

Covered Bridge at Barnes Mill Condominiums

Quarterly Association Meeting

Minutes for Thursday October 19, 2023 7:00pm

Magnolias Clubhouse

During the meeting, the Board of Directors respectfully requests we observe the following Rules of Order:

- Please silence your cell phones and other devices; remain on mute unless recognized to speak
 - Raise your hand and wait to be recognized if you wish to speak; use the microphone so that everyone can hear you
 - To permit as many residents as possible the opportunity to be heard, **each household can speak for up to two minutes on any agenda topic**; no household will be permitted to speak to a single agenda item more than once when others are waiting to participate.
 - Speak calmly and with respect to the Board, Committee Members, and neighbors – residents who are unable to be respectful will be excused from the meeting
 - Do not talk over others and refrain from interrupting
 - This is a community meeting to update residents on activities from the past quarter, review finances, and discuss items on the agenda. ***It is not a forum for the airing of personal grievances.***
 - If you would like an item included on the agenda please notify the Board of Directors at hoamagnoliasbarnesmill@gmail.com at least one week prior to the meeting.
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33 homes present in person or via Zoom, with a further 29 homeowners represented by Proxy – Total 62 of 70 homes represented, quorum established

MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order

Tom Stephen

Approval of Agenda *Rules of Order have been updated*

Tom Stephen

Motion: Judy McGhee Second: Angela Davis

Welcome

Michael Weinman

Welcome to our newest resident, Tina Arbore in Suite 38

Welcome speech:

I've had the honor of serving our community for the past six years, and in that time how we manage has changed markedly. When I first joined the board we did not cover things like gutter cleaning, maintenance, or wood rot. We planted the clubhouse and spread mulch ourselves. Volunteers even trimmed trees. But that wasn't sustainable – it seemed like we were constantly at odds with homeowners

to force them to pay for gutters and wood rot, and when volunteers to plant or trim trees trickled down to one or two people we heard clearly from the community that things had to change.

And change we did - our budget now covers all that. We've learned over time that going with the cheapest providers available is tossing money down the drain, as we pay for services that simply don't meet our expectations. How many landscape providers have we gone through, and the same for homeowners insurance? It's not worth paying a cut rate when our landscaping isn't done or our claims aren't honored.

I well understand that this increase is a tough pill to swallow. We want to be able to continue to maintain the neighborhood in the fashion we've become accustomed to. Over the past year we've been glad to have the ability to do things like adding a keypad for expanded clubhouse access, treating cicada wasps, and replacing the large umbrella for the pool. At the same time we're able tackle large projects like Asphalt Sealing and Concrete Replacement while not depleting our reserves – if we cut our reserve and wind up with unfunded reserve study projects it will make it much more difficult to sell our homes.

Consider also that we remain a self-managed community; if we try and turn back the clock and put things managed by the Association back on homeowners we don't have a management company to chase after folks to get things done. We're putting the folks who already volunteer time back in the position of having to be adversarial on a constant basis which is something none of us want to do.

Review of Minutes

Michael Weinman

Approval of Minutes from the August 2023 Quarterly Meeting

Tom Stephen

Motion: Marcy Rosenbaum Second: Rich Franzell

Committee Reports

Recreation Committee

Caryl Hanlon

- Thanks to committee members for their hard work
- Appreciation for three members who are stepping down
- Thank you gifts for Judy M and Tom S for the wonderful BBQ meal
- Thanks to Betsy Montemayor for monthly calendar, hanging in mailbox kiosk
- Reminder of recurring weekly activities and upcoming holiday activities (reminder to check calendar in mail kiosk)

Rules & Regulations Committee

Tom Stephen

Committee walked the neighborhood recently. Here are a few highlights/reminders for everyone:

- No flowerpots permitted in flower beds
- More than 18 landscape lights are permitted, but they must all match (same fixtures)
- Request for neighbors not in compliance to please make their household compliant so we don't need to give verbal reminder, then written reminder, then small fine
- The committee is surveying the neighborhood and will be sending an update of homes that are out of compliance to the Board of Directors in the near future

