

# **Ballantrae Condominium Association Board of Directors Meeting**

**DATE:** October 19, 2022   **TIME:** 4:00 pm.

**LOCATION:** Gulf Gate Library, Meeting Room A

**Board Members Present:** David Dicke, Drew Lowther, Jim Boyd, Maria Gwillim, and Ken Rowland. Quorum established.

**Attendees:** Mike Miller, Miller Management; 33 Residents.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by David Dicke at 4:03 p.m. Roll Call: Five board members present (David, Drew, Jim, Maria and Ken). Meeting notices have been posted appropriately.

**Approval of Minutes:** David asked for a motion to approve the September 21 Board of Directors meeting minutes (Drew) seconded (Maria). No discussion, passed 5-0.

## **Reports of Officers and Committees**

### **President**

David Dicke reported that he would like to move things along quickly to accommodate a busy agenda for this meeting. He wanted to thank all those who helped with the cleanup after Hurricane Ian. Many residents volunteered their time to remove fallen branches and clear the roadways. Residents also helped pile up debris to make cleanup easier and less expensive. The community appreciates the efforts.

### **Vice President**

No report.

### **Secretary**

Ken Rowland reported that a unit owner who is away and unable to attend the meeting requested a letter be read into the record and posted in the meeting minutes:

Board members, I would like to go on record as opposing an assessment to our community for cleanup of the storm damages caused by Ian. It has always been my understanding over the last twenty two years that the reserve (emergency) fund was to be used for this purpose. We were supposed to borrow from that fund and pay it back as we go forward in the years to come. We should be paying into the reserve fund with each quarterly payment. I thought the reserve was fully funded at over one million dollars. I found out from David Dicke yesterday that the reserve fund was down to seven hundred thousand dollars which means we must have been borrowing from that fund to pay for non-budgeted items.

I also have a problem with the clean slate letter if it allows a unit in our complex to have a propane tank for a gas fireplace. That is a violation of our community rules and maybe a county code violation as well. If that is legal, every unit in the complex that has a fireplace should be allowed to have a propane gas fireplace installed. The clean slate letter should include that provision. Personally, I wonder about a propane tank that close to a group of condos and the danger that may cause.

I would like to have this letter read into the minutes of the board meeting by the secretary prior to voting on these issues.

Respectfully,  
Thomas Hull

David said that the reserve account is not actually an emergency fund, but that we are allowed to borrow from it for that purpose and repay those funds. He noted that roof replacement costs for 10 roofs in the past few years and other scheduled expenses had drained the fund to its current level of \$746,337 as of 9-30-22. John Frazzini noted that we have not fully funded the reserve account in the past two years' budgets.

### **Treasurer**

Jim Boyd reported that we are doing pretty well with our budget amazingly considering the current stagflation. We have saved by deferring the mulching and planting schedule, and also Mary from Miller Management has helped him get acclimated to the new role as treasurer. We are on track but the next question will be how we will handle the cost of the storm damage cleanup and repair.

### **Buildings**

Gordy Shonka reported he would like to thank Lane for all the hard work he has put in addressing the storm damage and cleanup. He has been working with Lane to assess the number and location of damaged or missing soffit panels. Nancy Shonka also has participated in the effort. They should be done by next week locating the missing panels and noting the loose ones, and a handyman may be available soon for the repairs. In response to questions, residents should locate the panels near where they went missing or in their garage, and contact Gordy so he can coordinate with the repair person. Gordy also noted that panels which were screwed in stayed in, vs. those nailed. So far, the team has noted 207 panels which need to be replaced or repaired.

A driveway repair will be starting shortly on Muirfield. Gordy will coordinate with the unit owner on the timing. Cash Jacob, who will be doing the driveway, will be inspecting the barricade gates at the exit and entrance, which were further damaged by a fallen tree. He is scheduled to come here this week; the repair schedule is hopefully soon but may be affected by other priorities due to the storm.

### **Rules and Regulations**

A unit owner was contacted after a report of trash bags being left on the sidewalk in front of the residence. The unit owner said he had scheduled a bulk pickup of the debris, which came from his garage which is under repair. The pickup was delayed due to storm cleanup priorities. He agreed to move the obstacles from the sidewalk to his

garage until the next pickup date, which usually coincides with trash and recycling. John Frazzini asked if we could talk about the propane tank issue at this time during rules and regs due to its impact on the community. David said the issue would be talked about later in its entirety as it is on the agenda.

## **Grounds**

Lin Dunn read his report:

-We had started receiving quotes for the mulching project to be completed by the end of October. The budgeted amount is 11K. The lowest quote received was 15K from Brightview. They lowered their quote from the original 17K after negotiating.

-Hurricane Ian cleanup has put the mulching on hold.

-I was out of the country when Hurricane Ian arrived, so David Dicke arranged for the first two tree removal companies to come in for the first phase of debris removal.

Lin noted that Brightview won't trim branches that are hanging unless the tree itself is 14ft tall or under, even if the branches are hanging low. They must be covered by the cleanup funds.

