

Oak Creek Subdivision Homeowners Association
Minutes– January 13, 2025
Annual Meeting

Meeting called to order with Board (Bd) members Linda Grahovec (President), Randy Olson (Treasurer), and Ginger Thayer (Director) present. Tom Hytry (Secretary....in memory...) and Ted Ergo (Director) were absent. (7:06pm).

Linda forwent the reading of the minutes from the November 11th, 2024 meeting. Minutes were approved by Bd members Linda, Randy & Ginger.

Linda reviewed the agenda for the Annual Meeting (AM). She further reiterated how and where residents can find past meeting minutes. One resident spoke about the inability to connect with The Building Group (TBG). TBG provided their number ((312)-466-8100), and TBG representative Kim provided her extension (X909).

The Bd members each gave a brief introductory talk with Linda highlighting what the Bd had accomplished in the past year. She noted monthly communications, notable upswing in attendance for social events, attendance at the area/regional Storm Water Meeting, IDOT communications (IL 71 expansion project), the future construction of proposed new monuments at the Oak Creek subdivision entry (with enhanced lighting features), legal work on various matters, and launching a new Oak Creek website utilizing the Wix website building program which now needs constant updating. Linda also stated that the participation by residents in the various committees was up to 27% (from previous 10%). She further highlighted the current Bd's view regarding the role and responsibility for each committee, affording autonomy and independence with basic guidance and budgetary oversight only by the Bd. Teamwork and collaboration is emphasized.

Committee Reports

Architectural Committee (ARC): Luke Martin said there were only a handful of submissions to report. He touched on a denied fencing request with a resident that was handled through attorneys. There were two roofing submissions, one in-ground pool submission, and a dormer repair/replacement (not new construction) submission, all of which were approved. He also stated that there are documents/forms/FAQ's available online (<https://www.oakcreekyv-hoa.org>).

Clubhouse Committee: Jazel Aguirre reported that we had 15 clubhouse rentals with two pool rentals for the year. She said the fee to rent the clubhouse or pool went from \$50 to \$100 with Bd approval midway through the year, with the after event cleanup not covered by the fee. It is up to the renter(s) to provide cleanup and garbage removal. This is an "honor" system with deposit required to cover any additional cleaning services if they are deemed necessary to return the facility to its original condition. Suzanne Fayoumi is Jazel's back-up for rentals. Rental details are available on the website (www.oakcreekyv-hoa.org/clubhouse).

Pool: George and April Booras lead the pool committee. George reported on the successful pool resurfacing that was completed this year (2024). He emphasized his commitment to remain diligent to insure the pool stays within state mandates as well as keeping the Pool safe for the community.

Grounds Committee (GC): Gene Dunne reported that OCHOA employed Aberdeen Landscaping to cut the grass of the common areas and that the committee has been pleased with their work. He mentioned the removal of the bushes by the clubhouse entry walkway, adding mulch, the inspection of

playground equipment (new mulch needed to replenish bare spots and worn / high traffic areas), and the power washing of the tennis court. Gene cautioned that the tennis court surface cracks continue to spread and widen and a refurbishment strategy needs to be addressed and repair plan implemented within 2-4 years. He also reported the GC will investigate an alternative to McCloud Aquatics to explore other cost saving or beautification measures and assist the HOA with the maintenance of the pond for the 2025 season. Pond maintenance consists mainly of algae and invasive plant species control around the waters edge while monitoring and supporting the surrounding landscaping (native grasses, flowers, trees). The Committee also continues to manage and maintain the pond fountain and lighting installation (spring) and removal (late fall) each season. All of the aging and non-functional barbed wire fencing located to the south of the pond and adjacent to the walking path is in considerable disrepair and a potential hazard to pets, wildlife or residents exploring off the formal pathway. A large portion has been demolished and removed, to be completed in spring / summer 2025. Gene ended his report by stating that much of the physical labor associated with the committee's work is performed by a small, sweaty group of volunteers to keep costs down. We do need to be mindful that these volunteers are not a long term solution to cost cutting.

Social Committee: Ginger Thayer gave an overview of the social events of the past year including a bread making class, an Easter Egg hunt, Summer Bash, Halloween party, Wine Pairing class and Dinner, and Soup & Chili cook-off were all well attended, and many residents voiced a desire to have more events. A neighborhood progressive dinner was mentioned for future consideration. Some events are supplemented by social group budget from the HOA and as agreed by the Bd while others are funded entirely by individual homeowner participants. Any ideas for future events are welcome as well as volunteers to assist with planning and execution would be greatly appreciated.

