



Condominium Association

Newsletter

January 2024

"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."

VERIZON ISSUES

It has come to the attention of the Board that Verizon is encountering problems with their installations in Birch Pointe buildings that have resulted in damage to the structures, unsightly wiring, and less than satisfactory appearance to the completed jobs, thus far. PLEASE NOTE - Building integrity and appearance cannot be impacted by any contractor doing any type of installation. All work proposed that could possibly impact the integrity or appearance of the building must be approved IN ADVANCE by the Board. Discussions with Verizon regarding this situation are underway and more information will be forthcoming.

MAINTENANCE ISSUES

Owners and Residents are reminded that fireplaces may NOT BE USED unless certified by Jules Litchfield, on behalf of the Birch Pointe HOA. If you do not know whether your unit has been certified for fireplace use, contact Jules at jlitchfield@birchpointe.net or telephone 302-277-7978.

Also, if you observe things like entryway lighting, parking lot lights, or common area lighting in buildings not working in the evenings PLEASE let Jules know so that he can replace bulbs or fixtures as may be needed.

BIRCH POINTE 2024 BUDGET

The Board is pleased to announce that a 2024 budget has been passed in its first reading during the recent December 13th monthly virtual Board meeting. The detailed budget is included in this newsletter for review.

Most notable 2024 capital projects that will be addressed are:

- A New Castle County Ordinance requiring all multi-family communities with buildings rising 3 Stories or more must have a certified engineering inspection regarding the structural integrity of the building.
- 10 Building entrance replacements with a goal to install modern, secure doors to the buildings and roll these out over the next 4-5 years. Additionally, the Board is investigating the possibility of moving to a "Video Screen Intercom" to replace the present hand-held intercom & front-door buzzer system (somewhat akin to the current RING Camera.)

Other capital expense projects may be added based on need throughout 2024 and currently prioritized projects may be augmented.

01-02-2024

2024 BUDGET - Birch Pointe Condominium Association			
		✓ Passed 12-13-2023	
			2024 BUDGET TOTALS
Operating			
Income	Condo Fees (100% at \$340/mo)		\$1,199,520.00
	Delinquencies		-\$12,000.00
	ACH Enrollment Discount		-\$67,700.00
	Back HOA + Legal Fee recovery		\$500.00
	Dryer Vent Reimbursement		-\$5,600.00
	Condo Fee Total		\$1,114,720.00
	Interest Income		\$18,000.00
	Re-certifications Income		\$2,000.00
	Investor Fee Income		\$2,000.00
	Total Operating Income		\$1,036,720.00
Expenses			
	Employee Salaries		\$63,000.00
	Parking Enforcement		\$0.00
	Employee Benefits		\$6,000.00
	Professional Development		\$0.00
	Employer FICA	SS/MC/Fed Tax/DE Tax/PUTA/SUTA	\$16,000.00
	Income Taxes (federal)		\$500.00
	Professional Fees		
	Accountant		\$17,400.00
	Lawyer / Legal for Collections / Consults etc.		\$10,000.00
	Auditors		\$1,500.00
	Bank Fees / Credit Card Fees		\$3,800.00
	Payroll Fees		\$100.00
	Utilities		
	Insurance		\$118,230.00
	Water		\$67,500.00
	Sewer		\$58,000.00
	Electric		\$25,500.00
	Waste Removal		\$42,000.00
	Advanced Security		\$750.00
	Water (3300/3400 Haley Sprinkler)		\$3,000.00
	Maintenance		
	Snow Removal and Salting		\$50,000.00
	Maintenance Supplies		\$25,000.00
	Landscaping		\$75,000.00
	Cleaning		\$33,000.00
	Carpet Cleaning		\$2,000.00
	Pest Control - Monthly		\$10,000.00
	Pest Control - Spring/Incidental		\$6,000.00
	Ice Melt, Buckets		\$2,000.00
	Fire System Maintenance / Cell Communicators		\$12,500.00
	Miscellaneous Contractors		\$25,000.00
	Summer Equipment Rental (Cherry Picker)		\$1,000.00
	M&T BCC Cash Discounts		-\$2,500.00
	Office Expenses		
	Phone / Shed Verizon Internet		\$1,500.00
	Mileage Reimbursements		\$0.00
	Accounting Software / Dues / Subscriptions / Promotional / Advertising / Contributions		\$5,250.00
	Petty Cash		
	Office Supplies, Postage, Printing, & Misc		\$1,000.00
	Total Operating Expenses		\$680,030.00
	Operating Profit / Loss		\$456,690.00
	Capital Expenses		
	10 Balcony Rebuilds / Permits		\$225,000.00
	Unplanned Work: Water Intrusion, Water Lines		\$30,000.00
	10 Building Entrance replacements (phase 1)		\$50,000.00
	Major Project - NCC Ordinance for Bldg. Integrity Inspections		\$50,000.00
	Gutter Cleaning		\$5,500.00
	Total CAP Expenses		\$360,500.00
	Net Profit/Loss		\$96,190.00
	Contributions		
	Carry-over/Starting Operating Fund Balance Available		\$65,000.00
	Carry-over/Starting Operational Reserve Fund		\$55,500.00
	Total		\$120,500.00
	Annual contribution from Operating Fund to Operational Reserve from Available		\$100,000.00
	Available CAP Expense Budget for 2023:	\$350,000 from net profit plus \$120,000 starting funds	
	Allocated CAP budget for 2023		\$360,500.00
	Additional CAP Expenses to be approved throughout the year		
	Reserve Fund Available		\$460,550.00

