

THE
VILLAGE  GRANDE®
AT ENGLISH MILL

BOARD'S OPEN SESSION AT VILLAGE GRANDE –ENGLISH MILL

DATE: 10/15/24

TIME: 6:30 p.m.

HANDOUTS: (These were made available in hard copy prior to the meeting).

- Meeting Agenda
- Financial Update Power Point
- Maintenance Committee Report

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Charles Bisciegliia called the meeting to order and asked all to stand.

ROLL CALL: Abe Greenbaum called the roll.

- Charles Bisciegliia – President- present
- Bob Kennedy – Vice President – present
- Eileen Mayer – Treasurer – present
- Abe Greenbaum – Trustee – present
- Jo-Anne Goldberg – Secretary – on Facetime
- Tara Frontera – Associa Property Manager

Charles Bisciegliia said that we have a quorum.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA:

Charles Bisciegliia called for the motion. Bob Kennedy moved it and Eileen Mayer seconded it.

MOTION TO APPROVE SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 MEETING MINUTES:

Charles Bisciegliia called for the motion. Bob Kennedy moved it and Eileen Mayer seconded it.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Charles Bisciegliia asked if there were new residents in attendance. None indicated.

CORPORATE TRANSPARENCY ACT – Charles Bisciegliia provided an update.

On 10/11/24 there was a hearing in US District court in Alexandria, Virginia. CAI is trying to get an injunction for temporary relief. The date for compliance to provide personal financial information is 1/1/2025. The bill HR 9045 is asking to exempt Homeowners' Associations. At this point the US District court's decision is pending.

DRAFT OF AUDIT REPORT - Charles Bisciegliia indicated that the finance committee did a preliminary review. There were no major concerns; however, there were questionable transactions from operations to reserve that might have to be reversed. Specifically, legal and engineering expenses related to the ponds. Charles is asking for copies of the legal bills to review to determine appropriateness of the transfers. Of note, there was over \$32,000. in landscaping charges moved over to the reserves which was picked up by the auditor. There may be a need to put money back to the reserve from operations. Since the audit covered the period from October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023 the previous board will need to sign off on it. Having a certified audit is needed in order to complete the HOA's tax return.

BIGGEST FINANCIAL BLUNDERS – Charles Bisciegliia stated that the decision to aerate and over seed the lawns caused a disturbance within the community. He was concerned that residents complained about it, and one resident contacted him and said “it may turn out to be the biggest problem the community faced.” Charles Bisciegliia disagreed and provided specific examples to substantiate his point. Specifically, he said that in his opinion the real financial blunders were within the last three years overspending in legal expenses to the amount of \$114,000. Landscaping is another area in which there were additional expenses of \$88,000.00 beyond the budgeted amount. He reminded the community that for every \$5000.00 spent means an additional \$1.00 in assessment fees. He said that these actions were taken by “cliques” without community input.

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Another example is the pond. He said that the community paid \$240,000 for the pond remediation. He indicated that it was not necessary at the time, there was no community input in the decision to move forward and it was processed as operating, rather than, capital improvement to avoid a community vote on this expenditure. Charles Bisciegia emphasized that it is critical that residents challenge the board, come to the meeting and fully understand where the money is being expended. He explained that oftentimes at the end of the fiscal year expenses are moved from operations to reserve to make operations "look better". He stressed that residents need to examine the financial reports and question any unclear action.

Charles Bisciegia observed that as president residents are primarily concerned about the geese and the condition of the lawns. He anticipates the new language in Community Rules will put the issue of lawns to rest by specifying what the HOA is responsible for. That is, irrigation, application of chemicals and mowing and edging. Beyond the specified services, the homeowner is responsible.

PROSPECTIVE LEGAL FIRMS: Bob Kennedy reported that Mike Mc Grath is instrumental in narrowing down the applicants. There are three law firms that the board will consider. There is a Zoom interview scheduled for Tuesday, October 22 and two additional Zoom interviews scheduled for the following Tuesday. Once all the interviews are conducted, the community will be notified of any decision made.

