

CHIMNEY HILL OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
CHIMNEY HILL CLUBHOUSE  
Saturday, February 11, 2023

**Call to Order:**

Paul DiPietro, President, called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. Present in person were Keith Mears, Brian Lynch, Jane Cary, Dennis Heberlein, Gene Clark, Kate Trinklein, and James Walker, Executive Director. Kristen Wenger and Steve Boyce attended via Zoom. Homeowners present in person were Dee Harmon, Carlotta Gladding and Laura Powers. Tanya Sparano attended via Zoom.

The **Minutes** of Saturday, January 21, 2023 were approved.

**Financial Report:**

Keith Mears. said that all looks well as of January 20, 2023. CH is more that \$3K ahead in reserves allocation. DRL lots income is up \$82K. Renter-guest total is up 152%. Misc. maintenance is up 135% (\$32K). "Other income" is up \$28K. Renter total is up \$5K. Real estate is up by \$6K. CH is \$143K stronger than a year ago in the Reserves account.

Dennis Heberlein moved that the report be approved; Jane Cary seconded the motion. All approved.

**Committee Reports:**

**ACC:** Gene Clark said there have been no meetings, so no report. Meetings will resume soon.

**Budget/Audit/Insurance:** Budget will be addressed later in the meeting when the 2023/2024 budget draft is discussed.

Paul addressed employee health insurance cost. Per the investigating that James is doing, coverage for the employees will be equal to what they are getting now, or better. The cost to employees will be the same or less. James is reviewing the policy cost to CHOA in an attempt to get a better deal.

Paul said the audit report (distributed to all Board members) looks a good deal like last year's. We have deficiencies to address, some due to our small office staff.

**Clubhouse/Recreation:** Kristen Wenger reported that there will be a snow sculpture contest on homeowners' decks or at piles created at Birchwood. The snowmobile tour to be led by Gene Clark around President's Day is not happening due to lack of snow. The Committee is looking for someone to host a Paint and Sip Night. (Kate Trinklein may have a connection.) They need more members, both to generate and host events. A yard sale around the Annual Meeting was discussed, as were a pickle ball clinic and fishing derby. Brian Lynch said two bands have been secured for the summer.

**Landscape:** Jane Cary will send James a notice for the e-Blast about the dog park idea being tabled for now.

**Legal:** Tabled until later than in the meeting

**Long Range Planning:** No report.

**Maintenance:** Gene Clark gave the most recent report: driveways had been plowed and sanded numerous times; maintenance has been performed on two vehicles; freeze-ups in five homes had been detected; tank 3's soda ash pump and tank had been repaired; roadside brush cutting had commenced; 12 rubbish bins were repaired, and four new house signs hung.

**Management Review:** Brian Lynch said that the Committee will meet in March.

**Nominations:** There will be two information sessions about the Director role. Zoom info meetings will take place Tuesday, February 28 and Saturday, March 25 in the evening. Brian requests support from the Board in terms of attendance at those meetings. Diana Gould and Rich Breault are Committee members with Brian. Brian suggested some changes to the written materials that candidates need to submit. Dennis Heberlein will run for another term. Dennis said that the committee should vet candidates. Paul, Kate, and Brian disagreed. The Committee will proceed with putting everyone up for election who wishes to run with no Committee vetting.

**Public Relations:** Paul and James report that the e-Blast continues to be well-received. Information about the Board of Directors nominations process will be featured in upcoming e-Blasts. Kristen said that we have not heard back from invited Town officials to whom we sent questions.

**Real Estate/Rental Management:** Paul DiPietro reported that Rentals were up; it was a banner year. CHOA is up about \$8K in Real Estate. Long and short term Rentals are up \$100k, the best CHOA has ever done. Short-term is defined as 30 days or less.

**Water Commission:** Steve Boyce reported. The site surveys for the two tanks are done now. Engineering Ventures is the firm CH is using. Steve's "optimistic hope" is that we will get the tank at the top of the Hill completed this summer. On another topic, Paul said Binney Brook Road cannot be upgraded by the Town until we replace sleeve road crossings and get water lines out the road way where possible.

#### **Executive Director's Report:**

The bi-town Short-Term Rental Committee has met and addressed long-term rentals. CH has one of the biggest stock of long-term rentals in the Valley. At the next meeting, the Committee will meet with three different software companies and will recommend one. The software systems will collect STR data and locations throughout the Valley. Some send violations notices, and would serve as the registry data base.

#### **Old Business:**

- a) **Bylaw Review:** Two informational meetings with CH homeowners will be held on Feb. 21 at 7 PM and March 14 at 7 PM. Members are invited to review and comment on the recommended changes that will then be voted on during the Annual Meeting. Typos were noted and will be corrected.
- b) **23/24 Budget Review** After review of the proposed budget, with changes incorporated from the last meeting, it was agreed that the working base increase to assessments would be 6.5%. The projected budget deficit then is virtually erased.  
Services will be increased 10% across the board (except for the Plowing, Sanding and Year Round Rubbish line) to cover expenses.  
The BoD will approve the final budget in March with the most current numbers.

#### **New Business:**

a) the revised **Collection Policy** will go into effect April 1. Discussion ensued about the percentage of the penalty (\$) that the legal firm we had hired had recommended, 18%. Most thought that was high and should be reduced to 15%. A 60-day warning period will also be changed to 90-days. Discussion was held about "shaming" techniques such as posting the owners' names and what they owed in the Annual Meeting bulletin. Keith Mears reminded the Board that sharing offender/homeowner names could be a violation of 27A.

The Collection Policy document was reviewed and errors noted and improvements suggested. James will make the corrections.

- b) **22/23 Committee reports** for the Annual Meeting report are due by March 31st.

#### **Other Business/Owner, Public Comment:**

Dee Harmon asked how CH knows where a leak is in someone's house. James explained.

She also asked about a Suburban Propane issue from Facebook. There is not an official CHOA-negotiated price with area fuel companies any longer. Apparently there was such a negotiation in the past and local fuel companies still reference it.

Carlotta Gladding reminded the Board that the Chimney Hill 50 year celebration is just two years away. Tanya Sparano said we cannot compare our assessments to the condo associations' around. She also suggested that CH homeowners be given a deal for using CH Realty to sell their homes. Paul said there was a such a deal currently.

**Next BOD Meeting Dates:** Saturday, March 18th at 4 PM; April 15, 9:30 PM; May meeting is after the Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 27.

**Executive Session:**

Entered at 5:56 PM. Legal and employee issues were discussed. Exited at 6:42 PM.

**Adjournment:**

Upon a motion made by Dennis Heberlein and seconded by Keith Mears, the meeting was adjourned at 6:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Cary  
VP/Secretary