**Emerald Plantation Master Association Annual Meeting**

**MINUTES FROM THE 2025 ANNUAL MEETING**

**Saturday May 3, 2025, 1:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER –** Mauri Galey called the meeting to order at 1:06 PM. Mauri reminded everyone that while we may have differences and similarities, we are all neighbors. The Board Members and other helpers are all volunteers. We will have time to talk and discuss items on the agenda, but we will need to limit cross talk to complete our meeting in a reasonable amount of time.

**INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS** – Mauri Galey, President; Frank Salvo, Vice President; Darcel Browning, Treasurer; Brian O’Dell, Member at Large; George Gomez, Member at Large; Donna Grady, Member at Large and Townhouse Liaison; Kristina Voltaire, Secretary is out on childbirth leave. Sandy Helms was recognized as the Club House reservation coordinator.

SPECIAL THANK YOUS – A special thank you to Rick Stepputtis for maintaining our electrical, putting up the Christmas decorations and more. A special thank you to Sandy Helms for managing the Club House and keeping an eye on the plantings around the circle.

**ATTENDANCE AND PROXY CERTIFICATION OF A QUORUM** – Molly Laula and Malcolm Mead confirmed a quorum was present. The sign in sheets and mailed in proxies are on file with the annual minutes. Our Bylaws require 10% participation to be a quorum.

**PROOF OF NOTICE OF MEETING** – PB Mares sent the mailer on April 18, 2025. We also posted the meeting on our Facebook page and posted it on the entrance and the pool/clubhouse bulletin boards. Our Bylaws require this mailing to go out 50 to 10 days prior to the meeting date. This was done. Neighbors confirmed receiving the document. NOTE – for future meetings please bring your mailers in case you have specific questions.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING –** All acknowledged receiving the 2024 Minutes in the notice of the annual meeting. There were no changes or comments to the minutes as posted. A motion to approve the minutes was called for. Stewart Baker motioned to approve the minutes and Dean Whitley seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

**SURVEY RESULTS –** In 2023 the neighborhood requested more input and communication to and from The Board. A survey was used as part of expanding this dialog. The results of the survey are reviewed in the State of the Community notes. These results and direct communications are what The Board is using to drive actions in the community. The Pool, Day Dock, Roads, Boat Ramp and Boat Storage were key items tagged by our neighbors as points needing focus.

**TREASURER’s REPORT: FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND 2026 BUDGET –** Our fiscal year runs from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026. Our balance sheet for the 2024 – 2025 year and our proposed budget for 2025 to 2026 were eclosed in the Annual Meeting Mailer. Below is our status:

 3.31.2025 Comments/Updates

Money Market Account $112,243.15 $79,844.33 is due on the dock.

Checking Account $ 36,831.23

Outstanding Balances $ 2,258.66 as of 5.3.2025, $526.35

The Board targets transferring $1650.00 per month to our reserves. Our reserves are lower than this time last year. This is because we paid for the first part of the day dock in 2024. We will pay for the remainder in FY 2025. Our one-time additional dues, $275.00 per lot per quarter, will restore the reserve value this fiscal year. The budget for 2025-2026 will be voted on during the voting section or our meeting.

Dues are payable to: EPMA

Mail to: PB Mares LLP, 3621 John Platt Dr., Morehead City, NC 28557

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Architectural Control Committee (ACC)**

Frank Salvo VP, Chair of the ACC presented. Mauri Galey has completed construction on his home on Emerald Plantation Road. The Burnette family is in progress building their home on Emerald Plantation Road. The Johnstons will begin their addition soon. Several new roofs were installed, and several homes were painted this past fiscal year. The goal of the ACC is to ensure our homeowners can make improvements to their home while ensuring bylaws are met. Please contact the ACC before making changes to ensure there are no surprises.

Currently our covenants allow aluminum fencing. Privacy fencing is not allowed. A current issue is that there are several privacy fences that have been erected that do not meet the guidelines for fencing . These fences will be addressed through the formal process in FY 2025-26. The Committee is looking for input from the neighborhood with respect to fencing. Do we need to revisit the requirements?

