



August 2018

Inside this Issue

- 2 VP's Podium
- 3 Manager's Corner
- 3 Volunteering
- 4 From the ALC
- 5 Neighborhood Watch
- 5 Real Estate Beat
- 6 Board Minutes
- 6 Upcoming Meetings
- 6 Contacts

Board of Directors

President ~ Willis McCloud
Vice President ~ Earl Burton
Treasurer ~ Patrina Kandul
Secretary ~ Mike Irvin
At Large ~ Susan Nettinga

Somerset News

President's Corner

By Willis McCloud



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

August 2018. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year has come and gone. I'm sure your family has had many exciting events to reflect on – marriages, births, new neighbors and graduations. There is still plenty of time left to enjoy the end of what we hope is an extended summer. Management and the board, like you, have had much to look back on as well – most notably a fire at the beginning of the year, the attic sealing project, and our continuing efforts to improve our landscaping, to name a few. Also like you, the board also has an agenda for the rest of the year. We will be busy planning or completing several projects that will impact the community. I'll detail them later in this article.

First, a couple of safety reminders. I know you've heard or read this a few times before, but I think it's worth repeating. Please slow down on Westridge Drive! I don't know how often I've had drivers pass me as I turn off Westridge driving more than 40 MPH up the road. I am amazed no one has gotten hit so far. But the combination of speed and pedestrians rarely ends well. I know none of you are guilty of this, but if

you know anyone who is, please ask them to take their foot off the gas a bit. School is starting soon. Let's ensure we don't begin the school year off with a needless tragedy.

Second, recently there have been at least two instances where county residents have been robbed (or threatened with robbery) in connection with online sales. The Prince William County Police Department (PWCPD) has been monitoring this issue and has come up with a potential solution. Read our Neighborhood Watch article for more information on this issue and what the PWCPD is doing to keep us safe as we shop online.

As we near the beginning of fall, there are several key projects planned. Many will need your assistance to make them a success. Several are referenced later in this newsletter. One of them is the annual meeting. As always, we will need your attendance or your proxy vote to achieve quorum. This year's annual meeting will also launch one of our new initiatives – a resident survey. We want to hear your concerns, priorities, and questions. Please take a little time to respond when you receive it.

We will also repave the streets and parking lots before the end of the year. This project will include restriping parking spaces and repainting curbs. More information

will be provided prior to the project start.

Another annual event is our ongoing landscape improvement program. Once again, we will be removing selected trees, replacing dead or dying foliage, and performing other needed actions. We intend to address many yards that have very little or no foliage during this fall’s effort. So, if you’ve been waiting for a while, this should be your year. If you have questions or need assistance with a landscaping issue, reach out to our community manager, Mrs. Stacy Martin, for assistance.

On another note, I believe there is the expectation that management and the board have everything in hand. We work hard at it, but we need your input to make this an even better place to live. Community management is a team sport. And teams only win if everyone plays their part. All of us need to get into the game. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Finally, thanks to you we continue to be a community of excellence within Prince William County, and I think in Northern Virginia. With your efforts we can only get better.

All the best! ☀

Vice President’s Podium

By Earl Burton



Have you ever attended a Board of Directors (BOD) meeting? If not, then you are not taking advantage of your right to observe and participate in the decision-making process that protects, preserves and enhances your community's assets – and most importantly your property values.

You, as a homeowner, can play a big part in helping the BOD in making those decisions by sharing your ideas. Virtually all the business decisions made by the BOD directly impact the property values of our community. Admittedly, the most common decisions regarding the

association are mundane maintenance items – but again, those maintenance decisions impact our property values. Some decisions have an indirect effect, such as decisions regarding rules and regulations and financial operations. But whether they affect property values directly or indirectly, they all have some impact on our community. And as a member of this community, they impact you.

There are three different phases of a board meeting. The first phase is the business meeting, during which the board discusses and makes decisions based on a pre-established meeting agenda. Homeowners can attend the business meeting, but only to observe. The second phase is the homeowners open forum, where you as a homeowner can address the board with your ideas, comments and/or suggestions pertaining to our community. And finally, the executive session, which must be conducted without homeowners present in order to discuss sensitive legal, personnel issues and/or non-compliance hearings.

During the homeowners open forum, homeowners are permitted and welcome to address the board. An important point to remember is that important issues that are brought to the board’s attention during open forum will not necessarily be acted on at that time. Most issues are turned over to the community manager for research to determine the financial and legal options available for dealing with the new idea/issue. The more prepared the board is before making a decision, the better the decision will be.

In addition to our BOD meetings, the time is nearing for Somerset’s Annual Meeting. This year’s meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 9, 2018, at 7:00 PM. Notices, with proxy instructions, will be mailed to all owners in September. Please consider submitting a proxy vote if you are unable to attend these legally mandated meetings.

