

Woodland Creek – Annual Homeowner’s Meeting March 21, 2024

I. Call to Order and Financials

There were 44 homes represented.

Sara Heatherly called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm

Sara introduced herself, Amand Miller (HOA Manager), and Dawn Starnes (Lowder New Homes representative)

Sara introduced the 2023 minutes. Asked if there were any corrections/comments. There were none. Approval of 2023 minutes.

Sara introduced the 2023 budget, the 2023/2024 budget comparison and the 2024 budget. Asked for corrections/comments/questions.

- **Julie Livingston (9021 Black Cherry Trail)**

Why is there a deficit in 2023 budget? Are people not paying their HOA dues?

Sara: We projected 36 houses being sold in 2023 and were 4-5 short of that so that is part of the deficit. However, the major reason is that there are many people not current on their HOA dues. Explained that the HOA is trying to work with people to catch up (ie: setting up payment plans, etc.). Try not to get an attorney involved because attorney fees come out of the HOA budget if they go unpaid by the homeowner in deficit, and it can be expensive. Explained the process the HOA uses for delinquency; A homeowner is allowed delinquency for up to a year then a first delinquency letter is sent out. Then a follow up letter is sent if no resolution. If no resolution after second attempt, it is referred to a collection’s attorney. Also, the HOA has the ability to place a lien on the property until dues are paid preventing the homeowner from getting a loan, selling property, home equity, etc.

Follow up from Ms. Livingston:

The 2023 budget for utilities seems to be incorrect.

Sara’s answer: She will double check the numbers; seems to be an error in the document; there were no significant issues in 2023 regarding utilities.

Follow up note: (03/22/24) It was an error in the documentation. Sara has corrected the number error, and Amanda contacted to inform that the error was corrected.

Approval of the 2034 and 2024 budgets.

Sara discussed the HOA. Explained that it is responsible for maintenance of the neighborhood, as well as various projects. When WC was developed all amenities, maintenance and projects were subsidized by Lowder New Homes and billed to HOA. As the neighborhood is developed, HOA funds are used to “pay back” Lowder New Homes. That debt has been 100% paid back to Lowder New Homes (LNH) at this time. LNH is still the Board of the HOA and dues paid are held in an account and used responsibly to maintain and enhance the neighborhood.

A large expense in 2024 was the addition of a new playground in the green space in the last plat in the neighborhood.

Sara discussed some “big ticket” items that would need to be done in the neighborhood in the next few years highlighting the need for new deck boards on the bridge at a cost between \$125-\$150 thousand dollars (the deck is sturdy, structurally sound and is inspected professionally annually) and the draining and re-surfacing of the pool which would cost approximately \$50,000 (the pool is structurally sound, this would be for cosmetic purposes as well as regular wear and tear).

Sara turned the meeting over to Amanda Miller for a neighborhood report.

Amanda read the purpose of the HOA: *The purpose of the Association is to properly maintain the common areas in the community, manage insurance, contract services, utilities and other needed materials and services. The HOA is a partnership between the builder and the homeowners. The Board, Lowder New Homes at this time, is obligated to make ethical and legal decisions that best serve the entire neighborhood. An HOA is only concerned with what effects the entire subdivision, which helps maintain your individual home property value and your quality of living in the community. Fiduciary duty requires the board to ensure that the assessments you pay are used properly to maintain a neighborhood.*

Neighborhood projects that were completed in 2023 were the following:

1. 2 new HVAC units were installed in the Lodge
2. Refresh of 2 pod monuments
3. Various landscaping projects

Neighborhood projects that have been and/or will be completed in 2024 are the following:

1. Painted the interior of the Lodge
2. New carpet installed in the fitness center
3. 2 new TV's in the fitness center
4. New patio TV
5. Install new playground on island in Dakota; this was done because of the consistent feedback from Homeowners that a playground would be beneficial in the back of the neighborhood. There will be plenty of room left in the green space to add additional amenities if the neighborhood decides to do so in the future (ie: pickle ball courts, etc.).

II. **General Discussion**

- **John Wanschek (9132 Helena Drive)**

When will the final asphalt wearing surface be completed on his street?

Sara: The Town of Pike Road requires the developer to make any needed repairs before the final wearing surface is completed. Lowder is working on those needed repairs now

and when completed, we will submit to the town for the final surface to be laid. Projected a completion date of Summer/Fall, 2024.

- **Jan Sherlock (8929 Saw Tooth Loop)**

Wanted clarification on needed sidewalk repairs, who is responsible for repairs?

Sara: Saw Tooth Loop has already been turned over to the Town of Pike Road, so they are responsible for any needed repairs.

- **Erin Turnham (9930 Turtle River Road)**

Sidewalk repairs have been made but we are waiting for road repairs.

Sara: Explained the process of getting final wearing surface done and that once turned over the Town, they are responsible for any needed repairs.

- **Esteban Ramirez (9053 Black Cherry Trail)**

Will there be lighting at the new playground and on that island?