**Clubhouse, Pool, Tennis Courts**

CLUBHOUSE – Mauri filled in for Sandy. Each member of EPMA is entitled to reserve the club house twice per year free of charge. Contact Sandy and put down your $500.00 deposit check. When using the club house please remind attendees they cannot park on the grass. Additional parking is behind the pool. Use of the pool IS NOT INCLUDED with Clubhouse rental. Contact George Gomez for a temporary gate code, so your attendees can get in the neighborhood.

POOL – Mauri reported the pool will be maintained by Carolina Pool and Maintenance in 2025. Before we started the season, we had to replace some of the piping for the pool fill line. We had BrightSpeed come out several times and they were eventually able to find the shorts in the ground so that the emergency phone was not calling the police every time it rained. The first day of pool use was scheduled to be May 3 and we opened early on May 1st. Recreational swimming starts at 9:00. The pool closes at Dusk. That means the pool closes at 7:30 in May and September. 8:00 in June, July, and August. October the pool closes at 6:30.

Many thanks to our pool helpers without these people we could not have a pool season: Meg Bowen, Karen Cloninger, Tim Howard, Stewart Baker, Judy Nielsen, Molly Laula, AnnaMarie Mead, Jennifer Alford.

The rules of the pool remain the same. The big ones are:

* Swim at your own risk.
* Owners must accompany guests at all times.
* Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.
* No glass containers, no pets.
* Members under 21 are limited to 2 guests.
* Have your pool pass with you at all times.
* No running, no diving, no horseplay.

We had four of the older loungers restored and re-strapped for 2025. We are noticing more stains on the chairs. Mauri has sent photos to Coastal Carolina Supply and asked for some help on how to extend the life of the straps.

**We still need pool closers for Saturday nights. This would relieve us from doing it by committee as we do now.**

TENNIS COURTS - The tennis courts have pickleball lines painted on them. Last year a group of neighbors asked about painting shuffleboard lines on the end of the courts. This was approved but was not done.

As a reminder once we get the courts resurfaced in 2026, 2027 or 2028 we will have to start enforcing the no dogs, no bikes, no skateboards etc. on the surface.

BULLETIN BOARDS – thank you to Katie O’Dell for updating and maintaining our bulletin boards at the entrance gate and at the pool/clubhouse.

**Social**

In 2024 our Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day events were all successful with large attendance at all three. Thank you to everyone who helped and especially to Bruce Paetzold, Clayton, and Blake Boykin for doing the cooking. The events would not be possible without all the sides, desserts, and fellowship the community brings to the event.

In 2025 we plan to have three events as outlined in your Notice of Annual Meeting.

* Memorial Day Weekend – Poolside barbecue May 24, 2025
* Fourth of July Weekend - Poolside barbecue July 5, 2025
* Labor Day Weekend – Poolside barbecue August 30, 2025.

**Gate/Gatehouse**

In 2024 we changed our gate maintenance company from Eastern Access Control to 70 West Access Control. Eastern Access was unable to fix our gate issues. 70 West Access Control replaced our entrance gate motor and rewelded some of the gate components. This has resulted in the entrance gate being much more dependable. We have a maintenance contract with 70 West to check and maintain our gates twice per year.

Please contact a board member if you have a large truck making a delivery. We need to watch the trucks to prevent damage. Larger trucks have an easier time coming in through the exit side of the entrance.

The gate codes for the main gate and the pedestrian gate will be changed today.

For the pedestrian gate pressing C or Y before the code will clear prior numbers or reset the gate if you are having issues. Mauri will notify emergency services, pool service company, etc.

In 2024 we also repaired the fence along the eastern boundary to try and reduce outside traffic and the vandalism we have seen in the neighborhood. We did find evidence of the fence being cut down by the dock. This has been repaired, and The Board will talk to the condominium association east of us to ensure it does not happen again.

**Landscaping/Lighting/Irrigation**

Lawn Rangers, Sixtos Arellano Gomez, is our landscaping supplier. They also provide us with support on items like ramp repair, fencing repair and more. They also provide services to many individuals in EP.

The irrigation leak occurring in front of Brenda Underhill’s house was fixed. Several other sprinkler heads were replaced. Please be careful when turning corners, especially at the townhouse entrance as several of those sprinklers have been broken by truck or car tires.