The bottom line is that the more our homeowners are involved, the better the Board can properly maintain and serve our community. ☀

Manager’s Corner



By Stacy Martin

As someone who owns a unit in a common-interest community, you have certain rights. You also have certain responsibilities to the association and to other homeowners. These rights and responsibilities are described in the association’s governing documents, which include Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs) and bylaws. And by virtue of your ownership, the association – your neighbors and fellow homeowners – presumes you know the governing documents exist and have an idea of what they contain.

As a homeowner, you have the right to:

- Participate in the association board’s decision-making process
- Attend and participate in all membership meetings
- Vote in person or by proxy
- Access association records, financial statements and governing documents
- Use and enjoy common areas (this privilege can be suspended temporarily for unpaid assessments or rules’ violations)
- Sell or rent your individually owned unit or property

As a homeowner and member of this community, you are obligated to:

- Pay your fair share – via regularly scheduled and special assessments – of the costs of operating the association and maintaining common areas. Some of these costs include trash collection, maintaining the landscaping, clearing snow from the roads/sidewalks, common utilities (water, sewer and electricity) and funding the reserves for future large ticket repairs and replacements (roofs, siding, asphalt, concrete, etc.).
- Maintain your personal unit or home in accordance with the association’s bylaws and architectural guidelines. Some associations’ rules are stricter about exterior modifications, yard ornaments and landscaping than others. Be aware of and adhere to what Somerset’s architectural guidelines prescribe.

- Be respectful of your neighbors and allow them the “quiet enjoyment” of their own individual units or homes. Loud parties, second-hand smoke or outdoor lighting can infringe on your neighbors’ privacy.

The Association also has rights and responsibilities, which are described in the same governing documents as those mentioned above. This does not mean that the association is equipped to handle every issue or complaint that may arise, nor does the association have the authority to evict homeowners. The association does have Due Process Procedures in place however and will always strive to mediate an amenable outcome for all of its residents and members. If you suspect community rules are being broken, you may report them to the community manager. If appropriate, the manager will follow up with the necessary residents, or direct the complainant about other possible remedies, as may be appropriate for the given situation. ☀

Volunteering



By Susan Nettinga

Your community wants you!

The Somerset Board of Directors has volunteer opportunities in a number of important areas that we would love for you to fill. We are looking for a few good men and women who want to augment or spearhead the areas below.

Architectural Landscape Committee (ALC): The ALC currently has 2 members. Our goal is to expand the membership to 5. If you have an interest in protecting and improving the visual beauty and appeal of our community, this is the place for you!

Neighborhood Watch (NW): We all want to feel safe and secure in our homes. We’ve had an effective NW in the past and we would like to re-establish this important community service to assist in that effort. We are looking for a NW leader and at least two NW members to begin rebuilding the watch. Training is provided by Prince William Police Dept.

Communications Committee (Website, Newsletter, Facebook): Helping you easily connect to your neighbors, the board, and to important Somerset documents and information is critical to our quality of life. Restarting this committee will assist in maintaining and improving the Somerset website and Facebook page. We know there are at least two tech savvy residents who can take on this challenge!

Do you have other ideas for volunteering? Would you like to organize a meet-and-greet event, a community yard sale, a kids' Easter Egg Hunt, a Welcome Committee for new residents, etc.? Bring your ideas, interests and talents to bear! Your efforts can positively impact the overall experience of living in our community.

If you have interest in any of the above, or have some ideas of your own, please contact our manager, Stacy Martin, at smartin@capitolcorp.com. ☀

From the ALC



By Greg Hodgson

Our area experienced a significant, extended period of rain from mid-May into early June. While turf generally loves rain, too much can actually be detrimental under certain conditions. The combination of heavy, extended periods of rain, humidity and warm temperatures (with very little sun) during the period caused a fungal disease, known as *brown patch*, to break out in some areas of Somerset. Brown patch symptoms: *Turf grass infected with brown patch is, at first, a dark purplish-green which fade to light brown. Circular brown patches of turf develop that are a few inches to several feet in diameter. The discolored grass blades within the circle have a sunken or flattened appearance. Some healthy, unaffected grass may exist within the diseased area.*

Our landscape maintenance company, Image, was quick to recognize this brown patch outbreak and treated the affected areas once the weather became dry enough to do so, in efforts to mitigate the damage. We suspect that the similar conditions we experienced in July may

result in another round of brown patch. We'll do our best to control it if it does!

With all of the rain we've had it seems somewhat silly to be talking about watering your grass! However, we did have an extended period of dry, hot weather after the rainy period, and a lot of the turf was turning brown. The simple rule of thumb is, well, simple. During an extended dry period, and before the first signs of browning, it's time to water. Watering 2-3 times per week during long stretches of no rain will go a long way in keeping our grass healthy and looking its best.

