

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, May 3, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Azalea Ridge Amenity Center, 1667 Azalea Ridge Boulevard, Middleburg, Florida.

Present and constituting a quorum were:

Jacqui Proctor Miller	Vice Chairperson
William Barnhouse	Supervisor
Dennis Schroyer	Supervisor
Michael Weatherbee	Supervisor

Also present were:

Marilee Giles	District Manager
Wes Haber	District Counsel by telephone
Jay Soriano	GMS
Tara Lee	RMS
Rodney Hicks	Brightview
Several Residents	

The following is a summary of the actions taken at the May 3, 2023 meeting.

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS

Roll Call

Ms. Giles called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and called the roll.

SECOND ORDER OF BUSINESS

Public Comments

A resident stated I was told the rates were not yet approved and a 400% increase is too much.

Ms. Giles stated the rates were approved at the last meeting and what is being discussed tonight are the time periods proposed at the last meeting of 9-1, 2-6 and 7-11 and the corresponding rates. They approved the rental rate for the building which is between \$75 and \$150. The building and the small pool is between \$150 and \$250. What determines that is whether it is prime time. A proposal was made for three different sets of hours and that is what is being discussed tonight.

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A resident stated if you break something into three different shifts as opposed to two, you have to literally have somebody scheduled to be here to check the first group in and out to make sure there are no issues, check the second group in and check them out then check the third one in and then check them out so everybody can get their deposit back and make sure no damage was done and make it run efficiently. If that is the route you go that is pretty much a fulltime job to be here and make sure it is running exactly as it should. We have voted in a weekend person to be here to run things, however, three is excessive, two is a lot more reasonable.

Ms. Giles stated that is an agenda item 3A after public comments. You can discuss it now or wait.

Ms. Miller stated we should wait until that point.

A resident stated I want to approach the board about events in July.

Mr. Soriano stated that is HOA and CDD combined events. We were going to talk about that later.

Ms. Cole asked why were rates raised, not raised at a feasible rate over the course of the years, where is the reserve fund and where is the proof of expenditures and why it is gone. Why are we not staying in budget as far as the attorney's fees are concerned? There is a significant usage versus what was budgeted.

Ms. Giles stated that is all part of the budget discussion. I can answer these now if you like?

Ms. Cole stated after a 34% increase last year we are seeing a 14% increase this year. Where is the money going and why do we have another significant increase? Attorney's fees, we were budgeted for \$12,000 and total projected for just this year is \$25,000, that is a \$13,500 increase.

Ms. Giles stated I will remind everyone that over this last year there was a boundary amendment presented from the Freedom section.

Ms. Cole stated then they should cover that.

Ms. Giles stated it did cost the CDD as a whole to go through that boundary amendment process. It was a request of 132 residents in the Freedom section and district counsel represents all the residents in the district. Whether you have a 30 minute meeting or five hour meeting we pay the hourly rate for the district engineer and district counsel. Jay and I reach out to the district

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engineer and say we don't see anything on the agenda for the engineer and we ask him not to attend. District counsel will be at the meetings.

A resident stated anybody could file any kind of lawsuit and we would pay our counsel.

Mr. Haber stated it depends on the particular type of legal issue the district is dealing with. Generally speaking lawsuits against the CDD particularly if the lawsuit is based on negligence if somebody slips and falls on CDD owned property or if somebody is injured and the property has been damaged by virtue of something the CDD did, the district has general liability insurance and typically those types of claims are covered and the insurance company will hire counsel and that would not be paid for by the CDD out of the general counsel line item. To the extent there are issues that are legal in nature but aren't covered by insurance generally we attend meetings, we prepare agreements, we prepare resolutions. The boundary amendment issues the district has been dealing with are legal in nature that they directly impact the CDD. It is a claim the board has no control over, but because it is a claim that is being made potentially against the CDD but certainly involving the CDD is something the CDD needs to address and legal was involved. I will note that all of our invoices are descriptive as far as the work that is done by whomever in our office. I'm happy to answer any questions about time that has been spent and paid for. The line item for the legal fees is an estimate. I would say more often than not in my experience legal fees come in under the budgeted expense, but you never know what is going to come up. This year it did go above because there were more legal intensive issues that have come before the board.

Ms. Giles stated these budget lines are proposed. The attorney is on there for \$20,000 and if nothing else comes up and we don't use that, that money stays with the district. In 2023 we budgeted \$12,000 and through March we have already spent \$10,000. The last contact we had from Freedom was when I called each of the supervisors with that question. Since then as far as I know Freedom has not further pursued it. I don't know if Freedom is going to pursue this any longer, we raised it to \$20,000 anticipating that it could continue.

A resident stated to make sure I understand there is no oversight so if Freedom decides to try this again, we are going to pay again. Every time they try we are going to fix the budget.

