

**Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting
The Hamlet at Castle Pines North Homeowners Association
June 30, 2012**

The meeting of the Hamlet Board of Directors originally set for July 16 was rescheduled to June 30, 2012. The rescheduled meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by President Howard Morrison at the home of Colleen George, 15 Roder Gate Lane. In attendance were board members Peggy Capp, Mary Firth, Colleen George, and Nan Mead, as well as Business Manager Charley Heard and Master Association Representative Suki Fitzgerald. Homeowners who attend this meeting included Vern Cain (#41), Nelson and Nancy Eagle (#3), Don Frank (#1), Larry Ramona (#4), and Dennis and Teresa St. Hilaire (#46).

Old Business

Minutes of the May 14, 2012, meeting were approved as submitted.

New Business

Master Association—Suki reported that the Castle Pines “Red, White, and Blue” fireworks display and Independence Day celebration scheduled for July 6 has been cancelled because of drought conditions and fire-related restrictions issued by Douglas County. Howard will send a notification to Hamlet homeowners if the event is rescheduled for later in the year. A G-rated movie will be shown in Elk Ridge Park on August 18, with popcorn and activities for children. At their last meeting, board members emphasized the need for design continuity within the community as homeowners change and improve their properties—a concern precipitated by a non-conforming fence that was installed near Castle Pines Parkway. They ask that people continue to maintain their properties, but in accordance with the established covenants. In response to questions from some homeowners about the costs versus benefits of incorporation, the Association is considering a study that would assess the feasibility of reversing the incorporation of Castle Pines as a city. This issue will be addressed at the next Association meeting, to be held on July 19, 2012 (always on the third Thursday of the month).

Design Review Committee—The 16 applications submitted thus far this year are varied, yet involve no significant changes to properties. Peggy indicated that requests for approval have included painting (8), patio enlargement (2), driveways (2), and landscaping (2), plus a parking sign and a new deck.

Landscape Committee—Howard announced that **tree-spraying** will be done again in September. Fit Turf has submitted a proposal of \$425 to treat aphids on the trees at the entrance. Peggy described the problem as seasonal, with new growth being the most vulnerable. Suki said she has had Swingle at her house to do treatments, at \$70 each; this company has noticed problems with tree stress near the gate house. Howard will follow up with Dan at Ross Tree Company and request an evaluation.

We still are awaiting word on the installation of new rotary-type **sprinklers** in the common areas. Given the delay, Howard has suggested that DCWRA consider using Coldsnap for this job. Peggy said the current sprinklers now are watering the “rough” bordering the golf course instead of the grass. She has asked Coldsnap to submit a proposal for digging out the sprinkler heads there if the rotary heads cannot be installed in that location.

Howard provided an update on **work being done by Coldsnap**, reminding those present that the 2012 budget was set based on the proposal submitted last year by the former contractor, Colorado Property Management (CPC). The scope of work being done by the new contractor is based on that proposal. However, Howard has received e-mails from homeowners expressing concern about “what is and is not being done.” Several meeting attendees also provided comments about landscape maintenance, as follows:

Don Frank said that TerraCare (the firm preceding CPC) did landscape work irrespective of contracts and property boundaries, resulting in better and more extensive service, so homeowners now are “paying more for less work.” Howard noted that TerraCare declined to bid on work in the Hamlet for the 2012 season. They also delayed the fall clean-up last year for weeks, ultimately missing 33 homes, which caused a problem for many in the community. Peggy said that the board has had multiple complaints about TerraCare damaging lawns by using large riding mowers—a problem that also applied to CPC’s equipment. Don asked if the current scope of work included picking up grass clippings, and Peggy said this was not in the CPC contract but that Coldsnap has been instructed to do it. Don expressed his belief that TerraCare benefits from an economy of scale because they have so many customers in this area and so much equipment; thus, he hopes Coldsnap can “gear up” appropriately.

Both Don and Nelson Eagle commented that Coldsnap was not cutting the grass short enough, but Peggy confirmed that the hand mowers are set to three inches. Nan indicated that this is a height recommended by CSU Extension and professional lawn-care companies when temperatures are as high as they’ve been so far this season.

Larry Ramona asked why the mowing now takes two days, while no edging is being done, weeds have been overlooked, and pine cones are not being picked up. He said he believes the current crew has not yet been molded to the Hamlet’s standards—but he also has seen a deterioration of service since moving into the community, possibly the result of budget constraints. He feels that CPC did some of the work provided by TerraCare, though Coldsnap isn’t following suit—for example, not cutting the “rough” along the golf course bordering his property, which attracts animals and looks unsightly. Peggy presented a map of the Hamlet showing the specific boundary areas where tall grasses are to be cut by riding mowers every three weeks, with some follow-up work provided where necessary. She emphasized that the needs of *all 29* properties along the Hamlet’s boundary, rather than just a few, have to be accommodated, adding that most homeowners seem satisfied with what’s being done. However, she will continue to work with individual homeowners and try to address their concerns.

