



Condominium Association

Newsletter

June 2021

"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."

WELCOME A NEW BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE



Birch Pointe welcomes Liz Ritter to the board. She brings a secretarial and administrative background to the table. Liz moved to Birch Pointe from a condo in Cape Coral, FL in November 2019 and has a strong interest in "community". "No one can do everything, but everyone can do something." (Max Lucado).

Please consider becoming a board member. Individuals with all kinds of skills are needed. Whatever strengths YOU can offer are welcomed and greatly appreciated. Help keep Birch Pointe running smoothly and efficiently. Remember that this volunteer Board is why we have such a good reputation; without it, a management company would be an undesirable alternative! Everyone should be interested and active in their participation of what goes on in the community!

TREASURER HELP NEEDED

The Board is seeking anyone in the community who is willing to step up and learn the Treasurer position. No Monica isn't going anywhere soon, but rightfully she has pointed out that the position is too important to have only one person know it. There would be a training process and support along the way. If you are interested please email Steve Papparazzo at spaparazzo@birchpointe.net

MAILBOX USAGE

It has been a slow process with a few setbacks but it appears that the lock situation should be settled soon. It is anticipated that the new mailboxes will be available for actual mail delivery - and not simply overpriced pieces of art - in the near future. Eric will be working on a usage instruction sheet to be posted. All are looking forward to finally being able to make use of these boxes and see those old, worn out ones outta here!

CAPITAL PROJECT UNDER WAY

Work on select skylight replacement by Fedale is underway. As this project involves not only the skylights but other materials such as flashing and roofing shingles, Fedale needs a large contractor size dumpster on site

for disposal of used product. Please make sure that community trash is placed in Birch Pointe Waste Management dumpsters ONLY and NOT into the construction one located at the top of Batta.

CONDO LIVING ETIQUETTE / REMINDERS (AND BY-LAW MUSTS)

PARKING RULES: Parking in front of buildings is for residents only from 5PM to 8AM. Every unit is entitled to ONE spot. Please make sure to advise guests to park in unmarked parking areas. The community is subject to parking enforcement and repeat violators will be fined as has been outlined in several previous newsletters. So, remember to place your hangtag in plain view!

PET RULES: Please pick up after your pet. Designated waste bags and bins are conveniently located around the community. Nothing says "nasty" and "inconsiderate" to your neighbors like your fur baby leaving a "present" and you not bothering to pick it up! Also of note, pets are to be accompanied and supervised by their owners at all times. When walking with a dog, it MUST be on a leash and are NOT permitted to run free, even at the so-called dog runs.

GENERAL RULES: Please remember to

Keep the Noise Down....Be Considerate if You Smoke (NOT in hallways)....Follow Garbage and Recycling Rules (break down boxes)....Treat Common Areas with Care (hallways, parking areas, dog runs)

SUMMER REMINDERS

As summer is now "officially" here, the Board would like to reiterate that gas and charcoal grills are strictly prohibited by the Fire Marshall (and our by-laws) anywhere in the community. Any form of open flames pose an extreme fire hazard and as such pose a serious risk due to the wooden structure of the buildings. **ONLY ELECTRIC OUTSIDE GRILLS ARE PERMITTED IN BIRCH POINTE.**

As the weather goes into summer mode and heat and humidity are high, air conditioners will start to run more and more. Make sure condensation lines are not blocked or frozen and that they are draining properly to avoid water damage. In the very unfortunate event that your A/C is not working, be advised that Birch Pointe by-laws prohibit the use of window units or any other object which hangs or protrudes from a window

CONTRACTOR BIDDING

The Board periodically reviews its contractor relationships pertaining to all large capital expenditures; balcony replacements are no different. As a result, the process of soliciting bids from contractors in the greater Delaware area has started to determine if a competitive advantage can be obtained.

Bids are being sought for community trash removal as the current contract with Waste Management is nearing its end. Eric has been instrumental in looking into alternative providers for this including Waste Masters. Certain issues such as overage charges and bulk pickups are central to determining overall costs.

The Board is also starting the process of looking into new entry way doors for the community. This is part of the continued work to make the community safe and update some doors that need it. Such an undertaking will be a little bit slower as the costs are high so multiple bids will be sought.

In addition, alternative contractors are also being considered for the balcony replacement work. During this post-COVID time, many contractors, including ProTech who has been our mainstay for such jobs, have been in high demand. This is true of ProTech whose work in Birch Pointe has recently been limited. As with other large scale projects, several bids will be reviewed to determine costs, time frames and availability.

SECURITY

The Board has again looked into security cameras for the community in light of a recent reported car break in. This remains a costly expense with investment in services for monitoring and storage of video information. At this time it is felt that the cost for such an undertaking remains too high. While cameras have become wireless, it was noted that with the trees and size of Birch Pointe, it would not be feasible to have a wireless system. Please be diligent and do not leave personal belongings - money, phones, valuables - for thieves to see in your vehicles and, above all, keep car doors locked at all times. Everyone is urged to report any and all suspicious activity by calling 911 and notifying the police to have law enforcement address these concerns directly. Birch Pointe has no authority to arrest suspects or cannot otherwise cure these incidents.

