

COUNTRY LAKES AT FOX MEADOW  
HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING  
JUNE 15, 2023

WELCOME: President Shawn Smith commenced the 2023 Country Lakes of Fox Meadow Annual Meeting at 7:07 PM. The late start was a result of a line at the registration table. The PowerPoint Presentation was projected and followed. He asked that everyone silence their cell phones and that the meeting recording be prohibited.

The President was pleased to announce that the upcoming election of Trustees had five candidates for four positions. Registrants should have received ballots of one per household and submitted proxies. The candidates can present themselves after the President and Treasurer report, with ballots being collected later in the meeting.

He provided a quick overview of the Agenda, including an opportunity for Homeowners to ask questions at the end of the meeting and not interrupt presenters.

Current Trustees were identified and included:

President: Shawn Smith  
Vice President: Bob Beres  
Secretary: Bill Hanigan  
Trustee and Chair of the Design Review Committee: Vince D'Angelo

The President also offered a special thanks to three others that have assisted the Board and offered the Homeowners a monthly newsletter. These were:

Bruce Buller – Property Manager  
Anthony Embrogno – Assistant Treasurer  
Shirley Kcrmar – Monthly Newsletter

And a new homeowner was recognized in attendance.

The Notice of the upcoming Annual Meeting Notification had been sent by email, followed by other communications to Homeowners.

2022 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES:

The President stated that everyone had an opportunity to read the 2022 Annual Minutes in that they were duly posted and asked if they needed to be read. There was a call to waive the minutes' reading and pass them as written.

Motion By: Ross Bulmer  
Seconded: Ted Lesiak  
Voice Vote: Unanimous to waive the reading and pass the minutes (A call for opposition resulted in no voice vote).

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Shawn Smith

President Smith commenced the report by stating that Board met 12 times during the year with much attention to the budget. The Board faced a number of challenges during the year. Country Lakes has 122 homeowners. In an effort to keep in contact, Shawn established during his tenure improvements to the Country Lakes HOA website, a new Facebook account, enhanced electronic communications, and Google Drive filing of Board activities.

The Board had received two formal complaints during the past year. The Board works in concert with our legal services to guide us in following the covenants and bylaws of Country Lakes HOA. He informed the attendees that a formal complaint requires that the homeowner complete the written posted form and submit it, as opposed to the number of calls received over incidental matters such as minor problems with service providers or a neighbor. Such calls are handled routinely and usually commence with the homeowner contacting our Property Manager, Bruce Buller. The formal complaint form is on our website.

**CHALLENGES:** President Smith identified a number of challenges that the Board faced during the past year.

- **Fuel charges:** Several contracts had provisions that allowed a fuel surcharge to be added to an invoice should gas prices exceed certain standards. This was an obvious budget issue, and in one case, a contractor exceeded the allowable charge and was forced to reverse it.
- **Mulching:** This has been a major issue in its timing and application. There is an issue with the application preceding trimming, as well as the methods used in the application. The Board continues to struggle to find service(s) that provide such service, which is currently subcontracted by our current landscaper.
- **Streetlamp Illumination:** A number of incidents where the lines to the line were not buried to the minimum depth, and lines were cut when edging or aeration is done. The lamp posts must be lit for the safety of residents, pedestrians, and motorists. We do reach out to homeowners whose lamps are out.
- **Signage:** He mentioned that the Emergency Access Road is for fire, police, and EMT purposes and not a means of egress to and from Poe Road.
- **Street Safety/Parking:** He addressed the speed signs later in his presentation and focused on parking issues. Vehicles are not permitted to park on the street overnight.
- **Bio-treatment:** It is one of the most important concerns of the Board. He referred to the costs related to dredging and how the new bio-treatment appears to be mitigating the problem of sediment build-up. The monitoring of the effort, including depth studies, will continue, as well as the use of other factors, such as the type of fish (Amurs) that feed on the bottom vegetation and the fountains.
- **Flower Boxes:** The Board has reversed its position on flower boxes and does allow homeowners that wish to install such boxes to submit their request to Design and Review Committee. He explained the breadth of the problem in its complexity (various materials, sizes, maintenance, and appearance).
- **Frontier Communications:** The Board has been advised that Frontier Communications has notified local officials that they intend to run fiber cable throughout the township. No certain date has been announced as to their intent in Country Lakes.
- **2023 Budget:** He deferred most of his comment to the Treasurer Report

