

Silver Ridge Park East Homeowners Association June 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes

(Minutes are unofficial until approved by the Board of Trustees)

President Oliver Oramas called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Roll Call of the Board of Trustees

Trustees Trudy Venskus (Section 1), Patrick Tatulli (Section 2), Joan Ward (Section 3), Peter Szytybel (Section 4), Susan Swain (Section 5), James Clarke (Section 6), Tom Coffey (Section 8), Mary Conery (Section 10), Mike Joffe (Section 11) and Debbie Moriarty (Section 12) were present. Sections 7 and 9 are vacant.

Forty-two residents signed the attendance sheet.

Special Guest: Berkeley Township Council President John Bacchione

Council President Bacchione discussed the new Property Alert service that Ocean County is providing to help protect residents from title fraud.

He explained that scammers are filing false documents with the County Clerk's office to change the titles of properties in 55+ communities to their own names. People don't usually know they have been scammed until they want to sell their property, and then find out it is no longer in their name.

This service provides property owners with e-mail alerts whenever property documents in their names are recorded in the Clerk's Office. The service is free.

Register at www.oceancountyclerk.com. On the left side of the home page is a list of links. Click on the Property Alert link and enter the e-mail address at which you would like to receive notifications. Then respond to the e-mail reply you receive and create an account. It will ask you for your lot and block number. If someone does register a mortgage, a new deed, a mechanic's lien, a home equity line of credit or other document against your house, the clerk's office will notify you via e-mail.

If you do receive such a notification, notify law enforcement – the Berkeley Township Police Department, the County Prosecutor's Office or the State Police – who will help you fight to get your house back in your name.

It's important that people register now. It's easy to do, and someone else can help you or do it for you. All you need is an e-mail address in order to set up an account. If you don't have your own, you can use a relative's e-mail or that of someone else you trust who can let you know if you receive a notification. You will create your own password, and they will not ask you for other personal information, such as your Social Security number.

Flyers on Property Alert service are available at the clubhouse.

Announcements by President Oliver Oramas

Several people have reported seeing a pack of foxes running around near Edgebrook Drive South. Please protect your pets and do not approach foxes; they could be rabid.

A resident suggested that sidewalks be installed on Edgebrook Drive. The board will be contacting the township to see if they will install and pay for them, but there are other considerations besides installation costs.

Because the sidewalks would be less than 10 feet from the curb, they would be on township property. But under local ordinances, homeowners would be responsible for removing the snow from the sidewalks in front of their houses in the winter. Sidewalk installation may also require the re-alignment of homeowners' existing sprinkler systems. And people falling or tripping on the sidewalks could lead to insurance claims.

We will await the township's response to our inquiry and will provide more details at the August meeting.

A resident suggested that we hold meet-and-greet events so that residents can get to know their section trustees. The board agrees. We are holding our ice cream social this evening. We will be planning more events like this in the future.

As part of our effort to improve communications between the board and residents, inserted in the June Park Echo is a short survey asking for feedback on our community, how it is administered, and suggestions for improvements. Please fill it out and return it to the office by July 8. You can drop it in the mail slot on the office door. You don't have to include your name and address unless you would like someone to contact you about your comments. We'll report on the responses at the August meeting.

Another element of our communications efforts will be an annual report. It will summarize the current state of the SRPE community, and will include the board's long-term and short-term goals and accomplishments over the past year.

Thanks to the efforts of several volunteers, the SRPE kitchen passed the Ocean County Health Department's inspection. Plans for more kitchen improvements are underway.

Great news on HOPA: More than 90 percent of SRPE homeowners and tenants have submitted their forms. We thank everyone who took our appeals to heart and supported our community by responding in a timely manner.

But the original deadline was March 31, with a 30-day grace period extending it to April 30. Those who have not filed their HOPA forms by now will be fined.

A number of residents who are not retired have told us that the current office hours make it difficult for them to resolve matters that require in-person contact. The board and the SRPE staff are establishing a schedule of alternative hours, including specific Saturdays, which we will announce at the August meeting.

As many of you know, our administrative secretary, Nina Callari, retired effective today. We are all glad to know that she has agreed to still help out in a pinch, and will continue to serve as a volunteer on many committees. We thank Nina for her dedication and the years of professional experience that she brought to the job.

