



November 2016

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Board of Directors

President ~ Willis McCloud
Vice President ~ Earl Burton
Treasurer ~ Patrina Kandul
Secretary ~ Charlotte Jordan
At Large ~ Susan Nettinga

Somerset News

President's Corner

By Willis McCloud



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

First, a big "Thank You" to Somerset for meeting quorum in support of our annual meeting! As many of you know, it's been almost a decade since we last accomplished this feat – so this was a significant event. Achieving quorum allowed elections to take place, resulting in the board voting to appoint Ms. Susan Nettinga to our vacant seat on the Board of Directors (BOD). Susan's appointment brings our 5 member board to full membership. The BOD thanks Susan for her willingness to sacrifice her personal time to support her community and we look forward to working with her to improve our neighborhood. Her presence will bring fresh energy and ideas to our team. And congratulations to our raffle winners, Hope Jacobs and Gail Jarboe! Now that we know we can reach quorum, I believe we are up to the challenge of reaching it again in 2017.

Even though the BOD has reached full membership, there are positions available on two of our committees: the Architectural Landscape Committee (ALC); and the Communications Committee. The

ALC currently has two members, Mike Irvin and Greg Hodgson, who have been providing extraordinary support to Somerset for many years, and we thank them for their support. They have been primarily responsible for our efforts to upgrade our landscaping, improve safety, and upgrade our facilities over the last several years. If you have an interest in any of these areas, please consider joining our ALC team.

The Communications Committee is in even more need of support. Currently, Greg Hodgson and Drew Nettinga edit and produce our newsletter. You wouldn't be reading this without their efforts. However, we don't have resident support to help manage our website and Facebook page. This hampers our ability to effectively utilize our communications resources and, ultimately, our ability to reach out to you. Since I know that there are many technically savvy residents within Somerset, I am sure there are several people who are more than qualified to assist.

If you would like to join the ALC or Communications Committee, please contact our Community Manager, Ms. Stacy Panuzio, at 703-707-6404 or spanuzio@capitolcorp.com for information on how to get involved.

As I've reported in previous editions, there are two significant

projects that the BOD is continuing to complete as we move forward toward the end of the year. Both projects are on the community-approved Strategic Plan. The status of each project is below.

Security Light Upgrade. All lamp posts within Somerset have had their traditional bulbs replaced with new energy efficient LED bulbs. We are now in the process of replacing the flood lights attached to the buildings with the same type lighting. This task should be complete no later than the end of November 2016 and will result in savings to the community in reduced utility and maintenance costs.

Attic Thermal Upgrade. We will begin installing the thermal air barriers in several homes in building

3, 4124-4134 Churchman and 4057-4067 Chetham, by the end of November 2016. Once installed, we will survey owners and conduct analysis to determine if the installation was a success. If we achieve the desired results of reducing energy loss through the attics, we will continue installing the barriers throughout the community. Work in the attics can only be done during the cooler months so, if initiated, this will probably be a multi-year effort.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone for making Somerset a great place to live. Yes, we can improve in many areas and we will try to get better next year. However, I would like to take a final opportunity this year to say how fortunate we are to live in a

community of residents who care about their neighbors and Somerset. I sincerely hope as you end this year that you and your family can look back with many fond memories. I also hope that the upcoming holidays will create even more magical moments to add to your collection. Over the next few months, please take the time to: enjoy time with your family and friends; remember those less fortunate, and help where you can; and thank our veterans and first responders when you see them. We owe these men and women more than we can ever repay.

All the best and Happy Holidays! ☀

Board Minutes



By Greg Hodgson

Did you know that as a Somerset unit owner, you can read our association’s Board meeting minutes on our website? While the meeting minutes are not intended to record every discussion and debate word-for-word, they do include all actions voted on by the Board. In addition to reading the quarterly newsletter, reading the meeting minutes is a good way to stay informed about what’s going on in our association!