- New Snow Removal: The charge was based on the season and not the incidents of snowfall. The contractor has a full-time crew that provides services to a number of locations which ensures that they are available.
- Mole Removal: The problem is a major annoyance, but the community survey was overwhelming in opposition to the cost of trying to eliminate or reduce the problem.
- Flags: The flags are being replaced twice a year due to the high wind in the area.
- An Annual Letter: Produced and submitted to homeowners in January
- Retention of board members: The loss of board members often causes major logistic problems in contacting key services so that board functions can continue. A call for greater participation of homeowners to serve and thanked those that stepped forward to run for the open board positions today.
- Technology: A brief update on the Board’s activity related to software.

A special carve-out was made for the Traffic Speed Signs. The presented chart showed that the number of sped vehicles has dropped since installing the traffic speed signs. He did, however, point out that we still have a few incidents of speeds over thirty miles per hour on the street. The signs are working, but there is still work to be done.

**TREASURER’S REPORT – Shawn Smith**

President Smith commenced with the status of our financial accounts. He made reference to the change in interest rates for Certificates of Deposit and how they were now a better allowable investment instrument than Money Market Investments. The result will be a significant increase in interest earned in the coming year.

	2022	Current
Huntington Money Market	\$239,898	\$0
Westfield MM	\$0	\$52,050
Edward Jones	\$229,427	\$402,200
Total Reserves:	\$469,325	\$454,250
Huntington Checking	\$13,360	\$0
Westfield Checking	\$0	\$59,576
Total Holdings:	\$482,6850	\$513,826

We paid our tax obligation of \$851.18 and filed the necessary IRS forms. The contractors were provided their required 1099’s.

In mentioning all the challenges that the HOA faced in terms of fuel surcharges, inflation and other costs the Board was able to establish a balanced budget with an adjustment in homeowners’ monthly assessment to a total of \$170.00.

President Smith detailed on how our Reserve Funds were invested through our Edward Jones Broker by lacking a ladder approach with investing approximately \$100,000 in annual CD’s in quarterly acquisitions. These investments are with different banks to provide maximum FDIC protection. A chart of the investments was provided.

**PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES**

Each of the five candidates running for Country Lakes Board Trustee were presented and spoke briefly about their background. The candidates for office were:

- Vince D'Angelo
- Kerry Winer
- Don Kelley
- Beth Whitson
- David Shippoli

Membership cast their ballots which were collected

#### LANDSCAPING, Bruce Buller

Bruce Buller, Property Manager, informed the audience of HOA activities during the past year. He commenced with Moscarino (landscaper) being in its second year of a three-year contract, with the current Moscarino contract reflecting pre-inflationary rate charges. He further noted that we will work with the landscaper to address the mulching issue before trimming.

The snow removal contract is being reviewed. There were several salt applications though we only had one major snowfall.

The fertilization of lawns, shrubs, and trees is covered under a contract with Weed Pro, which is also in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a three-year contract.

Tree Master trims only the tree in the front beds of homeowners and those in the common area. If a homeowner wants additional service, the contractor information is on our website.

He has not heard any complaint about the spider control application by Akron Pest Control. Their new three-year contract offers two applications per year.

Bruce referred to comments that President Smith presented about the bio treatments by Pond Control. A depth study is planned for next year to confirm the positive impact of the treatments. He expounded on dredging aspects and our use of fish and fountains to contain sediment growth.

Fifteen mailboxes will be replaced based on the condition of the mailboxes.

We are in the process of removing old mulch from 15 homes and replacing it. The mulch replacement pattern will continue.

