

Southwinds Association, Inc.
Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2019

I. Call to Order and Roll Call:

The 2019 Annual Meeting of the Southwinds Association, Inc. was called to order at 7:08pm in the Essex Elementary School Media Room. Present were: Bonacorsa representing Burrows, Decker, DeCrescentis, Jendrucek, Kearns, Levene, MacMillan, McCaffrey, Monaco, Quets, Sexton, Shepherd and Sorrentino. Attending remotely were Brochu, Fisher and Himsel. In addition to a proxy submitted by Burrows, proxies were submitted by: Antone, D'Amico, Farley, Flynn, Hammen, McDonald, Saitta, Severance, Strong and Tweed. The total of twenty needed for a quorum was exceeded.

II. Review and approval of 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes.

There was no discussion. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

III. President's Report

Fred reminded everyone of his report, which summarized 2018 efforts on behalf of the Association. The report was sent to all homeowners. It is appended to these minutes.

Fred also announced that State Trooper Tretter's office will commence electronic monitoring of speed on Mares Hill Road, beginning in December.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Stacia Libby, of Thompson and Peck, has been selected as our insurance agent. She will review both policies (general liability and directors and officers) for coverage and cost with recommendations to the board in time for the December 2020 meeting.

The 2020 budget was approved. Although some numbers are still preliminary in the 2019 budget, it appears that we will go into 2020 with a surplus of \$848. This will be transferred to the Association's certificate of deposit.

V. Committee Reports

Landscape Committee: (Judy Jendrucek)

The area near Mares Hill Rd. was enlarged, and the entry gardens were edged, weeded and mulched in the spring. The contract with Cerase has been renewed. Less mulch is expected to be needed next spring.

Pond Committee: (Jack Kearns)

There were two pond treatments again this year, the second year of a three year certificate for algae removal. These went according to schedule, with modest success. "Rick the Pond Guy", who has been treating the pond for the past 22 years, feels that good progress is being made in combatting the lily pads. Two treatments are budgeted for 2020.

We are working on possible solutions for two other pond problems. One is the build-up of silt from the 2 brooks that flow into the pond and carry debris from the roads into the pond. The other is the growth of an as-yet unidentified weed that has become an eyesore near the dock area. No money has been budgeted for these problems, since right now there is no viable solution.

Open Space Committee: (Peter Bonanno)

There were two open space cleanups this year, one in May and one in October. Each had 4-6 volunteers with equipment to clear brush and beautify the area. Several additional trips to the path were necessary to clear debris and cut back growth. Cleanups will continue in 2020, as will remarking the trail from Southwinds Drive with orange paint, treating and cleaning the picnic table, monitoring the dock and, possibly, adding a bench.

VI. Old Business

Standing Committee Charters

Charters describing the work of the three standing committees has been completed and will be posted on our website.

All Southwinds Association, Inc. committee chairpersons will keep their positions in 2020.

VII: New Business

Nomination and election of treasurer

Although one member is considering becoming treasurer, no one has volunteered as yet to assume that position when John Shepherd's term ends Dec. 31. With the assumption that we may not have a treasurer, Fred contacted Crehan Group, LLC to provide accounting services at a cost not to exceed \$1,000 annually. The job requirements were documented for Crehan Group. John has a copy for members to see. If we do not find a treasurer, there are two possible ways to proceed. One being that the firm would work independently of the board.

The other would be to have a third board member as liaison to the firm, but not responsible for the treasurer's job. Rather, this would entail review and approval of all invoices to be paid before sending on to Crehan Group, LLC for check processing, and check signing for payment.

The board will continue to look for a third board member, either as treasurer or as a liaison to the firm, until John's term ends at the end of 2019. A motion was approved for Southwinds Association, Inc. to enter into a contract with The Crehand Group, LLC at a cost not to exceed \$1000 annually.

Ed McCaffrey, who has been treasurer, feels the job is not very difficult. He and John have both offered their help to a new treasurer. Jack will provide computer assistance, if needed. He will also continue to manage the mailing labels.

A motion was passed to raise the dues \$17.50 if a treasurer is not found.

Board Priorities

Fred reviewed the board priorities for 2020. They are the following:

1. To evaluate the cause, identify solutions and subsequent costs to address silt build up in specific areas of the fourteen-acre pond owned by South Winds Association, Inc.;
2. To have electronic traffic speed monitoring of Birch Mill Trail and Mares Hill Road with subsequent reports forwarded to all South Wind Association, Inc. members;
3. To clarify the responsibilities of the Division of Public Works, Essex Town Hall and Southwinds home owners, regarding overhanging tree branches that are identified as a potential hazard along South Winds Drive, Birch Mill Trail and Mares Hill Road
4. To monitor the completion of work to be done in the spring by the Department of Public Works to install a new dry well, catch basin and sump pump.

VIII: Comments, concerns and recommendations

1. Mike asked that our members not exceed the 25mph speed limit within our neighborhood. He has a hidden drive and a faster speed is dangerous.
2. Stu suggested that we actively use the website for recommendations that may be helpful to others. Ralph asked specifically for gutter cleaner recommendations.
3. Fred recognized John for his 7 years as treasurer. This was met with applause.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

Addendum

2019 President's Report South Winds Association, Inc.

The South Winds Association, Inc. board has addressed the following during this calendar year to date:

1. Revamped annual budget format
2. Developed Charters for each of three Standing Committees
3. Established working relationships with:
 - a. Mr. Joe M. Budrow, Essex Town Hall, Zoning/Wetlands Enforcement Agent
 - b. Mr. Ryan Welch, Essex Town Hall, Director of Public Works and
 - c. Trooper David Tretter, Essex Town Hall resident trooper for the Connecticut State Highway Patrol.
4. Established protocol entitled: "Board Responsibilities Regarding the Approval of Planned Additions and Alterations to the Exterior of Homes and Property" (board adopted 6/27/2019)
5. Responded to resident concerns with the direct intervention of Essex Town Hall or private vendors:
 - a. Asphalt collapse on Birch Mill Trail (June 11, 2019);
 - b. Removal of a large tree branch that blocked a portion of South Winds Drive (January 24, 2019);
 - c. Removal of a large branch (April 3, 2019) and two large trees (September 27, 2019) adjacent to the path leading to the floating dock that represented safety concerns/liability exposure;
 - d. In process of addressing a drainage issue at the entrance of Birch Mill Trail and Mares Hill Road;
 - e. Shared information with South Winds Association, Inc. home owners concerning a traffic accident that occurred January 25, 2019 on Mares Hill Road that also resulted in subsequent property damage on Birch Mill Trail (April 3, 2019);

- f. Electronic Traffic Speed summaries for South Winds Drive, forwarded to all members of South Winds Association, Inc. (April 21st and May 1st). Working with State Trooper Tretter to monitor traffic on Mares Hill and Birch Mill Trail in 2019 and 2020; and
- 6. With the direct assistance of Peter Decker, working with Ms. Stacia Libby (The Thompson Group) to review our current Directors and Officers Insurance policy, Liability Insurance policy, regarding coverage, premiums and liability exposure.