Her replacement will be Karen Crossley, a former board member and the current chair of the Garden and Beautification Committee.

An update on a resident suggestion that we pay a contractor to clean up the islands and cul-de-sacs: We received three bids, all exceeding \$4,000. The bidding vendors themselves told us that this would have to be repeated at least twice a year to stay ahead of the curve.

The vendors also noted that since there are no sprinkler systems in these areas, plants and grass have a hard time thriving there. The board has decided that because of the unbudgeted costs and the existing situation, we will not be able to undertake this project at this time.

Finally, the board depends on residents to let us know if there are new people occupying a building or if anything unusual seems to be going on. Just call the office. Everything will be held in confidence.

A few calendar updates: There will be no HOA meeting in July. At the meeting on Thursday, August 3, we will be welcoming a special guest speaker. A local attorney who specializes in wills and trusts will be providing valuable information to our residents.

Approval of the Minutes of the May 4, 2023 HOA Meeting

James Clarke made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Tom Coffey and approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Dru Sangemino reported that income increased because of several fines billed to homeowners for various violations. Since the start of the fiscal year, there have been three unbudgeted expenditures approved by the board to ensure the safety of homeowners and to validate recent insurance quotes: The clubhouse defibrillator, replacement of the outdated fire extinguishers and the reappraisal of the clubhouse. A motion to approve the report was made by Joan Ward, seconded by Trudy Venskus and approved unanimously.

Administrative Report

Trustee Mary Conery said the office is busy and the real estate market is active. In May, there were eight properties for sale or pending contracts, and four sales closed. Four flippers are currently renovating properties. Twelve properties have lawn violations. Fines collected in May totaled \$350.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

Bylaws Committee Update – Trustee James Clarke said they have received the attorney’s comments on the changes to the bylaws and expect to have the ballot out to the community soon.

Alternate Dispute Resolution Committee Update – Trustee Joan Ward said there were no active ADR matters in SRPE.

Rules Committee Update – Trustee Debbie Moriarty said the committee’s work was completed.

Berkeley Township Senior Coalition Report – President Oliver Oramas said there were two new proposals in the state legislature relating to people in 55+ communities: A requirement that anyone who becomes a trustee attend a 3-hour training course within 180 days of the commencement of his or her term, and a change to the law regarding the \$3,000 Veterans’ Benefit making it available to the veterans’ widows or widowers. The Coalition also reported that there were currently no ADR matters in any communities, and that they had not yet received a response to their letter to state gambling commission on various matters. They also discussed the terminology of the words *clubs* and *committees*. Oliver will report on that at the next HOA meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion #1: To approve the rules and regulations clarifying and supplementing prior adopted Covenants, Restrictions, Rules and Regulations. The full text of the new rules is available on page 9 of the June Park Echo and on the SRPE web site www.srpeast.com. Debbie Moriarty made the motion, which was seconded by Pat Tatulli and approved unanimously.

Motion #2: To ratify the Architectural Committee’s approval of improvements at the following properties: 1) To start the reconstruction of the home at 48 Southampton, which was destroyed in a fire. 2) To install a 16x14 deck off the rear of 6 York Street. 3) To install central air conditioning at 11 Stanford Court W. Debbie Moriarty made the motion, which was seconded by Susan Swain and approved unanimously.

SECTION REPORTS

All the trustees said things were quiet in their sections. A few residents in Section 3 are not attending to their lawns, and there are several new residents in section 12.

CLUB AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Architectural Committee – Debbie Moriarty said there have been a number of new applications, which will be reported on at the August meeting.

Beautification and Garden Committee – Karen Crossley said work in the reflection garden with the engraved bricks has begun. Some of the work is done in the evenings and they could always use volunteer help.

Billiards Club – They meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 7 p.m.

Clubhouse Décor Committee – The next meeting will be in late June or early July. Contact Gail DiNicolas for more information.

Common Grounds Committee – Complaints about maintenance in several areas are being reviewed.

Entertainment Committee – The indoor/outdoor picnic will be on Saturday, June 3. There will be a dance in August. Details in the Park Echo.

