



## EE Annual Meeting Minutes

Annual Property Owners Meeting at St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Date of meeting: 10/15/22.

Meeting held in person with a Zoom option. Sign-in sheet was requested and Zoom attendees were recorded.

**Current HOA Board Members:** Mark Stellini (President, '24), Dean Dey (VP, '23), Jim Azato (VP, '23), John Smeallie (Treasurer, '22), Courtney Sunborn (Secretary, '24)

### **President's Report by Mark Stellini:**

Welcome to the new property owners and those attending an Annual Meeting for the first time!

#### Mission of the HOA Board of Directors:

To facilitate the delivery of basic services for the operation and upkeep of Edgewater Estates in the most cost-efficient way. The Board should keep the yearly fee at the lowest level possible for the neighborhood Property Owners.

Review and approve Property Owner's requests for new or additional construction on their property that meet the guidelines of the EE Covenants, in a timely and organized manner.

- Moment of silence for Joni Gaines, former Board Member and Communications Director.
- Current Board Openings: Communications Director. We are also seeking an Architectural Committee Chairperson, as well as volunteers to serve on the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). ARC members do not need to serve on the Board nor do they need to attend monthly Board meetings.
- Mark read the Meeting Minutes from the 2021 Annual Meeting. There was a request for annual meeting minutes to be approved and posted to the website within 3 months of the annual meeting. Residents also requested that financials be posted to the website, as well as the monthly Board meeting minutes. Mark explained that the minutes need to be approved by the Board before they are

posted to the website, but that we will begin posting both Annual Meeting Minutes and Monthly Board Meeting Minutes to the website once the minutes have been approved.

- There was a request for the Annual Zoom meetings to be recorded, although we did not agree to do this. Mark said that we will discuss it at the next Board meeting.
- The Annual Meeting Minutes from 2021 were approved.

#### **Architectural Review Committee Report by Dean Day:**

- We are seeking a contractor, engineer, or other building related person/persons to form the Architectural Review Committee (ARC).
- Covenant Rules and SetBacks- a couple houses are currently being built. We have had pools and fences that have applied and been approved added to properties.
- Dean announced the new ARC form on the website. Anything that changes the footprint of the property needs to be approved by ARC. Please submit requests via the website form.
- We also put a change of address form on the website, so please use that form to update your current email address with us. We are trying to collect email addresses for our communications needs.

#### **Building and Grounds Committee Report by Jim Azato:**

- We are going to improve the two EE entrances by adding more flowers in the garden beds around the EE signs. We are looking at how maintenance will get done moving forward.
- Discussed speeding in the neighborhood and asked that residents call state police to report speeders. Per Steve Smyk, a speed limit sign that will flash on Edgewater Dr in front of Stephanie Davis house.
- Street Maintenance Report- we are also looking for a new snow plow company. We need a curb to curb snow plow service. The state will come in to plow but there is a delay because the State plows primary and secondary roads first. We are also concerned about the ice build-up, especially in shady areas. So, our goal is to do the snow plowing in a more timely way. Now the state gives approx 70% of our costs for snow plowing reimbursement. We paid for the snow plowing in total \$949.45. Someone asked further about the state plowing our roads. What is the formula? It is based on 4 inches of snow in Ellendale. The information can be found on DelDot. Our neighborhood gets snow plowed from the state when snow accumulation is at least 4" in Ellendale.
- Question about sinkholes: what is the cost to the homeowners about the sinkholes? The county is saying they won't touch the sinkholes because of the

tree roots. We have reached out to the state about the sinkholes and we will continue to communicate with them and challenge the state because we think it is a compaction issue/problem, not a tree root problem. We will ask community members to reach out to the state as well. Dean said that, on Edgewood Dr and Elm Dr, the state is planning a reconstruction. Storm drains are also maintained by DelDot. The State is responsible for the drains that are underground.

- Is there a shade tree easement? The State/DelDot has the right to shave the tree from the blacktop to the black top- up vertical. Dean maintains that they are responsible for the state. Dean and Jim both agreed that the state is responsible for all storm drains, but that we, the HOA, have reached out for confirmation and that we are waiting for a response from the state.
- The Cullens, who live on Elm Dr, asked why DelDot is harassing them about their trees. She said that they would like to “go on record” that in 2017 they received a letter from DelDot and that there are continuous issues about the trees on their property. She is saying that DelDot told her that they (DelDot) get continuous calls to their office about her trees. She stated that this is harassment. “We just went on record that we have been harassed by Jim Azato.” They stated that they have lived here for 25 years and this is her 2nd board meeting being attended.
- Loretta Link if Jim is insured. Jim said yes that his business, J & L Services, is insured. Loretta asked if there is a conflict of interest with Jim being our person to cut the grass on the boat ramp and maintain the entrances. J & L Services was already hired (won the bid) prior to Jim being voted on as a Board member.
- Loretta Link stated that they are getting constant calls about who maintains the boat ramp. They asked if it was DelDot’s responsibility? Who is responsible for cleanup of the buried storm drain on the boat ramp? The storm drains on the boat ramp are not draining properly and it is causing a mosquito issue in the swale. Loretta complained that the boat ramp property is not being properly maintained. Mark stated by reading from the previous Board Minutes that Loretta’s swale would be cut one more time until the second survey was completed.
- The bylaws state that the Board does not need approval from homeowners/HOA to engage our attorney. Loretta Link shared her opinion that the homeowner’s money is wasted. We did the survey on the property based on trying to do the kayak launch/finger pier. We, as a Board, have permission to spend up to \$5,000 without getting the HOA approval. We are continuing to figure out solutions to figure out maintenance of the boat ramp.
- We will continue to work on the transparency issue, both with financial reports as well as posting Monthly Meeting Minutes.