December 2023 Board Meetings

Held virtually on 12-13-2023 via Zoom

- Reports
 - Financials
 - Collections
 - Real Estate outlook
- Updates
 - Reminders for newsletter
 - No pets for renters
 - No alterations of common elements
 - Concerns about damage & defacement of buildings
 - Investor fee increase - approved to \$5000.00
- Budget for 2024
 - Line item discussions
 - Entry door options
 - Get bids
 - Adjustments to Capital Projects
- Adjournment



Real Estate Status: Online resources such as Realtor.com, Trulia, Zillow, Estatefy, etc. (as of 12-31-2022)



(1) Units on market now:	1 on Claremont Court	active
(2) Units recently sold:	1 on Birch Circle	on 11-10-2023
	2 on Claremont Court	on 10-28-2022 and 12-16-2022
	2 on Haley Court	on 11-02-2023 and 11-16-2023

When moving, PLEASE inform Don McFarland if you are on Birch Pointe's ACH program so that future automatic bank debits can be canceled. 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 \$320 ACH discounted rate. Contact dmcfarland@birchpointe.net if there are any questions or concerns.

Note also that **parking hang tags for units being sold are to be returned to Jules**, 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 likewise and turn over their tags.** Remember that replacement fees for reissue of a hang tag is \$50. Your cooperation is most appreciated!

Note:

- Requests for DUCIOA forms needed for property transfer should be directed to Donald McFarland.
- **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.**



01-02-2024

Collections Report:

In general, the collections for 2023 were in the expected range, with the closing totals as of 12/31/2023 as follows:

91 or more days over due - \$32,940.00, and the total of delinquent accounts for 2023 was \$40,970.00.

Beginning April 1, 2024, any account that is found to be in arrears will have a penalty interest charge of 1.5% added to the balance due each month until the balance is paid in full. Accounts which are found to be delinquent for more than 5 months will be referred to Legal Counsel for collection.

THE BIRCH POINTE BOARD TAKES SUCH LONG TERM DELINQUENCIES SERIOUSLY !

- 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**
- HOA FEES ARE NOW \$340.00 monthly. If you pay your fees via the website's "PAY NOW" feature, be sure to change the AMOUNT to \$330.00 for credit card payments.**

Treasurer's Report:



November 2023 Financials

► Operating Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 124,494.22
Inflow – Operating Income:	\$	78,292.33
Inflow – One-time Transfers (from ORA*):	\$	0.00
Outflow – Operating Expenditure:	\$	53,705.05
Outflow – Capital Expenditure:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-Time Transfer (to ORA*):	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ 149,081.50

▶ Operational Reserve Account (ORA)

Beginning Balance:		\$ 5,490.78
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	0.09
Outflow – Periodic Transfers*:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>5,490.87</u>