Accessing the minutes is easy: Just sign in to your Somerset account at www.somersetatwestridge.org and go to Resources>Board Minutes. If you have any questions, please contact Stacy Panuzio at spanuzio@capitolcorp.com or 703-707-6404.

Vice President’s Perspective

By Earl Burton

One of the biggest advantages of living in a common-interest development is the ability of the Association to preserve, protect and enhance property values. But, just how does the Board of Directors guide the Association to perform those duties? Often, we think of the Association as a collection of rules and regulations limiting personal freedoms and individuality. But it is those same rules and regulations that protect, preserve and enhance the investment each of us have in our home.

If you dust off your copy of the CC&R's (Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions) and reread them, you will see that the Board of Directors have a pretty precise blueprint on how to protect your investment. First and foremost, our Association is not just made up of the Board, Committees and a few interested owners. It was established as a corporation in which ALL owners are members. What that means is that you, as an owner, have committed yourself to become business partners with every other owner in the community. In order to achieve the primary goal of the Association (to preserve, protect and enhance property values), certain Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions had to be established in order to achieve that goal. In those CC&R's, the Board is given the authority to establish Rules & Regulations that complement the Association's purpose. When we follow the CC&R's and the Rules & Regulations, we are doing part of our duty as members of the Association. Architectural controls and guidelines and procedures for gaining architectural approval were established to promote aesthetic conformity and eliminate architectural changes that threaten the investment other members have in the Association. By following the architectural guidelines and obtaining approval from the Association before any exterior architectural changes are made, we are doing part of our duty as members of the Association.

Our Board of Directors is given the charge of overseeing the operations of the Association and to see to it that the CC&R's and Rules & Regulations are followed by the Association's members. The Board is

made up of owners, other members just like you. They volunteer their time and energy to serve the Association because they care about the investment they have in it. Committees are formed to assist the Board with their charge. These committees are made up of volunteer owners, again, just like you. When you volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors, or you volunteer to serve on a committee, you are doing part of your duty as a member of the Association.

Monthly assessments are necessary to protect and maintain our community assets and to help provide professional management to assist our community. When owners fail to pay their assessment on time, the Association is unable to meet all if its financial obligations. The result of not paying on time is that the degree of property value protection the Association provides is reduced. In other words, even one owner who does not pay their assessment on time can adversely affect how Association business is conducted. When you pay your assessment on time, you are doing part of your duty as a member of the Association.

Finally, the Board of Directors meet on a regular basis in order to make decisions, keep up-to-date on Association business, and to hear from other owners in order to make proactive business decisions. As owners, keeping abreast of association matters and contributing during Open Forum is only good business. When you choose to attend the Board meetings, you are doing part of your duty as a member of the Association. ☀

From the ALC



By Greg Hodgson

Greetings to all of our fellow Somerset residents! The long-awaited replacement shrub/plant/turf project was completed in October. While our contractor did provide two watering services after the installations, the ALC is respectfully requesting that residents help out with additional watering in order for these plantings to survive. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

In September, a number of dead/declining trees on the right side of the hill on Quarterhorse Lane (near the Somerset sign) were removed. The hill had been on the ALC's and Board's radar screen for future consideration. While we knew the removals would result in somewhat of a void in that area, we were all taken aback by how dramatically the removals altered the landscape. Therefore, the ALC met on site with management and our landscape contractor, Environmental Enhancements (EE), to discuss design options for this area. EE submitted three design proposals/quotes for consideration. The ALC recommended one of the options to the Board, and they accepted that recommendation. Our request is now in the hands of the Westridge Architectural Review Board (WR ARB) for approval. (The WR ARB must approve alterations affecting the perimeter appearance of our property.) It is our hope that the approval occurs quickly in order for the work to be done this year.

You may have noticed that a number of trees around the property have been marked with different colored tape. The markings are the result of an ALC walk through with management and an arborist. The initial scope of the walk was to make a determination on the parking island trees. But as the walk progressed, the arborist made additional recommendations regarding non-parking island trees. The ALC and Board are in receipt of a bid as a result of the walk through. At this time, both the committee and the Board require more time to consider the arborist's recommendations.

