

## Highland Lake Property Owner's Association Board of Directors Meeting, October 18, 2021

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This hybrid zoom/in person meeting was called to order by Joe Bigalke at 7:00 PM. Board members present were Marilyn Henry, Linda Wegge, Larry Leafblad, John Sonnenberg, Casey Bloomer (who will resign after this meeting), David Oswald, Ron Mittlestaedt, and Lorna Denig. Many members of the community were also present. Marilyn moved to approve remote voting, Larry seconded. The motion carried. Motion to approve the September 2021 minutes was made by Linda and seconded by Larry. The motion carried.

Comments from Residents: Ann Bidwell addressed the group. She stated that per Maggie Keefe who gets the email blasts out to residents, she estimates that we have email addresses for only about half of all residents. We need to do better; communication is vital. She congratulated Larry who years ago got the community together and garnered from them a list of priorities, which she said were followed until just recently. She listed them and discussed as follows. Lake Health: great job, John in particular. Sense of community: There are good people there. In a healthy community people treat each other with respect and kindness; they work for the good of the whole, not just the good of a few. Fiscal responsibility: In order to have a successful HOA you have to allow the members to see the finances. We need to be able to see the budget and transactions. We need to have audits. She suggested we ask Trisha Steele to do it as she is a CPA. Without transparency regarding the financials trust is lost. Another resident asked if there was still a planned mailing of the FAQ and a ballot; none have been received yet. Joe said that they were mailed out today. The deadline to vote is November 12<sup>th</sup>. Linda mailed out the ballots/FAQs to 219 addresses. Per Casey you can vote through Google docs or mail in. Someone asked if drop boxes could be set up as it was difficult to trust the USPS. Ron said people could drop them off at his house and he would make sure that Linda got them. She picks up the mail at the post office. A resident asked about how the vote would work. She voted already but now the deadline has been extended. Joe explained that because there was confusion about the original FAQ sheet, we had a 3+ hour meeting on 10/4 to address questions and concerns; they were revised and sent out to all addresses along with a ballot. The vote deadline needed to be revised. Ron said that the last vote offered would be the one taken as long as it is received by 11/12. She then asked how the vote would be counted. She suggested that a third party from the Township be present for the count. Joe stated that there will be Board members and residents there at the count to ensure fairness. Another resident said that per Roberts Rules of Order there is one vote, one person. She felt that multiple votes per person is in direct violation of the bylaws. Joe said the final vote is the one that will count. John stated that whichever vote per household has the latest date is the one that will count. A property owner is only eligible to vote if they have paid their dues. If a household wants to vote and is not paid up they can submit their dues with the ballot. A resident felt that was crossing a line and could be viewed as a payment to vote if you were not already paid up. She suggested we ask a person in authority to weigh in, someone from the Township, perhaps, who understands elections. Cindy Mittlestaedt urged the Board members to adopt a code of conduct in light of the projected member turnover. She offered a sample handout. She stated that the Board members needed to remain impartial, disseminate information and not use resources to sway votes. Cathy agreed, saying that per Robert's Rules that any Board member with an interest in what's being voted on should recuse him/herself. Casey clarified,

saying that everyone should be able to vote in this ramp issue; we all have a special interest on Lake affairs. If he owned a landscaping company and was bidding on a Park job he would need to recuse himself on a vote. Cathy said it was regarding Board votes and Board conduct. John explained that an individual Board member cannot speak for the Board unless the issue has been voted on and approved. Regarding Board vacancies, Cathy nominated herself to fill one of them. She described her efforts to gather community feedback and her desire to work with the Board to achieve goals the community has set. Comments from online were perused; there was a complaint voiced about the sound quality from those participating by zoom.

Lake Health: Ron would like to do some fish cribs this fall; he has nothing to report yet. He has fish stocking scheduled coming up soon; he will need a check from Linda to pay the fee; it should be about \$1,000.00. He will buy about 1000 hybrid blue gills; they should get to be about 13 inches. He is working with Jim Benzo and Marc Rosemeyer on this project. As the November meeting will be occupied with the ramp John will report on zebra mussels at a later meeting. So far the data is looking good. We are learning a lot. There is one more bill that was sent out for PDC that will be the last one for the season.

New Board Members: It was Joe's thought to poll the community to see who was interested in filling one of the Board openings. Ron noted that there were multiple vacancies right now. Lorna made a motion to nominate Cathy DeGroh. John mentioned as per the bylaws the Board members should be evenly distributed by shore. John wanted to see a list of applicants at the next meeting. Cindy, Ron and Lorna said that vacancies have never been filled that way. Ron moved to nominate Cathy for an open Board position, Lorna seconded. John stated that everyone should have a chance to apply for a position if they wanted to. Marilyn said that with three positions open and one applicant today we should start filling them. Coleen stated that when she left recently she pointed out that Vicki Kennedy was willing to take her spot. Vicki is here today. Larry said that years ago we only had elections at certain times of the year. A lengthy discussion ensued. A vote was taken on electing Cathy, which passed. Linda dissented, John abstained. Casey motioned to nominate Vicki, Ron seconded. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Linda asked Ann if she would be agreeable to reviewing the financial documents monthly with her and reporting back to the community. Linda expressed security concern with having the documents circulating freely and thought that this may be a way to increase transparency. Ann declined. Lorna said she thought the numbers should be posted, John mentioned that they were in the past. Ann suggested that the numbers be presented in a zoom meeting or handouts distributed at the meetings. John said he could facilitate a process for getting the numbers to everyone, Joe requested this be tabled until the next meeting. Last month the foundation account was increased by \$225.00 in dues and donations, the Association account increased by \$125.00. Reconciled balances are Foundation account \$984.43, Association account \$21,449.13 to total \$22,433.56. The Association has a positive bottom line (income minus expenses) of \$5,668.56; the Foundation has a loss of \$10,061.64. The Foundation is NFP so does not pay tax on any money used to meet goals of our charter. She said the budget would be ready tomorrow and she would get it out. She has gotten one bill to be paid to PDC labs for \$553.50; John said it was for sampling. He has done a lot of our own work and has saved money that way. Casey moved we pay the bill. Ron seconded. The motion passed. Marilyn moved to approve the Treasurer's report, Joe seconded. The motion carried.

Sense of Neighborhood: The weather is no longer conducive to pulling debris out of the Lake and the big boats are out and unavailable to haul it away. We will have to plan something for the spring. Debris has been tagged and recorded. Casey made a statement; he is officially resigning. He said he was saddened by the verbal abuse of him in the presence of his wife and children over something as simplistic as the ramp proposal, by this community that they grew to love. He hopes that the winner of the vote decision is honored. He said we need to get compassion, kindness, empathy and sympathy back into this community, so that adults know how to treat each other.

Adjournment: John moved we adjourn the Association meeting at 8:05 PM; Larry seconded. The motion carried.

The Foundation meeting was opened at 8:05 PM. There were no changes in the attendance roster aside from the addition of the 2 new Board members. John moved to transfer \$3,000.00 from the Association account to the Foundation account (was the funds acquired from Avon Twp to pay the interns), Ron seconded. The motion carried. John moved to adjourn the Foundation meeting at 8:06 PM, Larry seconded. The motion carried.