Ms. Giles stated I'm sure there is a due diligence and a process that Katie would use to not entertain this happening every other year.

Mr. Haber stated I'm not sure of the exact question that was asked but if the question is if every time the issue is raised is there going to be legal expense, there is probably some amount of

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money that was spent for Katie to learn about the issue to familiarize herself and every time it comes up she will already know that. I don't anticipate that would be the same amount of time spent and money spent every time it comes up. If it does get pursued and something is filed with the county because nobody wants to amend the district's boundary then this board will have to decide to what extent they want to agree to that, oppose that, without input we would try to provide you guidance on the impact of whether that happened or not. I think there has been a learning curve and my guess is if it keeps coming up and Katie knows how to deal with it if it goes further then there may be additional expenses to address what the board may want to do.

Ms. Giles stated one of your questions was the carry over, what has happened over the years. I can't answer that on the spot, what was done for every budget since 2005, but I can research that and let you know every year how we mitigated or the amount of increase. In 2021 or 2022 when I first started with this district you did not have an increase and you did use the carry forward to not have an increase. Those funds are no longer available because over the years you have used those funds to keep the assessments flat.

A resident asked what happens if a hurricane comes through and wipes out this building?

Ms. Giles stated we have insurance.

A resident stated the insurance will only cover so much and will they reinsure us or does the HOAs, use their reserves to fix things should you not be able to because there is no money in the reserves. There has to be a backup plan. With the amount of money you are collecting in a year's time from everybody who lives in this community we paid in a little over half a million dollars. For there not to be any savings is very concerning.

Ms. Giles stated you do have reserves you do have savings. The reserves and carry over are two different things. The reserve account as of March 31st is \$179,633 and is on agenda page 55. Two different things, the reserves are based off the reserve study and that is an independent company that comes in and looks at all the district's assets and anticipates future repair or replacement of the district's assets. The intent of the reserves is to repair or replace those items on the reserve study. That is on the CDD website and it is forecasted out for 30 years.

A resident asked how much of the budget goes into the reserves?

Ms. Giles stated that is on here too, for this year \$35,000.

Mr. Soriano stated that was new last year, you didn't have a line for a reserve transfer in. There were no reserves.

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A resident stated there are two palms at the entrance of Azalea Ridge off of Blanding Boulevard that look dead and I want to know if anything is going to be done about them.

Mr. Hicks stated you can't trim the queen palms in January, February, March because the freeze will damage them. That is why we have it scheduled towards the end of April into May. You need those fronds to stay there to keep it alive. If we cut it off it would cause the palm to die.

THIRD ORDER OF BUSINESS

Open Items

A. Consideration of Revised Amenity Rules & Policies – Rental Rates

Ms. Giles stated you have adopted the rental rates and the suspension and termination rules so they have been added to it. At the last meeting there was discussion about prime time and some blocked hours presented so we put those in there and highlighted them in yellow and it talks about a five-hour block. If we switch to these three-hour blocks that affects the language on page 10 of the policies. We have to work on these blocks of hours to see what the board wants that to be. Tara is prepared to talk historically about what has happened. Is there a need for three blocks of time Monday through Friday?

Ms. Lee stated I think two blocks work perfectly. My concern was with the block with the small pool 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. we don't have night swimming. Right now it is 4 to 8, 7 – 11 they are paying for a pool they can't use and that was my concern.

Ms. Miller asked did you see any difference in the people who wanted to book but couldn't versus Monday through Thursday and the weekend?

Ms. Lee stated I don't have anyone request that during the week. I looked back on the calendar and it didn't look like anything was booked through the week as well. Other than the HOA having their meetings, there is nothing. Friday, Saturday and Sunday are big days and not many people want to rent the room with the pool the whole entire day. I don't think three time slots will work.

Ms. Miller stated I went down there because I was concerned about those times, cleaning afterwards and if someone who wants to get it, they have a very short time to prep.

Ms. Lee stated the hours we have implemented are working.

Mr. Soriano stated with the five-hour time slot there is time for them to clean up.

Ms. Giles stated the way it is written now is that the five hours include set up and post event cleanup.

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Mr. Soriano stated the hours would be 10-3 and 4-9, that is five hours and if they ran a little over that shouldn't create a situation.

Ms. Giles asked would that be Monday through Friday and on the weekends?

Mr. Soriano stated that would be the easiest thing.

Ms. Giles stated the next item highlighted in yellow says 11 p.m. that would change to 9 p.m. Everything else is the same in your policy. We worked on formatting and put a picture on the front and spelled out some of the abbreviations, some administrative errors that were on the policy and we added the suspension and termination policy to it. We can make the change on page 17 and put it on the CDD website.

On MOTION by Ms. Miller seconded by Mr. Barnhouse with all in favor the revised amenity rules and policies were approved with the change in the rental hours being two time slots, 10-3 and 4-9 weekdays and weekends.
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Ms. Miller stated you had other things highlighted on page 20, the playground.