Hopefully you've noticed the facelift to our Somerset sign at the corner of Westridge Drive and Quarterhorse Lane. We hope you'll agree that the makeover turned out pretty well!

The ALC wishes all of our residents a safe and happy Holiday season! ☀

Secretary's Minutes



By Charlotte Jordan

Get Involved, Stay Informed, Support Somerset!

When most of us decided to buy our home and live within our community association, the last thing that

probably came to mind were the possibilities that community association living presented. After all, anytime a group of homeowners work together for a common goal, practically anything is possible. From increasing our community's aesthetic appeal and eliminating neighborhood crime, to creating a more influential voice in regional issues, the opportunities to benefit from being a part of a community association are waiting to be seized. The possibilities are limited only by our ability to work together.

Unfortunately, without a clear understanding of how and why our community association operates, those possibilities will elude us. When we can grasp the theory that underlies our governing documents and the reasons that our Board and management company must, at times, do what they do, then we take a giant step towards realizing the potential of our community.

Our community association is no different than any other organization. In order to succeed and reach its potential, it needs the support and involvement of its members. Just think of the goals that can be achieved when we all work together for the betterment of our community! Instead of perceiving our association as an obstacle to overcome, try thinking of it a tool to help us create a more comfortable life-style. But, like any tool, we need to learn how to use it effectively before it can do any good.

Get involved, stay informed and support your community. You won't be sorry! ☀

Neighborhood Watch

By Willis McCloud

Fire Knows No Holiday

Important safety tips for a happy and safe holiday season:

- Use only Underwriters Laboratory (UL) approved lights and cords.
- Use only approved outdoor lights for outdoor use and make sure they are weatherproof.

- Lights should be thoroughly inspected prior to installation.
- Miniature or indoor lights generate less heat and will not dry out the tree as much as larger lights.
- Always unplug all lights and blow out all candles before leaving the house or going to bed.
- Never use candles near trees or windows.
- Never dispose of trees, decorations or wrappings in the fireplace.
- If you choose to use a natural, cut Christmas tree, select only the freshest.
- Needles should bend, not break, when folded.
- Keep the stand full of water and check it daily.
- Keep the tree away from heat sources and heater vents.
- Remove the tree promptly after the holidays or once the needles begin to fall. ☀

Real Estate Beat



By David Gray

What does the new President mean for the Prince William Real Estate?

Many questions arise after this tiring election season. One being: What will happen to the real estate market? Over the past 3-4 years we have experienced interest rates continuing to drop and home values steadily rising, leaving homebuyers along with sellers feeling comfortable with the transactions they pursue. With such a drastic change in administration, some feel that this may all change. Will it? Although uncertain, it should not. Interest rates will inevitably go up. Yesterday may be prematurely considered the ‘Good ole days’ with rates around 3.5%-3.75%. Rates have already begun to rise to near 4%, but this increase should not cause a reaction to the housing market. Some analysts speculate an increase to the low to mid 4% range. At a \$300,000 loan the increase is less than \$80 per month. Although some may feel that it is drastic, lower taxes should easily offset that amount.

Somerset activity in the past 90 days:

- 10 Homes on the market
- 2 Sales
 - 12528 Kempston sold on 11/4 for \$223,000 with an \$8,907 seller credit. (Seller credit is a subsidy towards the purchaser’s closing costs.)
 - 12615 Kempston sold on 10/31 for \$232,000 with a \$3,250 seller credit.
- 4106 Churchman Way is under contract, settlement and final price TBD.
- 7 homes remain on the market ranging from \$220,000 to \$235,000.

Should you have any questions regarding your home, please feel free to contact me anytime.

