

North Fort Annual HOA Meeting

January 14, 2023

10:00 am

Rainbow Lanes

850 Hwy 42 West
Clayton, NC 27520

Meeting **HOSTED** by: Bruce Allen, Signature Management

Type of meeting: HOA Monthly Board Meeting

Secretary: Trish Perna

Directors Present: Jane Garvey, Tracy Williams-Pender, Beth Smith, John Kronz, Ken Jones

Officers Present: John Sickler - President, Daria Tolentino - Vice-President, Trish Perna - Secretary

Quorum Established

Meeting began at 10:12 am

Introductions were made by all attendees. 22 Residents attended.

Note from secretary: Items are grouped by topics not necessarily in order of discussion.

Agenda Item: Northfort Website

Discussion:

Ongoing website improvements, such as enhanced security/monitoring and the additional capabilities that are in progress to add the annual membership and board meeting minutes to the site, were explained.

The board informed the attendees that there is not currently a webmaster volunteer to take on the task of website upkeep and therefore a third-party service is being utilized at expense.

Residents inquired about whether there would be the ability to pay dues online in the future.

Conclusion:

The board is using WordPress to maintain the website. Services for the improvements will be sourced through them.

A volunteer for webmaster was suggested by a resident and that individual will be reaching out to the contact.

The Board explained that information regarding online dues payment options is being gathered. Furthermore, it would go through a third-party service to keep security concerns, as well as overhead

costs, to a minimum. Alternatives in the interim, such as personal online bill pay services, were discussed.

Agenda Item: Covenants and HOA

Discussion:

The differences between the Covenants and the HOA were unclear for several attendees. Clarification was asked for by attendees.

Existing covenants and reason for the covenant re-write was discussed. The history of how the covenants were developed originally while the developer retained the sole ability to impose same, was discussed. In addition, the attendees were advised of the provision in the original covenants which allowed for amendment by residents after 25 years. The Board explained to the attendees the current covenants are a patchwork of more than a dozen different filings and therefore, confusing, disorganizing and occasionally internally inconsistent. Over the course of several months the Board members and officers debated and drafted a proposal that is more organized and comprehensive in structure.

Questions were asked by residents regarding their feedback on covenants. Also, the timeline. This process is for all lot owners.

Legal advice was explained regarding the new inclusion into the HOA. Inquiries were made regarding the sale of the current residents' homes that used to be excluded from the HOA and are now included and must begin to pay the dues. Complaints were made regarding these new deemed members having to pay and refusing. Concerns regarding their wanting to mitigate when they sell.

It was suggested by attendees that the Board should better explain to the residents, ahead of time, that the annual meeting is the best forum to discuss the dues and any covenants grievances.

Conclusion:

The differences between the Covenants and the HOA were clarified and explained. Covenants are legally binding rules of the development that ALL residents must abide by. The HOA is group of volunteers that accept the legal responsibility of upholding the Covenants and maintaining the public access areas of the neighborhood.

The covenant draft is with the attorney and the Board hopes to receive that back with approval soon.

Resident feedback will be acquired once the covenant draft is received from the attorney. At that time, the draft will be sent to all residents of the North Fort community for feedback and discussion.

The newly included residents will fall under the same legal processes regardless of their past status when it comes to participation in the HOA. It was also explained that, given the legal advice received, it would have been a dereliction of the Board's duty and unfair to those who had been paying all the bills not to include in the revenue process all lots mandated to join. Beginning January 2023, all members will begin paying HOA dues moving forward. No dues will be collected in the arrears for these new members.

The Board will make a conscious effort to better inform the residents of how and when to properly address the dues, covenant concerns and grievances.

Agenda Item: Neighboring Properties

Discussion:

Whitley Corner water runoff was discussed. The rain runoff and overflow from Whitley Corners borders the Northwest portion of the neighborhood and is becoming a concern for residents as well as the HOA.

Privacy issues were discussed as well. Residents inquired about the landscaping on the Whitley Corner side of the borders to reinstate the privacy that the North Fort community had prior to the developing efforts.

The new emergency access gate was discussed regarding whether it would need to stay in place as well as the traffic issue it has created. Traffic is still an issue as Google Maps now shows it as a through road. Vehicles coming through the North Fort development on North Fort Drive are now having to make a U-turn in the street and back track.

The possibility of an entry gate on Buffalo Road being added to the neighborhood was suggested.

Conclusion:

The Board has notified the contractors/builders of the runoff issues and they have stated that the corrections have been completed. The board has asked residents to inform them if any issues are seen moving forward.

The Board as well as the residents are hoping that the landscaping is added on the Whitley Corners and Thales Academy side soon. Management will inquire about this with the contractors/builders.

The gate will most likely need to remain due to the need for emergency responder to have it as an access point. A locking mechanism of some sort has been added to the gate. Any residents willing to contact Google maps regarding the issue is encouraged and appreciated with the understanding that the more it is reported the faster Google may correct the problem on their end.

A gate on Buffalo Road is not able to be added to the entrance of the North Fort neighborhood because of the roads being state maintained.

Agenda Item: Roads, Improvements and Maintenance

Discussion:

The roads within the North Fort development were discussed. Currently, some are state maintained, however, there are a few that have not been taken over by the Department of Transportation (DOT) due to pre-existing issues that the DOT is requiring be corrected.

