

# Cypress Trails Homeowners Association, Inc.

Board Meeting | August 27, 2022 | 9:00 am | Cypress Park

## Meeting Minutes

### Board Members

Rich Horvath / Marie Fulop / Paul Naranjo

CALL TO ORDER	Meeting called to order at 9:06 am
ESTABLISH QUORUM	A quorum was established, two Board members were present and one was on Facetime.
HOMEOWNERS PRESENT	23 homeowners were represented
PROOF OF NOTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notification of meeting in compliance: 174 emails sent and a letter was mailed to 122 households.</li> <li>• In addition, signs were put up at the entrance August 24.</li> </ul>
APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES	Rich motioned to approve minutes from the February 17, 2022 Board meeting, seconded by Marie, and the motion was approved 3-0.
BOARD UPDATE	
Architectural Review Committee	<p>The Committee has been meeting regularly as planned with a continuing significant number of submittals, however, the number has slowed down a bit.</p> <p>At the February meeting we shared that the Board had voted to initiate a lawsuit against a resident for non-compliance. Fortunately shortly after the meeting the resident agreed to make the necessary changes to his property. He completed the changes by early March and the lawsuit was put on hold.</p> <p>Late last year two residents requested to remove the trees in their front yard near the sidewalk. The Board did some research and learned that the City of Jacksonville has an ordinance (656.1203 thru 656.1206) that controls the removal of mature trees from resident's lots. This ordinance takes away the authority of the HOA to approve removal of these trees. If you wish to remove a tree you should still make a submittal to ARC and we can explain what steps you need to take.</p> <p>The Board recognizes the need for an update to the Architectural Review Manual to allow additional landscape rock sizes and colors. Therefore the following revision is proposed to the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph in the Landscaping section:</p> <p><b>Current</b></p> <p>Cypress mulch, pine bark, pine straw, or similar natural materials are acceptable for use as mulch in light brown, brown, black, or red colors. Stones, rocks, or lava rock may be used as mulch, but must be approved prior to installation. Stones, rock, or lava rock must be 1-3 inch in size and beige, brown, or red in color. No white stone, rock, or pea gravel is allowed.</p> <p><b>Proposed</b></p> <p>Cypress mulch, pine bark, pine straw, or similar natural materials are acceptable for use as mulch in light brown,</p>

	<p>brown, black, or red colors. Stones, rocks, or lava rock may be used as mulch, but must be approved prior to installation. Stones, rock, or lava rock must be 1-3 inch in size, but no more than 50% of the surface may have stones up to 6 inches in size. The stones or rock may be beige, brown, gray, or red in color. No white stone, rock, or pea gravel is allowed.</p> <p>Rich motioned to approve the proposed revision, seconded by Marie, and the motion was approved 3-0.</p> <p>The Covenants and Architectural Review Manual can be found on the HOA website – <a href="http://cypresstrailshoa.com">cypresstrailshoa.com</a>.</p>
<p>Fining Committee</p>	<p>The Covenants Section 11.2 has a provision to allow the Board to assess a fine against residents that do not abide by the Covenants or Architectural Review Manual. The section defines a fining committee of at least 3 members. The maximum fine allowed for a specific violation is \$1000. The process is as follows: 1) The fining committee is established; all members must be independent of the Board, 2) The Board determines that a resident is in violation and has refused all attempts to get them to comply, 3) The Board decides that this resident should be fined, 4) The resident is given 14 days' notice that their noncompliance will be taken to the fining committee, 5) The resident presents their case to the fining committee, 6) If the committee concurs with the Board, the Board can proceed with fining the resident. If the committee concurs with the resident, then there is no fine. The Board is looking for volunteers to be on this committee, so please contact a Board member or BCM if you are interested. Rich motioned to proceed with establishing the fining committee that would meet on an as needed basis, seconded by Marie, and the motion was approved 3-0.</p>
<p>Nocatee HOA Officers Group</p>	<p>This group had a meeting in early June. Eleven of the 23 member HOAs were represented. The major subject discussed that affects residents was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks – The HOAs planning the event provided an update. It appeared to go off pretty much as planned and we currently expect it to be held next year also with even more HOAs providing financial support.</li> </ul>
<p>Citizens Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC)</p>	<p>Interesting things learned in the recent meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our City Council member Danny Becton reported that waste pickup has been working as planned since recycling was restarted in April.</li> <li>• The Jacksonville Public Library in Mandarin provides technical help on Wednesdays from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm.</li> <li>• You can get free entry to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in downtown Jacksonville the last Friday of the month with your Jacksonville Public Library card.</li> <li>• New fire station No. 74 opened in E-Town on July 27.</li> <li>• The representative from the fire department shared that fire extinguishers should be periodically turned over so that the powder does not settle and cake up.</li> </ul>
<p>Financial Update</p>	<p>Two residents are delinquent on their HOA dues and have not responded to the letters sent to them. BCM recommended that they be turned over to a collections agency. Paul motioned</p>

