

Minutes
GHI Board of Directors
July 14, 2005

Present: Abell, Alexanderwicz, Alpers, Eichhorst, Hess, Hudson, Lauber, Lewis, Moore

Others in Attendance: Gretchen Overdurff, General Manager
Stephen Ruckman, Director of Finance
Eldon Ralph, Director of Physical Plant Services
Joan Krob, Director of Member Services
Brenda Lewis, Director of Human Resources
Tom Sporney, Staff Engineer
Matt Berres, Landscape Specialist
Chris Dwyer, Community Beautification Inspector
Diane Wilkerson, Chair, Audit Committee
Mary Crellin, Audit Committee
Diana McFadden, Audit Committee
Genevieve Courbois, Recording Secretary

Pat Novinski
Betty Deitch
Lora Katz
Alice Mitchell
Elsie Forbes
David Morse
Kim Kash
Cass Cooney
Melissa Emerich

Corinne Carter
Eva Barnett
Michel Cavigelli
Katia Cavigelli
Mark Cummins
Suzette Agans
Jeanette Grotke
Mary Moien, & *Greenbelt News*
Review

President Eichhorst called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. She added *Moratorium on Exterior Modifications* to the Agenda as Item 7e.

1. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: MOVE APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AS REVISED.

Moved: Alexanderwicz Seconded: Abell Carried

2. Visitors and Members

There were no visitors or members who wished to approach the Board at this time.

3. Discussion of Minutes

MOTION: MOVE APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2005.

Moved: Lewis Seconded: Hudson Carried

While some members may have the most current plats in their possession, said Ralph, GHI is not planning on acquiring plat copies from members as this is a time-consuming process. General Manager Overdurff, in agreement with Ralph, stated that GHI will devote the resources needed to update the binders. Treasurer Lewis stressed that plats acquired by members at the time of sale which show yard lines hold vital information which should be considered in evaluating yard lines. She stressed that GHI needs to know about the existence of any such plats.

Staff Engineer Sporney explained that he developed the yard plat binders at the onset of the yard line project for the benefit of the Committee but with the intention that the binders would eventually become an official source of information used by staff. His goal is to have a source which contains documentation representing official yard plats; the plats would continue to be updated at the time of resale. He said that the administrative assistant, working in conjunction with the resale inspector, attempted to procure the most useful, original document to include in the binder. Sporney explained that often an “onion skin” plat is contained in a member’s file, and at the time of resale, this plat is photocopied and dimensions are drawn onto the copy and the unmarked “onion skin” plat is placed back into the member’s file. As a result, the plats in the binders may not be the same as those in members’ files.

Director Hess inquired if there were any situations in which dimension notations are crucial to plat interpretation. He stated that in many cases natural boundaries obviously exist which may perhaps obviate the need for specific dimensions. In response, Director Hudson quoted that 24% of the 579 units have boundaries that are obvious and 76% of the 579 units have plats without dimensions. Member Lora Katz voiced her concerns about the multitude of plats in existence and stated that, as a result, plats are not a good standard by which to establish yard lines. Director Hess said that he understood that yard plats reflected yard lines. In response, Katz explained, “Not all plats have yard lines and not all plats reflect reality, but most plats exist.” Director Hudson gave a hypothetical example where a member has erected a fence 5’ outside of the plat boundary; the yard line along this fence would not be reflected on a plat.

President Eichhorst stated that the next step would be for staff to complete the binder project and report back to the Board. Staff will strive to include those plats which are from the most recent resale in the hopes that these are the most detailed, accurate and realistic.

7b. Creation of Ad Hoc Committee to Study 2005 Sustainable Designs

At the Board’s planning session, it was agreed that an ad hoc committee should be formed to study various heating options, such as solar energy, which is of interest to a number of members. This topic falls under the classification of sustainable design.

Member Alice Mitchell, summarized: a) request to the Board seeking permission to formally establish an ad hoc committee, and b) her brief summary of GHI’s previous investigations of solar power in the mid 1970’s and early 1980’s entitled *Solar Summary*. Board discussion regarding the establishment of this committee was very positive and encouraging. President Eichhorst envisions a lot of good ideas being implemented through this committee. Several members remarked on the active discussions which have been taking place about the committee on the Greenbelters Yahoo!Group.

President Eichhorst requested that the committee draft a charter for Board approval, as well as a timeline, budget request and roster of members (maximum of 11 – subcommittees can be formed.) She said that committee members will be appointed in August. General Manager Overdurff made available a committee application form for those interested in serving on the committee.