Flea Market – The “Junk in the Trunk” flea market will be in September. They could always use more volunteers to help run the events.

Gray Power – Pat Tatulli said May projects included: Installing security protection over the pumping station to prevent kids from climbing on the clubhouse roof; helping the Entertainment Committee prime and paint the stage area; attempting to fix the front doors (the magnetic mechanisms that lock the doors may have to be replaced at a cost of \$500 each); placing the Memorial Day flags at the clubhouse and in the cul de sac on Hamilton; cleaning up the picnic area. They meet at 9 a.m. on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month to work with the Garden Club on various projects. Pat said they are in desperate need of help. Even if you can only spare half an hour to assist the community in this way, please join them.

House Committee – Tom Coffey said the new fire extinguishers have been installed in the clubhouse.

Hospitality Committee – The new chair of the committee is Katherine Kohler.

Library Committee – The official re-opening of the upgraded library will be on June 10 from 2-4 p.m.

Library Décor Committee – They are still looking for a computer table.

Pins and Needles – They meet every Tuesday from 1-3 p.m. in the Library.

Roamers – Oliver Oramas reported that the next group dining outing is Thursday, June 15, at Tang Dynasty in Toms River. Look for details in an SRPE e-mail blast.

Sunshine Club – Elva Hall said she sent out three Park Echos to former residents, two get-well cards and, sadly, five sympathy cards. She reminded residents to contact her if they know of a neighbor who would appreciate a card.

Trees Committee – Tree costs for May were \$3,705. Seven trees and two large hanging branches were cut because they were either dead, diseased, or dangerous.

Welcome Committee – Penny Rapicano reported that she presented seven welcome packs to new residents. She thanked Berkeley Township officials for all the informational material they have given her.

There were no reports from the Bocce, Exercise or Golf clubs.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

A resident said she was offended that a “No Dumping” sign had been installed in the common area behind her home. She felt it created a negative impression about the upkeep of her property and the common ground behind it, which is very well-maintained. A volunteer who installed the sign apologized for any distress its location may have caused, and said there was no intent to imply criticism of the resident’s maintenance of her property. The apology was accepted.

There was a general discussion about the on-going problem of illegal dumping in the common area.

An Edinburgh Court resident thanked his neighbors, Chris and Judy, for all the work they have done to landscape and maintain the island in their neighborhood.

An Edinburgh Drive resident, speaking on behalf of herself and other residents of that street, raised concerns about the maintenance of the brook. She said it is congested with branches and garbage, making it stagnant and a breeding ground for mosquitoes, noted she has not seen any improvements in the common areas around the brook, and asked what the HOA was going to do about this.

Oliver and trustees responded that the state of the several brooks surrounding our community are not part of the common area. The federal EPA does have a program that cleans up brooks.

That said, the policy has long been that if a tree goes down in the common area, it stays there as a part of nature, as long as it isn’t dangerous. Oliver cited an informal study done several years ago by a resident indicated that more than 400 trees had fallen in the forest. Physically removing them would be cost-prohibitive. Oliver said he would contact the EPA, DEP, and other agencies to gather more information on these matters and would report back to the community at the August HOA meeting.

Another resident asked if people could cut the grass in the common area behind their homes to their own liking. Oliver responded that cutting the grass is fine, but residents need permission from the HOA to cut or trim trees or vegetation in the common area. He noted that the HOA would never say no to new plantings in the common area.

A few residents were understood to have complained about clean-up volunteers placing brush bundles in front of their homes for pick-up on garbage days, even if the brush did not come from their properties. It was explained that Berkeley sanitation workers will not pick up brush that is not placed in front of a home.

Gail DiNicolas thanked all the volunteers (some of whom were trustees and their spouses) who spent many hours preparing the clubhouse kitchen for the Ocean County Health Department inspection.

A resident suggested that people who have differences with each other should just talk to each other and work things out, rather than airing them publicly at board meetings.

Gail DiNicolas asked if there was interest in holding a second Health Fair at the Clubhouse in the fall, as the 2022 event was very successful. She was told that there is, and asked for volunteers to help organize and run it.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next meeting will be Thursday, August 3, at 7:00 p.m. at the clubhouse.

Kathryn Forsyth, Recording Secretary