David Gray

Real Estate Agent

Cell: [571-305-1495](tel:571-305-1495)

E-Mail: HomesWithDavid@gmail.com

Website: HomesWithDavid.com

Realtors Association of Prince William County, Board of Directors

2015, 2016 Top Producer ☀

Treasurer’s Notes



By Patrina Kandul

Our Monthly Assessments

Each month at bill paying time we take out our check books and pay a multitude of monthly bills: credit cards; car payment; and mortgage, etc. However, one of the least understood bills that we pay is our association’s assessment. Just where does our money go?

Every year the Board approves a budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The budget is then mailed to all homeowners for their review. The budget lists all the anticipated expenditures for our association. Those expenditures include insurance, common utilities, common area maintenance costs, and administration costs such as professional management, postage, etc. In addition, a portion of our monthly assessment is set aside to fund our capital asset reserves, such as roofing and siding. Our reserve fund pays for the repair and/or

replacement of the capital assets owned by our association. An adequately funded reserve reduces the chance that a special assessment will have to be passed in order to pay for repair or replacement of those common assets.

So, when you write out that monthly assessment check, remember that it covers many items necessary to ensure that our association maintains, preserves and enhances our property values.

2017 Budget

At the Annual Meeting in October, the draft budget was reviewed at a high level and most importantly, the monthly dues for 2017 will remain at \$309 per unit. At this time our capital asset reserves are adequately funded and we expect a minor surplus at the end of the year. ☀

Manager’s Message

By Stacy Panuzio, CMCA, AMS, PCAM

Important Master Insurance Change!

Please be advised that the Association will be changing insurance carriers for the master insurance policies, from Nationwide to Farmers Insurance. After thorough review, the Association was able to obtain better coverage at reduced premiums. As soon as it becomes available, a new master certificate of insurance will be posted online and email blasted to unit owners, to share with their individual agents and mortgage holders as needed.

Trash Removal Reminders and Holiday Schedule

Please be reminded that there is No Trash Pick Up on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 24th. Please keep all household trash in your home, garage, or shed until the next regular Monday pick up on November 28th. Please also be reminded that trash should only be placed curb side the evening or morning before a pick-up, and should only be placed curb side in tightly sealed bags and in cans with tight fitting lids. Following these simple trash handling rules ensures the community is always neat and attractive. Christmas trees will be collected on the regular Thursday collection day

following the holiday. All tinsel and decorations must be removed. Please do not place trees in plastic bags.

Winterize Hose Bibs Now!

Please be reminded that frozen or burst hose bibs are a Unit Owner responsibility. Please take a moment to ensure the hose bib servicing your home is in proper working order and properly winterized BEFORE there is an emergency pipe break. ☀

Upcoming Board Meetings

January 10
March 14

Residents are welcomed and encouraged to attend Board meetings, which are held at the Westridge Clubhouse and begin at 7:00 PM.

Somerset at Westridge, A Condominium

Management Company: Capitol Property Management
3914 Centreville Road, Suite 300, Chantilly, VA 20151
Manager: Stacy Panuzio; 703-707-6404;
spanuzio@capitolcorp.com
After Hours Emergency: 703-481-1918
Somerset Website: www.somersetatwestridge.org
Board of Directors: bod@somersetatwestridge.org
Architectural Landscape Committee:
alc@somersetatwestridge.org

Westridge Swim & Racquet Club

Management Company: Legum & Norman
12764 Quarterhorse Lane, Woodbridge, VA 22192
General Manager: Debbie Carter; 703-590-1600;
HOA@Westridgeva.org
Westridge Website: www.westridgeva.org

Additional Contacts

Emergency Police, Fire, Ambulance: 911
Police Non-Emergency: 703-792-6500
Washington Gas: Emergency, 703-750-1400; Non-Emergency, 703-750-1000
Dominion Virginia Power: 1-888-667-3000
Towing: Dominion Wrecker Service; 703-590-0994
Trash: American Disposal Services; 703-368-0500;
<https://www.americandisposal.com>