

MINUTES OF MEETING
RIDGEWOOD TRAILS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Ridgewood Trails Community Development District was held Wednesday, July 6, 2022 at 6:06 p.m. at the Azalea Ridge Amenity Center, 1667 Azalea Ridge Boulevard, Middleburg, Florida.

Present and constituting a quorum were:

Marty Genska	Chairman
Jacqui Proctor Miller	Vice Chairperson
Yolanda Nolte	Supervisor
William Barnhouse	Supervisor

Also present were:

Marilee Giles	District Manager
Katie Buchanan	District Counsel by telephone
Melissa Brown	Amenity Manager
Jay Soriano	GMS
Several Residents	

The following is a summary of the actions taken at the July 6, 2022 meeting.

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS

Roll Call

Ms. Giles called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. and called the roll.

SECOND ORDER OF BUSINESS

Public Comments

Ms. Morgan stated D.R. Horton told us that we had no CDD fees.

Mr. Soriano stated the bond fee was paid by D.R. Horton for many of you, but your O&M portion is paid by all the owners and that goes up over time. If you were told there were no bond fees, that didn't come from us but was a bad marketing statement.

Several owners in the Freedom section were present with the same concern, they were told there were no CDD fees.

Ms. Giles explained that this particular issue was discussed at length a few months ago and that a member of their HOA had the information of how Freedom can hire a lawyer and start the

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process to break away from the CDD. It will be a legal matter that the Freedom section would have to hire and pay a lawyer to handle.

Ms. Schroeder stated I am the secretary of the HOA for Freedom and Azalea Ridge. We have tried as board members to explain this to everybody over and over again, we understand that Freedom and Azalea Ridge were part of the CDD but because we are a gated community, because we pay for everything we do in our community we are trying to look at separating ourselves. We need to listen to what they say, but that piece of paper that everybody got when they bought their house basically says you have maintenance fees.

A resident asked what is taking so long to repair the pergola?

Mr. Soriano responded the boards were on order for quite some time, but it has been delivered.

A resident stated a lot of families like to enjoy the pool and the slide and it doesn't make sense to only lifeguards when the slide is open.

Mr. Soriano stated people are the most expensive item in the budget. Lifeguards are not cheap and the budget was based on their hours, but if you increase it to have them here every day, that is a lot more money.

Mr. Peterson asked can the residents propose things to be in this budget?

Mr. Soriano stated you would have to coordinate with your HOA but there is that ability.

Mr. Butler asked can we make the CDD fees equal across the board?

Mr. Genska stated it is based on the front footage of your property.

Ms. Butler stated everyone should be level and pay the same price? I don't have a bond.

Ms. Giles stated call me or see me afterwards, because if you don't have a bond, you should only have the O&M fee. My contact information is on the website.

Ms. Gamble stated I understand the HOA is elected by the community but who hires GMS? Who do they work for?

Ms. Giles stated this board.

Mr. Soriano stated the board votes on all the subcontractors, whether it is an electrician, landscapers, legal group, engineer, they finalize everything. Your five elected officials who are residents here do that.

A resident stated when you discuss the budget and get to security, can you elaborate? We have had many issues with vandalism.

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Ms. Giles stated we have Clay County Sheriff's officers that patrol the area, we see the reports and we can discuss security in general but not specifics.

Mr. Davila stated I have looked into GMS website and it is lacking. The budget that was supposed to be submitted to the community 14 days prior to this meeting was never submitted properly. We do not have a signed, approved budget that was on the website so I don't know how we are going to have a vote. I would love to speak directly to the board. I would love the board to think about putting out a bid to remove this management company and get a new one. We did that with the HOA and it is better now with the new lady and with the involvement we have with the HOA.

A resident asked is there an annual cap on how much the CDD fees can increase each year?

Mr. Soriano stated there is no cap, but you vote for the board members and the board members make the decision on what is needed in the budget and they vote on it.