MANAGING THE CONTRACTS: Charles Bisciegia strongly mentioned that all contracts need to be managed and there needs to be oversight that all aspects of the contract are being implemented. He said that one reason why the board has difficulty managing the contracts is because of all the meaningless distractions that take up time. He asked that the community be cognizant of how distractions impact us all.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

It was reported that we are under budget after 11 months of the fiscal year and this should result in our year end expenditures below the budget. The current expenses account is: Balance as of 8/1/24 is \$110,831. Income is \$96,164 and Expenses is \$88,339. This results in a balance of \$118,656. The other account balances are as of 8/31/2024 replacement reserves \$855,255, other reserves \$155,272.00, Social committee \$4,365 and Special events \$8,596.00

Mr. Lichtenwalner, Chairperson of the Finance Committee presented a power point that included anticipated budget deviations, current expenses account, liquidity, other account balances and significant budget deviations. This handout was printed out in hard copy for all.

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COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Maintenance: Copies of their report were made available in hard copy at the meeting. The maintenance committee fixed and repaired items and they will continue to work on the light repairs. Under Maintenance: I reported that we rebuilt the table in the Conference room, replaced a pair of 3-way switches in the corridor adjacent to the game rooms and we replaced 2 photocells at the Mill Road sign. One of the Mill Road sign's spotlights still needs to be installed and will be when it gets delivered

Landscaping: There is an estimated savings of \$70,000 because of the wells. Water continues to be on three times per week because of the drought situation.

Special Events: Sandy Kurman shared that the balance is \$9,162.52. The committee plans to use the money to replace pool furniture.

Social Committee: TD Bank is charging \$10 per month because it is considered a commercial account. If \$1500.00 is kept in the account, the charge would be waived. It was suggested that \$2000.00 be kept in the account and the remainder be transferred to the operating account.

Newsletter: The Newsletter is budgeted \$2,000.00 per year. A survey was distributed to all residents to determine their interest in keeping a hard copy versus online only. There were 133 returns and 96 said to provide a print copy and 36 said to do online only. A hard copy will continue with the next copy expected in December.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION TO ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF CHARLES BISCIEGLIA:

Charles Bisciegli called for the motion. Bob Kennedy moved it with reluctance and Eileen Mayer seconded it. All were in favor and motion was approved.

MOTION TO APPROVE ART FARNUM to FILL THE UNEXPIRED TERM OF CHARLES BISCIEGLIA:

Charles Bisciegli called for the motion. Bob Kennedy moved it and Eileen Mayer seconded it. All were in favor and motion was approved.

MOTION TO PROCEED TO AMEND THE INITIATION FEE (Article II, section 2.07) AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORKING CAPITAL (Article II, section 2.08):

Charles Bisciegli called for the motion. Eileen Mayer moved it and Bob Kennedy seconded it. Everyone approved and the motion was passed.

Charles Bisciegli explained that this change would in no way effect the present residents. It is a move to increase funds to ensure equity. The recommendation is to increase the initiation fee to \$500. and the working capital fee to \$2000.00. The working documents allow the HOA to increase it to 9 times the assessment or in this case \$2100.00. This amount is similar to the fees at Little Mill so it would not be a deterrent to purchase here. There would be a minimal filing charge with the county approximately \$80.00. The community would need to

approve it by 51%. The money collected could be used for any purpose except for decreasing assessment fees. It would require a change in the HOA by-laws. The declaration states that it is subject to restrictions in Article 13, however, there is no Article 13 in our declaration.

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RESIDENT COMMENT:

A resident asked who pays these fees. Charles Bisciegia explained that the fees are paid by the buyer of the home. He said that currently each of the 397 homes in the VGEM currently own 397th part of the community's approximately \$1 million dollars which converts to \$2500.00. Currently, they are buying into the \$2500. but presently only paying \$1500.00.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE SNOW POLICY:

Charles Bisciegia called the motion. Abe Greenbaum moved it and Bob Kennedy seconded it. Bob Kennedy read the names of all snow captains (those who would measure the snow) and stated their locations which are accessible to them. A resident, Dan Cianci asked to have the snow shoveled from the sidewalks, but was told that the township does not require it and Eileen Mayer reminded the residents that snow is plowed from the streets onto the sidewalks.

There were no closing Trustee comments. Charles Bisciegia called for the motion to adjourn. Bob Kennedy moved the motion and Eileen Mayer seconded it.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Anne Goldberg
Secretary

