

# San Elijo Hills #1 Homeowners Association

## Summary of Minutes from June 17, 2015

### **ESTABLISH QUORUM AND INTRODUCTION OF CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS**

It was reported that a total of 111 ballots were received for the election, constituting a quorum. The current Board was introduced: Fred Dawn, Mark Flather, Al Benner, and Sarah Devereaux. Donna Mancuso, who serves as Treasurer, and Board member Teri Melese were unable to attend. Donna Mancuso was thanked for her many years of service on the Board as the Treasurer and will continue to help with the slope renovation work. Also, Al Benner has decided not to run for re-election, but instead will take over the slope renovation and landscape maintenance duties. The Board also acknowledged Stu Erwin who was elected to the Board last June, but passed away in November, and John Frank for all his years of work on the maintenance issues.

### **OFFICER AND CHAIR REPORTS:**

- A. **Financial Report** – Reviewed the written financial report that was prepared and distributed to those in attendance. The Board has voted to increase the slope maintenance fee by 7% (or \$90 per home per year) to help fund the slope renovation work.
- B. The Board thanked Sandy Punch and Randi Sharman for putting on the neighborhood garage sale.
- C. **Entry Monument Renovations** – The Board has been working on plans for the renovation of the 3 entry monuments. The drawings were shown to the members in attendance and they were given details about the work to be done. Bids were solicited from 7 contractors. We have obtained bids and the Board will be voting to approve a contractor in the next few weeks. The budget for this work is around \$14,000.
- D. **Slope Renovation Update** – The Board has been working on the slope renovation work for just over a year to change out to drought tolerant plants. It has been a learning process and the Board has decided to obtain a separate contract for installation of these new plantings rather than trying to use the existing gardeners to do the work. The work is being suspended during the hot summer months, but will resume in the fall. The plan is to address all the visible slopes first. There are 5 species of plants being used and we are now mulching the slopes when they are planted. The Board reviewed the areas that have been planted so far, but we still have over 400,000 sq. ft. to be done. This will be a long term plan that will go on for several years. The new plants will reduce water use, maintenance, and fertilization. With the water restrictions in place now, we may lose some of the plants that we have installed on the slopes and some existing plantings. It was suggested that the Association pursue getting a variance from the Water District to allow additional water on the newly planted slopes so that those plants survive. A plan has been drawn up showing all the irrigation system and what everything covers. We have attempted to get rebates through the Metropolitan Water District, but we do not qualify. We have also looked into using reclaimed water, but that will be too costly to bring it to our entire project.
- E. Additionally, the Board has asked that bids be obtained for the landscape maintenance contract. While the current landscaper has done a good job over the years, his costs keep going up. We have obtained bids that the Board will be reviewing and voting on in the next few weeks. The current contract expires the end of June so we will be on a month to month basis until we make a decision.

### **OPEN DISCUSSION: MEMBER INPUT**

- Several owners expressed concern over the slopes. Many felt that the Board was maintaining the newly renovated slopes and allowing the others to deteriorate. There was also concern about fire safety on the slopes. The Board stated that the current landscaping on the slopes is reaching the end of its life and with the water restrictions, it is dying out. This is one of the reasons why the Board chose to begin a program to replant the slopes with drought tolerant plants. Also, the Board stated that no order was given to the landscaper to cease landscape maintenance work on any of the slopes. The Board has had the Fire Marshall out to review out slopes and we are in compliance with their requirements.
- Another concern expressed had to do with irrigation of the slopes. An owner asked about the use of hand watering on the new plants and if the slope irrigation has been shut off. The Board stated that the use of hand watering was done previously, but the landscape architect has advised that the regular irrigation would be adequate to water the plants. The slope irrigation has not been shut off, but is operating under the water restrictions imposed by the County.
- Owners asked about the native plants that have been installed and when they will start to fill in. The Board stated that the landscape architect said that it could take 2 years or longer for the plants to become established.
- Another issue raised had to do with the Eucalyptus trees on the slope. Some people want to keep them, others feel that they should be removed. There was also discussion on whether or not replacement trees are installed when a Eucalyptus tree is removed. The Board stated that due to limited financial resources,

they have not been replacing as many trees. When a tree is replaced we are using native trees. Another owner suggested we look for grant money to study whether or not we should remove the Eucalyptus trees for fire safety reasons.

- The next issue of concern was communication with the owners. Many owners feel that there should be a quarterly newsletter to all the owners. It was also asked that the billing go out at least 30 days before the due date and the website address should be on everything that the Association sends out. The Board does post the agenda and a summary of the minutes on the website each month, along with other information.
- The issue of funding the slope renovation work was brought up. The Board does not have the funds to do all the work at one time. They estimate the total cost for the slope renovation work could be \$1,000,000. The Board can only increase the budget by 7% per year without a vote of the members. An owner suggested that perhaps the City would fund the project with the Association to pay back the money over time. The owner volunteered to check with the City on this matter.
- The idea of individual owners planting their slopes, at their expense, with the same plant material that the Association is using in order to advance the slope renovation project faster. The Board has looked into this previously and will again consider this idea.
- The idea of using reclaimed water was again brought up. The Board stated that the cost difference is only 15% between regular water and reclaimed water. Also, the hook-up would cost us too much money (around \$500,000). If the Water District can pay for bringing the water into the community, then we would review it again.
- The members thanked the volunteer Board members for their work.

### **RESULTS OF ELECTION OF DIRECTORS**

The following persons were elected to the Board for the coming year: Fred Dawn, Mark Flather, Sarah Devereaux, Teri Melese, Bill MacConnell, Beckie Samuels, and Erwin Willis. There were 4 names submitted as write-in candidates that each received one vote. The new Board members were introduced.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL BOARD MEETING**

- Immediately following the Annual Meeting the new Board met to elect officers. Since the full Board was not present, only Fred Dawn was elected President and Sarah Devereaux as Secretary.
- The Board also voted to remove two dead Eucalyptus trees on the slopes.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. All owners are welcome to attend!**