Bruce also mentioned that the lamp posts will be painted with several posts with gas that will need to be turned off to allow the unit to cool and the spray not ignite.

He concluded with the front entrance wall being resealed and the resealing of driveways where they abutted the street.

#### DESIGN & REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC) – Vince D'Angelo

Vince D'Angelo stated that the Design Review Committee members were Bill Hanigan (Member), George Shafer (Consultant), and Vince (Chairman).

He identified the purpose as outlined in Article 7, Exterior Appearance of the covenants and restrictions. "To ensure that any exterior additions/alterations to your home or landscaping changes are consistent with the other homes in the neighborhood. Responsibility of all homeowners to maintain outsides of home to keep our neighborhood consistent& beautiful."

Vince explained the review process. He emphasized the importance of getting approval before signing or committing to a contract and that the DRC Application must be completed by the homeowner and not the contractor but include all contractor information on the form. The homeowner is responsible for ensuring that the contractor parks on the non-hydrant side of the street, obey speed limits, and does not offload supplies on the street.

The normal timeline for the DRC to respond to an application is 10 days though most have shorter timeline approvals. Vince identified some of the more popular improvement categories and stated that all 30 applications had been approved.

DRC keeps a historic electronic list of projects which assists in the Committee's review of applications.

Special issues that the homeowner must consider is:

- Blockage of other homeowner views
- Matching siding and roofing due to storm damages
- Dealing with insurance companies
- Do not commit to contracts before DRC approval

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTED BOARD TRUSTEES: Shawn Smith announced the four candidates elected:

- Vince D'Angelo
- Kerry Winer
- Don Kelley
- Beth Whitson

Congratulation was mentioned, and an appreciation of David Shippoli in his submittal to run for office.

NEW BUSINESS:

President Smith mentioned that the issue presented at the previous annual meeting concerning the rental property and AirBnb had been taken up by the Master Association with the issue passing. He stated that he would not comment on the other two issues, which were still in the hands of homeowners.

HOMEOWNERS' QUESTION AND ANSWER

Question #1 by Ted Lesiak: Ted offered what he referred to as a sad story with a warning. A neighboring HOA (Cobblestone) had its management company quit leaving the HOA with projects uncompleted or ignored. Fortunately, the new developer is resolving one water issue resulting from a pond adjacent to Poe Road.

Blue Heron HOA is not so fortunate when their management company left with issues surrounding their dam being cited by the state inspectors, no board, no covenants, and no money.

Answer: Ted did not ask for an answer but warned our homeowners to stay clear of HOA management companies.

Shawn did respond to thank all those board members who had served and provided the homeowners of Country Lakes with what we have today.

Question #2 by Basil Galati: Asked if the two homes that had rocks in their front beds were approved.

Answer: Yes, An application had been submitted and approved.

Question #3 by Basil Galati: Asked if the Board was aware that a dumpster was sitting on a driveway for eight months.

Answer: Shawn stated that he was not aware of the length of its duration, but his normal commute did not take him in that direction.

Bill Hanigan stated that he was aware and that he had spoken to the new owner, who was undergoing major renovations inside the house, and was having issues with contractor and material delays.

Question #4 by Dan Auker: Dan wanted to know about the tree company trimming just the front trees and if the homeowner could contact them directly for other work.

Answer: Bruce answered in the affirmative and mentioned that we have a number of trees planted by different developers which have different diseases and need. The trees outside of the front beds are the responsibility of the homeowner.

Question #4 by Greg Arko: Greg wanted to know if the service providers to the ponds are ecological/biological certified and what fish are currently in the ponds.

Answer: There are two pond service providers. Pond Control is the service provider that maintains the ponds and Aqua Doc does the depth and sediment study. We are also using the fountains for aeration purposes. The stocking of the pond varies as is with the winter weather. We do have amurs, bass, and blue gill in the ponds.

ADJOURNMENT:

By unanimous consent the meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM

*Draft Minutes were taken by Bill Hanigan, Board Secretary*