LANDSCAPING

Green Side Up was in the community recently to remove several dead trees and do extensive weeding and trimming. In addition, our own maintenance crew has been power washing bridges and upgrading the corner of Batta and Claremont to be more attractive: red rock, shrub/flower planting, weeding. Upkeep of the grounds is a constant task meant to make Birch Pointe a nice place to live.

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 (Eric, Jules) – e-mail: maintenance@birchpointe.net

➤ ACCOUNT STATEMENTS / HOA FEE /OR ACH QUESTIONS

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

➤ BIRCH POINTE MAINTENANCE EMERGENCIES

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

June 2021 Board Meeting

Held virtually on 6-14-2021 via Zoom

- Reports
 - Financials
 - Collections
 - Real Estate outlook
- Mailbox usage status
- Housekeeping items
 - Introduction/welcome of new MAL Liz Ritter
- Updates
 - Maintenance work
 - Batta/Claremont corner landscaping
 - Engineering inspection for Haley buildings
 - Potential new/additional contactors and bids
 - Paddy's for balcony replacements
 - Waste Masters for trash removal
 - Verizon on site
 - No notice to residents when ringing units which looked like solicitations
 - New rep; made bad impression
 - Working on installing concealed lines into buildings
 - Mailboxes
 - Locks have been finally been obtained at post office following residents direct complaints
 - Eric to work up sheet with instructions for use
- Board treasurer position seeking help / back-up
 - Volunteer needed from community to set up
- Adjournment



Real Estate Status: Online resources such as Realtor.com, Trulia, Zillow, Estatefy, etc. (since the last newsletter and info as of 6-21-2021)

(1) Units on market now:	3 on Birch Circle 2 on Diana Drive 1 on Claremont Court	all new listings, all under contract 1 new listing, under contract; 1 short sale re-listing
(2) Units recently sold:	3 on Birch Circle 1 on Diana Drive	2 on 5-27-2021, 1 on 6-8-2021 on 5-27-2021

When moving, PLEASE inform Treasurer Monica Rieder if you are on Birch Pointe's ACH program so that future automatic bank debits can be cancelled. Once DUCIOA forms are requested, any scheduled ACH draws should be discontinued if possible. Current owner monthly payments can be made at closing by check, still at the \$300 ACH discounted rate. Contact mrieder@birchpointe.net if there are any questions or concerns.

Note also that **parking hang tags for units being sold are to be returned to Eric**, not handed to new owners directly or to real estate agents. Tag numbers are associated with specific vehicles for security and tracking purposes. If the existing protocol is not followed, confusion may well result regarding undocumented cars and their actual owners if the new information is not provided. **This procedure applies to units which are rentals: tenants moving out should do like-wise and turn over their tags.** Remember that replacement fees for reissue of a hang tag is \$50. Your cooperation is most appreciated!

6-22-2021

Notes:

- Eric Kennedy is the Birch Pointe real estate liaison and can provide many of the essential information and documents needed for property transfer – including completion of DUCIOA forms. **The current fee for re-certification is \$50, payable PRIOR to issue of said documents.**
- **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 available on our website.**

Collections Report:



(1) Total operating income posted in May:	\$ 80,675	in HOA fees
	\$ 300	6 DUCIOA re-certification fees
	\$ 240	continued promissory note
	\$ 3,112	Comcast revenue share
	\$ 380	legal fee recovery

(2) Two check bank deposits were made during the month which totaled \$10,905 of the above number. In addition, there were credit card payments during the month of \$3,410 (10 transactions).

(3) With a past settlement of a unit, the overdue balance of \$2,325 on the account was paid at closing. Also received was a payment of \$1,300 toward a delinquent balance.

Similar situations will apply to several other future property transfers, clearing out their delinquencies.

THE BIRCH POINTE BOARD TAKES LONG TERM DELINQUENCIES SERIOUSLY AND ARE REFERRING THEM TO OUR LEGAL COUNSEL!

- REMINDER: – MONTHLY HOA FEES ARE \$320 IF PAYING BY CHECK**
– ONLY OWNERS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN ACH (OR OTHER E-FUND TRANSFER) RECEIVE A \$20/MONTH DISCOUNT
– PAYMENTS MADE BY CREDIT CARD RECEIVE A \$10 DISCOUNT

ACH/FIS enrollment at the end of April stands at 85.7% (252 units)

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.
- A Birch Pointe ACH enrollment form is attached for convenience.