Ms. Herman stated the issue I have is the 41% increase in fees. Since we moved in was the additional playground but the majority of my neighborhood wasn't even moved in.

Mr. Genska stated as we go through the budget we will talk about every one item.

Ms. Jacobs asked is this a kneejerk reaction for the increase because of inflation currently?

Mr. Genska stated no.

A resident stated we had an incident in the pool and called law enforcement and the lash back we got was they weren't breaking any laws. What are the rules of the pool?

Mr. Soriano stated this is a different concern that I deal with in lots of neighborhoods and they aren't going to do anything if they don't think it was something malicious. I have problems with that because they should be trespassed and if they do that multiple times they should be arrested. All we can do is call them. Our off-duty officers are much quicker about that, but they are here a limited amount of time here.

Ms. Giles stated this board has been very lenient but if someone violates the rules whether it is jumping the fence or whatever it is we can send suspension letters to the resident. Recently our cameras did catch who did the vandalism and we worked through the Clay County Sheriff's Office. If you see an incident please report it, we will take a sworn statement and send a suspension letter. If you don't know who did it, it is hard to send a suspension letter to an unknown person. If someone is breaking the rules give it to Melissa or send an email.

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Mr. Genska stated we will have someone from CCSO at our next meeting to address the issues everyone has brought up tonight.

THIRD ORDER OF BUSINESS

Affidavit of Publication

A copy of the affidavit of publication of the public hearing was included in the agenda package.

Item four taken later in the agenda.

FIFTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Acceptance of Fiscal Year 2021 Draft Audit Report

Ms. Giles stated there were no findings or recommendations in the current year or prior year and it is a clean audit.

On MOTION by Mr. Genska seconded by Ms. Miller with all in favor the fiscal year 2021 draft audit report was accepted.

SIXTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Public Hearing Adopting the Budget for Fiscal Year 2023

Ms. Giles gave an overview of the three funds, the general fund that is the operating fund, the debt service funds with the interest and principal payment on the bonds, and the capital reserve fund that is the fund set aside for repair and replacement of capital assets and stated using the capital reserve study as a guide we will set aside \$35,525 in fiscal year 2023. This is where you funded the gym equipment and if you choose to fund the playground that is where the money will come from.

On the next page are columns across the top, the actual as of May 31st, projected for the next four months and total projected through September and the last column is the approved budget for fiscal year 2023. The board approved the budget in May and it was posted to the website. In fiscal year 2022 there was \$112,000 in carry forward surplus and projected through September is \$104,000. In 2022 you were able to use the carry forward surplus to balance your budget and not raise assessments. This year you don't have as much money in the carry forward surplus and that will be used to pay the first four months of expenses until the taxes are received from the county.

There is a slight increase of \$2,000 in the total administrative fees. The next section is the amenity center and this is where we see an increase. Insurance had a significant increase, we added

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a facility assistant, lifeguards was increased by \$1,000, pool maintenance went up \$4,000, pool chemicals stayed the same, water/sewer stayed the same. There are two security lines, one is Clay County Sheriff's Office that went up by \$3,000, landscaping went up and landscape contingencies went up.

Ms. Giles reviewed each line item and stated the overall increase in assessments are due to rising cost of services, labor costs, fuel costs and inflation is at a 40-year high. Out of your 691 residents we received 46 objection letters from residents. 42 of those letters were from residents in Freedom and the rest are from Azalea Ridge residents. Most of the letters from Freedom were templated letters, a couple were written from residents with something other than the template. Most all the letters objected to an increase in assessments.

On MOTION by Mr. Genska seconded by Ms. Miller with all in favor the public hearing was opened.

Mr. Genska stated we are going through each item but there are certain items that cannot be decreased.

Mr. Soriano stated you have to put money aside to build the capital reserve which you haven't done in the past, but we are now putting money in the capital reserve. We had a study prepared of how much money should go into the capital reserve each year to take care of existing assets and to put in new assets such as a new playground. Last fiscal year was the first time we put money in that capital reserve and we plan to put in \$35,000 this year. Last year you didn't have an increase because we had carry forward surplus we had been building up year over year but we don't have that surplus this year. What we have been hearing lately is people want more landscaping and a new playground.

