

Cypress Trails Homeowners Association, Inc.

Board Meeting | September 12, 2023 | 6:30 pm | Crosswater Hall

Meeting Minutes

Board Members

Rich Horvath / Paul Naranjo / Tom Roberts

CALL TO ORDER	Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm
ESTABLISH QUORUM	A quorum was established, all Board members were present.
HOMEOWNERS PRESENT	19 homeowners were represented in person.
PROOF OF NOTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of meeting in compliance: signs were put up at the entrance September 6. • In addition, 174 emails notifications sent and meeting notice was posted on Facebook.
APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES	Rich motioned to approve minutes from the February 15, 2023 Board meeting, seconded by Tom, 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. It is very rare that a request is denied. We sometimes ask for some clarification or a minor modification before approving. We will also meet with residents to review their proposed changes to help expedite the process.</p> <p>There appears to still be some confusion on requirements for removal or replacement of trees in your yard. We request that these be submitted for approval to make sure that the HOA guidelines and City statues are adhered to.</p> <p>A resident asked if trimming of a damaged tree required approval – answer was no, that is considered maintenance.</p> <p>We are in the process of updating the external paint color book. There will be no changes to the main body colors, but Sherwin-Williams is adding alternate trim and front door colors.</p> <p>A resident noted that the current allowance for any front door color to be used with any paint scheme is not helpful for homes with shutters as the front door and shutters are normally the same color. Rich agreed to look into this issue.</p> <p>The Covenants and Architectural Review Manual can be found on the HOA website – cypresstrailshoa.com.</p>
Nocatee HOA Officers Group	<p>This group had meetings in May and September; at the most recent meeting 14 of the 31 HOAs that are now members were represented. The major subjects discussed that affect residents are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 4th fireworks – Planning for the 2023 show was finalized with nine HOAs providing financial support. Show went very well, started on schedule and ran for 17 minutes. David Ray wants us to continue hosting the show and we plan to do so. • Several HOAs have had Sherwin-Williams update their exterior color paint book and are pleased with the results.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of HOAs report a problem with residents clearing a section of the preserve behind their lot; one shared that residents have actually also built sheds in the preserve. The SJRWMD takes this very seriously with a fine of up to \$10,000 possible. • An HOA in St. Johns hires an off-duty policeman a few hours a week for security. He has shared that homeless people are coming into Nocatee. Keep vigilant and lock your cars. • Several HOAs have found at turnover from the builders they have inadequate reserves and not enough income to cover their costs. This results in them having to immediately increase their dues, sometimes several years in a row. Fortunately, our builders did not put us in this situation.
Citizens Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC)	<p>Interesting things learned in the recent meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A representative from JEA gave us a presentation in April about their effort to incorporate solar electric power generation. Our group was not impressed with their progress. They are relying on others to build the solar farms so they can buy the power from them. • JFRD talked in June about restrictions on outdoor burning and the risk from Lithium-Ion batteries. Rich shared their battery handout on our Facebook page. • I have not met our new City Council member - Raul Arias - yet, but he was at the town hall meeting on August 14 in our District with our new mayor. The mayor and other attendees that talked about him were all very complimentary.
Financial Update	<p>The community continues to be in great financial shape; as of the end of August we are under budget and our member's equity exceeds \$51K. We had two higher than expected expenditures this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs to the fountain cost about \$4,100. The motor was replaced under warranty, but they also found that the main power cable was bad and had to be replaced. There are two years remaining on the motor warranty. • The cold weather we had last winter took out more plants in the Butterfly Garden than normal so the replacement cost plus the mulch was higher than planned – about \$1000 total. <p>Three homeowners have not yet paid their HOA dues. Rich made a motion to send their information to the same collection agency we used last year, seconded by Paul, and the motion was approved 3-0. A resident asked if we could set a deadline to initiate the collection process without taking a vote each year; answer was yes.</p> <p>The 2024 budget was reviewed; there were a few minor changes from the 2023 budget to account for inflationary increases: the dues remain the same. Rich made a motion to approve the budget, seconded by Tom, and the motion was approved 3-0.</p>
Neighborhood Watch Committee	<p>Joe Irek updated us on this committee. Four residents are currently on it, but they could use some more members. The task is to walk your assigned street at least a few times per week and look for anything unusual or out of place.</p>

	<p>Depending on the concern you could text Joe at (571) 213-7786 or call JSO.</p> <p>A resident asked what would be done to ensure no repeat of last year's Halloween teen activities. The CDD will be doing a better job of monitoring the cameras they set up at the pavilion and they have installed signs that now give JSO the authority to eject people from Cypress Park after hours. If a resident observes an issue on a street, they need to call JSO.</p> <p>The team is working to set up another community meeting with our JSO liaison officer. It will be some Saturday morning at the pavilion.</p>
<p>Communication Committee</p>	<p>After the Feb. Board meeting a resident - Tracy Gallo - contacted Rich and said she wanted to help with this committee. Rich gladly accepted her offer. She recommended we first distribute a survey. She prepared the survey and it was mailed out in the spring; 22 households returned the survey.</p> <p>Survey results: Most people were aware of or used the HOA website and Cypress Trails Facebook page. Only a quarter used Next Door. The majority wanted to receive neighborhood information by email. Two additional residents were interested in helping with the Communication Committee so we will work with them to make that happen. Other comments – Several just wanted to say thanks for what we do, one suggested a community directory.</p> <p>A community directory was put together by our first Board President. Rich took it over about five years ago, but the last update was Nov. 2020. It is located on the Cypress Trails Facebook page under files. If anyone would like to take over this task, please let Rich know. Lisa Kees volunteered to own the directory. Send your information to her at lisa.kees@outlook.com.</p>
<p>Events Committee</p>	<p>Chili cookoff – Tentative plan would be for November 5.</p> <p>Holiday golf cart parade and social – Need to get with Mr. and Mrs. Claus to see when they are available.</p> <p>Yard of the month (YOM) – This has gone very well this year. After the last meeting a resident volunteered to manage this effort; she enlisted three other residents and they have done a great job. Each winner receives a \$25 gift card to Home Depot and gets a picture of their front yard on the Facebook page.</p>
<p>Community Improvements: - JEA Easement Area – Butterfly Path</p>	<p>The Butterfly Path and Garden have looked very good this year. We are trying to control the weeds in the grassy areas and have sprayed them a number of times.</p>
<p>Yard Waste and Pond Algae</p>	<p>The two biggest complaints the Board receives are about people putting their yard waste out too early and excess algae in the ponds. These are somewhat related. When yard waste sits in the road for several days some of it will eventually go down the storm drains which helps to feed the algae. It is against state and county law to put any yard waste down the storm drain for this reason. Rich and others have witnessed residents blowing their grass / leaves into the storm drains.</p>