-We have a quote for 2200.00 for tree stump removal and are receiving quotes for the remainder of the tree trimming and cleanup.

-Unit 24B has submitted a proposal from Troyer's Landscapes to remove the faux jasmine from behind his lanai and extend the existing ixora across the back. We will be replanting the jasmine in other areas of the community. Waste not, want not. This is being done at the unit owner's expense, (a savings of \$1070) Thank you, Bill and Louise!! In response to a resident comment, this work has been approved for future reference.

-Units 16D, 17A, 17B, 18B, 18C and 18D on Royal Birkdale have had their landscaping refreshed since our last meeting and we will continue to do new plantings as funds are allowed. Plantings are not complete, but the committee is working within what is budgeted and working with owners to give them what they want if possible.

Please, if you have any landscaping needs or concerns, please contact me directly. My phone number and email are posted on each mailbox. Your requests are not getting to me if you are using another option. It was noted that Lin's email was not in the directory, and the Secretary said he would make an update. It was also noted that work orders are in short supply and being reordered. If anyone has a stockpile, they should turn in any extras while we await the new forms.

Residents had comments about the plantings at the entryway near the sign, and also along the guard shack lane. Lin said a big problem is lack of irrigation/watering. He is planning to refresh the plantings when budget is available. Gordy noted that the area was not intended as a planter and more depth is needed. He suggested digging out the asphalt underneath when funds are available. Lin commented that one option to build up the depth of the soil is putting a 12 inch flagstone wall which would allow the plants to thrive without blocking view of the community sign. A resident suggested installing an irrigation hose with a timer along the entry drive.

## **Unfinished Business**

We received an additional bid for managing our bodies of water, and would like to present West Coast Lake and Wetland Management as our choice for the work. They have proposed to do water management at 3 storm water retention ponds and also the canal (elligraw). Their cost would be \$350/mo, \$4200/yr which is less than what we are

paying now. Three references provided very positive reviews of the company's work. David moved that we select them for our waterway management. In response to questions, there is a 30 day opt out clause. The service would use selective herbicide applications by certified aquatic specialist(s) and control of nuisance and underwater aquatic vegetation. Algae control monthly, as necessary. Jim Boyd asked if we are dissatisfied with our current provider. At that point, Ken Rowland seconded the motion so that we could continue discussion. Mike Miller noted that currently we are paying \$250 each time the current provider services the elligraw. His cost is \$390/mo, and coupled with the extra charge for the elligraw, he is considerably more expensive. In response to a question, the references came from golf courses. A vote was taken, and the motion was passed 5-0 to use WCL&WM for our waterways starting in January.

We tried to make contact with Florida Southern to see if they would reduce their roofing bid for three buildings on Gleneagles, through our contractor George McGonagill, but were unsuccessful. We would like to get started with Singleton roofing while the ultra shingles we have used thus far are still available. Many questions were asked about the reliability of the installation vs. Florida Southern. Also questions arose concerning the use of "day laborers". Gordy reported that in his experience of 28 years as a builder in the Sarasota area Singleton's reputation was excellent. Gordy noted that all bids received were to the same specifications and Singleton's bid was very attractive. Residents further questioned having inconsistent installations and tracking which company performed which work. It was noted that the county keeps records of the roofing installation so it is traceable. Cost overruns was another topic. Mike Miller opined that the day laborers most likely do the "grunt work" and that the skilled labor does the installation. Gordy reported that Westside Village used Singleton door a multi-unit project where a current resident was living and the results were positive. A resident reported that Forest Lake was done by Singleton and was poor quality with significant cost overruns. Sheri Netto suggested we check on projects done by Singleton as to how the roofs held up through Hurricane Ian. George Harland asked how much different were the bids, the answer was around 25% (21K plus per bldg). It was agreed we should do further investigation considering there is no leaky roof issue on the 3 buildings scheduled for 2023. Additional discussion ensued about the roofing schedule and its effect on insurance cost. Considering all, the issue was tabled for further investigation. After another comment on the use of day labor, David reported that he understands they use experienced roofers from up north when they are looking for work as the weather gets colder. Dave agreed to try again to contact Florida Southern.

## **New Business**

David reported that two companies, Tree Doctor and Dave's Integrity tree service, had done work to cut and remove trees throughout the property downed by they hurricane. The cost was about 18K, and was funded through the reserve monies, as was approved in last year's budget. He asked for a motion (Ken) seconded (Drew) to affirm the emergency expenditure. Motion passed, 5-0. Drew commented that the price for the work that was done was very reasonable and commended those who contracted for the two debris removal companies.

John Frazzini noted there is a huge pile of tree limbs and debris inside the entrance and wondered how that was being taken care of. FEMA normally will not come onto private property for cleanup. David said he had contacted the hotline and filled out a

form to give FEMA permission to pickup on the entry road. He said we are also looking for someone to remove felled trees along the entry road. Dave's Integrity tree service has said they will take on the work and will come look at the area, along with some broken tree limbs on the property.