There were a number of comments, questions and objections raised by the residents in attendance to an increase in the line items.

Mr. Genska stated we can remove \$5,000 from special events because the HOA may fund special events. If we don't want to do the additional lighting we can cut \$10,000 and get rid of that.

Mr. Soriano stated we planned on three lights but you may be able to get four out of that \$10,000.

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Mr. Genska stated I would like to take \$5,000 out of landscape contingency. I want to take a total of \$20,000 out of the proposed budget.

Ms. Miller stated I don't want to go another year with that dark spot even if we have one or two lights it would help. It is too dark there and we need at least one light. From the lake it is too dark.

Ms. Giles stated if you agree to reduce that line by \$10,000 that is something we can pay for out of capital reserves. Remember, the capital reserves is your savings account.

It was the consensus of the board to use \$10,000 from capital reserves to fund the lights rather than have a new line item.

Ms. Nolte stated I agree to reduce the special events by \$5,000, reduce the landscape contingency. Can we get new bids on the ponds?

Mr. Soriano stated their contract is up this year and we will put that out to bid but it won't affect the budget because you don't know that you will find anybody cheaper.

Ms. Giles stated if we contract for a lower amount that excess will go into carry forward surplus, which is why the carry forward surplus was so healthy in the past.

Ms. Nolte stated I would like to put the playground on hold until the economy gets better.

Ms. Giles stated on the capital reserve page is the playground under capital outlay. The \$60,000 for the playground equipment did not increase your assessments for FY23. This is \$60,000 you are thinking you might want to spend on a project. Not using it doesn't hurt anything but remember this capital reserve is where we pay for new gym equipment.

The reduction in special events, lighting, landscape contingency, will be a net decrease of \$20,000. Those changes for a 50-foot lot reduces the increase from \$269 to \$241 instead of a 45% increase it will be a 40% increase. That total amount was \$875 and is now \$846. The 60-foot lot took it down to \$292 increase it was \$326, it was \$1,060 and is now \$1,025.

Mr. Genska stated the residents can now make their comments.

The following comments, questions, opinions and objections were made: amenity manager \$60,000 per year with a \$3,600 increase is absurd, twice the industry standard, if she gets an assistant why does she get a raise, questions about hours worked and if there is a problem contact CCSO, a lot of vandalism happens when the amenity manager is not present therefore the need for the addition of a facility assistant, how to handle trespassing into Freedom, breakdown of special events, breakdown of salaries, benefits, health insurance, the new assistant should be lifeguard

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trained, why did I have to write a letter and mail it rather than email, how are vendors contracted and who approves the vendors, how are they vetted, is the board reminded when the contract is coming up for renewal, the entranceway grass is dead, many negative comments about Tree Amigos, has the board considered a smaller landscape maintenance company, why increase the budget for landscaping if you are going out to bid, charge for special events, ability to set hours for CCSO, explanation of rental revenue, consider raising rental rates, concerned about increase in assessments being on fixed income, lake maintenance does not include Freedom, are the lakes interconnected with Freedom, district is paying for Comcast but who needs Wifi, why raise assessments when you project carry over surplus, it is not surplus but funds used to fund the first quarter expenses, rename carry forward surplus so as not to be misunderstood, surplus was used to offset budget so as not to have an increase last year, projected supervisors' fees are for 12 meetings, proposed to reduce board salaries to \$50 per meeting, no one qualified with the supervisor of elections to run for the board, reduce supervisor fees to cover eight meetings per year rather than 12 meetings, incremental increases rather than large increase, reduce engineering by \$2,000, purpose of trustee fees and why residents who have no bonds pay the fee, unhappy with CCSO response and suggested deleting the line item, why pay CCSO extra to patrol streets when we pay taxes, discussed security system in general terms, management fees, ATV issues and dirt bike issues in the community, invite CCSO to the next meeting, a resident spoke in support of the additional person at the amenity center, reduce the amount paid to CCSO and get private security, cost/benefit of CCSO and cost/benefit of private security, suggested marked cars for CCSO rather than unmarked vehicles, remove CCSO contract someone spoke in support of CCSO.