### **Communications Committee Report by Courtney Sunborn:**

- We have new forms on the Edgewater Estates website – please use the address update form to provide your current email address. We will be communicating with homeowners via the website. This is our primary place of communication.

Check out the website for Board Members information, Community announcements, Meeting updates and minutes from various meetings. There is a password protected section containing the names and addresses of residents. You can obtain the password from any Board Member.

- Nextdoor's I Live in Edgewater Estates Website this site has been used to post meetings and events being held. There is no charge to join. Homeowners also use the EdgeWater Estates Facebook page to post pictures and neighborhood and community information.
- Our spring Yard Sale is currently scheduled for May 6th from 8am - 2pm (with a rain date on the 7<sup>th</sup>). A neighbor suggested that we coordinate with our near-by neighborhoods, who usually hold their yard sales the week after ours. Great idea! We may move our yard sale date. Check the website for updated details on the yard sale. <https://www.edgewaterestates.org/>
- Boat Ramp Keys – if you need one, please contact our Communications Director. Contact information is listed on our website.

### **Treasurer Report by John Smeallie:**

- Our billing runs from October 1st thru September 30th. Dues letters are sent out midyear. Dues are \$50.00 with a 30 day return request. 2<sup>nd</sup> notice will be sent out with an \$35.00 administration fee to cover additional fees.
- You can see actual expenses on the budget page. \$42,199- total assets. We've never had a reserve, although we maintain a very healthy balance. Every year, we come away with a reserve.
- John explained that any changes to our annual dues need to be made by  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the homeowners. A neighbor asked a question about the dues being changed. We explained that the odds of dues being changed is unlikely because we need to receive  $\frac{2}{3}$  votes to make changes.
- Status of dues- there are 12 individuals in arrears for 2021 dues.
- We moved to approve the budget. Everyone was asked to please review the proposed budget, so that we can approve the budget.

### **Other Business:**

- Covenant changes need  $\frac{2}{3}$  votes from our homeowners, which makes changes very difficult. We do not see any changes that need to be made at this time. Possible Covenant Changes discussion.
- There was a request that we change the current setbacks to conform to the Sussex County Code.

## New Business/Open Floor:

- New business- someone asked about businesses being run out of the home. There is a commercial vehicle blocking his view of the pond. Are we condoning this? Mark said we are aware of the issue and working on the vehicle that needs to be moved.
- Question about the Buttonwood pavement. Edgewood and Buttonwood both have pavement issues. Dean said that they have marked the Elm and Edgewood corner for street work, but we don't have an update on when this work will take place.
- Question about the finger pier. Is that a dead issue? Mark replied that it is a dead issue at this time because we don't have approval from the adjoining home owners because they feel it is a safety issue. There was a complaint that people trip and fall into the pond, which is also a safety issue. Jim said- right now, we only have so much property there. The width at the ramp itself isn't wide enough. We are looking at a total redesign of the boat ramp. The latest discussion is moving our boat ramp back. The repair is over the \$5,000 threshold. We would need to change the entire footprint of the boat ramp. The issue of improving the boat ramp is dormant because we need  $\frac{2}{3}$  votes to approve over \$5,000. Our boat ramp is sub-par. Part of the mission of the board is overall improvement of the Board. Is it possible that we can keep the community informed? We are in the inception phase. There was a question asked- would it be possible for the homeowners who want it to be able to pay for it? We'd be happy to discuss that as a group. Is it possible to put in a floating dock that is not permanent. "As a homeowner, I would like the boat ramp to be a community decision." Everyone would have to contribute. We understand that other communities have better boat ramps. From the response of interest, we will continue working on the improvement of the boat ramp.
- There are two slight swell accesses (about 10 feet) but they have never been used as other accesses to the lake. They are about sidewalk width. Can we put a kayak launch there since they have never been used? We, as a Board, will take a look at the accessibility of both of those. There is a whole line of trees. We will get something out in the next few months about the finger pier.
- There was a complaint that the boat ramp signs are in the way of kayak launchers. Can we move the sign? We can move the signs as long as they remain on community property. The water is controlled by DenRec. Kayak launch plans would like to be posted.
- Sheds/setback: a neighbor (didn't get the name) stated, "I'm in violation right now". I would like to change the general consensus of the setback. We would need to bring an official resolution. We would need to send a ballot to all homeowners and we would send 2 or 3 issues out as a poll. 15 from the side. 20 from the back. 5 feet everywhere. We are taking a straw poll. 60% of the meeting raised their hand that they would like to see smaller setbacks. We would need  $\frac{2}{3}$

of 276. Examples: Dean said that 60% of the homeowners rejected free water samples. Neighbors would need to network to make any changes to the community as a proposed amendment to the covenants and bylaws.

- As a Board, we are willing to work on whatever the community thinks is important. But it is a challenging process to make any changes. We will be communicating with homeowners via the website. This is our primary place of communication.

### **Nominations:**

- Communication Director: Trish Dickerson was nominated by Courtney Sunborn. Trish was voted on and approved.
- Architectural Chair/Committee: vacant. We asked for ARC Volunteers- there were no volunteers at the meeting.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

The meeting was held from 10:00am - 11:25am.

The next annual Property Owners meeting will be held on 10/14/23. We will try to secure the large meeting room in the Lewes Library. Our next monthly Board meeting is scheduled for 11/12/22, although our monthly HOA Board meetings are for Board members only.

\*Questions/changes: please email [edgewaterestatesboard@gmail.com](mailto:edgewaterestatesboard@gmail.com).