Ms. Giles stated the things you see highlighted are the things that I got stuck on as I read through this. For the playground and tot lots, it say, adult supervision 18 years and older is required for children under the age of 16. Is that what you want?

Mr. Soriano stated some of these were questions because some are hard to enforce or we don't really see that going on right now and something like the playground is hard for us to keep an eye on and it brought up questions as we went through it. Is that the way you want to keep it?

Ms. Giles stated 16 surprised me. If I'm almost 16 I can't be at the playground without adult supervision. Right below that it says no food or drinks or gum permitted on the playground.

Ms. Miller asked is the fitness center and amenity center part of this?

Ms. Giles stated yes.

Ms. Miller stated under the fitness center I think there needs to be a sign about the headphones music.

Mr. Soriano stated the clause is in there, but we can put up a sign as a reminder.

Ms. Miller stated the amenity center, I don't know if it should be here or in the contract that whoever rents the amenity center, it should say the guests are not permitted in the fitness

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center. I have heard that is happening. It should be in the contract so that whoever rents it understands their guest are not able to use the fitness center.

Ms. Giles stated I will add that.

On MOTION by Mr. Barnhouse seconded by Ms. Miller with all in favor the revised amenity rules & policies were approved in substantial form.

B. Consideration of Storm Drain Clearing

Mr. Soriano stated this is an item from the last meeting and concerns the drain behind the pool area going into the parking lot. It is completely ours, it is not hooked into anything that goes out to the road, it eventually connects to the rest of the system but it is not something I can get the county to help us with since it is completely surrounded by our property. It is something we need to do but it is not an emergency. I contacted three companies but received only two written proposals.

On MOTION by Ms. Miller seconded by Mr. Weatherbee with all in favor the proposal from Wind River Environmental in the amount of \$1,695.75 was approved.

FOURTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Consideration of Proposal from Riverside Management Services (RMS) for Fiscal Year 2024

Mr. Soriano gave an overview of the proposal from Riverside Management for fiscal year 2024 services, copy of which was included in the agenda package.

Mr. Schroyer asked do we have to stay with Riverside?

Mr. Soriano stated you don't and you can break up services. I have some neighborhoods that look at janitorial or pool service or they want a new amenity manager. There are times we are not the cheapest, but it is usually not much cheaper with another company. We do have the ability to move people around.

Mr. Schroyer asked what does the rest of the board think about going out for bid?

Mr. Barnhouse stated I don't have a problem with RMS, the reason being the last time we had a budget meeting we got everything down so low, we got caught and these guys did their best to cut corners a little.

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Mr. Schroyer stated I still think it is a good idea to shop it to see and get quotes.

Ms. Miller stated I'm happy, but it doesn't hurt to look. The only concern I have when we look is you have to understand that other companies may not go above and beyond what their duties are.

Mr. Weatherbee stated I hope we don't offend anybody like we did with the grass cutting, it cost us another \$6,000.

Mr. Soriano stated we do work with other companies. It does make it hard when we are trying to keep it low for this budget.

Ms. Giles stated I feel like there are two things going on here. You have this proposal in front of you where you need to make a motion to approve it or not. Then also the board can direct staff to get proposals for a scope of work and that is what we need to talk about, what you want in that scope of work. Do you want to get proposals for the same scope of work you are looking at so you can compare two like items? Or do you want a modified scope of work?

Mr. Schroyer stated it has to be apples to apples.

Ms. Giles stated there are companies we can reach out to and tell them we are looking for a proposal for those six services. I did use their proposed rate to plug into the budget. After we get the proposals in and look at it, there is a termination clause in every agreement we have in this district. I would ask that you consider this so we can get to the budget item and if you choose another company you would terminate in accordance with your contract, whether it is landscape, RMS, GMS, district counsel, pond maintenance whatever it is we would need to work that process if it comes to that.

Ms. Miller stated maybe we should just continue with RMS and then if we want to see other prices for 2025 instead of 2024. We are right in the middle now.

Ms. Giles stated it can happen next fiscal year. We can get the proposals back and you review them. I don't think anyone is going to beat RMS' prices and you have a meeting July 5th, September 6th and we will set your meeting schedule for next year.

Mr. Schroyer stated I think we can at least look. If we don't get them back until October we can still look at them and if they are less we can start the new contract in 2024 not 2025.

Mr. Soriano stated to compare prices you can look at any CDD website and compare the prices. You may not know all their duties and many won't put the hours but you will see the line items if it is strictly about cost.

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Ms. Giles stated if you are going to do that on your own, look at a like district, you wouldn't want to look at a district half your size and try to compare what they are paying to what you are paying.