Treasurer’s Report:

(1) Total operating costs for May:	\$ 59,866	in	utilities; maintenance/trash; professional, payroll, taxes and office expenses
(2) Major expenditures for May:	\$ 20,541	for	2 monthly insurance premiums
(other than normal utilities)	\$ 5,670		2 months waste removal plus overage
	\$ 4,100		monthly landscaping contract
	\$ 3,300		maintenance supplies

\$ 2,450	2 regular hallway cleaning services
\$ 1,157	2 monthly pest contro/treatments
\$ 840	legal consulting costs
\$ 3,011	taxes (federal, state, Medicare, Social Security, DE, and SUTA)

AMEX discount/rebate posted = \$517

(3) Capital improvement expenses for May: \$ 4,258 gutter cleaning on Birch Circle

Current Operating Fund (as of 6-21-2021) stands at \$189,226

May 2021 Financials

▶ Operating Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 125,385.69
Inflow – Operating Income:	\$	84,706.92
Inflow – One-time Transfers (from ORA*):	\$	0.00
Outflow – Operating Expenditure:	\$	59,866.10
Outflow – Capital Expenditure:	\$	4,258.00
Outflow – One-Time Transfer (to ORA*):	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>145,968.51</u>

▶ Operational Reserve Account (ORA)

Beginning Balance:		\$ 105,452.80
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	2.69
Outflow – Periodic Transfers*:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>105,455.459</u>

▶ Reserve Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 260,434.10
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	6.64
Outflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-time Transfers:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>260,440.74</u>

BIRCH POINTE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION CENSUS FORM

P.O. Box 1195 Hockessin, DE 19707

Unit Address: _____ Number of Persons Residing in Unit: _____

Legal Owner's Name: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Legal Owner's Mortgage Company: _____

Legal Owner's Vehicle Insurance Company: _____

Legal Owner's Condo/Home Owner's Insurance Company: _____

Legal Owner's Phone Number(s): _____
Home Work / Mobile

If Non-Resident, Mailing Address: _____

Tenant(s) Full Name(s) and Phone Numbers:

Name	Home Number	Work / Mobile
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Emergency Contact Info: _____
Name Phone

Vehicle(s) Owned by Occupant(s):

Year	Make / Model / Color	State & License Plate Number
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Pet(s) in Unit: _____
Size / Breed

*** * NOTE: Renters are NOT permitted to have pets/animals while residing in Birch Pointe * ***

Are you currently in possession of the Rules and Regulations of the Birch Pointe Condominiums? Yes / No

If a unit is a rental, it is the duty and responsibility of the owner/landlord to notify the Management/Board and advise all tenants of the Rules, Regulations and Code of Conduct of Birch Pointe Condominiums

I understand that the above information is for the sole use of Birch Pointe Condominium Association and its authorized agents in maintaining the community and providing emergency services. I also acknowledge that I must notify Birch Pointe Management if there are any changes in this information and/or if my unit is rented or sold.

Direct Payment Plan Overview

A smart and easy way to automate your payment with Direct Payment.

Direct Payment is a repetitive payment between businesses and consumers that enables the service provider to deduct scheduled payments from the customer's checking or savings account. It's a dependable, flexible, and convenient process that does not require the consumer to use a computer or access the internet.

With Direct Payment, you will:

- Save time by having one less check to write
- Reduce postage costs with one less bill to mail
- Eliminate late fees or charges by making payment(s) automatically

How does Direct Payment work?

You (the customer) will authorize regularly scheduled payments to be deducted from your checking or savings account by completing and submitting an authorization form. Payments are originated one business day before the specified day that they are due. Direct Payment is usually a repetitive payment that will remain in effect until the customer terminates the authorization. It's just that simple!

What is ACH?

The Automated ClearingHouse (ACH) Network is a nationwide system that processes electronic payments on behalf of depository financial institutions. The ACH Network was established in the 1970s as an electronic substitute for recurring check disbursements and collections. The ACH system is designed to serve all depository financial institutions, regardless of size, on an equitable basis. The system uses batch processing which costs less than on-line, real time processing systems. This feature makes ACH payments less expensive than other electronic payment methods such as wire transfers, and allows many financial institutions to participate.

Direct Payment Plan Authorization Form

1. Mark the box of the type of account from which payment will be deducted, either a checking or savings account.
2. Fill in your name, unit number/address, financial institution information, and date.
3. Indicate what day of the month funds should be withdrawn and if this is for a monthly or 6-month pre-pay draw.
4. Attach a voided check for verification of all financial institution information.
5. **Be sure to sign the form!**

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT

I authorize Birch Pointe Condominium Association to initiate electronic debit entries to my:
(check ONE)

checking account OR savings account

for payment of my condominium fee(s) on or about the day of the month selected below, as well as any late fees, fines or assessments that are assessed (returned ACH fee, census non-completion fine, general fines, etc.).
This authority will remain in effect until I have cancelled it *in writing*.

Processing date **(check ONE)** 1st of month 11th of month 21st of month
(ONLY these dates are available)

Processing schedule **(check ONE)** monthly 6-month pre-pay

Starting month for regular HOA payments

Unit ID (e.g. 5001BC, 4005HC, 5203DD)

Financial Institution / Bank Name

(Please Print Neatly!)

Account Number at Financial Institution

Financial Institution Routing/Transit Number

Financial Institution City and State

Signature _____ Date

PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THE AUTHORIZATION FOR YOUR RECORDS

Please mail to: Birch Pointe Condominium Association, P.O. Box 1195, Hockessin, DE 19707

Attach Voided Check Here