Linda stated we have three candidates for three open seats on the Bd. She briefly explained the voting process as described in the By-Laws and further explained TBG would handle the election process. The TBG attendee(s) confirmed that we met the minimum 40% quorum needed to hold a valid and binding election of Bd officers (Quorum validated by the resident sign-in sheets provided at the start of the meeting.). Some attendees raised questions and concerns about the Bd member election process including the lack of an apparent ballot to allow for write-in candidates. The By-Laws (and in conjunction with past practice) describe the process used by OCHOA including the submittal of candidates and their qualifications prior to the meeting date to allow residents to become familiar with the candidates. Linda explained a formal ballot was not needed considering three applicants for three positions which was also verified by The Building Group; a majority vote (only) of residents in attendance is required. The Bd approved the slate of candidates and then a show of hands from the quorum of residents present indicated the slate of candidates were approved, with one dissent. The Bd acknowledges that many residents may not be familiar with the Bd candidate and election process (especially newer residents and those who do not regularly attend monthly or annual meetings); the Bd will endeavor to communicate the procedure with more advance notification and description in advance of next year's AM.

New Bd members adjourned to a short executive session for election of the officers, namely, President, Treasurer and Secretary. The new Bd returned (8:05pm) to the open meeting and introduced the new Bd:

President – Linda Grahovec
Treasurer - Randy Olson
Secretary – John Baer
Director– Ginger Thayer
Director– Luke Martin

New Business – Proposed Budget/Monthly Assessment adjustment

The Assessment Committee initially proposed an increase to the monthly assessment from the existing \$105/month to \$175/month. The Bd explained that the increase was needed to fund the operating and administrative costs as identified in the proposed 2025 budget, with a primary focus of gradually replenishing the Reserve Fund that was depleted due to the pool resurfacing project. Many residents voiced their concern with the magnitude of the increase, perceived lack of transparency of the budget development process and timeliness of the presented proposed budget. The Bd explained the budget information was prepared with support of each of the committees and issued to residents in an “Annual Meeting Packet” mailed (USPS) 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting to each resident and non-resident homeowner along with Candidate form, Committee form, Agenda, Proxy form and Proposed Budget. There was a subsequent communication sent on January 3rd to the email of record of each resident and non-resident. The email communication also included the information from homeowners that submitted Board Candidate Forms by the due date of December 31st, thus providing notice of 3 Candidates for 3 open positions and another reminder of the Annual Meeting and the Agenda.

It was further emphasized that the budget as presented was a proposal only and that no vote would be taken at the Annual Meeting to approve said budget. The vote at this AM was to establish the monthly assessment amount, only.

Randy explained the last assessment increase was agreed by the residents back in 2017. At that time, the Bd initially proposed a \$55 increase (from \$85 to \$140/mo). At that time, the proposed \$55 increase was rejected. The residents settled on a \$20 increase (from \$85 to the current \$105). The OC community has enjoyed seven years with no assessment increase during that time with the help of resident volunteers. Increasing annual costs, high labor costs and recent rates of inflation requires that revenue needs to be increased to cover minimal (current) operating costs. Randy, as treasurer, is concerned that a vote to reject any increase will leave the HOA open to the use of “special assessments” which is undesirable by the Bd, inefficient and time consuming if implemented. The main responsibility of the Bd is to protect our significant financial investments/home values and this is achieved by maintaining our financial health and responsibility and by protecting what makes the Oak Creek community so special and appealing.

Notwithstanding the apparent consensus among homeowners that the initial proposed budget and related assessment increase to \$175/mo would not be acceptable to the attending quorum (no formal vote taken), Randy presented a motion to increase the assessment to \$150/mo, seconded by Suzanne Fayoumi. A vote was taken and this motion was rejected (a majority vote (only) of attending residents is required).

After some comments by a long term resident and the opinion that some increase was warranted, Randy presented a second motion to increase the monthly assessment to \$120/mo, seconded by John Baer. A vote was taken and it was passed by a majority of the attending quorum.

Linda explained the assessment increase from \$105/mo to \$120/mo would not go into effect until the March monthly assessment is due. The Board will provide a final Budget within 60 days of this Annual Meeting (per the By-Laws) that will need to balance at the assessment level approved.

Linda thanked everyone for their attendance and look forward to a great 2025!

Meeting adjourned – 9:08pm. Minutes will be approved by Board and entered of record at the next open meeting.