	<p>agreement with this action, seconded by Marie, and the motion was approved 3-0.</p> <p>The community continues to be in great financial shape. The 2023 proposed budget was reviewed. Due to the increase in costs over the years and the desire to maintain a surplus each year, BCM recommended increasing the annual dues by 10% (\$36). This is the first dues increase since the Covenants document was issued in 2014. Rich motioned to approve the budget and the dues increase, seconded by Paul, and the motion was approved 3-0.</p>
Neighborhood Watch Committee	There are no issues to report.
Communication Committee	The Board published updates to the community in June and July. We will continue to publish these when there is important information to share.
Events Committee	<p>Yard of Month presentation this summer has been inconsistent due to committee members being out of town. One meeting attendee suggested presenting it quarterly instead of monthly and the Board agreed to consider this idea.</p> <p>In years past the community has had a chili / rib cook off in late October or early November, but missed the last year or two. We agreed that this was a great activity and would reinstate it this year.</p> <p>The last few years we had a community Holiday golf cart parade in December followed by the kids meeting with Santa and Mrs. Claus at the pavilion. We plan to hold this event again this year.</p>
Preserve	<p>For several years some residents that live on the preserve have complained about dead trees and standing water in their backyard. Rich has been gathering data from them and early this year was ready to present it. In January he contacted the SJRWMD, but was told he needed to talk to the engineering company that designed the neighborhood. With help from BCM we were able to get one of their engineers to come out to look at the problem areas. Rich then requested a meeting with their management.</p> <p>The first meeting was on June 1. Rich shared the data he had collected and photos of the three worst locations: 1) the corner of Stony Ford and Cypress Trails, 2) the area between the ponds behind Stony Ford and Gray Wolf, and 3) the entire area enclosed by Aspen Leaf. To layout the neighborhood they first perform a topographical survey to find the ridge lines. The streets are put on the ridges to minimize the impact of drainage after construction. They shared that in 2015 design changes were made in area 2 to improve drainage, but there are several natural ridges that helped to retain water. They requested that Rich ask someone to look at the dead trees to determine if pine beetles could be part of the problem. Rich requested them to see if anything could be done to improve areas 1 and 3.</p> <p>On June 17 a representative from the Florida Department of Agriculture visited the neighborhood. Rich showed him all three areas. He did not see any evidence of pine beetle distress. He was able to determine that areas 1 and 3 were recovering.</p>