**Community Involvement and Special Projects**

INSURANCE – our policies have been updated to industry standards and consolidated with The Cincinnati Insurance Company.

**Dockmaster and Boat Storage**

Mauri reported on behalf of Gary Vaccaro. As of right now, there are two spaces available in the main boat storage area and one space in the overflow lot. A renter is requesting a space for a jet ski and once we get all her information, we will assign her that space in the overflow lot. We had three spaces come vacant in the main lot – one person sold their boat, and two property owners sold their homes. The two new property owners have boats, and we have assigned them the spaces of the previous owners. One issue that we are having is that we are getting some longer boats moving into the storage area and we only have certain spaces that will accommodate a 24 ft boat. We may have to ask owners or smaller boats to move to smaller parking spots. It is not possible to have boats over 24 ft in length.

Another issue is we have a number of boats and trailers that have tags and registrations that have expired. The bylaws specifically state that boats must have up to date registrations and all boats and trailers must be operational. If you are in violation, you will have 60 days to comply or lose your space. Also, if you are not going to use your space, please give it up. Last year, there were three spaces in the main lot that were assigned to people that never used them.

If we have a year where there are more qualified requests for storage space than there are spots, we have a lottery. The lottery is for the total number of slots. Each property gets one chance. Once all the slots are taken those who did not get a spot will have to find alternate storage for one year. Then there will be a new lottery the following year if needed. We want to be clear on this part. Each property gets a chance not one chance per family. If a family has two lots, they get two chances. They pay two dues, they get two votes, they get two chances.

**Boat Ramp/Day Dock**

In 2024 it was determined that due to loss of structural integrity the day dock needed to be replaced. Harber Marine was hired to complete the task. The dock and finger piers are currently being used by the community. The dock is within about 6 inches in height of the other community docks along the sound. Some neighbors feel the dock may be too high. The dock is 13 inches higher than the boarding step along the boat ramp. The dock height was built to ensure the dock and supporting hardware did not spend time in the salt water during normal tide swings. Neighboring day docks that built lower step downs for swimming are seeing the hardware in the lower steps rust due to exposure to the salt water.

We have measured the heights and built the chart below. During the current mid 1.0/1.4 and high tide 1.8/2.0 the dock height works well. The current tides are lower than what we generally have seen as shown in the chart. We added a couple of step ladders for our neighbors to try. Please use the dock and provide feedback. We have options to adjust if we decide as a community to do this. We could drop the finger piers two steps, or fifteen inches. We could add boarding steps across the front or side of the piers. These too would step down 15 inches.

**Figure 1: This is an illustration of the finger piers as they are now.**

Along the bottom is the tide from the tide chart. The blue boxes show the distance from the water to the top of the pier. The black boxes show the distance from the top of a 30-inch boat gunnel to the top of the pier. When the tides run 2.3 to 3.5 feet boat gunnels will be above the pier.



**Figure 2: This is an illustration of how the water and boat levels would look if we lowered the finger piers 15 inches or if we added boarding platforms 15 inches lower than the piers.**

Along the bottom is the tide from the tide chart. The blue boxes show the distance from the water to the top of the pier. The black boxes show the distance from the top of a 30-inch boat gunnel to the top of the pier. During high tides boat gunnels would be above the pier/boarding step. Any tide 2.0 or higher would put the structure in the salt water.



The idea of Kayak storage was brought up by the community. We do not have a lot of room for this but storage close to the launch would be convenient. Storage would be limited to one kayak per lot. Those that had the idea are willing to help finance the building of the racks. It was suggested we rent the storage area to neighbors. We would have to have some type of lottery to determine usage of the storage. More on this later.

**STATE OF THE COMMUNITY**

Mauri reviewed the survey highlights and read the State of Community Pages in the Notice of Annual Meeting. Key accomplishments, projects, and capital planning were reviewed. Details of these can be found in the committee reports area of this document.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES**

Neighbors were referred to the Notice of Annual Review Document for Board Member roles and contact information. The notice of the gate code changing was talked about again. Dues payment information was reviewed.

