

Meeting Summary – June 28, 2018

The Rio Crossing Homeowners Association Board of Directors held a Regular Meeting which began at 7pm on June 28, 2018 in the Mojave Conference Room at the Avondale City Center, located at 11465 W. Civic Center Dr., Avondale, Arizona 85323.

Disclaimers

This summary is advisory only, and intended to inform the Members of the Association about decisions made in a timely manner. The official Meeting Minutes will be approved at a future board meeting, and is the official record of board actions taken.

Guest Presentation

Representatives from Stillwater, our landscape vendor, briefly presented and discussed their proposal for the Weathermatic “smart irrigation & site management” system.

Stillwater also mentioned that they had noticed the flowers at the monuments weren’t looking very healthy, and that on investigation found that the irrigation lines seemed to be plugged up with some fibrous matter of some sort. They are in the process of cleaning it out and will be monitoring until everything is back in shape.

Board Decisions

Weathermatic Smart Irrigation System Controllers

The board approved the proposal from Stillwater for the 6-controller option for installation of the Weathermatic Smart Irrigation system. That approval included the authorization to pay for the system monthly at a cost of \$670 per month over a 3 year period, and for the additional payments to come from the Reserve Fund as a major item replacement relating to Irrigation System Components (from the 2015 Reserve Study, Asset ID 2025).

Sissoo Tree Removal

The board approved a proposal from Stillwater to remove 2 sissoo trees along El Mirage near city-maintained sidewalks. The proposal includes cutting down and removing surface roots, treating with selective herbicide, and grinding of stumps. The total amount approved was \$1,160, from Operating Funds: Landscape Maintenance. This work is necessary in order for the city to proceed with remediating the uneven sidewalk sections.

Community Message Board Replacement

The board approved the proposal for \$1,014 from Zollock LLC to replace the community bulletin board at the corner of Roma and 123rd, since the current/previous board supports were rotted. Payment will come from Operating Funds: Common Area Maintenance.

Post-Meeting Note: The prior bulletin board was blown over by the July 9 storm and subsequently removed. The replacement board is on back-order and won't likely be installed until August.

Playground Maintenance Items

Playground Sand Cleaning

A proposal from Safe and Sound Playgrounds was approved by the board for \$595 to cover a one-time sand cleaning and sifting on both playgrounds, to be paid from Operating Funds: Tot-Lot Maintenance. Per the proposal: “The Sand Cleaning process will loosen compacted sand as well as remove debris with the sifters. Once this is complete we will be able to determine if there is a need for additional sand.”

Ramada Cleaning

The board also approved a monthly contract for cleaning the Ramada areas for \$250 per month from Safe and Sound Playgrounds, to be paid from Operating Funds: Contract Services.

Resignation

Board member Lori reported that she has sold her home and will be moving from the community, and therefore resigned from the board effective at the end of the June meeting.

Other Discussion

Committee-Related Items

The board agreed to postpone the activities of the Capital Improvements Committee until after the 2018 Annual Member Meeting and elections for Board of Directors.

The Social Media Liaison’s Social Media Policy which was presented in draft form several months ago will be revised based on the current state of social media activity, and presented for approval at the next meeting. Ray mentioned that the mailing list continues to work well, with very few “un-subscriptions” since it began.

Financial Items

Stephanie (Association Treasurer) commented about the water bills, and asked when we would see the bills from after the water was turned back on (it was turned off in February to reduce water usage during winter months and wasted water from ongoing irrigation repair issues, which have now been fixed by Stillwater). Ray indicated he has a 3-page write-up on water costs from the first 6 months of this year which he’ll make available.

Stephanie also mentioned she had received the audit report, and was corresponding with the auditor on some issues and corrections noted.

There was discussion about moving some association funds into CDs to generate additional interest income, especially in funds where we have a substantial balance, such as the Reserve Fund.

Future Maintenance Items

Julia noted the presence of a number of areas of erosion and drainage issues that should be evaluated for possible remediation. This include the headwall areas (drainage outflow), landscape ruts due to erosion at a few homes adjacent to common areas where the landscape slope is steep, and drainage issues along block walls. Melanie estimated that an inspection of affected areas could cost upwards of \$1,500, but that a detailed report from a civil engineer would run closer to \$5,000.

Julia also requested bids on two sidewalk areas along the walkway from Highland to Roma Park (between the cul de sacs), where there is more than a quarter inch of elevation difference between sidewalk panels. These are potential liability/trip hazard issues which may need to be remediated.

Matt mentioned a couple of plants in the entrance ways that might need replacing, and asked for proposals.

Computer System Changeover

AAM has changed the software our information is stored in; the previous system was called Jenark, the new system is called VMS. This changeover has had some issues, and the VMS team is still working on transitioning data in parts of it. It appears that most homeowners with logins to RioCrossing.org had to re-register for access. The change will affect the July financial reports, with a different look and feel from before.

Common Area Landscape Plan Compliance

Julia reported conducting a review of current trees planted versus the approved Landscape Plan filed by the developer with the City of Avondale back in 2003, and noted that we are short by potentially 340 trees. Discussion about ways to approach the replenishment of trees focused on developing a long-range plan over several years, beginning with a project plan, developing cost estimates and annual expenditure budgets, and executing the plan as funds are available.

Ray mentioned he was approached a few months ago by a company aspiring to help Rio Crossing with their landscape maintenance planning, and at the time Ray told them we would not need their services. More recently, however, Ray approached them about potentially helping with this project. Their response was:

As you know from our first discussion, our approach is planning for better action in order to achieve improved results. However, our first step is always inspect, so we all know what we're dealing with when we plan for better actions in the future.

So, the first step to be taken is always a landscape asset audit that looks at every aspect of your landscape infrastructure, including soil, plants, irrigation, hardscape, maintenance activities, and even current management strategies.

Then based on the audit results, we work with the Board to examine options and associated costs that will produce the results desired.

If you like, our team can conduct a preliminary inspection of the property and provide you a proposal for the landscape asset audit. There is no charge for the inspection or proposal. Our only condition is that, once complete, we be allowed to present the inspection results and proposal directly to the board in a meeting.

The board agreed to allow the company – called Tree'age (pronounced like "triage") – to conduct a free inspection and present a proposal for a landscape asset audit to assist us in ensuring that we develop a plan which we can maintain compliance with.

Homeowner Appeal

The board discussed an appeal by a homeowner who requested to have discussion of their appeal in open session, as allowed in ARS 33-1804(A)5. The homeowner had received a “needs a tree” violation and objected to the letter’s requirement that the violation be cured within 14 days of receipt of the letter. Homeowner requested time to formulate a revised landscape plan for their lot, time to submit an Architectural Request and obtain approval, and time to schedule the planting for cooler weather to help ensure plant survival. The board agreed to allow the homeowner through the end of November to complete the desired landscape changes, subject to submittal of the Architectural Request by the August meeting.

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