▶ Reserve Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 461,285.11
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	1,518.96
Outflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-time Transfers:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>462,804.07</u>

December 2023 Financials

▶ Operating Account

Beginning Balance:		\$ 149,082.50
Inflow – Operating Income:	\$	88,660.00
Inflow – One-time Transfers (from ORA*):	\$	0.00
Outflow – Operating Expenditure:	\$	53,519.03
Outflow – Capital Expenditure:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-Time Transfer (to ORA*):	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>184,068.67</u>

▶ Operational Reserve Account (ORA)

Beginning Balance:		\$ 5,490.87
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	0.09
Outflow – Periodic Transfers*:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>5,490.96</u>

► **Reserve Account**

Beginning Balance:		\$ 462,804.07
Inflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Inflow – Interest:	\$	1,574.85
Outflow – Periodic Transfers:	\$	0.00
Outflow – One-time Transfers:	\$	0.00
Ending Balance:		\$ <u>464,378.92</u>

PETS

Residents who are renting their BIRCH POINTE Condo are not permitted to have pets according to the BY-laws of the Community. ALL PET OWNERS ARE REQUIRED TO CLEAN UP AFTER THEIR PETS AND TO KEEP DOGS ON LEASHES AT ALL TIME WHEN OUTSIDE YOUR RESIDENCE.

STOP SIGNS AND SPEEDING

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE SPEED LIMIT IN OUR COMMUNITY IS 10 MPH. STOP SIGNS ARE PLACED TO PROVIDE FOR SAFETY OF EVERYONE. IF YOU ARE IGNORING THE STOP SIGNS, YOU ARE RISKING SERIOUS INJURY TO YOUR NEIGHBORS, THEIR PETS, AND THEIR VISITORS. LIKewise, YOUR NEIGHBORS SHOULD NOT HAVE TO TAKE THEIR LIVES INTO THEIR HANDS WHEN CROSSING THE STREET TO A TRASH BIN OR MAILBOX.

PLEASE SLOW DOWN AND PAY ATTENTION TO STOP SIGNS! YOUR OWN LIFE MIGHT DEPEND ON THIS!

FIRE SAFETY

As noted in previous newsletters, all residents are to be sure that your Fireplace has been certified, approved, and the chimney cap removed before attempting to use. Contact our Maintenance supervisor, Jules Litchfield at jlitchfield@birchpointe.net if you need an inspection, or want to know the status of your fireplace.

ANNUAL MEETING OF HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The Annual Meeting of the Homeowners Association of Birch Pointe is being planned for April 27, 2024. The HOA Board will hold the meeting "in person" at a location to be determined at 10:00 AM. As plans for this meeting are developed, a special email will notify all Owners of the details of the meeting. For now, please put APRIL 27, 2024 on your calendars and plan to attend.

IF YOU HAVE NOT YET COMPLETED THE CENSUS FORM, PLEASE DO SO AND MAIL TO P.O.Box 1195, HOCKESSIN, DE 19707. RENTERS ARE ENTITLED TO A RESIDENT PARKING TAG IF THEIR LANDLORD SUBMITS A COMPLETE CENSUS FORM WITH RENTER'S VEHICLE INFORMATION AND REQUESTS THE ASSIGNED TAG FOR THE UNIT THEY ARE LEASING OUT.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CONVENIENT ACH METHOD FOR PAYING YOUR MONTHLY FEES, PLEASE SEE THE ACH FORM THAT FOLLOWS.

BIRCH POINTE DIRECTORY / IMPORTANT NUMBERS

➤ GENERAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS

Jules Litchfield – phone: (302) 277-7978; e-mail: jlitchfield@birchpointe.net



➤ MAINTENANCE ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

Maintenance staff (Jules) – e-mail: maintenance@birchpointe.net

➤ ACCOUNT STATEMENTS / HOA FEE /OR ACH QUESTIONS

Don McFarland – e-mail: dmcfarland@birchpointe.net

➤ BIRCH POINTE MAINTENANCE EMERGENCIES

phone: 1-302-277-7978; e-mail: maintenance@birchpointe.net

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