Ms. Giles stated if we reduce other current charges under administrative by \$500 and it will be \$1,000, reduce supervisors' fees by \$4,000, reduce engineer by \$2,000 it will be down to a 38% increase for the 50-foot and 60-foot lots, increase for 50-foot lot is \$232 for a total of \$837 per year and the 60-foot lot it is \$281 increase for a total of \$1,014 per year.

If we reduce the amount for the additional facility assistant from \$8,436 to \$5,000 the increase is 37% for a 50-foot lot it is \$226 increase for a total of \$832 and for the 60-foot lots it is \$274 for a total of \$1,007. The increase will go from 45% to 37%.

If we take security at \$22,650 out takes the increase down to 32% for a 50-foot lot the increase is about \$193 for a total of \$799 for a 60-foot lot the increase is \$235 for a total assessment of \$969.

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On MOTION by Mr. Genska seconded by Ms. Miller with all in favor the public hearing was closed.

A. Consideration of Resolution 2022-06 Relating to the Annual Appropriations and Adopting the Budget for Fiscal Year 2023

Ms. Giles stated item A is consideration of Resolution 2022-06 relating to the annual appropriations and adopting the budget for fiscal year 2023 as amended.

On MOTION by Mr. Genska seconded by Ms. Miller with all in favor Resolution 2022-06 adopting the fiscal year 2023 budget as amended was approved.

B. Consideration of Resolution 2022-07 Imposing Special Assessments and Certifying an Assessment Roll for Fiscal Year 2023

Ms. Giles stated item B is consideration of Resolution 2022-07 imposing special assessments and certifying an assessment roll for fiscal year 2023. This resolution allows the county to place the assessments on the tax rolls and to be collected on the annual property tax bill.

On MOTION by Ms. Miller seconded by Ms. Nolte with all in favor Resolution 2022-07 was approved.

SEVENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Consideration of Updated Proposal from Vector for Access Control

This item tabled.

EIGHTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Staff Reports

A. Attorney

There being none, the next item followed.

B. Engineer – Ratification of Stormwater Needs Analysis Report (due June 30, 2022)

Ms. Giles stated this is an item that Katie and I can answer any questions you may have. It is the report for your stormwater needs analysis that your engineering company provided in accordance with the new state guidelines. It was submitted by the June 30th deadline.

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On MOTION by Mr. Genska seconded by Mr. Barnhouse with all in favor the stormwater needs analysis report was ratified.

C. Manager – Discussion of Fiscal Year 2023 Meeting Schedule

Ms. Giles stated under my report is the fiscal year 2023 meeting schedule. Your July meeting is July 5th, which is the day after a holiday. It is up to the board, we can leave it as is for now on the schedule and cancel or reschedule it later.

On MOTION by Mr. Genska seconded by Mr. Barnhouse with all in favor the fiscal year 2023 meeting schedule was approved.

D. Operation Manager’s Report –Report

E. Amenity Manager

Ms. Brown gave an overview of the amenity report, discussed a proposed event at the pool for teens in conjunction with the HOA from 6 – 9 p.m. on a Friday in August.

The board directed staff to put the landscape maintenance contract out to bid, and to schedule a workshop in September.

NINTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Supervisor’s Requests and Public Comments

A resident stated a conversation earlier that went around, when we do our things in the middle of the field we have people from our group that sell things or do stuff like that. It is our community so I don’t understand if we were doing it at a fairground you would charge a fee but we are trying to promote a community atmosphere.

Mr. Genska stated I don’t think we want to charge for that. It is bringing the community together.

