

Birch Pointe CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION Newsletter



"A self-managed and -run community, composed of a volunteer board that works to keep costs low while striving to enhance property values and provide efficient leadership through open and honest communication."

P.O. Box 1195, Hockessin, DE 19707

Annual Open Meeting of March and Board meeting of March 14, 2016

Board Attendees:

Annual Meeting:

Jim Coll – President.....jcoll@birchpointe.net
Monica Rieder – Treasurer.....mrieder@birchpointe.net
Susan Yeatman – Secretary.....syeatman@birchpointe.net
Manuel Harnisch – MAL/Advisor.....treasurerbp@gmail.com
Cheryl McDonough – MAL.....cmcdonough@birchpointe.net

Board Meeting:

Jim Coll – President.....jcoll@birchpointe.net
Monica Rieder – Treasurer.....mrieder@birchpointe.net
Susan Yeatman – Secretary.....syeatman@birchpointe.net
Tami Cooper – MAL.....tcooper@birchpointe.net

Annual Meeting (of March 9):

The community was fortunate to have had two guest speakers: Michael Ramone, Representative 21st District
Janet Kilpatrick, District 3 County Council

- (1) Representative Ramone reviewed issues in which he has been involved:
 - state gas tax; WEAC and consolidation of school districts; yard waste site off Red Mill Road; sting operation of massage parlor by Farmer's Market on Kirkwood Highway
- (2) Q&A for Representative Ramone by attendees:
 - Q: Fairmont Drive snow removal and what the state can do for us.
 - A: Will be looked into further to see if there is a solution. Priority might be raised since adjacent to Skyline Drive.

 - Q: Trash dumping at Fairway Falls backing up to Birch Pointe; status?
 - A: Clean-up was done as far as steepness of area allowed crew to progress.

 - Q: Status of the additional lighting in Birch Pointe mentioned last year.
 - A: Will look into this since Delmarva has already come on site to survey; places need to be prioritized. (need at the end of Birch, the "Dog Park" area on Diana Drive)
- (3) Councilwoman Kilpatrick spoke at length about the golf course property and the various litigations and court decisions which have taken place over numerous years. Although still ongoing, the building of 17 townhomes on Hogan Drive in has been approved. Pike Creek Recreational Services is still pursuing the development of 40 acres not designated as open space. A major obstacle is the storm water management and road drainage.
- (4) She also discussed the new "Linden Hill Station" mixed-use complex to be built at the old Citibank site, now being demolished. There will be 60,000 square ft. of retail and office space along with 30 apartments and 32 townhouses.
- (5) Finally, Councilwoman Kilpatrick briefly mentioned the Charcoal Pit/bowling alley location. Because of deed restrictions on the property to limit its potential uses (recreation), no movement has been seen. In the meantime, the buildings have fallen into disrepair and may need to be demolished in the future.



Board Elections/Voting

As there was not a quorum of owners present, it was to be reconvened at the next board meeting. Attendees then will constitute the new quorum (as per by-laws) and voting based on the ballots and proxies submitted.

Financial and Budget Review

- (1) A review of 2015 was done, citing where budgeted line items were above and below estimates. Completed capital improvements were also discussed as well as major repairs undertaken during the year.
- (2) The passed budget for fiscal 2016 was briefly outlined, including a breakdown of "Where Your Money Goes" for HOA fees.

Community Issues/Attendee Q&A

Q: When will the remains of the salt pile be removed from Haley Court?

A: This will be addressed as soon as the weather is warmer and we are free of snow and ice.

Q: When will landscapers start the community clean up?

A: The cleanup should begin at the beginning of April.

- A Kennett distributor of Kolbe windows similar to those in the community will be noted in the next newsletter.
- The issue of abandoned and commercial vehicles was mentioned, as was out of state cars.

Board Meeting (of March 14):

Real Estate Status: Resources such as Realtor.com, Trulia.com, Zillow.com, and Estately.com



(12) Unit(s) on market:	3 On Birch Circle:	regular	
	1 On Claremont Court:	regular	Sale pending
	4 On Diana Drive:	3 regular, 1 short	1 Sale pending; 1 price cut
	4 On Haley Court:	regular	1 Price cut
(2) Unit(s) in foreclosure/up for sheriff's sale:	1 Foreclosure on Birch Circle		Sale pending
	1 Sheriff's sale on Birch Circle		Bank Buy-back (3/8/2016)

Notes:

- Let a member of the Board know if you are aware of a new listing in Birch Pointe, or if YOU are moving and planning to sell your *own* condo.
- Eric is the Birch Pointe real estate liaison and can provide many of the essential documents, forms, and certifications needed for property transfer for a \$25 fee.
- Birch Pointe has been recertified by HUD allowing them to obtain FHA insured mortgages.
- Birch Pointe has a policy regarding investors to protect the interests of ALL owners which must be disclosed to potential buyers, either directly by the seller or by his/her realtor. The document outlining this policy – established in 2013 – is clearly outlined on our website.