Unfortunately, climate is not the only cause of damage to our turf, plants and shrubs! We're sure it comes as no surprise to you that some of our four-legged friends (Fido, Rover, Spot, etc.) contribute to the unsightly brown/dead patches in the grass and dead growth on shrubs and plants. While there isn't any single good remedy for completely eliminating the damage, there are some things that dog owners can do to help lessen the effects of pet urine. The pet waste management company, Doody Calls, has posted a brief, informative and helpful article on their website at <http://www.doodycalls.com/blog/7-tips-to-prevent-dog-urine-spots-on-your-lawn/>. We kindly ask that you not permit dogs to roam into landscaped areas to do their business. And a continued "thanks" goes out to all of the responsible dog owners who pick up after their pets!

The ALC attended the May board meeting to discuss Kate Davidson's recommendations for updating our landscape design. Since that meeting, the ALC has walked the property again and made our recommendations for a phased approach to tree removals. The overall plan is scheduled to be phased-in over a few years. Residents can review the design/plan at <http://somersetatwestridge.org/somerset/>. To review the plan you must log on to your account. The three (3) files associated with the plan are located under Resources/Documents/Other Documents and Forms. Work is scheduled to begin this fall.

Lastly, the Board is planning to replace the Somerset sign spotlight at Quarterhorse Lane and Westridge Drive, as the current housing and fixture is old and

rusted. An updated, energy efficient LED light is being strongly considered. ☀

Neighborhood Watch

By Willis McCloud



EXCHANGE ZONES

Most of us have used or are familiar with the websites such as Craigslist, Letgo, or OfferUp. These sites allow users to sell products easily by placing them in front of thousands of potential customers. However, as with any activity where money is involved, criminals will soon follow. Thieves posing as prospective buyers have been arranging to meet with sellers to view or purchase items. Once the seller shows up they have been assaulted or robbed, or both. This has been happening all over the country and isn't just a local problem.

As a result, the PWCPD instituted a new program to provide a secure space, an exchange zone, where buyers and sellers can meet in safety to complete their transactions. The site can also be used by parents to drop off or pick up kids from the other parent. For more information, visit the PWCPD's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/PWCPolice/posts/exchange-zone-we-are-offering-an-exchange-zone-at-the-western-district-police-st/1462875260428569/>

DRUG USE

Another issue impacting the community to some extent is illegal drug use – particularly smoking marijuana. Some residents may believe with the passage of laws approving marijuana use in some states that they can use the drug within the Commonwealth without penalty. However, in Virginia, the recreational use of marijuana is still illegal. Residents using the drug within the community are not only breaking the law but are creating a hazard to their neighbors from the smoke. Marijuana has a pungent odor that other owners should not have to endure. Any resident suspecting drug use should report it to the PWCPD at their non-emergency

number at 703-792-6500 and to the community manager. ☀

Real Estate Beat



By David Gray

The following is a listing of the most recent real estate activities for Somerset At Westridge.

SOLD

4116 CHURCHMAN WAY
Sale Price: \$250,000
Seller Subsidy: \$0
Close Date: July 10, 2018
Days on Market: 3

12575 KEMPSTON LANE
Sale Price: \$235,000
Seller Subsidy: \$7,050
Close Date: July 30, 2018
Days on Market: 15

12603 KEMPSTON LANE
Sale Price: \$250,000
Seller Subsidy: \$0
Close Date: July 13, 2018
Days on Market: 10

PENDING SALES

4022 CHETHAM WAY
List Price: \$240,000
Days on Market: 18

4046 CHETHAM WAY
List Price: \$245,000
Days on Market: 11

ACTIVE

4045 CHETHAM WAY
List Price: \$239,900
Days on Market: 58

12504 KEMPSTON LANE

List Price: \$255,000

Days on Market: 6

David Gray

Gray Realty Group

Cell: 703.598.4946

E-Mail: David@GrayRealtyVA.com

Website: GrayRealtyVA.com ☀

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 our manager, Stacy Martin, at smartin@capitolcorp.com or 703-707-6404.

Somerset at Westridge, A Condominium

Management Company: Capitol Property Management
3914 Centreville Road, Suite 300, Chantilly, VA 20151

Manager: Stacy Martin; 703-707-6404;

smartin@capitolcorp.com

After Hours Emergency: 703-401-1918

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>

Upcoming Board Meetings

September 11

October 9 (Annual Unit Owners Meeting)

November 13

Residents are welcomed and encouraged to attend Board meetings, which are held at the Westridge Clubhouse and begin at 7:00 PM. Annual Unit Owners Meeting Notices will be mailed to each owner in September.