David noted there are tree stumps which need to be ground and cleared. He has spoken with an associate of Dave's Integrity, who previously did a similar job for Ballantrae. He asked for a motion to approve having 14 tree stumps ground for \$2200. Drew moved, Maria seconded and the motion passed 5-0. In response to a question, David says the areas will need to be restored at a later date.

There is additional tree work, about \$2500, more lawn work, sodding, roof repairs which could be \$3000 or more, and possibly more work which is not apparent from storm damage as of yet. There is also street signs and mailbox repairs needed. Dave thanked those who made temporary repairs to the mailboxes. Suggestions from residents as well as Jim Boyd and Mike Miller were made as to how to handle the additional costs. A resident asked if the trees along the exit way were our responsibility. Mike said it is the responsibility of the owner of where the tree lands. David replied that we own approximately 20 feet north of the asphalt. Replanting is another expense we anticipate. Jim Boyd said with his experience he is against a special assessment. He moved that we borrow 30,000 from reserves and pay for the storm damage and pay that back in 2023 as a line item in the budget. Ken seconded for discussion. John Frazzini said that adding the repayment to our monthly fees is the financially easiest way to repay, noting that the assessment in 2021 was because there was not enough budget left to pay the funds required. Drew opined that the hurricane expense is hopefully once in a lifetime and something all residents can understand as a special assessment item, without adding to the monthly fees which are going to increase anyway. Sheri Netto said an assessment for a second year in a row would affect property values and she is strongly against that. Discussion ensued about the merits of adding the hurricane cleanup costs to monthly dues which will probably have a hefty increase anyway (Mike Miller) vs. having a special assessment. Dave Strattard suggested we study the financial effect of the two proposed ways of handling the cost. His opinion was that it would not be that significant and an assessment would not affect the property values as much as increasing monthly fees. Two residents who are also realtors, Sonia Harland and Cindy Furtado, gave their opinion that prospective buyers would be made apprehensive (freaked out) by seeing two assessments. One said our HOA fees are reasonably in line with neighboring communities, even with an expected increase. Mike Miller said he is working with the board on the upcoming budget and noted that in talking with our agent, insurance premium increases may go much higher after the storm damage, as much as 50%. He said the fee increase is ultimately the Board's decision. Kathleen Stroebel said in interviewing 7 prospective new residents she was told that CPA's opinions were that we have a well managed association with healthy reserves, if not fully funded.

David Dicke said another option would be to delay the assessment until next year when we have a better understanding of the costs. We could also shift funds from this year's mulching budget toward those expenses, and address the mulching next year. There is also garage and driveway work needed for Fred Sieger's place which is another unknown quantity to be addressed. Drew said he would prefer to address the cleanup costs now rather than 12 months after the fact, but would go along with the consensus of the community. Sue Frazzini suggested that we do a spreadsheet of all necessary expenses for the cleanup and repair work, and reassess when we know the

amount that will be needed. David agreed with that approach, but noted that the budget for 2023 needs to be finished up in the coming couple of weeks. Mike said we could borrow the 30K from reserves now and figure out the repayment method later. Stan Valerga wanted to make certain that we are not paying for expenses that FEMA would cover. David said we have explored that, and they won't pay for the type of cleanup work we have, it is payments to municipalities and damages to dwellings. Jim Woods reported that there seems to be a lot of lifting of the cedar shakes on the roofs that is or could be a problem down the road. David said that we have a claim in and the insurance adjuster from Heritage Insurance is assessing the roofs and there will be a report forthcoming. Mike noted that with our deductible and the depreciation clause we will most likely be responsible if repairs are needed.

Jim Boyd amended his motion- Borrow \$30,000 on an emergency funds for storm cleanup and repair, repayment to be determined at a later date. Drew seconded, motion passed 5-0.

David brought up a proposal from Cash Jacobs, who we have been working with, to repair the driveway at 7451 Carnoustie. To replace half would be \$2250, the full drive would be \$2675. David noted the driveway was noted by Gordy as needing replacement soon at any rate. He moved we get the entire driveway replaced, money from reserve budget. Drew seconded. Motion passed, 5-0.

David moved that we approve spending \$4055 for interior garage work- drywall, garage door tracks, ceiling, prime and paint for the same residence, 7451 Carnoustie. Proposal came from Josh Jacobs who also has done work for Ballantrae which we are happy with. Once work is complete, Fred Siegel will be able to get back into his garage. Ken seconded, motion passed 5-0.

It was agreed to table the next two agenda items (Clean slate letter and Propane tank) and put them at the front of the next meeting agenda under unfinished business, due to the time.

**Adjournment:** Jim moved and Drew seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 PM

**Reminder:** The next Board meeting will be held on **November 16 at 6:30 PM**, at Gulf Gate Library, Conference Room A

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Rowland, Secretary

Date: October 26, 2022