	<p>Different type trees were growing in area 1 and young pine trees were growing in the middle of area 3. These new trees will be tolerant to the new wetter environment.</p> <p>We held a follow-up meeting with the Engineering company on August 4. Review of the topographical maps revealed additional ridge lines that would explain why water was being retained in areas 1 and 3. Pine trees do a great job of pulling water from the ground and transferring it to the top of the tree where it evaporates into the atmosphere. Once these trees are removed to build the streets and our houses more water is going to accumulate in the remaining preserve area. Since areas 1 and 3 are recovering there are no changes that can be made to improve the current situation.</p> <p>One resident on Aspen Leaf had a backyard with a standing water issue as it was actually lower than the adjacent preserve. This should have been corrected by the builder, but was not. The resident requested to build up the backyard to the level of the preserve; this was approved. If anyone else has the same issue, please present it to the Architectural Review Committee so it can be corrected.</p> <p>If anyone would like to see the topographical maps or understand the issue in more depth, please see Rich.</p>
<p>Community Improvements: - JEA Easement Area – Butterfly Path</p>	<p>The Butterfly Path initial plant installation is complete. All of the trees and shrubs are doing well; one tree had to be replaced due to storm damage. Most of the flowers in the Butterfly Garden are doing well, however a few will need to be replaced this fall or next spring. The butterflies and bees have found where it is and taking advantage of the flowers. We could still use a volunteer to head up the Landscape Committee,</p>
<p>Lawn Care Committee</p>	<p>This committee was initiated due to a concern that the chemicals we use to treat our lawns could be affecting the health of our pets. On August 20 a meeting was held with a lawn care specialist to discuss this concern. Rich provided a brief summary of the meeting and the complete minutes from it are at the end of the Board meeting minutes.</p> <p>Major points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lawn care best practices are developed by the Florida Department of Agriculture working in conjunction with the University of Florida.</li> <li>• The Florida EPA has the most stringent lawn care requirements in the United States due to our soil type and the importance of the aquifer for our drinking water.</li> <li>• All local lawn care companies are licensed and heavily regulated by the Florida EPA.</li> <li>• Pesticides break down very quickly by the UV rays from the sun. They should be watered into the soil within a few hours and no later than 24 hours after application.</li> <li>• Lawn care companies are required to remove any granular material from sidewalks or street curbs. The residue will be washed into the storm drains and then to the retention ponds where it is harmful to the fish and can feed the algae.</li> <li>• All fertilizers are made from types of salts. If any residue is on a dog's paws they will lick it. Recommendation is to wipe</li> </ul>

	<p>or rinse your dog's paws after they have been outside.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no documented research that shows proper application of lawn care pesticides and herbicides leads to health issues in animals.</li> </ul>
<p>OPEN FORUM</p>	<p>The fountain by Cypress Park is not working due to the failure of an electrical component; the part is on order.</p> <p>Yard waste continues to be put out too early and in the street. It should be placed by the curb no earlier than Tuesday evening and on the resident's property. By putting it in the street it blocks traffic, restricts flow of rain water to the storm drain, and results in some debris being washed into the storm drain and retention pond which contributes to the algae problem.</p> <p>For the same reason grass clippings should not be left in the street or blown into the storm drain.</p> <p>Illegal parking of cars continues to be a problem. When on the street the car must be pointed in the direction of traffic and not across from another car such that it would prevent an emergency vehicle from passing through. When in the driveway the vehicle must not block the sidewalk.</p> <p>The sign at the front and the one at the entrance to Cypress Park often show signs of discoloration. This is most likely caused by the irrigation water. One meeting attendee suggested painting the background color a pale yellow instead of white to mask the discoloration. Another attendee volunteered to help adjust the irrigation nozzles so that they do not spray onto the signs.</p> <p>An attendee asked how they can reserve the pavilion. Since it is owned by the CDD you need to contact the Nocatee Business Center. There are three times slots per day the pavilion can be reserved: late morning, afternoon, and early evening. There is a fee of \$200 per reservation. The CDD will put up a sign indicating that it is reserved and clean the area prior to your use of it.</p> <p>An attendee asked how to get a sidewalk problem fixed. The streets and sidewalks are owned by the city so any issues with them should be reported by calling 630-CITY.</p> <p>An attendee noted that there was still an area on the sidewalk around the dog park that holds water after a heavy rain. This area previously had an irrigation nozzle problem that was reported to the CDD and corrected. Rich requested that any issues observed in Cypress Park be reported to him and he will contact the CDD landscape manager.</p>
<p>ADJOURNMENT</p>	<p>Meeting was adjourned at 10:43 am</p>