A resident stated I don’t know the legality between liability insurance and what have you but there are plenty of people that are CPR certified may not be lifeguard certified with the county but can be a volunteer. 4th of July weekend we couldn’t have the slide open for the kids because we didn’t have lifeguards yet there are plenty of people who live in this community that can render that type of aid and it is legal to do that.

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Mr. Soriano stated if we have people in the neighborhood that can help out and get certified and be back up in cases like that, you can't volunteer, I have to pay you and if you want to give the money back to the community that is okay. I do have a lot of neighborhoods where there are adults from that neighborhood that do work as lifeguards. If you are not certified we have an instructor and can give those classes.

TENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Approval of Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the May 4, 2022 Meeting**
- B. Balance Sheet & Income Statement**
- C. Assessment Receipt Schedule**
- D. Approval of Check Register**

On MOTION by Mr. Genska seconded by Mr. Barnhouse with all in favor the consent agenda items were approved.

FOURTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Organizational Matters

- A. Acceptance of Resignation from Supervisor Barnes**

On MOTION by Ms. Miller seconded by Mr. Genska with all in favor Supervisor Barnes resignation was accepted.

- B. Appointment of New Supervisors to Fill Expired Term of Office (11/2024)**

Ms. Giles stated we received resumes from four residents that were included in your agenda package from Dudley Lee, Dennis Shroyer, Carl Young and John Vitellaro. You have had time to review those resumes and if you want to ask those gentlemen a question you can do that.

Ms. Miller asked Mr. Shroyer are you on the Freedom HOA board?

Mr. Schroyer stated no.

Mr. Genska stated I would like to see someone from Freedom on the board.

On MOTION by Ms. Miller seconded by Ms. Nolte with all in favor Dennis Schroyer was appointed to fill the unexpired term of office that expires in November 2024.

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C. Oath of Office for Newly Elected Supervisors and Appointed Supervisor

Ms. Giles being a notary public of the State of Florida administered the oath of office to Mr. Schroyer.

Ms. Giles stated if you will stay after the meeting I will go over the paperwork you will need to fill out. You are now a government official and are subject to the sunshine law which means if any business is to be discussed about Ridgewood Trails CDD you can talk to anyone but you may only speak to the other supervisors in a publicly noticed meeting such as this one. You are also subject to Florida's public records law meaning any document you may acquire or generate pertaining to the district is subject to a public records request. We ask that any document to include electronic communication that you keep them segregated in the event a request is made. GMS stores and archives all the district's records in the event there is a request we typically can handle those for you. The first thing you should do if you receive a public records request is contact myself or Katie Buchanan, our district counsel. In the packet we have provided you with a new supervisor's packet to make the transition a smooth one, the packet includes questions and answers about district business, Chapter 190, Florida Statutes, which includes everything under the umbrella for CDDs, ethics and sunshine law.

Ms. Buchanan stated should you have any questions I am happy to set up a call and we can go over the package in more detail.

D. Election of Officers, Resolution 2022-05

On MOTION by Mr. Genska seconded by Mr. Barnhouse with all in favor Resolution 2022-05 was approved reflecting the following officers: Marty Genska chairman, Jacquie Proctor Miller vice chairman, Marilee Giles and Treasurer, James Oliver, Daniel Laughlin, Darrin Mossing assistant treasurers, James Oliver, Daniel Laughlin, Darrin Mossing, Yolanda Nolte, William Barnhouse and Dennis Schroyer assistant secretaries.

ELEVENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Next Meeting Scheduled for Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Azalea Ridge Amenity Center, 1667 Azalea Ridge Boulevard, Middleburg, Florida

Ms. Giles stated the next meeting will be September 7, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the same location unless we need a workshop on the landscape maintenance item.

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On MOTION by Ms. Miller seconded by Mr. Barnhouse with all in favor the meeting adjourned at 11:03 p.m.

DocuSigned by:

Marilee Giles

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Secretary/Assistant Secretary

DocuSigned by:

Marty Genska

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Chairman/Vice Chairman