

Braesmont Civic Club

Minutes

November 9, 2017

7-8:45 pm

Type of Meeting: Special Called Meeting of Braesmont Property Owners

- I. Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM by Kay Swint
- II. Resignation/Recognition of Wayne Franklin as Sec and Intro of Officers and Committee Leaders
 - Wayne Franklin resigned as BCC secretary in October after serving as an officer for more than 10 years. Thanks to Wayne for his many contributions.
 - Officers include Kay Swint President, Cyndy Sax VP, Trish Figueroa Treasurer and Harold Eaton Secretary (appointed by the current officers to fill vacancy.) Robert Cope accepted the position of webmaster. Robert Cope and Michelle-ann Small accepted co-chair roles for Communications committee. Harold Eaton chairs the Security Initiative Committee.
- III. Housekeeping
 - \$30 gift certificate Door Prize donated by Kim McHugh of McHugh Teas. Time keeping expectations and introduction of timekeeper Robert Cope. Please update your contact data before leaving; necessary for updates
- IV. Approval of Feb 23, 2017 minutes: Approved without corrections.
- V. Old Business
 - A. Amendment of Deed Restrictions to Support a Constable Security Patrol through creation of a Property Owners' Association with Mandatory Dues
 - Why We Care – Kay Swint reviewed reasoning behind the officers' decision to move forward with this initiative. At the Feb 23, 2017 meeting, attendees voted to obtain legal input to create deed restriction changes needed to move forward with a vote on the initiative. The officers recognize that a security program standard for residential communities exists in our area, as evidenced by 7 of the 9 neighborhoods in the Greater Meyerland Super Neighborhood with established mandatory dues programs to contract for patrol and 24 hours on call coverage. An increase in serious crime in our area received heavy coverage by news outlets and resulted in an area crime forum led by Mayor Turner and Police Chief Acevedo. Many of our residents have requested that we offer a security program, but we have learned from multiple attempts that voluntary dues do not sustain an effective program. This leads us to the conclusion that it our responsibility to offer these amendments of deed restrictions for a vote to our property owners.
 - Overview of the Harris County Precinct 5 Constable Patrol Program (Chief Constable Ted Heap and Lt. Mitch Hutter) – The presenters explained the key capabilities and services offered by the constables to contracted neighborhoods, highlighting:

- Constables are a police agency and have full arrest powers, crime reporting connection to HPD and a specialized investigative unit. Average response time for emergencies is 2 minutes after call is dispatched; 5 minutes for non-emergencies. Fully marked cars equipped with cameras, computers, radar, and instant id. They work collaboratively with HPD.
- Neighborhood policing approach developing close relationships with residents and neighborhood security committee. Monthly crime reports provided for our specific neighborhood. Offer additional services such as home watch for vacations, response to alarm systems, directed patrol based on special needs.
- Preventing crime, in addition to education of safety practices of residents, is based on high visibility and rapid response time.
- In response to questions from the audience:
 - Constables respond to calls of contracted neighborhoods. Our contract would pay for 80% of a full-time officer contract. This allows constables to respond to other areas during emergencies. Usually constables have shifts scheduled during the day when most neighborhood crimes occur, but shift schedule based on crime patterns.
 - Bellaire police may monitor and respond to 911 calls of nearby areas, just as HPD may cover 911 calls in Bellaire. Constables respond rapidly to 911 and other calls.
- Presentation of Deed Restriction (Harold Eaton, BCC Security Initiative Chair and Courtney Palm, attorney from Hoover and Slovacek) -
 - The Braesmont Civic Club represents six sections, Braesmont Sections 1, 2 3 and 4, Braesview Terrace and Kingston Terrace. Each section has its own deed restrictions. An amendment for each of the six sections is being finalized by Hoover Slovacek law firm to provide for the establishment of a shared Braesmont Property Owners' Association (POA). This legal structure is required to allow the mandatory assessments (dues) program needed for the proposed security program.
 - The Braesmont Civic Club officers learned in our February meeting that residents need assurance that this POA will focus its mission on the security program and on the activities previously performed by the Braesmont Civic Club.
 - The mandatory assessments are set at \$50/year for administrative services and \$250 for patrol services. The amended deed restrictions contain specifics about fee increases, late fees and penalties for non-payment, which will be available soon on the website.
- Responses to questions from the audience:
 - Program affordability means that we would probably not move forward without approval of all six sections. However, we have two sections that each have only one block. We would consider enacting the change for the remaining sections if we can find a way to afford the program. In that case, we would probably need to work with another nearby smaller neighborhood to contract together. The section that did not approve the amendment would not be covered by the patrol program.

- If one block or street in a neighborhood did not want this program, could those homes leave Braesmont? We do not know the answer with certainty, but the vote for deed restrictions changes is by section, not by street or block.
- We learned from other POA's that collection of mandatory fees ranges from 75% to about 95%. Therefore, we determined our assessment amounts assuming an 80% collection rate in the first year.
- If an assessment is not paid, the POS can act to pursue legal action against the owner as they are responsible for those dues if amendment is approved.
- If you are current owner you are protected from foreclosure, as the mortgage is the first lien. But new owners are subject to a first lien from the POA based on the amendment. Mortgage would be a 2nd lien.
- Courtney explained that according to our current deed restrictions, each property owner has one vote. We would have to determine the total number of property owners, not lots, to calculate the number of votes that results in the required majority to amend the deed restrictions. Discussion occurred that questioned the fairness of this method, given it results in a home with one owner having less votes than one with two or more owners, even though equal assessments are paid per lot. Courtney agreed to do an additional review, but believes this language is clear and would need to be followed.

B. Process forward – We will use the website to post all Security Initiative documents. We will also work to develop block captains to coordinate with homeowners. Once all legal documents are completed satisfactorily and posted for review, and an adequate number of block captains are identified and provided with the information needed to work with residents, we will move forward with this initiative.

VI. New Business

- Block Captain Recruitment and Duties -Attendees invited to sign up as block captains after the meeting. Duties focus on assuring that block members have a reliable source of information about civic club activities and assisting residents with getting responses to their questions and suggestions. Currently, we need block captains to assist with the membership drive and the Security Initiative campaign.
- Website Planning (www.braesmont.org) – Robert Cope and Michelle-ann Cohen are working on the website to assure that useful information about the Security Initiative is available and updated regularly. We hope to post key documents within the next month. We will also post these minutes for your review.

VII. Meeting Adjourned at 8:28 pm.