Florida Lawn Care Best Practices Meeting  
Cypress Park  
August 20, 2022

- Background
  - In September 2021 a Cypress Trails resident shared that her family recently had three dogs die prematurely; they were concerned that the lawn care chemicals used in the neighborhood had contributed to their deaths.
  - A few weeks later the HOA held a community meeting to discuss this concern and set up a committee to investigate.
  - At the February 2022 HOA Board meeting the committee reported on the status of their investigation.
  - A short time later another resident that was a long time dog owner and had a medical background did some research on the subject and provided a report to the committee.
  - This same resident asked the HOA if she could have a lawn care specialist come talk to the community on this subject and the HOA agreed.
- Florida lawn care companies
  - Presentation was by a representative from a major lawn care company with over 30 years of experience in the field.
  - Lawn care best practices are developed by the Florida Department of Agriculture working in conjunction with the University of Florida.
  - The Florida EPA has the most stringent lawn care requirements in the United States due to our soil type and the importance of the aquifer for our drinking water.
  - All local lawn care companies are licensed and heavily regulated by the Florida EPA.
  - Many lawn care chemicals that were previously used in Florida are no longer allowed due to an issue being found with them.
  - Lawn care companies, like all businesses, are in it to make money, but they do not make a profit from homeowner lawn care. It is in their best financial interest to apply the lowest recommended quantity of the expensive chemicals they utilize. Their profit comes from termite control.
- Lawn care best practices
  - Saint Augustine grass has few needs. Make sure it has enough water, but not too much. Do not cut it too short. Too much fertilizer will result in runoff into the retention ponds leading to algae blooms.
  - Pesticides break down very quickly by the UV rays from the sun. They should be watered into the soil within a few hours and no later than 24 hours after application.
  - Herbicides are absorbed into the weeds fairly quickly and can also be watered within a few hours after application.
  - Watering after a pesticide or herbicide application has no day or timing restrictions. Only a short run time (less than 15 minutes per zone) is needed.
  - Lawn care applicators are required to keep their spray nozzles close to the ground to minimize drifting and overspray. The risk of drifting increases when the humidity is low.

- Residents can obtain a Best Practices license from the Department of Agriculture / University of Florida. This will provide much useful advice for the homeowner.
- There are several natural products that homeowners can use to deter bugs:
  - Grits, wood ash, or diatomaceous earth can be spread around the perimeter of the house.
  - Coffee grounds spread around the perimeter of the house will deter ants.
  - Coffee grounds spread around Sego Palms will keep some bugs away from them.
- Precautions for a healthy environment
  - Lawn care companies are required to remove any granular material from sidewalks or street curbs. If you see any residue contact the company or homeowner. The residue will be washed into the storm drains and then to the retention ponds where it is harmful to the fish and can feed the algae.
  - Lawn care applicators are required to not apply their products within a few feet of retention ponds to reduce the risk of the material getting into the pond. This zone is called the realm of responsibility. If you observe that this zone is not being respected notify the responsible company.
  - All fertilizers are made from types of salts. If any residue is on a dog's paws they will lick it. Recommendation is to wipe or rinse your dog's paws after they have been outside.
  - There is no documented research that shows proper application of lawn care pesticides and herbicides leads to health issues in animals.
- Other useful information
  - Lawns are living organisms just like us. The micro nutrients that lawn care companies apply are very similar in composition to the multivitamins that we take.
  - Weeds can be killed by sprinkling baking soda on them.
  - Northeast Florida is known as a fungus haven due to the local air temperatures: not overly hot like southern Florida and rarely cold like the states further north.
  - If you observe bees on plants that are not blooming, there are most likely aphids on the leaves creating a sweet food source for the bees.
  - Aphids can be treated with a mixture of water and a little dish detergent.
  - Good landscaping calls for the right plant in the right place.
  - SiteOne Landscape Supply at 8618 Philips Highway is a good source for lawn care advice and products.
  - Epsom salt is a very good fertilizer.
  - The optimum pH range for the soil in our lawns is 6.5 to 6.7 (slightly acidic)