	<p>Please do not put your yard waste out too early and keep it out of the road.</p> <p>A resident noted that they have seen our landscape company cutting around the ponds so that the clippings go into the pond. This is prohibited by our contract with them; Matt will contact the company to get this corrected.</p>
<p>Clearing of the Preserve</p>	<p>About six residents were observed this year to have cleared a significant amount of the preserve behind their lot. All were sent letters that stated the following:</p> <p>The HOA is responsible for maintaining the preserve in its natural condition per a Conservation Easement issued by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD). This document states in part "... the following activities are expressly prohibited ... (iii) Removing or destroying trees, shrubs, or other vegetation."</p> <p>Per Florida Statute you are permitted to cut back any vegetation or tree limbs that grow over your property line, but only to the property line. This applies to the preserve as well as any vegetation from your neighbor's yards on either side. Because there is no neighbor in the preserve to maintain the property, the HOA has provided guidance that it is acceptable to remove weeds or invasive plants a foot or two into the preserve, but no more. Under no circumstances may a resident remove a live tree, saw palmetto, or other native vegetation.</p> <p>In the event that there is a dead tree in the preserve that risks damage to your property, the resident is to report it to the HOA. If the HOA concurs, they will request permission from the SJRWMD to have the tree cut down and if approved, will hire the appropriate personnel to do so.</p> <p>Please refrain from any further clearing of the preserve and allow it to regrow to its natural condition. At some point in the future the HOA reserves the right to access your lot to permit inspection of the preserve to ensure it is regrowing.</p> <p>We plan to send out letters to these residents to let them know we will be doing this inspection, probably in October.</p> <p>A resident asked how new residents are informed of restrictions on the preserve. All new homeowners are required to receive a copy of the Covenants and Architectural Review Manual prior to or at closing.</p>
<p>Yard Maintenance</p>	<p>Sidewalks need periodic power washing due to the algae buildup resulting from the Florida weather conditions.</p> <p>Keep those trees near the sidewalk trimmed so that walkers don't have to duck to avoid the branches hitting them in the head.</p> <p>Palm trees need to be trimmed once per year to remove the dead fronds. The trees are tall enough now that professional help is needed to perform this work. To help reduce cost Jennie Walter organized a company to come in to do as many interested homeowner's trees during one visit to the</p>

	neighborhood. About a dozen have signed up so far; if you wish to join, please contact Jennie.
Board Election in Feb.	At our next Board meeting in February there will be an election for new Board members. We need some new blood on the Board so please consider nominating yourself when the request is sent out in January.
OPEN FORUM	<p>Several residents raised a concern relative to the frequent parties at Cypress Park. The pavilion has been rented quite often during the weekends this summer. The gate to the pool is often kept open, chairs are put in the pool, people are playing with the handicap chair, and children are not supervised in the pool. The parties often last well beyond the reservation time. Residents can call the CDD Help line at (904) 903-1042 which is posted at the pavilion. Suggestion was made that the CDD should have someone present to make sure things do not get out of hand. Rich agreed to contact David Ray relative to this issue.</p> <p>Note: Rich contacted David Ray the day after the meeting. He was aware of the issues and agreed this was not acceptable. The CDD has put together a plan for next year to address the problem.</p> <p>A resident commented that the magnolia trees just outside the neighborhood entrance could use some trimming to improve visibility. This is CDD responsibility.</p> <p>A resident shared that the CDD landscapers do not do a good job of keeping the preserve trimmed on the back side of the path around the dog park. She notifies David Ray when work is needed in this area.</p> <p>A resident asked if the fining committee has been established. Rich responded yes; it is in place, but fortunately there has been no need for it to date.</p> <p>Another resident asked if white rock was now allowed. The answer is no; there is some rock that was approved as beige, but is a little lighter in color than expected.</p> <p>Someone raised the issue of the two non-compliant For Sale signs that were put up on Aspen Leaf this summer. Rich and Matt contacted the homeowners and the real estate companies to get them removed. Unfortunately, the process that we are required to follow is much slower than any of us would like.</p> <p>The same resident then brought up the question of political signs. They must be no larger than 3 feet by 4 feet, can not be put up until 10 days before the election, and must be removed the day after the election. If the sign does not have the typical "Vote for John Smith" message, but something very objectionable, we would determine how to deal with it at that time.</p>
ADJOURNMENT	Meeting was adjourned at 7:46 pm