Collections Report:



(1) Total collected in HOA fees for the month: February	\$95,000
(2) Large(r) payments received for the month:	\$1,980; \$1,320; \$1,000; and \$990 resubmission of \$2000 via cashier's check
(3) March HOA fees remitted to date:	\$44,000

Notes:

- Owners in financial difficulty should speak with a Board member to discuss their situation and arrange a payment plan/schedule to address ways of clearing up past balances.
- Consider signing up for Birch Pointe's ACH program! It is an automatic and convenient way to pay monthly dues. A one-time \$15 credit will be applied when enrolling. Contact Monica for more info at mrieder@birchpointe.net – or see our website to download the necessary form.

Cable service will be disconnected after a 90 day delinquency unless a Board-approved payment plan is in place.

Treasurer's Report:



(1) Total operating costs for the month: February				\$135,044
(2) Major expenses:	\$37,500	for	annual sewer bill	
	\$23,400	for	snow removal	
	\$3,700	for	initial/first payment for Claremont Court leak	
(3) Capital improvement: Expenditures:	\$2,875	for	wall, footer, and deck repair on Haley Court	
(4) Status of Birch Pointe accounts: (see financial summary at end)		Operational Reserve	=	\$15,300
		Reserve	=	\$254,306

Board Discussions:

- (1) Termination of Birch Pointe landscaping with More for Your Money. A new contract has been negotiated with Green Side Up which will begin initial clean up by week's end. A community inspection and walk-through will be made to assess scope of the work needed.
- (2) Stanley Steemer cleanings of 4700 Claremont Court and 4600 Birch Circle have been scheduled. Both are sites of water leaks.
- (3) A registered letter was sent to the owner of a rental property on Diana regarding the tenant's serious Code of Conduct violations which have resulted in numerous calls to police. It was noted that the whole community should be made aware of policies and by-laws in place addressing this issue.
- (4) The abandoned car on Diana Drive will be towed.
- (5) Various necessary repair issues were brought up by ProTech. These will be addressed and resolved.
- (6) Potential capital improvement projects for fiscal 2016 were outlined.

**In light of a demanding work load, Jim Coll tendered his resignation as president of the board.
He has agreed to remain as a member-at-large.**

**Tami Cooper volunteered to serve in this capacity.
We are all indeed grateful to her for stepping in.
Thank you Tami!**

Community Reminders:



Pet Policies

Pick up after your pet! Failure to clean up waste will result in a \$50 fine. There has been significant non-compliance seen on Claremont Court, an unpleasant situation for ALL residents. Pets **must** also be leashed at all times when being walked.



Handicapped Parking

Observe the handicapped parking spots located throughout the community! They are to be used **only** by vehicles with the appropriate state handicapped license plates or hang-tags. **Birch Pointe reserves the right to remove vehicles not in compliance at the vehicle owner's expense.**



Community Parking

Please have consideration for your neighbor by asking your guests to park in the overflow areas. Limit non-resident vehicles in "prime" spaces in front of buildings.



NO SMOKING

Smoking Policies

Smoking is prohibited in all building common areas including hallways and staircases; light up only once outside.



Community Traffic

Please **SLOW DOWN** and mind the stop signs! They are put there for a reason. Cars backing out, owners walking pets, people picking up mail all may be difficult to see, especially at night. Be responsible and considerate: obey the speed limit.



Community Safety

Front security doors are to be kept shut. They *may* be propped open ONLY for a short time while moving heavy objects in and out of the building. This is for everyone's safety!

Birch Pointe Directory/Important Numbers:

• General Property Management Questions

Eric Kennedy – phone: (302) 685-4310; e-mail: ekennedy@birchpointe.net

• Maintenance Issues and Questions

Maintenance staff (Dennis, Eric) – e-mail: maintenance@birchpointe.net

• Account Statements / Condo Fee Questions / ACH Payment Sign-Up

Monica Rieder – e-mail: mrieder@birchpointe.net

• Birch Pointe Maintenance Emergencies

phone: 1-267-474-2907; e-mail: maintenance@birchpointe.net

February 2016 Financials

– Operating Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 74,801.22
Inflow – Operating Income:	\$	95,014.00
Inflow – One-time Transfers (from ORA*):	\$	20,000.00
Outflow – Operating Expenditure:	\$	135,044.59
Outflow – Capital Expenditure:	\$	3,775.00
Outflow – to Operational Reserve*:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ 50,995.63
Target Ending Balance:		\$ 50,000.00
Surplus / Deficit:		<u>\$ 995.63</u>

– Operational Reserve Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 35,299.52
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	1.18
Outflow – Periodic Transfers*:	\$	20,000.00
Ending Balance:		<u>\$ 15,300.70</u>

* monies are transferred into/out of Operational Reserve Account (ORA) as needed to cover expenditures, maximizing earned interest

– Reserve Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 254,286.10
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	20.21
Outflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-time Transfers:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ 254,306.31
Target Ending Balance:		\$ 250,000.00
Surplus / Deficit:		<u>\$ 4,306.31</u>