Board of Directors Update

Treasurer's Report

Mike Montemayor

Treasurer's report

- Year to date income is \$284,965 on a plan of \$274,050 because several homeowners have paid in advance
- Year to date expenses are \$231,605 on a plan of \$240,423
 - Areas significantly over budget are:
 - Wood Rot at \$3K
 - Irrigation at \$1575
 - Areas significantly under budget are:
 - Landscape Replacement \$3800 which is being accrued for use in 2024
 - Roof Repairs \$2000
 - Contingency \$1874
 - Landscape Maintenance \$1325
 - Legal Fee \$1125
- We're expecting to end the year \$11,000 in the black, which we hope to use to cover the unplanned expenses for water leaks that were paid from the reserve earlier in the year.
- A highlight to note is that our water bill has improved back to normal levels after replacement of one of the fire hydrants and water leak repairs at two homes
- This month we transitioned to using QuickBooks Online from the older desktop version.
 - The cost of the desktop version was already set to increase substantially next year
 - I was able to negotiate a steep discount on the monthly rate for the online version
 - Moving to the online version allows for access by multiple board members which creates redundancies in handling our finances
 - Data is automatically backed up in the cloud
 - We appreciate everyone's patience as we transition to the new platform. Some reports will be different

2024 Budget

I'd like to thank the finance committee and rest of the board for the many hours spent over the past several months drafting our budget for 2024.

We knew it would be difficult to keep from increasing the monthly dues given that inflation is officially somewhere between 3 and 4 percent. Also, some of our vendors have just now been able to start passing on increases to us based on their increased costs, which are greater than 3 to 4 percent. Their cost to do business started increasing back when inflation was around 8 or 9 plus percent. We are now feeling the effects of that and is reflected in that that caused increases of more than 3% in our 2024 proposed budget.

We researched each line item, working with vendors whenever possible to keep the cost at the same level as 2023 or to keep any increase as low as possible. With some items, we could not negotiate the cost increase. In a previous email several of those non-controllable increases were listed. They tend to be some of the larger increases in our overall costs.

The main drivers of our 4.4% increase in dues are as follows:

- Insurance is up \$7,025 or 17.78%. This represents almost half the entire increase and reflects trends in the insurance industry across condo insurance post-Champlain Towers as well as a broad increase in rates due to the prevalence of natural disasters
- Water/Sewer is up \$3,500 or 9.46%. This is based purely on rate increases from Cobb Water. It is calculated using 2021 water usage so we don't artificially inflate this from the leaks in 2022 & 2023
- Cobb EMC Streetlights is up \$2,208 or 74.19%. This is based on rate increase from Cobb EMC, for which we have no ability to negotiate the cost
- Pine Straw is up \$2,400 or 16%. We had many complaints this year about poor coverage for pine straw so we are going back to a trusted vendor which required an increase in cost
- Wood Rot Maintenance is up \$2,000 or 25%. This is based on our run rate for 2023 which saw a sharp increase in the frequency of needed repairs as our community ages
- Irrigation is up \$1,522 or 13.84%. Again it is based on a Cobb Water System rate increase, over which we have no ability to negotiate
- Also, Fees & Licenses are up \$450 or 100% due to our subscription to Quickbooks Online

With several of our local vendors we were able to keep the costs the same or have small increases. Even with all that, we had to increase the monthly dues by \$19.00. Some of you will feel we should not increase the monthly dues. There was no way to do that unless we cut back on some services or eliminate them completely. All or at least most of us live here because of the environment of the community, because of the services that our dues pay for. We updated our Reserve Study numbers and determined that with last year's increase in reserve funding we are still on track for all reserve projects to be fully funded for the next 15 years.

During the election of new officers this time last year I mentioned that I had told Betsy that when we sold our previous home, which had HOA fees, I would never live in another community that had HOA fees. When I first learned of the level of fees here, I was dead set against moving here. In our previous community we paid just over \$200 per month for dues, which did not include any services related to the

house and yard. Betsy encouraged me to reconsider, so I investigated what services are offered here that we had to pay for out of pocket there. When I included monthly yard mowing, raking of fall leaves, fertilizing the yard, spraying for termites, house painting, roof replacement, gutter cleaning, etc., the fees here were LESS than we paid at the former community. Plus, I did not have to worry about these services. They are taken care of by the board and committees here, committees which are far more active than those in the former community.

I say all this to show why I support this new budget. We are all feeling the effects of the inflation we have been going through lately. Unfortunately, it hit us here as a community in our community services.

Questions/Comments:

- Joan R Bylaws state that neighborhood should do yearly audits. Why don't we?
- Answer: This has been discussed and voted on repeatedly by the community not to do an audit as it is expensive and all the numbers are confirmed as correct
- Bernie: If not an audit, how about a review?
- Answer: We will discuss in our next Board Meeting and then review at our January Association meeting.
- Melanie Are we competitively bidding out our contracts routinely?
- Answer: Yes, absolutely. As often as necessary to get the best services for the best prices
- Bernie Is Landscaping bidded?
- Answer: Yes, just last year we obtained a total of 7 bids before selecting Unique as our provider
- Howard: My ceiling has a leak
- Answer: Send an email to the Board and we'll have the roofing company come out and take a look
- Kevin H: Thanks to Finance Committee for all the hard work. Won't we need more roof replacements soon?
- Answer: We are having all roofs checked and do small repairs as preventive maintenance to avoid having to replace them as long as possible; the first roof replacements are scheduled to start in 2029 but with preventive maintenance we hope to have our roofs last longer than that
- Tina: How much will dues increase each year?
- Answer: No way to answer that now, but we do everything possible to keep them as low as possible with the best goods and services available to us each year – it is really dependent on the rate of inflation
- Heidi: Board works so hard on everything. If we want to live in the neighborhood we all moved here for, we need to approve the budget unless we want to cut something like pine straw, or tree trimming, painting, etc., and those things keep our homes looking good.
- Bernie: Have we check with State Farm for insurance?
- Answer: Yes, they are VERY expensive. We are happy with Farmers

- Glenn R: Spoke in favor of budget. This budget is sound, as costs are increasing EVERYWHERE. Ours is only 4%. We are new residents and we were attracted to this community because of the beautiful appearance, which is made possible by all of the services provided by the vendors the board has chosen after careful consideration
- Dorian: How much was last year's increase?
- Answer: \$40. From \$395 to \$435
- Jeanne: Will we vote on Flock again next year?
- Answer: Yes, at the April meeting
- Bernie: I'm voting no. We're pricing ourselves out
- Betsy: Can anyone go to a committee meeting even if they're not on that committee?
- Answer: Yes – we will start notifying the community of committee meetings
- Rich F: Suite 61 is voting YES for the 2024 budget. It's about needs and wants vs funding known upcoming expenses. This board is good at that so we, as residents don't have to worry. I trust them
- Carmen: Dues increase. We know this. Will we fall apart if we cut some of the expenses? No. And all our services went up. If we don't put additional money in the reserves this year, will that affect us strongly in the future?
- Answer: YES. Each dollar not put in now will cost exponentially to catch up later.
- Joan: We are in city of Mableton. We will pay city taxes. There's also the Community Improvement District. We don't know what all the Mableton fees will be

Vote for 2024 Budget

Tom Stephen

Proposed 2024 Budget of \$387,197.84 with monthly dues of \$454.00, an increase of 4.42% over 2023, was passed by a vote of 35 Yes to 26 No:

Suite	Name	Yes Vote	No Vote
1	Barron	1	
2	Hanlon	1	
3	Roper		1
4	Saathoff	1	
5	Sonderman		
6	Rogers	1	
7	Whitten	1	
8	Stephen	1	
9	Floyd	1	
10	Nunez		1
11	Majors		1
12	Curry		
13	Lund	1	
14	Malone		1
15	Porecha	1	

16	Robinson	Abstained	
17	Berlin		1
18	Downing		1
19	Jefferson		1
20	Brown	1	
21	Waters		1
22	Myrick	1	
23	Nimick/Shucktis	1	
24	Fleming		1
25	Tiedemann	1	
26	Montemayor	1	
27	Kosseniyans/Bearse		
28	Pesak/Piazza	1	
29	Hoffmann		1
30	Manley	1	
31	McLendon	1	
32	Dumas	1	
33	Harbin		1
34	Thomas		1
35	Poulis	1	
36	Lord	1	
37	Davis	1	
38	Arbore	1	
39	Campbell		1
40	Montgomery		1
41	Lindgren		1
42	Faucette		
43	Carlson	1	
44	Bull	1	
45	Shaer	1	
46	Knight		1
47	Teague	1	
48	Metcalf		1
49	Monk		1
50	Dow		1
51	DeCay		1
52	Campbell		
53	Gallivan		1
54	Myers		1
55	Gooden		1
56	Barkley		1
57	Guduru		

58	Weinman	1	
59	Rasmovich		
60	Day	1	
61	Franzell	1	
62	Richards	1	
63	Davis	1	
64	Southall	1	
65	Nnaji		1
66	McGhee	1	
67	Rosenbaum	1	
68	Olson	1	
69	Sokhnich		1
70	Wade-Lopes		
Total		35	26

Sub Treasurer's Report

Ellen Lord

Concrete Repairs/Replacements

In October of this year Concrete Solution will be replacing the pool decking and various Curbs around the community. The original price was \$30,600 but were able to receive, A discount of \$380.00 if we wait until October to have the work done. Total contract Is now \$30,220.00.

Sinkhole of Atlanta started the work to replace the pool decking on Monday Oct 16th.

This process should take around 4 days. Once the old decking is removed, they will Clean the area to place proper reinforcements before pouring the new concrete.

In addition to the pool decking, they will be repairing various area by crack chasing the service drives.

