

2016 Meeting Minutes: Annual Members Meeting

Elk Ridge Community Association (ERCA)

June 25, 2016; Sleepy J Cabins, Hwy. 31, Swan Valley, Idaho

In attendance: John Rice (Board Chair), Mike Cochran (Vice Chair), Tim and Kelly Savage, Grace and Hasty Arnold

Call to Order:

John Rice called the meeting to order at 10:08. Distribute 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes; note that these are on the website. Motion to approve 2015 annual meeting minutes by John Rice, second by Mike Cochran.

Distribute copies of agenda; Approval of agenda, Motion by John, second by Mike.

Budget discussion:

Leigh Coveney, Secretary, could not attend today, but provided a Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statement (passed out to attendees) for the period Jan. 1 through June 15, and discussed her report with John before the meeting. We have \$38,000 in bank as of June 15; ~\$2K more than this time last year. We receive about \$16,400 in dues per year. There are a few collection issues but not many, and Leigh has diligently pursued past due accounts. Road Maintenance and snow removal is our biggest single expense, totaling almost \$9k to date. John noted that we have been without a paid manager for about 4 years now, and much thanks goes to Dave and Leigh Coveney for day-to-day subdivision management, which has saved the HOA a lot of money. In addition to managing road maintenance, Dave does a lot of roadside moving and weed spraying work, and even some snow plowing, all without billing for his time; he only bills for some repairs to his equipment, weed chemicals, etc. John noted that at some point the association will likely need some paid assistance, either for actual physical work and/or for management. Mike noted that Dave's mower that he uses for mowing our road edges is pretty beat up, and some repairs will be needed soon. John noted that it is a good thing and even necessary that we have a surplus in the budget, in order to have enough money to deal with occasional catastrophic damages to roads, such as occurred a few years ago with the unusual late winter runoff event (a warm rain-on-snow event when the ground was frozen).

Road Report:

Mike Cochran reported on a recent discussion with Dave about the on-going challenges with road maintenance, including washboarding on the big hill on Elk Ridge Drive, etc. One of the reasons why the surface material tends to washboard is because major rains and runoff events wash away fines, leaving only the coarse gravel or "pea gravel"; with the fines gone there is nothing to bind the coarse material. Dave suggests we consider putting up 25 MPH speed limit signs, as lower speeds will slow the rate of washboarding and damage. The large agricultural vehicles that use of the roads also tend to make the washboards develop faster. Dave is investigating options for getting some better, well-graded material with fines that can be placed and rolled in. The problem there is that this material isn't available in the valley and would need to be trucked in at significant expense. And we would need a lot of material due to having 7 miles of road. We are also considering another application of MgCl to the road bed on Elk

Ridge Drive over its length. When we did this a few years ago, shortly thereafter we had a major runoff event in early July which washed the surface material away. Another road challenge is that our grader contractor isn't always readily available. Another option is an oil coating, similar to a chip seal but with sand, which is a multi-day process with the sand application at the end. We will be evaluating costs for this option, and perhaps run an experiment. The main thing to understand is that the road surface material we have readily available locally is the primary reason that keeping the road surface smooth for any length of time is very difficult. Discussion about the mix of snow removal vs. road repair costs, and John noted that the 2016 costs to date are primarily snow removal due to being the Jan. to June period, this year being a relatively bad winter with lots of snow removal included. Mike noted that the repair of the large ditch along the lower part of Elk Ridge Drive occurred during the spring and was therefore in the 2016 road maintenance costs to date. Averaged over the year the road maintenance cost is usually higher than snow removal. John noted that an experiment on a section of the big hill may be in order with the oil-sand option. John also noted that Dave has done a very good job working with our primary roads contractor, including careful attention to invoiced costs, working through issues, etc.

Weed Control report:

Regarding our weed battles, John showed an example of cheat grass and discussed control methods, which are challenging. He further noted that minimizing ground disturbance and preservation of topsoil are important to minimizing weeds. Good news with the weed fight is that the county is very actively involved in Swan Valley, and helped with spraying in Elk Ridge last year. Mike noted that he had good luck with fighting his yellow clover by digging it. Mike also noted that if possible we should try to hit our thistles before the seed heads are out. John went over some examples of effective Spotted Knapweed and thistle strategies in Elk Ridge. Mike suggested that weed fighters should get a backpack sprayer, but also try simply digging out certain species, like yellow clover. Kelly Savage asked about suggestions for re-planting bare areas after construction. Mike noted they he had good luck with hydroseeding with native species and flowers on part of his property, and he planted grass that he mows close to his house. John noted that he used Cedera Seed's native grass mix over most of his disturbed area, and a Canby grass close to house. Little or no mowing is necessary, and in some years watering isn't either, and the mix of wild flowers is gorgeous all summer.

John noted that Bonneville County is building a building at the transfer station that will be used to stage weed control equipment being used in Swan Valley. The County is going to create a Swan Valley weed advisory board. John explained why he hates Canada Thistle above all other weeds – it's very hard to completely eradicate due to the extensive root network it develops. This is why it's important to attack new infestations as soon as possible.

Open Discussion and Member Questions:

Helen V. is planning to build a cabin on Cedar Circle, starting this year. The board has reviewed her plans, and she is going to submit an updated set of plans. Mike may build a storage building in the coming year or two. Tim Savage gave an update on the status of their on-going house construction project, and some of the set-backs they've encountered, as well as the timing of the building tasks that remain.

Grace Arnold thanked the board for the work that we do, and the expertise we bring. John talked about the status of the website and things that would be nice to add, including lessons learned from those who have built here, more wildlife photos, etc.

Adjournment: John motioned to adjourn, second by Grace. Adjourned 11:05 AM

Board Organizational Meeting following adjournment of members meeting. Brief discussion of possible additional board members.