

Minutes – Gwinhurst Civic Association General Meeting - Nov. 7, 2013 @7 pm

According to the sign-in sheet there were 30 Gwinhurst residents present, plus Rep. Bryon Short.

Introduction

Christina Anthony welcomed everyone and talked about the history of the civic association, including our two informal organizational meetings this fall at Pat's Pizza. Each of the interim officers then introduced themselves. The interim board consists of: Christina Anthony, President; David Paules, Treasurer; Carol Thomas and Kris McMahan, Vice Presidents; and Denise Brush, Secretary. Christina also introduced Bryon Short, our state representative.

Communication

There are over 500 homes in Gwinhurst and Greenmount combined. Greenmount is the small area which connects us to Claymont Heights on the north end of the neighborhood. Currently we plan to alternate board meetings and general meetings on the first Thursday of the month, at the VFW. So the next community meeting will be in January, and the next board meeting will be in December. Everyone is welcome to both.

We hope to put signs at entrances to the development (such as W. Holly Oak and Philadelphia Pike) to advertise meetings. Many people liked the idea of a permanent sign with a holder for flyers, especially those who don't use email. Anyone who wants to be a block captain and help distribute flyers to their streets should let the board know.

We plan to get a website up and running in addition to the Facebook page. However Christina has not been able to get in touch with the person who owns the domain name. We may have to start a new one.

Snow Removal

We need to have contracts in place and file with the state by Dec. 2. The state will reimburse us for 75% of the cost if it snows more than 4 inches. The state has stations all over the state to measure the snow.

Two options: either pay only if it snows, or pay up front. Which way to go? Either way you still have to have a contract. State requires a licensed contractor and a canceled check to reimburse us. We would have to decide whether to plow if we get less than 4 inches. Salting is separate and runs about \$2,000.

Snow removal contracts are very complex and each is slightly different. Based on the other civic associations Carol consulted, the "on demand" approach runs about \$1500 - \$2000 per snowstorm. With the "pay up front" method we would give them (for example) \$4500 to cover all the snowstorms that occur (and get 15% back if it never snows at all). We have 5 miles of roads so it might be as much as \$6000. Carol contacted 5 companies and 3 declined. The other two gave us bids. One was the company we used previously which many residents were unhappy with, and the other is a new company being started by Gwinhurst resident Mike Cameron.

There is an issue with South Park Drive - they don't want it plowed because it's a private road, but they don't want their driveway blocked in. This should be mentioned to the contractor. Kris recommended that we support the new company. One of the residents proposed that we go with the "on-demand" approach for this year and no one disagreed. Carol will contact Mike about setting up a contract.

Dues and Finances

We would start out with \$25 a year dues. We do have a new consolidated bank account with some money in it, and are working on getting non-profit status. While the banks don't care, we do plan to require two signatures on each check. We want to be very transparent so residents feel confidence in the organization and are willing to pay their dues.

The state charges \$189 to incorporate, then you have to file as a non-profit with separate fees and paperwork. David is working on this. Money from the previous association was in Artisans Bank but we were being charged for inactivity. Our new account is at PNC and we have \$12,132.93 left over from the previous civic association.

Everyone agreed \$25 is reasonable for this year. We will collect dues in January using an actual mailing. Christina said we welcome donations of envelopes or other supplies. Someone did donate the printing for the flyers we just sent out. Everyone can contact businesses to see if they want to sponsor the mailing – just tell the board. A list of vacant houses would be helpful to save us money – tell Christina if you know of specific addresses on your street.

We plan to create a newsletter summarizing what has happened so far, and giving the board contact information. Christina Lee volunteered to help with the newsletter.

Rep. Short spoke briefly about how important civic associations are for him to communicate with us and for us to find out what's going on. He mentioned that New Castle County police officers can come and give us crime reports at meetings, we just have to ask. Christina plans to invite Officer Hessler to our January meeting. Also there is a Community Transportation Fund that Rep. Short controls, and we can tell him what work needs doing (pothole repair etc).

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.