Peggy said that while she is not one-hundred percent happy with Coldsnap, she’s not ready to give up on them, either, because they are responsive and willing to work with the community, unlike other, larger firms. They are a small company working to grow their business through

good customer service. Their desire to “do things right” explains why they take two days to mow the lawns. Mary commented that lawns in the Hamlet have never looked better as a result of the current cutting and fertilization, with Colleen adding that this is true even though conditions right now are not ideal for landscaping. Howard said Coldsnap currently is on a one-year contract, to be reviewed at the end of the season; this is a trial period for both parties, and the board can solicit feedback when the contract comes up for renewal. The scope of services can be expanded, yet will cost more. Meanwhile, he will look at the budget relative to various homeowner requests for additional landscape work. Because of liability concerns, he will talk with the golf course about mowing any “rough” that may be on their property. He’ll also contact the Metro District about cutting foliage at the top of the hill, an area the community has been mowing, because it poses a fire hazard.

Don and Larry commented on the unsightliness of the long grass bordering the golf course near the Hamlet entrance. Howard said the bare areas beneath the trees look even worse, and a proposal has been developed to cover them with bark. Don proposed that stone be used instead, something Howard said would significantly increase the cost.

Don suggested that a homeowners’ meeting be held specifically to get feedback about landscaping. Nancy Eagle asked that e-mail comments also be accepted to accommodate those who are traveling. Mary thanked Peggy for all she does to keep the Hamlet looking attractive, and mentioned that board seats are available for those who want to help resolve concerns about the community. Howard added that the Hamlet is not a “maintenance-free” community, and those who want things done, beyond the basics, need to get out and help do them. He used Don’s maintenance of the gate as a good example of volunteerism that benefits everyone. Charley said he has seen many HOA boards whose members receive special services and perks, but that the Hamlet’s board members do not. He added that the board deserves appreciation for its significant contribution of time—and for the decisions it makes, all of which are implemented for good reasons and the betterment of the community as a whole. Nancy commented that she has appreciated the work of the board, the communications from Howard, and the neighbors who reach out to help one another.

Financials—Charley distributed the 2012 financial summary, current through the end of June. While most line items are either on or below budget, four components presently reflect higher-than-estimated expenses. These include (with variances in parentheses) “Mowing, Fertilization, Weed Control & Sprinklers” (\$2,130.52), “Snow Removal & Equipment Rental” (\$3,000), “Gate Maintenance” (\$300), and “Taxes & Filing Fees” (\$60), resulting in a net negative variance of \$3,620.83. The two large overages were caused by an unexpected change in contractors, from CPC to Coldsnap, in May and heavy snowfall earlier in the year. Howard noted that tree-spraying also contributed to the variance. All homeowners are current on monthly dues, with some of them paying ahead either quarterly or annually.

General Maintenance—Howard reported that **electrical repairs**, including the damaged lamppost near the entrance, have been completed. All lights in the Hamlet now are working. Howard said that covers are to be placed over some open areas to provide better waterproofing of the electrical connections. The lampposts may need some additional work to facilitate decorating for the holidays. Don asked that money not be put into the budget for arbitrary items until the

necessary ones have been covered. He projects costs of around \$1,000 for gate maintenance this year, which Howard said already is in the reserve budget.

Howard also said that there is money in the budget for **concrete and asphalt repairs** to be done in July. Larry asked for a definition of the term “driveway,” and was told that everything not specifically appearing as a driveway in the front of his house could be considered as “street.” Dennis St. Hilaire asked about having damage to his curbs repaired that was caused by TerraCare, and Howard said the HOA will handle it.

Water run-off into the ditch going toward the pond has caused erosion that must be addressed. This is a project that did not get done during the annual Spring Clean-Up. Wayne Gardner has suggested putting in cement and rocks to stop the erosion, and Howard will continue to work on a solution.

Other Business—Dennis mentioned that the Waste Management garbage trucks now coming through the community late in the day, instead of in the morning, are tearing up the streets because of the weight of their full loads. Nan will contact the Hamlet’s account supervisor at the company to request a schedule change.

Nelson described damage to his basement from the severe storm that occurred several weeks ago. He said the swale near his home, which used to be level, has shifted and needs to be regraded because water now is entering the house during each rainfall. Mary said that Douglas County addressed the problem when it occurred at her house years ago, by installing a French drain. Charley indicated that controlling storm run-off is important to the county, which signed off on the original drainage plan for the development of the Hamlet, and they need to become involved. Peggy suggested that they evaluate the entire community. She and Howard will assess the damage to Nelson’s property. It was recommended that Nelson also consider installing a basement sump pump.

The summer picnic that was cancelled in May has been rescheduled for Saturday, August 11, 2012. Howard will notify homeowners.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m. The next meeting is to be held on September 15 at the home of Mary Firth, #27.