7c. Community Beautification Program Report on First Round of Inspections

Community Beautification Inspector Dwyer said that all 1600 units have been inspected and he is currently conducting second and third inspections. He stated that the three items cited most frequently were 1) trash containers needing enclosure, 2) ivy on trees and 3) dirty siding. He said that he could see making a lot of changes to the program, even being more strict; however, each unit is different. Board members noted that some of the figures for specific citations appeared to be lower than usual. Treasurer Lewis confirmed that GHI would be giving out awards to members.

Member Betty Deitch, took this opportunity to voice her concerns about the appearance of her neighbor's area and presented some photographs to the Board. She is particularly concerned about items that her neighbor continually props against the side of her unit and the placement of her neighbor's gazebo. She said that she spoke with Landscape Specialist Berres, however, nothing has been done. Staff Engineer Sporney stated that he would look at the unit the next day. President Eichhorst stated that the Community Beautification Program evolves each year and she hopes that the neighbor's yard will be better looking next year. She said that she did not hear many member complaints about the program, perhaps because the program focused more on recognizing good yards.

7d. Newsletter Survey to Members

The GHI *Communicator* has become a major vehicle for communicating with members, however, it is uncertain how many members actually read this publication. Conducting a reader survey has been proposed.

The Board discussed what information should be elicited in the reader survey, and how it should be conducted. Board and audience members offered suggestions and questioned whether the survey would provide useful and representative information. Ideas of how to capture the survey information included a dedicated GHI telephone line for responses, a tear off response in the newsletter, posting the survey on the GHI website, contacting Greenbelters Yahoo!Group and placing a classified ad in the *News Review*.

7e. Moratorium on Exterior Modifications

President Eichhorst explained that this moratorium was put into effect for the CLEAR project. She stated that the Board understands that some members have been waiting six months to have exceptions considered by the Board. After reviewing the wording of the motion which enacted the moratorium in the February 13th minutes, the Board concluded that the moratorium is effectively lifted as of July 2005.

Director Hudson said that in future meetings, the A&E Committee plans to divide its time between working on exceptions and the CLEAR project. Staff Engineer Sporney mentioned that the A&E Committee will need direction from the Board if it is to proceed any differently than it has before. In terms of the CLEAR project and “as better practice,” Director Alexanderwicz opined that the A& E Committee should provide the Board with manageable pieces and that the Board should look at projects in steps.

8. Items of Information

No discussion.

9. President

President Eichhorst noted that Board members have received the Consultant Services proposal for the management audit and that this will appear on the next Agenda. She stated that she will be attending the PAHC meeting and training session in Newport News over the weekend.

10. Board Members

Director Hudson, after reviewing the section of the GHI Handbook which outlines the member complaint process, stated that member complaints do not need to be submitted to GHI in writing. He further stated that, within this context, Member Deitch’s complaint via telephone to GHI was sufficient.

Secretary Lauber said that she has received positive feedback on the improved appearance of the common areas this year.

Treasurer Lewis voiced her appreciation for member attendance and input at the Board meeting.

Director Hess said that his recent travels, which have precluded him from attending a number of meetings, are now completed.

11. General Manager

General Manager Overdurff stated that a ranger from the U.S. Forest Service telephoned GHI after being contacted by U.S. Representative Steny Hoyer’s office concerning GHI’s use of pesticides. She said that both Director of Physical Plant Services Ralph and Landscape Specialist Matt Berres met with the ranger to discuss whether GHI had followed proper procedures in applying pesticides. Ralph felt that GHI provided responses to the satisfaction of the ranger.

She noted that she would be away and returning to the office on July 21st.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Moved: Abell

Seconded: Moore

Carried

The meeting recessed to Executive Session at 9:20 p.m.

FOR THE RECORD: At an Executive Session of the Board of Directors on June 23, 2005, the following action was taken and moved to open session:

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS REMOVE BILL WILKERSON AND JOHN NICHOLS FROM GHI COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS FOR THEIR ACTIONS THAT HAVE FAILED TO SUPPORT AND SERVE THE BOARD AS EVIDENCED BY THEIR RECENT PUBLIC STANCE.

Moved: Hudson

Seconded: Hess

Unanimous

MOTION: MOVE THE MOTION TO REMOVE BILL WILKERSON AND JOHN NICHOLS FROM GHI COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS INTO OPEN SESSION.

Moved: Hess

Seconded: Lewis

Carried

Dorothy Lauber
Secretary