**Walnut Ridge Homeowners Association**

**Walnut Ridge HOA Annual Meeting**

Thursday, August 26, 2021 —7:00 pm

Location: DJs Dugout 19020 Evans St, Elkhorn, NE 68022

**Attendance: Board members:**  Robert (Bob) Kipling (President), Jim Neugebauer (Vice President), Laurie Winkelbauer (Secretary)

**Representative from PJ Morgan Real Estate** - Kathy Kavan (Property Manager for HOA)

**Homeowners in attendance:** Rosalee Kipling,Cindy Siadek, Gene Siadek, Eileen Mainelli, Nick Suhr, Ron Henkle, Margaret Conlon, Bob Maertz, Mike Benck, Chris McMahon

**Call to Order- Bob Kipling**

* Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.
* Welcome
* Introductions

**HOA responsibilities - Bob Kipling**

* Presented a map of the subdivision area that included HOA, City, County and OPS responsibilities and clarified what the HOA is financially responsible for
* Shared a list of items the subdivision is financially responsible to pay for: Upkeep of entrances including subdivision signs, all electrical at entrances and traffic calming devices, mowing along perimeter of subdivision, upkeep of trees along 160 St, upkeep of trees in the park and in traffic calming devices, entire fence that borders Maple St and 156th St
* Clarified the role of Board members:
  + Elected at HOA meetings by those who attend the meeting (usually people who volunteer to be on the Board)
  + care about their neighborhood and want to be involved
  + develop yearly budget
  + good financial stewards of the HOA dues and ensure budget is followed
  + make the best decisions on behalf of the subdivision
* Clarification on complaints
  + The Board is not responsible for enforcement of HOA covenants or to settle disputes between neighbors. Neighbors are encouraged to have discussions with their neighbors about their concerns or regarding perceived covenant violations.
  + Board members have gone to talk to neighbors’ homes in the past to clarify issues in a neighborly way, but they are not required to do so.
  + Neighbors often contact PJ Morgan with their concerns. There is also an HOA email that neighbors can use to ask questions or express concerns. All communications sent to the Board must be signed by the individual and cannot be anonymous.

**Financial Report - Kathy Kavan**

* Financial Statement for July 2021 was presented along with July 2020 for comparison.
* Financial Report was reviewed by all in attendance.

**Storm Damage from July 9 storm and Clean-up plans – Bob Kipling**

* Walnut Ridge sustained some fence damage to the fence along Maple Street as a result of the storm on July 9. There is no insurance to cover the repair costs. In the past the cost of fence insurance was cost prohibitive for the subdivision. However, after we install the new fence it might be worth obtaining.
* Ron’s Fence Repair will be giving the HOA a bid for fence repairs.
* No monies collected from the special assessment for the fence replacement will be used for fence repairs. Fence repairs will have to come out of the operational budget.
* Addresses with fence damage: 16023 Manderson St and 16035 Manderson St
* There was previous fence damage caused by a deer at the far western edge of the fence line along Maple Street. That needs to be fixed.
* There is a dead tree along Maple St that is property of the subdivision – located east of the 160th St entrance. Bob is volunteering to cut it down himself as opposed to contracting with a tree removal company. Will need a dumpster for the removal of tree limbs and volunteers.
* Need to look into the cost of stump grind for removal of stumps along tree line or in traffic calming areas
* The entire Walnut Ridge fence line needs to be cleaned up. Need to remove weed trees and mulberry bushes that are growing into the fence. Will need many volunteers to help with this work.
* Other trees need to be cleaned up. Plan to use a dumpster for disposal of all branches. Will need volunteers for pruning of low branches or dead branches on trees along Maple St (the subdivision is responsible for those trees) and also for tree pruning at the Walnut Ridge Park (the City doesn’t maintain the park trees so the subdivision is responsible for those trees).
* Will plan a future Saturday in the late Summer (when the Huskers and Hawkeyes aren’t playing) for a volunteer led tree elevation/clean up along Maple Street and also in the Walnut Ridge Park.

**Fence Replacement Update- Bob Kipling**

* Still on track to replace the fence in approximately 7 years.
* A yearly special assessment that was added to HOA dues is paying for the fence. Originally the cost of complete fence replacement was figured to be around $200,000 including inflation costs built in. The plan was to collect money for 10 years.
* The money for the fence repayment is kept in a separate secure Money Market account.
* There was discussion about starting fence replacement along 156th St where the fence looks the worst. The biggest concern is the cost if we replace sections of the fence at different times and the ability to obtain the same product later when we finish the fence. It is thought it would be cheaper to replace the entire fence at one time. Bob to look into the cost of getting the fence replaced in two different phases and to start getting bids. There is also concern about the current price of fence materials.

**Stained entrance signs – Bob Kipling**

* Jim recently applied an enzymatic cleaning product to the entrance signs. The signs may need a second application and scrubbing due to unexpected rains after the solution was applied. The entrance sign on 156th St looks worse. Plan to work on the signs again in the near future.

