Chadsworth HOA Meeting

Nov. 16, 2023, 7:00 pm

Sedgwick County Extension Office – Bison Room

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm and streaming live began.

Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and please share their reason for attending to make sure we made time to include their concerns.

The minutes of the last Homeowner’s Meeting (July 2023) were approved unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report

* The current balance in the accounts is $144,946.24. Most of it will go to fixing the canal.
* We are in good shape in getting caught up, with only $13,000 left in past dues and only two homeowners over $5,000.

Welcome Committee Report

* The committee responsibilities are being moved to Kyle & his wife.
* Let any Board member know if you are willing to join this committee, as we have 14 new homeowners coming into the neighborhood.

Architectural Control Committee (ACC)

* It was a busy summer with paintings, roofings, and tree removals to approve.
* There were 24 violations sent out (for yard condition, unapproved roofs, trash beside house, trampoline in the commons, RV in driveway, etc.).
* The committee is considering signs to remind homeowners that changes to a home require approval by the ACC.
* In answer to a question about solar panels, solar energy is allowed (and one home has it and they are very happy with it). Please discuss with the ACC if you intend to make this change.
* There is one light left to update on Sterling and Maize; it is in a homeowners backyard. All the other lights have been updated by Erin & Bruce.

Covenant Review:

* The covenant review is in progress now. It has been amended and restated. A summary of changes includes:
  1. Change in existing property with complete specifications on items that require approval.
     1. Include exterior building materials (siding, windows)
     2. Stronger language for roofing, painting, etc.
     3. Fences – no vinyl due to the fact that they don’t last very long.
  2. Homeowner elections will be decided by a majority of those voting with a specified minimum vote required (80 households minimum.) This is needed because so few homeowners vote in elections.
  3. Clarification of trailers, campers, and RV’s in driveways and streets.
     1. Parking for a maximum of five (5) consecutive days and not more than fifteen (15) totals in any month
  4. A stronger statement on assessments and fines, interest, and late fees.
  5. One of the biggest changes is that we have not had specifications for the condition of the houses themselves, but the need to maintain the house in good condition will be added.
  6. Greater clarity is sought on the issue of homes being used as rental properties and the situation with multiple families in the same home.
* All of the changes are designed to ensure that property values are maintained and that the appearance of the community is clean and inviting for homeowners.
* Once the draft is completed, it will be available for homeowners to review and comment on.
* Reminder that the HOA cannot know about all infractions of the covenants unless those who see it report it to the Board or ACC. If homeowners see situations that need to be addressed, those need to be reported to the Board.
* With the current board, we aim to be compassionate if there are situations outside of homeowners’ control. However, if there comes a point where we have to turn the management over to a HOA management company, they may not be able to make exceptions and agreements outside of the stated covenants. Their business is to find violations and collect on them to gain compliance. Covenants need to be clear and up to date before bringing in an HOA Management, should that be necessary.

Update on canal maintenance

* In regard to the railroad ties which line the “banks” of the canal and are deteriorating, the board has spoken to several companies and they have offered multiple ideas on how to fix the situation. It is going to be expensive but it needs to be done. If we choose not to do it, sooner or later the ties will break up, and then the city will fix it and make special assessments to all homeowners for the costs. So, it is imperative that we address as best we can.
* Large rocks and riprap appear to be the best solution. This will mean that we will have to slope the west bank a little bit, but we cannot narrow the canal.
* The process is going to take a long time because contractors are busy and don’t always have time to return calls, make bids, etc. The board agrees that the dry season this year would be the ideal time to do the work.
* Before the work can be done, we may need to do a property survey to determine the effect of the work on individual homeowner property lines.

