

SUDDEN VALLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2014
ADULT CENTER
7:00 PM

In Attendance:

Larry Brown, President
Carol Bauman, Vice President
David Narsico, Secretary
George Shaffner, Treasurer
Tom Doll
Melissa Lange
Tammy Woodin
Mitch Waterman
Jo Jean Kos, ACC Chair

Excused Absence: Carol Houlton
Leslie McRoberts, N&E Chair

Community Members: 6

Staff: Jeff Schlaack, General Manager
Amanda Becker, Administrative Specialist

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Director Lange announced Creekside Coffee Shop would be opened Saturday, April 12th. The Café would offer coffee, hot dogs, and other food items. The lease would be signed on April 11th.
- B. Director Lange also announced the 19th Hole would be opened Saturday, April 12th. The 19th hole would have a grab and go warmer that had premade breakfast sandwiches and burritos. Beer and other beverages would be available. A new drink cart, owned by Pepsi, would run in conjunction with the 19th hole. There are no set hours at the time of the announcement.
- C. Director Bauman stated the Fireman's Appreciation Dinner was an absolute success.
- D. Karin, the branch manager of the South Whatcom Library, announced the Library's Grand Opening on Saturday April 12th beginning at 10 am. The event would begin with remarks and ribbon cutting. There would be many other activities throughout the day; story time, performances by Bellingham Ukulele Orchestra, jugglers, marionettes, and a scavenger hunt. The library has checked out 5700 books to date, signed up 150 cards, and had to add an extra toddler story time on Fridays.

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Agenda was adopted with the following additions:

To Continuing Business: D. Pool Fees

E. Chickens and other Prohibited Pets

F. Realtor Search Issue

G. BOD Email Discussion and Propriety Discussed There In

To New Business: B. May Calendar

Closed Session after Board Comments

V. CONTINUING BUSINESS

A. EMERGENCY TREE REMOVAL AND ROADSIDE POLICY

1. Director Kos presented a policy written by the Architectural Control Committee.

MOTION: Director Kos motioned the policy be approved by the board so it could be added to the ACC guidelines. The motion was seconded.

MOTION TO AMEND: Director Shaffner motioned to amend the phrase “be retained as needed” to “be retained by the owner as needed”. The motion was seconded. The motion failed with 2 for, 2 against, and 3 abstained.

Some Directors felt that the policy didn’t give clear boundaries for removing a tree.

Another concern stated was the term “hazardous tree” wasn’t clearly defined.

President Brown recommended when referring a policy that defines a term it is best to use the term in the language of the definition you use. Questions arose about recourse for cutting down trees that weren’t a true hazard.

MOTION: Director Doll motioned to send this back to committee for a clearer description including the fine. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

1. Director Doll passed around a handout of the results from the Strategic Planning Committee meeting. He stated on April 5th that the focus of the committee has shifted towards implementing a plan that could be passed at the 2014 AGM. The plan would cover goals for 3-5 years and an overall goal of 10 years. Director Doll stated the committee will be working on a framework to present to the Board with the goal of being included in the 2014 AGM.

C. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAFFIC CONTROL UPDATE

1. Director Waterman stated the Emergency Preparedness Committee met on the 1st to draft a proposal for the traffic control issue. The memo has been sent on to Larry and David for review. Many options were presented, including banning people from driving in Sudden Valley, speed bumps, flashing speed signs, ticket generating speed guns, and bringing in the Sheriff. President Brown stated that he was almost run down twice since this was last discussed. Director Lange stated that moms on the Sudden Valley Mom’s Facebook page have had discussions, taken photos, called the deputy, and reported license plates to try and get this issue resolved. The Sheriff’s office told a resident that Sudden Valley had private roads so they couldn’t ticket without permission. Sudden Valley Board has sent a letter to the Sheriff’s office stating that they are allowed to ticket people within Sudden Valley. President Brown stated they sent a letter requesting a meeting with the Sheriff to discuss traffic enforcement, what their ideas for the Board might be, and what the statute allows them to do now that permission has been given. The meeting is under process.

ACTION ITEM: GM Schlaack will look into the cost of speed bumps.

Emergency services have restrictions on speed bump heights. GM Schlaack stated that he believes non-compliance and enforcement are the issue. Director Lange doesn't believe speed bumps will solve the problem.

The discussion was referred back to the committee. The committee is to come back with an actionable proposal with costs and alternatives.

D. POOL FEES

1. Director Lange stated the Adult Center pool doesn't have fees at this time due to it not being high priority. GM Schlaack has contacted Marshall, who has been the pool service man in the past. The Adult Center Pool will require access cards for use. In prior years a fee has been paid to the Health Club for the season.

