



Condominium Association Newsletter

May 2022

"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."



BIRCH POINTE OPEN ANNUAL MEETING

The primary purpose of this meeting, as always, was to communicate to the community an update on the financial status of the previous year as well as to discuss the planned actions of the Association. This includes a review of projects, a brief discussion of the current budget, election of Board members, and to discuss other such business as may come before the unit owners. This is an opportunity to become aware of what is being done in and for Birch Pointe in addition to learning about issues outside of the immediate community which might affect unit owners.

It is unfortunate that so few took an interest in attending this Zoom meeting and taking a bit of time to find out what the VOLUNTEER BOARD has done and is doing for everyone. Please remember that these members all work on your behalf and receive no compensation for their efforts...and without them, there IS no HOA and then this community will be forced to go to a Management Company.

Ballots were to be mailed or cast via the maintenance building dropbox by 6pm on April 26th, 2022. As there was insufficient participation of the community to reach a quorum at the meeting, as evidenced by the April 26th, 2022 number of ballots received, the election results (per the by-laws) would serve only as guidance for appointment of Board members.

The Board also held an organizational meeting electronically immediately after (on April 26, 2022) at which it re-appointed all sitting members based on the tradition of honoring the majority of the unit owner votes received. The Board further elected its officers for the 2022/2023 term.

The 16 voting ballots received and official results from the organizational meeting were as follows:

Cheryl McDonough:	15 Yes and 1 Pass	→ designated as President
Monica Rieder:	16 Yes	→ designated as continued Treasurer
Susan Yeatman:	16 Yes	→ designated as M-a-L; Welcome Liaison
Lee Long	16 Yes	→ designated as M-a-L
Erika Ruffin	16 Yes	→ designated as M-a-L
Don McFarland	16 Yes	→ designated as M-a-L

There was also a petition for candidacy received from a recent owner who will be contacted regarding the interest in serving on the Board for the current fiscal year.

Meeting synopsis:

6:35 PM – Annual Meeting was called to order

- Recap of budget highlights of 2021
 - Balances
 - Operating Fund: Starting = \$139,328 Ending = \$303,301
 - Operating Reserve: Starting = \$105,442 Ending = \$105,469
 - Reserve Fund: Starting = \$260,408 Ending = \$260,473
(beginning 2022, \$100K was transferred from Operating to Reserve Fund)
 - In addition to HOA fees, also have income stream from Comcast revenue share
- Budget vs. actual spends comparison
 - Most line items came in very close to budgeted
 - Snow Removal and legal fee expenditures were over
 - Overall spending was under budget due to several capital project delays
 - Budgeted was \$202K; actual spend was only \$157.7K
- Capital expenditures for 2021
 - A few unplanned projects
 - I-Beam supports replaced on several bridges
 - Gutter cleaning of all buildings
 - Soil erosion and underpinning issues of Haley Court building pod
- Outlook for Capital Expense projects in 2022
 - Overall more aggressive than in 2021 due to excess unspent 2021 funds
 - Complete final common building carpeting (in progress)
 - Postponed resealing of Haley Court road surface
 - Balcony replacements (as allowed)
 - Water intrusion and settling issues
 - Concrete repair work (walkways, curbs)
 - Possible reprioritizing throughout 2022 as needed
- Financial outlook in 2022
 - Birch Pointe remains highly solvent and in an excellent financial position
 - Monthly ordinary HOA fee will stay at \$320 (with possible discounts) for the year
- Rep. Mike Ramone participation
 - Spoke briefly to inform owners of developments at the state level
 - Delaware has had two years of significant surplus funds in the budget with just over \$1 billion excess revenue.
 - Proposed legislation to have that surplus returned to taxpayers in Delaware
 - Current 3 year cycle to reassess real estate values in New Castle County
 - Owners that they are NOT required to allow assessors into their properties
 - They need only answer questions regarding their property
 - There is a maximum amount that values may be increased or decreased
 - Property owners have the right to request a review of any decision with which they disagree
- Enforcement of rules and regulations review, esp. affecting quality of life at Birch Pointe
 - Parking
 - Only ONE hangtag issued per unit
 - Only owners are permitted hangtags and parking in spaces marked "Resident"
 - Others parking without proper resident identification visible to the parking enforcement officer will be towed after a warning sticker
 - Ground-floor unit owners are reminded to park on the street identified on hangtag
 - Unlicensed/untagged and/or unregistered vehicles will be towed
 - Pets
 - Per by-laws, only *owner* residents are permitted to have pets
 - Renters are NOT permitted to have pets
 - Ambulatory pets limited to two (2) only