HOA management company

* The board is weighing the options of paying a management company to handle the work currently being done by the ACC and the Treasurer. These jobs are the most difficult ones to staff for a volunteer board, but it may become necessary in the future.
* Dues would definitely go up in this situation, but we are studying the advantages and disadvantages of using an outside company. It would raise dues by approximately $39 per year, from $205 to $255 per household. They also charge for paper, postage, letters to homeowners, lien filings, taxes, violation letters, etc. The company with these charges is the same firm used by Sterling Farms. It would be a one-year contract, and we could evaluate at the end of a year whether to re-contract or not. Dues would no longer be handled locally, but instead billed from a bank in Arizona.
* Total costs for the year to the HOA are estimated at $13,065 per year plus incidentals, which is then divided among all households.
* A member of the HOA management company would come to HOA meetings.
* Rationale in favor of doing it includes: (1) consistency, because these companies do drive throughs of the neighborhood to identify issues that violate the covenants; (2) take pressure of the individuals on the ACC, who frequently encounter hostility and resistance to compliance; and (3) ease of transitions; and (4) it would take the technical stuff off the hands of the board members. There would still be an HOA Board to oversee the work of the management company, hire the contractors, hold elections, etc., but the board would be the one to decide how much of its work to turn over to the HOA management company.
* When asked why this might be necessary, it was stated that only 6 people voted in the last election and it is rare to get volunteers despite frequent requests. It was noted that there are 17 people in attendance at this current meeting, which is a large turnout compared to past meetings, but it is still only a fraction of the homeowners in the neighborhood.
* It was suggested that we could invite them to the next spring meeting so that everyone can hear from them what that type of change would mean for homeowners.
* It was suggested that any transition to a management company would coincide with the payment of annual dues so that any additional fees would be covered in the same year.

Open forum for homeowners

* The geese population is down. But it was suggested that we need to bring back the Goose Troopers because flocks are starting to reassemble.
* All the dead trees are cut down. When we do it, it should be when dues are assessed.
* One homeowner expressed worry about the changing of the covenants, in particular, if the covenants are something that are signed by every homeowner when they purchase property, can our board legally change the covenants or modify them? This could lead to costly legal fees if a homeowner decided to challenge the changes in court. This will be addressed with the attorney to guide us going forward. It was felt that there must be some way to handle modifications in these documents so that they don’t remain static. Our current covenant rules are difficult to follow in places and set up contradictions in certain portions.
* We will be putting up signs for a holiday lighting contest again. This year it was decided that we will not require an entry process. The judging panel will make their decision based on the best decoration in their opinion. There will be prizes, which, as always, are paid for from a special fee assessed when new homeowners enter the community. There will be no rules on maximum height, color, etc.
* When asked about having a sign about no soliciting, the board said that we cannot legally forbid anyone from stopping at a house and to speak to a homeowner. If a person does not want solicitations, the only way to prevent it is through signage on individual houses of those who don’t want it.
* There have been a lot of comments about cars parked in the street. If you have concerns about an “abandoned” or non-working vehicle parked in the street, police can come out and give notice to move the vehicle if it has been parked there for 48 hours with movement. The caveat is that if the car is only moved one foot forward, that is considered “moved.” However, please address any concerns to the Wichita Police Department’s community officer.
* A reminder was issued that the board is unable to address barking dogs. However, if you talk to a neighbor about their dogs and are not satisfied with their response, animal control issues must be reported to the city’s Animal Control department.
* A question was raised about why vinal is being disallowed in the covenant revisions. Because the current covenants do not have any stipulations on the home conditions, and because we are currently experiencing a number of homes that are not being kept up, the need to establish the boundaries of how to keep the home in good condition arose. The ACC felt that vinyl was not a preferred siding compared to brick, cement, wood, fiberboard, etc. Vinyl has a tendency to discolor over time and show damage from hail.
* A question arose about how long homeowners will be given to bring their home up to the new standards once new covenant provisions are approved. This has not been decided at this time.

Upcoming meetings

* While the meeting in the Sedgwick County Extension Office site was a success, it does have a cost. Therefore, future meetings will be held at Fire station #21 and going forward. HOA’s are allowed to hold their meetings there at no charge. Scheduling just needs to be set up before we can announce for sure what the dates will be in 2024.

Adjournment at 8:05 pm.

Julie Sherwood

Secretary to the Board

12/11/2023