**CAPITAL PLANNING PRESENTATION**

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ROADS - Our roads are 30 plus years old and in need of some work. We have had Onslow paving come out and give us some ideas on magnitude. We also reviewed Spinnakers Reach recent work. Spinnakers Reach has about the same square footage of paving that we have. Their project was $300k. Dave Chenoweth addressed The Board about the roads. He asked what research has been done, what would the scope for repair be, what is planned? Frank, Brian, and Mauri responded. We initially looked at a coating to extend the life of the roads. That was $60k and offered 3 years of “life”. We also found that the cracks in the road are getting larger. The road going into the townhouse area has eroded into areas where there is only sand. There are several other areas where the top layer of asphalt is gone. The current scope includes leveling the low portions, repairing the roads, scraping them to 20 feet wide and adding 1.5 inches of new asphalt.

Dave would like to offer his services and knowledge to repair and mitigate the roads, especially around the circle where we have some bumps. This would be done with a cold patch. Cold patch is what we have used to patch the sink hole on Emerald Circle and the damage on the townhouse exit road. Repairing the area discussed was approved but this spot work will not address the need to fix the main roads where cracking and crumbling are becoming an issue.

Dixie Noble asked how we plan to finance this project. We have two choices here. A special assessment which can be voted on by the community and implemented anytime during the fiscal year. This type of assessment is generally used for surprise needs. For the roads we plan to have a onetime dues increase spread over one or two fiscal years. How EPMA would like to see this financed is one of the things we are voting on today. This is not an active assessment or dues increase. We have more research to do, bids to be gathered, and input to be heard. The Board wants to keep you informed and the need to work on the roads is upon us. Dean Whitley said he has some contacts in the paving business that he will share with recommendations and quotes.

BOAT RAMP – this ramp is 30 plus years old and will need some work in coming years. The work done at the water end has proved beneficial. Neighbors are encouraged to provide input on their experiences using the ramp.

Steven Johnston suggested we may need to adjust dues to account for needs. We discussed that $340.00 to $360.00 is the right number according to models, but it is the right number if things are new. Our pool and dock are new. Our roads, boat ramp, buildings are not new. The Capital Plan and Community input will be necessary to keep things safe, usable, and aesthetically pleasing.

TENNIS COURTS - the group asked about the tennis courts. Work on the tennis courts is in the capital plan. Target date is 2027 to 2028.

**VOTING**

VOTING – Darcel Browning and Frank Salvo were voted to new two-year terms.

VOTING – Preparing to resurface the roads in the next 6 to 24 months, we asked how the neighborhood would like to finance this project. We assumed the project would be $400k for the purpose of voting. More research, discussion and planning will be required to set the timing and budget. The community voted on Option 3, “One time dues adjustment to fund 50% of the project at a rate of $500.00 per quarter for one year.

VOTING – The proposed 2025-2026 budget was approved.

VOTING - TOWN OF EMERALD ISLE GARAGE SALE – Jennifer Alford asked if the neighborhood would like to participate in the annual town of Emerald Isle garage sale. To do this we would have to leave the gate open for several hours on the day(s) of the sale. The community voted to participate, and they agreed to have the gate open for a set period of time during the sale to allow shoppers access to the sales.

**Old Business**

The Board is working to address items that our neighbors prioritize. The goal is to ensure our community remains high value. Properly cared for amenities ensure safety, lifestyle, and add value to everyone’s property. All this needs to be done within a reasonable budget.

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS – Mauri has a list for volunteers to help with the pool fence and wall restoration and painting, and a second list for painting the picnic tables and kids play area. With the length of the meeting, no one signed up for the work. We will talk to those who said they could help and set up some workdays.

**New Business**

SIGNS - Christina brought to our attention that Emerald Plantation Road and Plantation Drive street names are very similar and that many people have the same address number on these different roads. Discussion was held around potential solutions. Could we change the numbers on one of the roads so that they are not the same? Could we change one of the road names? Should we put up more signs? A small concern is that things are being delivered to the wrong addresses. The bigger concern is what if emergency services went to the wrong address?

SIGNS - Sherri Randall suggested we put up a sign that is the map of our neighborhood. This sign could go up on our website, on our Facebook page and a physical sign at the circle.

**Motion to Adjourn the Meeting**

A request for a motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 2:43. Dean Whitley motioned, and Jenifer Alford seconded the motions. The meeting was closed at 2:44 pm.