On MOTION by Mr. Schroyer seconded by Ms. Miller with all in favor the proposal from Riverside Management Services for Fiscal Year 2024 services was approved.

Ms. Giles stated I have the guidance written down to get proposals for like services.

FIFTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Consideration of Resolution 2023-07 Approving the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 and Setting a Public Hearing Date to Adopt

Ms. Giles stated tonight we are going to go through the proposed budget and set that public hearing date. Once we approve the budget we will provide a copy to Clay County as required by Chapter 190, F.S. We will set the public hearing no sooner than 60-days and that is how we get to the adoption date of July 5, 2023. The exhibit in your agenda is the proposed budget and it has three funds, the general fund, which is the operating funds for the district, then the debt service fund that shows the debt service with the interest and principal payments for the 2007 bonds. We have a few residents in the district that pay the debt service. The capital reserve fund we talked about earlier in the meeting are the funds set aside for repairs and replacement for the capital assets listed in the reserve study. The reserve study is a guide and a tool, it is a forecast to tell you what is anticipated to be repaired or replaced. In that guide it does show an inflation rate of 2.5%, I did ask the accountant to increase the reserve line of \$36,838 by 5%. This is something you can lower but with the inflation rate at 2.5% if we have to repair all of the items listed we may not have enough money. Last year there was a 32% increase and I tried to make a list of what caused that 32% increase and last year it was just a lot of small increases. Last year the increase to the homeowners was \$20 to \$25 per month depending on their lot size because we assess on a 50-foot lot and 60-foot lot basis. The proposal you see tonight is a 14% increase and if you have a 50-foot lot it is an increase of \$10 per month and if you have a 60-foot lot it is an increase of \$11 per month. I did ask the accountant to lay out the increase next to each line item. Last year you put \$35,525 in the reserves and this year we have \$38,680.

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The following items were discussed: Increase in electric to Clay Electric, reduce the number of hours that the fountains run to see cost savings, pool chemicals, explanation of contingencies, reduce lake maintenance contingency, irrigation meter for common area to be researched to see if it is operable, lack of oversight of district contracts, increase in insurance, reduce capital reserve to \$36,838 and reduce access cards.

On MOTION by Mr. Schroyer seconded by Mr. Weatherbee with all in favor Resolution 2023-07 approving the proposed budget to include the reductions outlined and setting the public hearing for July 5, 2023 was approved.

SIXTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Staff Reports

A. Attorney

There being none, the next item followed.

B. Engineer

There being none, the next item followed.

C. Manager – Report on the Number of Registered Voters (1,310)

A copy of the letter from the supervisor of elections reporting that there are 1,310 registered voters residing within the district was included in the agenda package.

D. Operation Manager

Mr. Soriano stated if we buy a commercial quality shade sail we are not going to be under the \$5,000 because the poles run about \$1,00 each and you need six. I looked around and found large 10 X 10 commercial umbrellas that cost \$650 each and if we put three next to each other you will have 30-feet of shade area and that is about \$2,000. That is what I would look at rather than a shade sail.

Ms. Miller stated we approved \$5,000 so let’s add \$2,000 to it and get the shade sails.

It was the consensus of the board to have staff get the number of umbrellas that will fit the area where shade is needed.

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E. Amenity Manager

1. Report

Ms. Lee reviewed the amenity manager’s report, copy of which was included in the agenda package.

2. Landscape Inspection Report

Mr. Hicks reviewed the landscape inspection report, copy of was included in the agenda package.

3. Proposal from Brightview for Replacement of Plants

Mr. Soriano presented a proposal from Brightview to replace the cold damaged Oleander with azaleas at the font of the amenity center.

SEVENTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Supervisor’s Requests and Public Comments

Other comments/requests: Staff to provide price comparison on pool companies, controllers, chemicals, Clay Connect, insurance, way to report streetlight outage, cost share with HOA on certain items, who does the board represent, lack of oversight of contracts such as landscape contract, send email out to residents advising of meetings, staff to create map with mowing schedule and post it online.

EIGHTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the Minutes of the March 1, 2023 Meeting

On MOTION by Ms. Miller seconded by Mr. Schroyer with all in favor the minutes of the March 1, 2023 meeting were approved as presented.

B. Balance Sheet & Income Statement

C. Assessment Receipt Schedule

D. Approval of Check Register

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On MOTION by Mr. Schroyer seconded by Ms. Miller with all in favor the check register was approved.

NINTH ORDER OF BUSINESS

Next Meeting Scheduled for Wednesday, July 5, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Azalea Ridge Amenity Center

Ms. Giles stated the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 5, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the same location.

On MOTION by Mr. Schroyer seconded by Mr. Weatherbee with all in favor the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

DocuSigned by:
Marilee Giles
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Secretary/Assistant Secretary

DocuSigned by:
Marty Genska
B0ED2816C3F8433...
Chairman/Vice Chairman