ACTION ITEM: Director Lange will bring forward a proposal to the Finance Committee.

E. CHICKENS AND OTHER PROHIBITED PETS

1. Director Lange, along with the rest of the Board, received an email regarding chickens residing on Honeycomb Lane. Chickens are a prohibited pet and the consensus is nothing is being done about them. Due to a lack of recourse more people are getting chickens. Director Bauman stated that this property and many others have been fined in the past. This has resulted in one woman taking the chickens into her home and stating they are her pets. President Brown stated that according to county code there are no chickens permitted in the Watershed, also that the restrictive covenants state chickens are not allowed in Sudden Valley. He stated the Board needs to decide on how they want to take care of this situation in the future, ask the county for help or start enforcing the regulations themselves. Director Narsico brought up the issue of changing a restrictive covenant. He encouraged the board to look into a higher fine for chickens. Director Lange inquired if the owner or tenant is responsible. GM Schlaack stated the fines are charged to the owner of the property. He suggested doing a rent intercept and taking the fine out of that. President Brown encouraged a Board Member to look into what would be required to do a rent intercept in the future. Answers to questions such as: do changes need to be made to the bylaws or covenants; what are the restrictions under state law? Director Shaffner stated collections has been a priority of the finance committee for some time but hasn't been made a priority due to the accounting manager being absent for an extended period of time. The collection plan will be coming back on the agenda next time and rent intercept will be added to that plan.
2. **POINT OF INFORMATION:** Director Waterman asked Director Bauman if the fine for having chickens was ever collected. Director Bauman said she doesn't believe the fine was collected but a lien was placed on the individual's house.
3. Director Shaffner feels the current board, as well as past boards, have been a part of slack in enforcement. President Brown said that this problem has come up many other times so an enforcement plan needs to be looked into.

ACTION ITEM: GM Schlaack is to propose to the board an enforcement mechanism that would be the most efficient use of staff time and Sudden Valley resources, based on his experience in other large communities and on his past experience.

GM Schlaack stated that there is a proposal going forward to Finance Committee, with two main concerns. The concerns are the amount of appeals that will come in and the amount being spent on collection. Director Lange and Director Narsico would

like Security to use common sense going forward, President Brown believed it to be a lack of clarity on what security is allowed to enforce.

MOTION: Director Doll motioned to have a closed session after the meeting to hear about Jeff's proposal that is going to finance next week. The motion was seconded. The motion passed with 6 for and 1 opposed.

F. REALTOR SEARCH ISSUE

1. Director Waterman recently learned that when purchasing a house in Sudden Valley if you search "Bellingham", Sudden Valley homes do not come up. A call needs to be made to the Board of Realtors to get Sudden Valley included in the Bellingham search.

ACTION ITEM: Director Waterman will get in touch with the Board of Realtors to go forward with this process.

G. EMAIL DISCUSSION AND THE PROPRIETARY DISCUSSED THEREIN

1. President Brown stated the Board had quite a few email discussions that have resulted in many items being added to the agenda. If an email chain results in a proposal, then President Brown asks the director to add the item to the agenda. Director Lange understood, from the attorney at the orientation last year, that email is not a place to have discussions but instead to be brought to a Board meeting. President Brown suggested going forward that general email discussions need to be stopped by any individual that feels the discussion should happen at a Board meeting. Director Narsico feels that getting an email ahead of time helps the Board prepare to make the meetings more efficient. Director Shaffner believes it helps the Board members decide if a topic is important enough to be brought forward to a meeting. The Directors decided going forward emails should include information that is being added to the agenda.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. QUITCLAIM DEED OF SUDDEN VALLEY DIV 16 LOT 62 TO SVCA

1. President Brown stated the lot owners can't afford to keep paying dues, in this particular case, due to medical expenses. The lot owners want to give the property back to Sudden Valley. They drafted a quit claim deed and it was brought before the Board to discuss, not vote on. President Brown checked out the lot and believes it would be nice for green space. If the lot is accepted and has commercial value then taxes will need to be paid on it. If the Board doesn't accept the lot, they aren't likely to get dues. If the county takes it, the only way to get the lot back is to purchase it in an auction. Director Lange has requested going forward, if a property is to be brought before the board, a real property search is done. A call to Lake Whatcom Water District to inquire about ULIDs is also necessary. This property is current in taxes and the ULID is paid in full. Due to the property being current; it will be 3 years before the County will take it to sell at a tax sale. The property is behind two quarters in dues. The property is worth \$10,000 and the taxes are very low. Director Bauman stated an issue very similar to this was brought to the last board meeting and was referred to the Finance Committee. The main concern seems to be paying taxes on the property going forward.
2. Director Shaffner stated that the property value dropped 2/3rds. Dues are approximately 70% of the revenue and of that 20% comes from lots. When a quit

