**Minutes**

Emerald Plantation Master Association

Date: **1.25.2024**

**Present:** Darcel Browning, Mauri Galey, George Gomez, Donna Grady, Brian O’Dell, Frank Salvo, Gary Vacarro. Bruce Paetzold via phone for the Day Dock Review.

**OPENING:** Mauri opened the meeting at 6:02 P.M. We approved the minutes from the **November 2023** meeting. The December 2023 meeting was cancelled so there are no minutes for December 2023.

**FINANCIAL STATUS: as of 12.31.2024**

**Treasurer’s Report – Darcel Browning**

* Reserve Fund Held in Money Market: $149,665.43 (reserve target TBD)
* Operating Fund (Checking) $ 21,984.61
* Dues Outstanding > 90 Days $ 23.07

Taxes – in the past the accounting firm has not charged us to prepare the HOA taxes. This firm will charge a fee. In the past The Board thought about doing it. It is not a good idea for The Board to do our taxes we need our accounting firm to complete them. Our current firm did them without a quote. The invoice was $600.00. Of note the Townhouses pay ~$400.00 to have their taxes done. They have 22 units. The Board is going to ask for a better deal.

The Treasurer’s report was approved.

**Insurance – Brian O’Dell**

Following our November meeting Brian O’Dell gave a review of our HOA insurance. It has been determined that our Umbrella Policy Liability Limit was below industry average. The Board voted to move up the coverage to industry standards.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Gate**: **George Gomez** - This month the entrance gate had an operating issue. This issue was resolved by our vendor. The technicians suspect the issue may be related to a power output problem. Should the issue reoccur with the entrance gate, please observe, and record the following so that we can report it to the technicians:

* Is the keypad receiving power?
* Is the receiver operational?
* Is the exit gate functioning properly?

Brian O’Dell has been trained in the gate operating procedures such as opening the gate for high wind days.

**Landscaping: George Gomez -** the small to medium sized “sink hole” that had developed along the entrance drive by the irrigation pump house has been filled. It appears to be holding. Further review will be required as the irrigation has not been running. If we run the irrigation and the hole redevelops further investigation and work will be required.

**Canal:** the small paddleboat that was reported as sinking in the canal has been tied off as out of sight as possible. This boat is used for canal, fountain, and aerator maintenance.

**Pool: Mauri Galey** - our past Pool Services vendor, Blue Water, is no longer servicing HOA owned pools. The local management team cited upper management concern about liabilities. This news was delivered to us in December. Mauri contacted seven pool service companies. Two did not return calls or emails within a three-week period. Two said they could not do our pool. One said they only do repairs and not service. Of the two that were left only one carried insurance. In January, a second bid was received. Both bids are higher than our 2023 price point.

Going into 2024 we will be working with Carolina Pools and Maintenance. This is the team that redid our pool in 2023. They were also lower than the second bid we recently received. So far in 2024 we have replaced the broken valves on the suction side of the pool recirculation pump, replaced the leaking seal on the pump, replaced the leaking seals on the filters, and replaced the main flow switch.

**ACC: Frank Salvo –** a new shed has been built at 444 Emerald Circle. The initial screening does block the long side of the shed from view from the street, but additional actions/screening will be required to block the front door portion of the shed from street view. The ACC has let the owners know and given some suggestions on correction.

Onslow Paving has given us options on how to repair our roads. The good news is the road base is in good shape. Details are being worked out and budgets being developed as part of the Capital Plan. Initial patch and repair are estimated at about $80k. Complete repaving of the road will be >$100k.

We have 42 signs in our neighborhood. Many of our signs are rotten and no longer serviceable. A poll was completed, and an updated sign style selected. The Board is planning to replace the rotten signs with the updated signs. They will be aluminum backed with composite fronts. This should eliminate the need for repainting. One exception will be the main entrance sign by the front gate which will be painted to match the updated signs. The complete job is budgeted at $6k. The initial pass to update the rotten signs is budgeted at $1500.00. An overall reduction in the number of signs is also being planned.

**Club House: Sandy Helms** was not at the meeting. There are not any current reservations.

**Boat Storage: Gary Vacarro –** at present there are three boat storage spots open. Nine people in the storage area will need new boat and trailer stickers. The Board discussed the importance of this amenity and reviewed the assignment and update processes.

**Boat Ramp: Bruce Paetzold –** At our 2023 Annual Meeting it was reported the boat ramp is 45 years old and in pretty good shape. Today The Board reviewed that this ramp looks solid. A post on our Facebook page by long term resident Al Smith acknowledges the ramp is still holding strong. The very end of the ramp has hog slat pieces that have moved over the past year. Bruce reached out to the vendor Coast2Coast, who installed them. The vendor has been non-responsive. The Board will reach out again to try and get the slats put back into their proper place.

There was discussion on what was spent on the ramp following hurricane Florence in 2018. A group from Raleigh came down and quoted $300k to rework/replace the ramp. This was turned down and $40k was spent with a Coast2Coast to “smooth out” the ramp and return it to usable status.

**Boat Day Docks/Kayak Launch: Bruce Paetzold –** At our 2023 Annual Meeting it was reported that some major work on this dock was going to be required in the near future. It was also reported that a full dock replacement would be $125k to $145k.

On December 8, 2023, Crystal Coast Home Inspections inspected all of the pilings on the day dock. The Board is currently reviewing our options for repair or replacement of the dock. The Board will be seeking additional input from the vendors and from EP Neighbors for the next steps.

Things that are being considered: CAMA considerations, can we find a qualified vendor to bid on repairs, visual appeal vs. strictly useable, limited mobility access, hog slat vs wood, budget for repair vs. replacement.

**Social: Mauri Galey –** there are no social activities planned for 1Q 2024.

**Capital Planning:** As outlined in the Board and Committees section below The Board members are working on budgets and Capital Planning for Emerald Plantation. In 2023 the Emerald Plantation neighborhood clearly stated they wanted more communication from The Board. Frank Salvo has led the way working with our General Ledger to define budgets versus spends by category and type. Darcel has provided the asset lists, historical numbers, perspective, and updates. Various Board Members and volunteers have been researching maintenance best practices, expected life expectancies and more. The goals include:

* Ensuring we maintain our neighborhood assets in best-in-class condition.
* Understand, budget, and communicate our short- and long-term maintenance needs.
* Understand, budget, and communicate our capital planning needs.
* Minimize the need for assessments.
* Confirm guidelines for reserve balance targets, floors and reserve use.

**Old Business:**

* Community Involvement Projects: (Projects that we can do with volunteers to enhance our sense of community, to elevate everyone’s ownership in our amenities and to save money)
  + Repair and stain/seal Club House Deck
  + Repair tiles, oil/stain wood, update fixtures in pool bath house.
* Others:

**New Business:**

Board and Committees: Six total Board Members. Two are voted in every 2 years based on a 3-year term.

Current Board Members are designated by the term expiration year in parens.

Mauri (26)          President          Pool, **Social,** Canal (Bruce has done it all so far) /

Capital Planning

Frank (25)          Vice President               **ACC** / Capital Planning

Darcel (25)         Treasurer                        Financials / Capital Planning

Bruce (24)          At Large                          Day Dock, Boat Ramp, **Dock Master** / Capital Planning

George (26)       At Large                          **Gate, Landscaping** / Capital Planning

Brian (24)          At Large                          Gate Back up / Insurance / Capital Planning

Donna         Town House Rep           Town house liason

Sandy                 Secretary                        Minutes / Club House

Jennifer              Volunteer                        Capital Planning

Gary Vacarro     Town House President  Boat Storage / Assistant Dock Master