Traffic and visibility leaving the complex was discussed.

Residents brought up a home on Buffalo Road that has the broken fence. The concern is that it looks unkept and unattractive. There were inquiries as to why the HOA has not fixed the damage.

The installation of more fire and other ways to add fire hydrants to neighborhood were discussed.

Residents informed the Board that the Buffalo fence needs power washing.

The Board inquired about the use of ATVs on the DOT roads in the neighborhood.

The Bradford Pears along Buffalo Road were discussed. They are nearing the end of their life cycle and conversations were held to discuss options once they are past their prime and a safety issue. They are also becoming a visual issue when trying to leave the development.

Dog droppings and trash issues were brought up by several attendees. This is an ongoing issue and residents are frustrated about the feces and trash being left around the neighborhood.

New landscaping company providing a higher level of service was discussed. Improvement in the common area landscaping has been achieved. A few attendees informed the Board that the company's promotional signs are being left behind even after they have fallen with new ones simply being added.

Conclusion:

The Board informed the attendees that to have the DOT acquire these sections there will need to be future conversations between the HOA and the members to decide how the issues will be addressed regarding costs, etc.

The Board informed the attendees that information is being gathered regarding either widening the entrance pavement to avoid the tire ruts in the landscaping, adding a traffic light at the entrance or both. The Board members are in communication with contacts at the DOT.

The board explained that the fence running along Buffalo Road is on private property and is the responsibility of the respective property owners to fix any damage. The only maintenance responsibilities that the HOA can provide is power washing of the fence. The Board explained to the attendees that the HOA is taking action to have the property owner correct the issue according to legal procedures.

A resident brought up the possibility that to have more fire hydrants added to the North Fort development we may need to hook up to the city water system that is being added down Buffalo Road. A resident volunteered to try to gather more information. Everyone agreed unanimously that they do not wish to hook up to city water.

The pond fence and the entrance of the development were power washed in the Spring of 2022. The Board will gather information and quotes for power washing the fence along Buffalo Road.

ATV use on roads was discussed. Residents informed board that the use of ATVs on the roads in the neighborhood has declined.

Options for dealing with the Bradford Pears in the meantime involved possible neighbor volunteers trimming the branches, possibly hiring a service to trim as well as possibly removing them. Further discussion would need to be held regarding the removal of the trees.

The Board will put out more reminders in the communications that pet owners are to pick up after their animals.

The secretary will contact the landscape company regarding the signs and request that they not place them in the common areas in hopes of solving the issue.

Agenda Item: Common Areas

Discussion:

ATV use on the common areas of the pond, which includes the walkway and the dam, is prohibited. It has been called to the Board's attention that recreational vehicles are, in fact, using the common area for travel.

The pond boundaries and restrictions regarding resident access were discussed and clarified. There was confusion as to who was allowed to access the common area of the pond.

Conclusion:

Signs will be added to both ends of the walkway to further inform residents and resident guests that recreational vehicles are not allowed in the common areas or on the pond walkway. These signs have already been ordered and will be installed when they arrive.

The residents and guests of the North Fort community in good standing are permitted to use the common area of the pond which includes the pond itself, the entire dam surface and a 25-foot strip from the dam to the northeast corner of the pond. The Board requested to be advised if any contiguous property owner improperly impeded access to any of the common area.

Agenda Item: Newsletters, Communication and Activities

Discussion:

Newsletters being used as the main informal communications was discussed. The Board asked residents if the newsletter is useful and requested feedback. Suggestions that a welcome wagon for new residents be started up moving forward.

The attendees informed the Board that the 2022 fall get together was a lot of fun and that more events be held. Residents would also like to continue with the fall social event annually.

Conclusion:

Suggestions for a more streamlined format of communication was suggested as well as communications more often. Board will investigate ways to improve and streamline communications.

A few of the HOA volunteers will look into event ideas and scheduling as well as possibilities for starting a welcome wagon for new homeowners of North Fort.

Agenda Item: Treasurer Report

Discussion:

To keep the HOA members informed on the use of budget monies as well as satisfy statutory requirements. The Treasurer presented an overview of the budget and attendees were afforded the opportunity to ask questions.

Conclusion:

Questions relating to legal fees amount were discussed and clarified. All questions were answered by the treasurer to the satisfaction of all attendees.

- ✓ Moved to approval.
- ✓ Motion 2nd.

✓ Approved.

Agenda Item: 2023 HOA Board of Elections

Discussion:

A Candidates' discussion was held. All existing board members were willing to continue volunteering in their current positions. No new candidates wished to be considered.

All attendees voted Yes for existing volunteers remaining in their current positions. Board continues as listed above.

- ✓ Moved to approval.
 - ✓ Motion 2nd.
 - ✓ Approved.
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Agenda Item: Final Thoughts or Feedback

Discussion:

A resident asked what the boards goals are moving forward.

Conclusion:

The Board informed attendees that the future goals included the handling of covenant violations, particularly the repeat violators/violations, mailbox/sign spruce ups are a future possible goal, as well as, continuing efforts to uphold the legal obligations to the neighborhood and residents.

All questions and concerns were addressed to satisfaction as far as the Board is aware. Meeting moved to adjournment.

Motion to adjourn.

Motion was seconded.

Meeting concluded at 11:51 am.

The Board met briefly after the meeting to thank the currently serving officers and confirm their reappoint.