

EMERALD LAKES VILLAGE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION SPRING MEETING
TROY UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAFETERIA
TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2011

MINUTES

Call to Order and Welcome – Chairman/President Dave Diener called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. and reminded the assembly that this was an informal meeting asking that all questions be held until the end.

Introduction of the Board of Directors – President Dave Diener introduced the ELV Board members:

- Vice President Bill Clancey
- Recording Secretary Karen Charnawskas
- Corresponding Secretary & Newsletter Editor Kathleen Donovan
- Lakes Chairman Tom Kuhn
- Maintenance Chairman Joe Power (absent)
- Membership Chairman Andrea Allemon
- Restrictions Chairman Bruce Berton (absent)
- Security Chairman Allan Boots (absent)
- Special Projects Sue Patterson
- Treasurer Jerry Elsenheimer

Opening Remarks – President Dave Diener

● Pumps and Wells

- A lot of time and money has been spent on the crossover pump. It has been used for several years during low water levels to pump water from Emerald into Pebble and Walker. The pump is similar to sump pumps used in basements. Recently, unknown persons have vandalized the pump frequently to stop the flow of water and the vandalism has caused Pebble to drop. Some Pebble residents have become very vocal about the lake level.
- The crossover pump has run very late in the season and the augmentation pump ran into the middle of January; is normally shut down on Labor Day. The output of the existing well has been tested at the insistence of a few Pebble residents. Drilling for a possible well on Emerald Lake requires a large amount of paperwork and long dissertations to get permission. The Lakes Chairman has handled writing and filing requirements. The results: A small in diameter well was dug, but NO water was found.

- Restrictions – The Restrictions were outlined in brief. The assembly was reminded that each has property rights that must be protected.
- Goose Busters – Some of the cleanest lakes are in Oakland County; consequently, it is imperative that residents call these men to chase the geese away.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Jerry Elsenheimer gave a quick overview of the Treasurer's Report.

- Total cash currently in reserve is \$145,036.
- There are 12 properties delinquent in dues and property liens were recorded on May 6.
- One legal action was settled on May 6. There is no other legal action pending at the moment.
- Several financial statements are available this evening.

Introduction of Speaker #1 – Recording Secretary Karen Charnawskas introduced Jan Bills, a certified landscape designer, master gardener and owner of Two Women and a Hoe, who discussed various principals of gardening, including organic gardening. Copies of Jan's presentation on *Green Gardening* and her *Pruning Calendar* are on file with the Recording Secretary.

Introduction of Speaker #2 – President Dave Diener introduced Troy Mayor Pro Tem Mary Kerwin and Mayor Louise Schilling who selected the ELV meeting as the first public place to reveal the City Council's vote on the Library issue. They distributed and discussed several handouts including: *Troy City Council Vision Statement and Goals, adopted Monday, February 7, 2011*; the *2011 City of Troy Community Fact Sheet*; and *Library Matters*. These documents are on file with the Recording Secretary. After a brief discussion on the Library millage and the City's current condition, they fielded questions from the assembly.

- Library Millage Discussion – The vote on the Library millage was not a clean vote. Council decided after listening to the residents that the Library should not be closed but bridged until a "dedicated" millage could be held. The Council is working on a solution.
- A Summary of the City's Current Condition
 - All taxes on homes are going down. The only homes that have not lost value are in Emerald Lakes because they are highly desired. Off-lake homes will see a 10% decrease in property value which equals an \$85 decrease in 2011. On-lake properties will see a 7% decrease which equals a \$77 decrease. If the millage is passed, residents will pay \$15 more; 26 cents out of each tax dollar goes to City services.

- Mail delivery was an issue this year because the streets were not cleared. ELV particularly struggles with snow removal because it does not allow salt. Because the City was missing 15 employees and remaining employees could not work overtime, clearing fell behind.
- Question – The City used the brine solutions throughout ELV this year. Was it used anywhere else?
 - Answer – Yes, Farmington Hills also used a lot of deicing.
- Question – Why did the Council decide to have the Library election in August rather than November?
 - Answer – It cost less than to bridge and wait till November. If it were to fail, the money would have to come from the reserve fund and would be replaced. Because the anxiety level was so high, it was decided to do the election early. If it doesn't pass in August, that's it.
- Question – When will absentee ballots be available?
 - Answer – June 16; those who saved their signs can put them up June 5 or 60 days before the election.
- Question – Read somewhere that the monthly operating budget for the Library is \$300,000. Is that true?
 - Answer – The Library houses special items such as collections, etc. The Library now only has 5 full-time employees and 50 part-timers. The rest are volunteers; about 150. Costs include items that go into the collection as well as utilities and cleaning staff, materials, etc. During the short window, the only things that will be in the Library are items that are already there. Fines account for \$100,000 a year. Troy has the most used Library in the State. Check the City website for more information. The budget was just passed last night. As a point of information, it is illegal to charge for using the Library.
- Question – Is the Troy Library still a member of the cooperative?
 - Answer – Yes. People from other libraries can use our services but they must purchase a library card.
- Question – Regarding dedicated millage. Where will it go?
 - Answer – It will be dedicated for library services.
- Question – Are there any thoughts as to what we will do in five years?
 - Answer – By then, there will be a new council and they will have to decide.
- Question – Curious about the businesses in Troy. We still have a lot of buildings vacant and not paying taxes. How will that affect paying taxes?
 - Answer – For years we were so blessed to have 50/50; half in commercial and half in industry. Now one of our commercial buildings is only half full and therefore the assessment was halved. When it was filled, the City tried to raise the taxes again; but there was a lawsuit. The Supreme Court said once the value goes down, it could not be brought up again. Now all the commercial properties want to follow suit. Bad news!
- Question – Don't we get a lot of revenue from Somerset and Oakland Mall?
 - Answer – Yes, but nobody foresaw this decrease in valuation. Money is coming back to the government, but the money will come back slower from the companies.
- Question – Do commercial properties increase in value like residential properties do?
 - Answer – Unlike residential properties, the commercial properties will not go back up. A constitutional amendment is needed to make the commercial properties the same as residential.
- Question – Talk about John R and its widening. What about Rochester Road landscaping?
 - Answer – The City has been purchasing the right of way on John R for many years. When all properties are purchased, we will get County and Federal matching, but that won't happen for at least five years. It should be noted that Rochester Road was ten years in the making. Regarding the Rochester Road landscaping; there won't be landscaping per se, mostly grass.
- Question – Approximately two years ago, the Army Corps of Engineering made a study of the county drain where it is adjacent to ELV. Troy Engineering promised to reveal that study but it never has. Can you tell us what recommendations the ACE had, and will something be done in the foreseeable future? Also, several years ago Troy did some upgrading of that drain at the north end of ELV. Are there plans to continue those improvements?
 - Answer – The Study has not been started. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is currently revising the Ferry Drain Project and Scope Agreement that eventually must be approved by City Council before the Study can begin. Due to the layoff of Troy's full-time Environmental Specialist and now the recent resignation of our part-time Environmental Specialist, Troy's cost share and scope of in-kind services has changed and this must be reflected in the agreement. Engineering is working with the USACE on these revisions. The study purpose is *"To provide technical, planning and engineering assistance for an Ecosystem Restoration Study under the authority of Section 401 of the Water Resource Development Act of 1990 as amended. To assist the City of Troy with working to study the ecosystem restoration alternatives for restoring the river's beneficial ecosystem habitat."* There is no construction funding associated with this study. A copy of Cynthia Stewart's email containing the John R 88-20-11-226-037 Plans is on file with the Recording Secretary.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

APPROVED on May 23, 2012