of Inspectors of Vote:

Diane assisted Kelli in soliciting two volunteers to count votes at the appropriate time. Marie McDonald and Michael Comperatore volunteered for this task.

Presentation of 2024 Budget:

Treasurer Wayne Wnuck presented the current budget and explained the projected expenditures for 2024:

- We are in middle of fixed price contract with SJN through October 2025, we are a bit under budget.
- Slight increase in fertilization cost – inflation and state tax. Will be done 5 times next year.
- Tree trimming and removal – we haven’t spent any funds yet but some tree work that needs to be done may cause us to exceed budget a bit.
- Crack sealing was covered by reserves as part of paving project – no expected expense for next year.
- Maintaining grounds is the majority of our budget (52%).
- Cost for electricity is projected to increase a bit for coming year – we will be under budget this year as the Board was able to get reduced rates by going with a third party supplier.

- Administrative expenses – Management fee increases by 5% according to the contract which runs through January 2025. Postage, copies, supplies are areas we are looking at because of coming in over budget – next year projected closer to what we spent this year.
- Website – paid for 2 years so no expense for next year.
- Accounting services – federal and state returns were not filed in 2022 for 2021 so we had to file for 2021 and 2022 this year which explains why we are over budget – next year will be for just one year.
- Legal expenses – what we had budgeted was very low so it was recommended that we budget at least \$500. We currently expect a refund of \$200 from Sentry for attorney fee from July 2023 meeting.
- Insurance – 3 policies – crime bond which protects us from malfeasance on the part of the property management company; directors and officers liability; general liability which included the property of a homeowner who was treasurer before we had a management company which we no longer need. We are currently researching options for a new liability policy for common areas which unfortunately will result in increased cost but we don't know the exact amount as of yet.
- Administrative expenses are about 21% of budget.
- Remaining amount goes into reserves which currently looks to be about just over \$21,000 but could be less if projected expenses increase.

Account balances reviewed – Operating (checking), Emergency and Reserve which are money market accounts. Once final payment is made to indus from the reserve fund, it will be in \$60,000 range. The Board discussed opening a CD but did not due to paving needs but will review this option once all paving expenses have been paid.

Future Reserve balances reviewed – In the illustration, maintenance fees go up \$5 per quarter beginning in 2025 as expenses will likely increase about 3% per year. We should have enough in reserves by 2027 to repave Spring Hill if necessary. We will look at better options for reserve account for interest rate above 1.5%.

Election of Members to Board of Directors:

Ballots were tallied by Marie McDonald and Michael Comperatore. Clark Winchell received a nomination from the floor and was added to the ballot. Patrick DeLorenzo and Wayne Wnuck were re-elected and Julius Prescod, who had been appointed to serve out the term of a Board member who resigned her position in January 2023, was elected to serve a full term.

Ballots for the 2024 budget were also tallied and the budget as presented passed unanimously.

Homeowner Comments and Questions:

Note: Some comments and questions that appear below were actually asked at various points throughout the meeting but have been listed here for organizational purposes.

A suggestion was made to email the community if anything important is happening. Jonny responded that this is being done regularly and that the Board will request a copy of email addresses from Sentry so that should we need to communicate something at a time when Sentry is unavailable, we will be able to do so.

The question of the amount of our electric bill was raised. The Board has been making every effort to keep the cost down and was informed by Eversource that our streetlights – which are all LED – are paid for by the Town, with the exception of Spring Hill. The Board will continue efforts to minimize cost.

A homeowner thanked the board for excellent communication throughout the paving process and for good collaboration with the Town to save money for the Association.

A homeowner mentioned that Ryefield Hollow Drive North needs to be repaved. It was explained that this is a Town road and unfortunately is not on this year's list for repaving. Board members are regularly in touch with the Town's Public Works Department to express the concern that the road is in disrepair and request that patching be done as needed.

A homeowner questioned whether or not SJN had removed mulch from around tree trunks in the common areas as it appears it has not been done. Jonny indicated he would reach out to them again.

A homeowner asked whether or not homeowners who are fined actually pay. Jonny answered that yes, they do – Sentry works to ensure payment and gets the attorney involved if necessary. We do currently have an outstanding fine that Sentry is working to have paid.

Question – Can micro-surfacing be done on top of micro-surfacing as an option for future work? This depends on the condition of the road at the time but it is a possibility.

There was a discussion regarding the pine trees on the Timothy Lane island. Two arborists have recommended removal as both are diseased. At their current height, they can be removed easily but if they get much taller – which they will – removal will be more difficult and more expensive. Timothy residents would like only one removed.

A question was raised about the pond and Jonny responded that we are forming a committee to research options and report them to the Board. We know that there are homeowners in favor of doing something with the pond and homeowners opposed, therefore we would like to have folks representing each viewpoint on the committee. The Board will discuss further at the January 2024 meeting.

A homeowner expressed appreciation for bringing back the community picnic.

A homeowner expressed appreciation to the Board members for their work.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned with a motion made by Jonny, seconded by Patrick , and approved unanimously at 8:04 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Diane Prescod
Secretary**