These are the following areas:

Service drive in front of Suite 1

Service drive in front of Suite 7 (around raised storm drain)

Service drive behind suites 15-16 and 17

Service drive between Suites 14 & 24 and front of Suite 24

Service drive behind Suite 21 and 33

Service drives behind Suites 37,39,45,56,60,65/66 along retaining wall and 66/67

Replacing of curbs

Curb in front of Suite 34

Curb behind Suite 8

Curb in front of Suite 36

Curb in front of Suite 1

Fix Storm drain on the right side of Suite 39

Pool Decking was \$ 16,870. And \$12,900 for the remaining areas.

Vice President's Report

Bobbie Teague

I would like to thank the Landscape Committee members for all the work that has been done so far this year:

MEMBERS ARE:

W.H. Teague, Co-Chair

Nancy Shucktis, Co-Chair

Heidi Barron

Cathy Whitten

Randall Whitten

Dorian Jefferson

Marcy Rosenbaum

Betsy Montemayor

We have been quite busy this year. We've made several walks around our neighborhood to determine plants that have died or are in declining mode as well as looking at trees that need the canopy raised and those that are diseased. It was a group effort and we have definitely gotten our walking in.

We received proposals from Unique and Mario Guzman for removal of the dead plants. Mario was awarded the work. He and a helper discovered several plants that were dead or declining that weren't on the original list that was given to them. They removed the plants, covered the holes and applied new pine straw. Mario has done a lot of work for us personally and his work is always top notch. We certainly appreciate him.

UNIQUE

It is our feeling that Unique has done a very nice job within our community again this year. When a situation arises, we reach out to their Customer Service Department and they are always very responsive

and explain their plan to rectify the situation. If the situation isn't resolved during the current week, they get to it the next week. We have been quite happy with their turnaround time. Their 2024 Proposal has been accepted by the Board with only a slight increase in their fees. We look forward to working with them again.

Because of the weather in January and February this year Unique was unable to do any hard pruning. Hard pruning is necessary to keep the plants healthy, keep them in proper shape as well keeping them from becoming overgrown. Hard pruning starts late November and will continue until just before pine straw is installed which will be around mid-to late February 2024. 2,300 bales were installed earlier this year and 2,900 bales will be installed in 2024 which will give better coverage.

OTHER

As you know, the irrigation system for our neighborhood has been shut off effective October 15/16 and will remain off until the start up in late March or early April.

Plants that were damaged in the bitter cold of December 2022 will be replaced late first quarter of 2024 or early in second quarter. We will wait for irrigation startup before installing new plant material.

We plan to do a neighborhood walk again in early November to determine if there are other plants that have declined since the dead plants were removed. They will be added to the list of plants to be replaced.

President's Report

Michael Weinman

Master Association

The Master Association budget for 2024 has been approved with an increase of 4% over 2022. To help offset increases the Master Association Clubhouse rentals will increase from \$325 to \$375 (forecast 26 rentals totaling \$9750) plus Fullers Loch is increasing their Initiation Fee to \$1000 from \$700 (forecast 10 sales plus Master Association gets a portion of Carriages and Verandas Initiation Fee – total \$14K). Capital projects budgeted for 2024 include replacement of an HVAC unit at Master Association Clubhouse (\$7200) and replacement of water fountain at Master Association Pool (\$2K).

Replacement of intake tower in Detention Pond – quotes range from \$20K to \$25K; was not properly constructed when the Detention Pond was built (there was no concrete inlet built to anchor the tower). Fullers Loch will likely cover the entire cost to rebuild the intake structure; if not 15% of the cost would be assessed to the Magnolias which will be covered from our Reserves.

Expansion of the Board of Directors

We're self-managed and having a three-person board had worked well for us, so no reason to upset the apple cart. I've had increased responsibilities at work, and when Mike got COVID at the same time Ellen had major surgery it became apparent that we needed more hands on deck. While our committees are wonderful and we appreciate their help, most projects require the hands-on attention of one or more directors. We wanted to move quickly; our Declarations provide the Board with the discretion to create new officers and the ability to temporarily fill vacancies between elections so we used this discretion to create and staff both a Vice President and Sub Treasurer. Come January we will be conducting elections

for four directors – Ellen, Bobbie & Heidi’s temporary terms expire as does my 2-year term. To even out the number of directors being elected each year to a 3/2 cadence the director that receives the least number of votes in January will be elected to a 1-year term and then in 2025 we will conduct elections for 2 directors.

Kevin: Are Board members that have been assigned considered “voting” members? And if so, do the declarations need to be updated?

Answer: Yes. And we just need to update the names of the new Board members with Secretary of State

Close Meeting

Tom Stephen

Motion: Angela Davis

Minutes submitted by Heidi Barron 10/22/23