

NPEA HOA GENERAL MEETING Minutes

April 15, 2024

The Fall Newington Plantation Estates Association (NPEA) homeowners meeting was held at the Newington School Cafeteria on April 15, 2024. Meeting was called to order at 7:03 by President Collett. Board members attending: President Larry Collett, VP Emily Vick, Secretary Kelly Roberts, Treasurer Jennifer Roberts, Member at large Carolyn Gardner. Board Member at large John Dubose was unable to attend. Financial Manager Mike Gobin was also unable to attend. 60 Households were represented.

List of Board Directors:

President: Larry Collett (843-323-2935) president@npeasc.com
Vice-Pres: Emily Vick (843-343-2506) vicepresident@npeasc.com
Treasurer: Jennifer Roberts (843-607-8821) treasurer@npeasc.com
Secretary: Kelly Roberts (843-532-5159) secretary@npeasc.com
At-Large: John DuBose (843-870-5338) memberatlarge@npeasc.com
At-Large: Carolyn Gardner (843-864-4000) memberatlarge@npeasc.com
Past Pres: Randy Sadler (843-875-7440) pastpresident@npeasc.com

II. **VISITOR:** Dr. Shane Robbins, Dorchester District Two Superintendent, spoke regarding the upcoming referendum. He pointed out that DD2 schools are overcrowded due to population growth, especially at Watson Hill and other areas on that side of town. A vote will occur on May 14 to approve funding for new elementary schools and additional wings at all the high schools. The vote allows the use funding sources in a way that there will not be a property tax increase. He discussed construction and improvements to Newington Elementary School, which includes a thorough HVAC overhaul. The Newington School pick up/drop off line will move to the rear of the school. Parking lot and car rider lane construction will begin this summer.

Dr. Robbins presented a Power Point with details of the Referendum. The Power Point is available on the DD2 Website.

HOA member Ben Hough asked Dr. Robbins if the Referendum would include a new or upgraded Tennis Facility for Summerville High School or possibly a facility for all high schools centrally located. Dr. Robbins was unsure of the specifics of a tennis court upgrade.

HOA member Gene Brislin questioned Dr. Robbins on why the Newington playground was now locked. It was available in the past and many neighborhood families enjoyed the use of the space. Dr. Robbins replied he was not at the meeting to speak about the playground facilities.

III. **MINUTES:** The October 23, 2023, NPEA General Meeting minutes have been posted on the Newington website and have been approved by the Board. Randy Sadler made a motion to accept the minutes as written – Kevin Carrol 2nd the motion – All approved.

IV. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Jennifer Roberts, Treasurer.

A. **Report.** The most current NPEA financial report was provided (see attached). President Larry Collett shared that moving forward the financial report will look different as we convert to Quick books. Treasurer Jennifer Roberts reported the delinquent HOA dues report is now down to a single page.

B. **Financial review.** The CPA review of our books was delayed because the Newington Financial Manager was late getting the information to the CPA. The results of the CPA review will be posted on the website when it is completed.

V. REPORT OF THE BOARD:

A. Pool Beautification Project.

The board approved up to \$5,000 to clean the pool area such as: pressure washing of the pool deck and chairs (\$650), painting of the concession area walls and floor (\$2,210), build a removable wall to enclose the community center for events (\$963), and rebuild the concession island.

The board also approved up to \$5,000 to replace the kid pool fence to bring it to an appropriate and safe height that is also taller to prevent swim meet guests from sitting on it, which was causing it to deteriorate (\$4,300).

The board also approved \$3,480.27 to replace a variable flow pump that stopped working (\$1,777.50), leaking pool valve replacement (\$875.00), and the purchase of metal signage for pool rules and “No Lifeguard on Duty” to replace the plastic signs that fade very quickly in sunlight (\$827.77).

A total of \$13,480.27 has been approved by your board to enhance and improve the quality of a neighborhood asset.

B. Board Portal. We are developing a digital board portal that will hold all documents relating to the association, board of directors, and general meeting information with a focus on full transparency and enhanced communications. It is a goal of the board, in developing this portal, which will assist in the succession planning process and strategy for the replacement or passing on of leadership roles.

C. Financial Oversight and Records Conversion. Board President, Larry Collett, met with Mike Gobin, Account Manager, to discuss current financial records. During this meeting, a financial records conversion was discussed to go from general ledger to all digital, Quickbooks Online. This is in progress and will take up to 90 days to complete the full historical data conversion. Data from this conversion will also be used online in the homeowner’s dashboard to see historical data, HOA due balances, etc. A financial review / audit was also discussed and we are in the process of talking with third-party accounting firms to conduct this review. After the conversion is completed, it will be discussed at that time with Mike Gobin if he will continue in the role that he serves. If it is determined that Mike Gobin will no longer continue in this role, an RFP and/or search for a third-party vendor (individual) to fill that role will begin.

D. Communications. We are in the process of improving overall communications on the website with the introduction of an AI-driven chatbot that can answer most questions related to our neighborhood and association. A digital email newsletter will also be released when the next newsletter is sent. You can opt-in to the newsletter on the NPEA website.