- Pick up after pets; fines will be assessed for non-compliance
 - Commercial Vehicles
 - Those used for commercial purposes with *advertising* are not permitted to park
 - Trash/dumpsters
 - Disposal of household items such as furniture, mattresses, etc. in dumpsters is prohibited
 - NO contractor waste is to be put into dumpsters
 - If non-residents are observed dumping in Birch Pointe containers, owners are encouraged to photograph the activities and vehicle license plates so that action may be taken to prevent such future activity
 - Residents should have homeowners or renters insurance for contents
- Q&A session
 - Only one recycle container is in the community, located on Haley Court
 - Cutting of tree branches overhanging onto parking areas continues
 - Some trees may be removed/cut down
 - PODS on Diana Drive
 - Intersection of Birch Circle and Haley Court stop sign



8:00 - Adjournment

REMINDER: NEW PARKING HANGTAGS



The current Birch Pointe parking hang-tags expired at the end of 2021 and the new 2022/2023 have been available for a while. The outdated **BLACK** ones need to be surrendered and traded in for the new **BLUE** versions, display of which is required for "Resident" spot parking in the community.

Pick these up during regular weekly work hours at the maintenance building on Claremont Court, or special arrangements can be made with Eric Kennedy.

Information on all unit vehicles that may ordinarily be parked in Birch Pointe must be provided, including license number, make, model, and color.

April 2022 Board Meeting

Held virtually on 4-12-2022 via Zoom

- Reports
 - Financials (for March 2022)
 - Collections
 - Real Estate outlook
- Updates for Ongoing Projects
 - Stone installation on high trafficked Birch Circle area
 - Diana Drive water intrusion
 - Waiting on insurance claim
 - Power washing approved for Sparkling Image
- Annual Meeting
 - Change date/time to 4-26-2022
 - Post notices in all buildings and send out email blast
 - Provide Zoom meeting invite and call-in number access
 - Provide tentative agenda, Board bios



**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)

- 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 March:	\$ 60,262	in	utilities; maintenance/trash; professional, payroll, taxes and office expenses
(2) Major expenditures for March:	\$ 17,145		snow removal and salting (from February)
(other than normal utilities)	\$ 9,550		monthly insurance premium
	\$ 3,630		trash removal plus special pick-up
	\$ 4,100		monthly landscaping installment
	\$ 3,821		hallway cleaning and deodorizing
	\$ 2,556		maintenance supplies
	\$ 1,790		taxes (federal, state, Medicare, SS)

Applied \$754.13 in cash back to Business Credit Card invoice.

(3) Capital expenses for March:	\$ 12,264		down payment for carpet replacement in remaining 9 buildings
	\$ 19,425		water intrusion issues on Birch Circle
	\$ 12,233		demo in Diana Drive unit with water intrusion issues

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



March 2022 Financials

▶ Operating Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 254,244.09
Inflow – Operating Income:	\$	87,198.21
Inflow – One-time Transfers (from ORA*):	\$	0.00
Outflow – Operating Expenditure:	\$	60,261.89
Outflow – Capital Expenditure:	\$	44,021.76
Outflow – One-Time Transfer (to RA*):	\$	0.00
Ending 2021 Balance:		\$ <u>237,158.65</u>

▶ Operational Reserve Account (ORA)

Beginning Balance:		\$ 105,471.93
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	1.79
Outflow – Periodic Transfers*:	\$	0.00
Ending 2021 Balance:		\$ <u>105,473.72</u>

▶ Reserve Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 360,484.46
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	6.13
Outflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-time Transfers:	\$	0.00
Ending 2021 Balance:		\$ <u>360,490.59</u>

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 canceled 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