**Volunteerism – Bob Kipling/Laurie Winkelbauer**

* The neighbors who serve on the Board are committed to saving the subdivision money whenever possible by volunteering to do things instead of contracting out for services. In the past most volunteerism came from the Board members alone and we need more help from other neighbors.
* Examples of Board volunteerism: Bob and Jim have saved the subdivision a lot of money by doing minor electrical repairs this past year at both entrances. They have also volunteered time working on entrance signs, moving a boulder the City left in the street after removing an Ash tree and tree trimming and cleaning up tree branches that were dumped along our fence on 156 St. All Board members have worked events such as Neighborhood Spring Cleanup, Easter Egg Hunt, Park clean-up and fall Dumpster Day
* Volunteer needs:
  + A volunteer to revamp the Christmas wreaths for the entrances and hang them up for the holidays. Someone who will take them down after the holidays.
  + Volunteers to help trim trees in the park, clean up fence line, trim trees along Maple St
  + Volunteers to help at City Sponsored spring clean-up in many ways – apply to Saddlebrook Elementary to use their parking lot for the event, direct traffic flow, ensure prohibited items are placed in metal dumpster or City dump truck, help unload cars, clean parking lot after the event
  + Volunteers to help pick plants for entrances, help plant them or help weed entrances from time to time
  + Volunteers who will create and place signs at entrances before key events
  + Volunteers to help at the Easter Egg Hunt – buy candy (HOA pays for the cost of the candy), stuff and tape eggs, place entrance signs for the event, set up in the park, place eggs in the park, clean up after the event. We do have one neighbor who has volunteered to coordinate this event in the future, but she still needs helpers
  + Volunteers for future fall Dumpster Days - apply to Saddlebrook Elementary to use their parking lot for the event direct traffic flow, ensure prohibited items aren’t placed in dumpster, help unload cars, clean parking lot after the event
  + Volunteers willing to help share their expertise with electrical, tree trimming, stump grind, gardening, landscaping or other needs to save the subdivision money
  + Volunteers to call HyVee to see if they would donate any food/beverage for neighborhood events. Volunteers to pick up items.
  + Volunteers to be on OCCP (Citizen Patrol)
  + Volunteers to walk the neighborhood and report significant safety concerns to the City of Omaha Mayor’s hotline such as sidewalks that could pose a significant tripping/fall danger
  + We also really need more homeowner participation/input at monthly meetings to help with ideas and give input on issues. We could use more Board members too.
* Communication
  + There was discussion about the most effective method to communicate with homeowners where there are needs. Two main ideas were identified to improve communication and help homeowners know what is needed:
    - * PJ Morgan to send post cards to all homeowners about upcoming events
      * Place signs at entrances to notify everyone of events and of needs for help

**Architectural & Landscaping Report – Bob Kipling**

* ACR (Architectural Construction Review) - All submitted ACRs were reviewed and approved prior to the meeting. The Board is committed to reviewing them quickly for homeowners. To date no ACRs have been denied. Homeowners who submit ACRs are very much appreciated by everyone. Lately some ACRs involved Adding solar roof panels. The Board approved those requests, but also encouraged the requester to talk to their nearby neighbors about their plan to have the solar panels installed.

**Secretary Report – Laurie Winkelbauer**

* Reviewed all the events the HOA has sponsored or supported in the past:
  + Easter Egg Hunt for kids
  + Spring Clean Up
  + Annual Meeting – early May
  + 4th of July parade (haven’t done this in the past 5 plus years due to low interest)
  + Neighborhood Night Out - early August
  + HOA picnic in the park to meet neighbors (haven’t done this for years due to decline in interest)
  + Fall dumpster day
  + Christmas lights/decorating contest.
* There won’t be a HOA sponsored fall dumpster day this year.
* The annual City of Omaha ***Neighborhood Night Out*** was on Tuesday August 3. One block in Walnut Ridge requested to be reimbursed $100 for holding a block party.
* The plan is to return to normalcy in the coming year with all events and meetings.
* The next upcoming event will be tree trimming in the Walnut ridge Park and along the fence like on Maple Street

**Safety Report – Jim Neugebauer**

* OCCP – Omaha Coalition Citizen Patrol is still patrolling the neighborhood. This is a small group of dedicated volunteers who patrol Walnut Ridge Subdivision and Elk Creek subdivision.
* OCCP reports safety issues like street lights that are out, calls OPD for safety issues and lets neighbors know if they forgot to close their garage door.
* No safety events to report.
* Always looking for more neighbors to volunteer to help patrol the neighborhood. A background check is required along with some training. Please reach out to Jim if you are wanting more information on how to join the group.

**Discussion and Suggestions**

* Have one large Spring Clean-up for trees, fence line and park. Communicate the plan.
* Communicate events by placing signage at entrances and also by sending out postcards through PJ Morgan to all homeowners
* Communicate volunteer needs by placing signs at entrances with information
* Share the email to contact the Board in all meeting minutes
* See if YyVee would be willing to donate any food/beverages for our events
* One neighbor volunteered to help elevate trees along Maple St
* Other neighbors present volunteered to help with park cleanup, waling fence line to clean up weed trees/bushes, help with gardening/planting, help with elevating tress along Maple St

**Monthly HOA meetings**

* The HOA meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 7pm in the HyVee Cafeteria on 156 St and Maple St.
* We *really* need more homeowners to attend the meetings to help provide input on issues and input on solutions to problems.

**Meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm**.

Email to contact the Walnut Ridge HOA Board:

A special thank you to all the neighbors who attended the meeting. Your questions and suggestions were very helpful and much appreciated. We hope to see some of you at the future monthly meetings too!