E. Discussion on Possible Covenant Changes.

1. ARC Chairman Randy Sadler, briefed that the ARC is struggling to address boats, RVs, and trailers in front yards. The problem is that we have a weak enforcement capability. Randy brought up for discussion the possibility of creating a fine for NPEA covenant violations. He cited Ashbrough East as a neighborhood who implements this fine for boats/trailers, RVs etc. A member in attendance brought up that Ashbrough East has an in-neighborhood storage facility. Randy replied there are many available storage facilities in the area. The Board discussed the pros and cons of allowing a \$25 fine for NPEA covenant violations. No decision was made, but Randy did say there were board members who believed this would be a good idea. He said if the Board moved forward with changes, a vote would be conducted via mail, and it would need the approval of 51% of Newington homeowners to pass. Randy will try to obtain additional information on this potential option from our attorney.

2. The Board discussed the possibility of raising our existing annual HOA cap by \$50 or \$100 at some time in the future. No decision was made.

This was only a preliminary discussion of these items and Board members agreed to table further discussion until the next Board meeting.

F. Landscape Maintenance Fee Increase. Landscaping Company, “Fresh Cuts”, recently proposed a Maintenance schedule change which includes two additional visits to the Lee Street entrance. These additional visits would incur an increase in annual maintenance services of \$675.00. The Board approved this request at their recent Board meeting. Neighbor Kevin Carroll shared the Newington Gardens entrance looked better than ever since Fresh cuts has taken over.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. POOL COMMITTEE. Kelly Roberts (Chairperson) 843-532-5159
poolcommittechair@gmail.com. Committee members: Victoria Merritt, Jena Ferguson, Rob Gross, Sarah Gibson, Natalie Clark and Nancy Bacher

1. **Upcoming Pool Season.** The Pool Committee met on January 30, 2024, to establish the 2024 season which includes open/close dates and daily hours. In addition, the committee was pleased to keep pool membership rates the same for another year (2024).

2. Kelly said homeowners should see the HOA website for pool info and pool forms.

3. Neighbor Ben Hough questioned why the pool doesn’t open in April like some neighboring pools. Kelly answered that our pool schedule follows the DD2 schedule so we can have lifeguards and snack attendants at the pool when it is open. This improves safety and helps to keep non-members out of the pool. Ben suggested that we could take the diving board off while lifeguards are unavailable. Larry suggested the discussion will continue as a side bar meeting with Ben, Larry and Pool Committee.

4. Neighbor Gene Brislin questioned the Pool financials and the pool not making money.

B. SOCIAL COMMITTEE. Jessica Toolin has come back to the social committee and is currently looking for additional volunteers to serve on the committee and/or volunteer at community events. Anyone interested in serving should contact Jessica Toolin.

C. COVENANTS COMMITTEE. We currently have an ARC composed of some board members and some volunteers. Boat, camper, and large trailer parking violations continue to be a problem. The Association may need to improve our covenant enforcement options to get better compliance. This is a topic the new Board is currently discussing. If anyone is interested in participating on this committee, please contact ARC Chair, Randy Sadler.

D. COMMUNICATIONS (NEWSLETTER) COMMITTEE. Emily Vick. If you have any articles that you wish to submit for the next newsletter, you can contact Emily Vick at vicepresident@npeasc.com.

E. COMMUNITY CENTER DESIGN COMMITTEE. This is a brand-new committee that is currently looking for volunteers to serve on this committee.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Parking Lot. Members have authorized the Board to spend “up to \$5,000” to make improvements in the unpaved NPEA pool parking area. The members wanted to spread a load of gravel and possibly get a new bike rack. Action has been deferred pending a decision on the proposed community center project. STILL OPEN.

B. Lee Street Entrance. The Board has authorized up to \$1,000 to troubleshoot and fix the water service at the Lee Street entrance. NPEA Landscaping Company (Fresh Cuts) reported on 18 April that a leak was fixed and a broken sprinkler head was replaced so the Lee Street entrance now has water. As a result of having water, Landscaping Company has planted flowers. ITEM CLOSED.

C. NPEA Meeting Signs. On 6-26, the Board approved the purchase of three HOA meeting signs for up to \$300.00. STILL OPEN.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

Frank Freeman had a petition available for homeowners to sign with regards to the speeding from Axtell and King Charles Circle.

Gene Brislin spoke about a serious water issue at Kenilworth and Sheffield and would like that water issue to be on the board's radar.

A. Next HOA Members Meeting. The Fall NPEA Meeting is scheduled for October 2024, at the Newington Elementary School cafeteria. The exact date will be provided in the Fall 2024 newsletter.

B. Any other new business? None.

IX. MEETING ADJOURNED: Meeting adjourned at 8:29.

Minutes Written by: Kelly Roberts on 21 April 2024.

Minutes Approved by: NPEA BOARD on _____.

LARRY COLLETT
NPEA President

Date