claim deed is offered, the people are saving Sudden Valley money from having to go after the lot later. He feels it is wisest to collect from the people who can pay, take the lots from those who can't, and when the market turns decide what to do with the property then. President Brown suggested the Finance Committee review the current existing level of financial fees on building in Sudden Valley. Perhaps going forward the payment could be spread over time or even reduced. Director Waterman stated the fee should be eliminated because it keeps people from wanting to invest in Sudden Valley. He has discussed the issue with realtors and the realtors feel the marketing isn't being done correctly.

3. Director Shaffner stated that the Finance Committee doesn't have the personnel to take on more at this time. President Brown suggested that people do as much research as possible to save the Finance Committee time going forward. Director Doll suggested the Strategic Committee could take a look at where the money is coming from and going forward spread the load out so not everything is being turned over to Finance. It was suggested to partner with a real estate business to put together a portfolio with strategies to sell the lots. President Brown asked for volunteers for a new taskforce. Directors Lange, Waterman and Woodin all volunteered.

ACTION ITEM: The taskforce going forward needs to present a lot plan to the Board.

ACTION ITEM: President Brown will reply to the current owners stating we can't accept their lot at this time.

B. MAY CALENDAR

1. President Brown reminded the Board that May begins on a Thursday, making the finance meeting and the board meeting two consecutive nights. He suggested going forward; the meeting schedule should state that the BOD meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday after the "1st" day of the month. The decision was made to change the Board meetings to May 15th and May 29th.

VII. PROPERTY OWNER COMMENTS

1. Resident is concerned with community spirit. She is aware of an elderly couple that is very sick and they need someone to offer them a ride. The gentleman lives in a nursing home and the lady is unable to take care of herself but still drives. The resident suggested getting a core list of people going forward that would be willing to help others out.
2. Another resident stated he was aware that the Community Environmental Services Manager, Mr. Cavender, had done a lot evaluation on Sudden Valley owned lots. He suggested Mr. Cavender would be a great assistance to the Real Estate problem. In response to speeding he suggested offenders be "named and shamed" in the Sudden Valley Views. Finally, in response to the chicken issue he suggests re-homing a few foxes that reside in Sudden Valley.
3. A resident stated concerning accepting lots from residents, there needs to be a policy in place. She stated previously a trade had been suggested to the Board but the trade wasn't of equal value, due to back taxes owed on the property. Looking back, in 1985 1 lot was given back; 1991, 2 lots; 1993, 2 lots; 1994, 9 lots; 1995, 27 lots; 1997, 16 lots; and in 2002, 167 lots. The point being that of all those lots returned, Sudden Valley is currently paying taxes on 71 of them. The resident suggested going forward to hope for the best but plan for the worst.

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

1. President Brown stated a lot of ideas have been discussed about the lot owner concerns that need to be addressed. The taskforce needs to address the history and welcome any input on the information. The Board will not take the decision lightly on what direction the taskforce chooses to take.
2. Director Lange stated in response to the need for volunteers/community spirit that an article should be written for the Views. She suggested that staff could collect the phone numbers for people willing to help others. President Brown stated he knows Christ the King has proven they have people who are willing to help. Director Woodin suggested using the Sudden Valley Volunteers page on Facebook.
3. In response to the lot evaluation Director Woodin stated it was previously in the Board binders but wasn't included this year.
4. Director Woodin stated in response to "name and shame" in the Views one concern is tenants don't read the Views and there are a lot more renters now. President Brown was reminded that in the future the Board needs to discuss the issue of rental and leasing policy.
5. Director Doll believes Linda Bradley should be appointed the historian of Sudden Valley. She always brings context to some of these conversations. Director Lange asked resident Linda Bradley if she would like to join the Real Estate Taskforce.
6. Director Shaffner wants to set an expectation for setting budgets next year, he hopes that people don't expect more revenue to come from lots. We need to embark on a strategy that reduces the amount of dependence we have left on lot contribution. President Brown suggested using a budget that is reality based when the time comes.
7. Director Narsico suggested using a variable assessment on dues going forward.

CLOSED SESSION

Closed session was called at 9:18 PM

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Board approved



Secretary David Narsico

Date

MAY 2, 2014