Sara: Additional lighting had not considered, but there probably needs to be light poles installed there. She believes there is accessible power and will investigate this suggestion.

- **Stephen Folker (9896 Bluestone Circle)**

When was the Lodge constructed?

Sara answered: The Lodge was completed in 2007-2008.

Follow up from Mr. Folker: Are there any big repairs/updates that need to be done at the Lodge in the near future?

Sara: Roof, structure, flooring, windows, and doors are in great shape; no needed repairs/updates are needed and don't foresee the need for any in the near future. The shingles are 30-year shingles.

Amanda: There were some roof repairs made in 2023 but it was the result of storm damage that caused a leak. The rest of the roof is structurally sound.

Sara: The Sales center moved out of the Lodge awhile back, and it is now being used by the Woodland Creek job superintendents, but once they finish building out the neighborhood it could be repurposed in any way the HOA chooses (ie: game room, etc.). Will be up to the neighborhood to determine how/if they do something with it.

- **David Livingston (9021 Black Cherry Trail)**

When will the emergency entrance be completed? On fire department board and it would be a great help to the fire department.

Sara: Looking into installing an inlet because of a drainage concern that she believes is being caused by the adjacent neighborhood. She is working on this with the other developer. She explained where the emergency entrance is located for those that were unaware (in Bluestone). Once the drainage issue is resolved, the work will be completed, and a gate will be placed there with a special lock box that only emergency services can access.

- **Dale Mapp (9497 Gunnison Drive)**

What is the process of turning over the HOA from Lowder to the Homeowner's?

Sara: Lowder (current HOA) is in the process of gathering names of volunteers who want to serve on the HOA board. At some point (either the next annual HOA meeting or through a special meeting) the names that were submitted will be presented to the homeowners and a vote will be taken to determine who will sit on the Board. The board will then create needed committees such as Architectural Review, Welcome and Events, for example. Lowder will be leaving the HOA in very good shape financially. Lowder will continue to be available for assistance for one year after turnover to ensure a smooth transition.

Follow up question from Mr. Mapp: What is the empty space at the entrance of WC zone for?

Sara: We do not own this property. Reggie DuBose owns the property. There are certain restrictions about what can be built in that space that are part of the agreement when Lowder purchased the property. Sara will get a copy of those restrictions and send them to Mr. Mapp. There will be an entrance or exit to whatever is put there off Lodge Drive, but the Town of Pike Road would determine where that entrance will be located. Explains our 30 ft. beautification easement at our entrance where our signs, trees, fence are located but do not own the other property to the left and the right.

- **Levi Cole (9150 Helena Drive)**

Will there be a vetting process for the people who are nominated for the HOA Board? Want to be sure they are good stewards/managers of the HOA monies.

Sara: There are basic requirements that must be met. Although we cannot discriminate, a resume will be required.

Amanda: She does not have a vetting process in place yet but does have a running list of people who are interested in being on the HOA board and various committees and will continue to add to that. If anyone is interested, please see her and she will tell you the responsibilities and add you to the list. In the end, the homeowners must vote on who is placed on the board.

- **John Wanschek (9132 Helena Drive)**

Can the HOA be run by a professional agency?

Sara: Yes, the new HOA board can hire a professional HOA company to run the HOA such as HOA Alabama, which is growing in the community. It is definitely an option to consider.

- **Abigail Walley (9809 Red Maple Lane)**

What can be done to homeowners that rent out their homes and don't maintain them?

Amanda: We are considering making an adjustment to the covenants, restrictions, and by-laws to address issues with short term rentals. It is not addressed in the original rules because we did not anticipate this being a problem. We are looking into this with an attorney. But for now, when there is a problem at a home being rented, the HOA reaches out to the renter or property manager first to try to resolve the violation and they are usually responsive but if they are not, she then reaches out to the homeowner because ultimately it is their responsibility. A lot of the time the renters are unaware of the HOA rules and regulations.

- **Betsy Guy (9382 Crescent Lodge Circle)**

Speed is a problem in the neighborhood. People drive like it's a racetrack. What can be done?

Amanda: We have done traffic and speed studies in the neighborhood. We have considered speed bumps, but it is hard to determine where they should be placed, and it is very expensive and time-consuming because we would have to partner with the Town of Pike Road. Unfortunately, the HOA is not responsible for traffic and speeding. Only law enforcement can do that. Speeding and distracted driving costs the HOA a lot of money each year. In 2023, Amanda had to have 5 light poles replaced in the neighborhood because they have been hit by homeowners at the expense of \$5,000 a piece. But, at the end of the day, the HOA cannot enforce speed.

Amanda Miller asked that more neighborhood residents step up to volunteer for the various events that the HOA plans for the neighborhood. She needs help at each of these events and if she doesn't get more volunteers, she will have to start limiting the events that the HOA can host.

Sara Heatherly asked if there were any more questions or concerns. There were none.

Sara and Amanda awarded door prizes.

Sara adjourned the meeting at 6:35 pm.