

Bel Pre Recreational Association (BPRA) Annual General Membership Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2021

Welcome, establish quorum, overview of agenda

President Karen Purdy called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm. The meeting was held by teleconference (using Zoom), with these teleconference participation guidelines in place:

- Use the Zoom chat function to ask questions
- You can raise your hand to be unmuted at the appropriate time to ask your questions.

The President noted that the BPRA is the homeowners' association that collects everyone's mandatory annual assessment (i.e., dues) and maintains and operates the pool and surrounding facilities.

The President announced that over 130 proxies have been received. As provided in Article VIII, § 5 of the BPRA By-Laws, the owners of 10% of the lots in the Association constitute a quorum. Therefore, the owners of 72 lots constitute a quorum for the annual general membership meeting. Article VIII, § 6 of the By-Laws (as amended December 4, 2018) provides that a lot may be represented by proxy for purposes of establishing a quorum. The requisite number of lots being represented by proxy, President Purdy declared that a quorum was present.

The President reminded the membership that the annual meeting is set up as an informational meeting and as a business meeting. On Tuesday December 7th, the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association and the BPRA are holding a virtual Town Hall meeting on Zoom. The Town Hall meeting is the more appropriate forum for open discussion.

The President extended her thanks to all the people who were attending the meeting on Zoom and everyone who turned in proxies and ballots.

Elections, including candidate statements

The President stated that the Board of Trustees is a 9-member board, with staggered terms so that 3 trustees are normally elected each year. Because there is currently a vacancy on the Board (as of October 2021), 4 Trustees will be elected this time. The 3 highest vote getters will be elected for 3-year terms and the fourth highest vote getter will be elected to fill the 2 years remaining in the vacant Board seat. BPRA officers for the following year are elected by the BPRA Board at its December meeting.

In accordance with § 12A(d) [now § 405(d)] of the BPRA Plan of Organization, ballots were mailed to every BPRA household. Ballots will continue to be received and accepted until Friday, November 19, at 7:30 pm, when the polls officially close.

Candidate profiles were published in the October edition of *The Bugle* and can be found on the annual meeting page of the community's website. The annual meeting page also covered the mechanics of voting. This year, due to COVID, voting was conducted by postal mail or through delivery to the ballot box outside the Treasurer's house.

The President announced the 4 candidates for the four seats on the Board of Trustees to be elected at this meeting: Ted Bechtol, Steve Jennison, Rod Oo, and Karen Purdy.

In accordance with § 405(b) of the BPRA Plan of Organization, each of the candidates (in alphabetical order) was given up to 5 minutes to speak. Bechtol, Jennison, and Purdy then spoke. Oo was not present.

At the end of the statements by the candidates, in accordance with § 405(h)(i) of the Plan of Organization, President Purdy announced that the counting of the ballots will take place on Zoom on Sunday, November 21, at 5:00 p.m. Any member who would like to attend that meeting (via Zoom) should contact Elections Committee Chair Dave Pullen. This announcement also will be posted on the community's website, on the annual meeting page. Results of the election will be posted on the website and at the pool no later than Sunday, November 27. (The full text of the COVID-19 era election rules also is posted on the website.)

Proposed By-Laws amendment

President Purdy presented the proposed amendment to Article XVI, § 1 of the By-Laws, that had been included in the notice of the annual meeting. The proposed amendment would revise Article XVI, § 1 to read "The fiscal year of the Association shall coincide with the calendar year, upon proper application to, and approval to do so by, the Internal Revenue Service." The President noted that the amendment will not change when the annual assessment is due, which will remain March 1 of each year (with a 30-day grace period before penalties for lateness are applied).

The results of the vote on the By-Laws amendment will be counted and announced at the same time as the results of the Board of Trustees election. Contact Elections Committee Chair Dave Pullen to attend that meeting (on Zoom).

Summary of BPRA activity (past and planned)

President Purdy expressed her thanks to Brenda Henry for all her many years of service to the community. Brenda is currently the BPRA's Administrative Assistant and has decided to step down at the end of the year. In honor of her service to the community, the Board will be dedicating a commemorative tree to Brenda on the pool grounds. The dedication ceremony will take place sometime in the spring or summer of 2022.

The President noted that the BPRA is run by volunteers. More volunteers are needed. Please contact President Purdy or any BPRA Board member about opportunities to participate, especially on committees and special projects.

Pool Opening

President Purdy reported that the pool opened on time in 2021 and operated in an almost-normal mode for the season. She expressed her hope to be back to business as usual in the summer of 2022. She expressed special thanks to:

- Joe Moeller and his team for getting the physical facilities ready to open and doing numerous maintenance jobs over the summer;
- The Emergency Response and Planning Committee for preliminary rules discussions; and

- The BPRA Board for putting together operating rules and procedures during the time of constantly changing COVID guidance leading up to the opening of the pool, and regularly approving revisions to these rules over the summer as circumstances permitted.

Physical Facilities Projects:

Tennis Courts

President Purdy reported that the biggest and most visible improvement to our facilities was the repair of the tennis courts and the conversion of one tennis court into 2 pickleball courts. This was a project that the Board had been trying to accomplish for a number of years, and took much effort to complete. The repair was anticipated by the BPRA Long Term Planning Committee's 5-Year Plan, and was completed within the budgeted amount. The President thanked Dave Pullen and the Tennis & Pickleball Courts Committee for making this happen.

Minor projects on the Courts facilities that remain are the possible addition of benches and a notice board. The Courts will be maintained with a yearly power washing and minor repairs, as needed, through a warranty program with the contractor that performed the recent repairs. Another project is a potential tennis/pickleball page on the BPRA's website.

Trees

President Purdy noted that tree removal, pruning and replanting has been proceeding on a yearly basis. 2021 saw several rounds of tree removal and pruning, including some unexpected work based on the concerns of neighboring members. Each year Ted Bechtol and an arborist identify and prioritize trees that need to be removed or pruned. The work then is scheduled with an eye towards safety and budget management. Based on the age of our facility and the surrounding trees, tree removal has increased in recent years. A replanting program also is underway, as the budget permits, with several trees and shrubs planted in the spring of 2021

Pool Filter replacement

President Purdy explained that the replacement of the main pool filters and related piping was completed in the spring of 2021. Though the filters were still functional, they were more than 25 years old and had outlived their expected life span. A filter failure during the pool season would have resulted in unplanned pool shutdowns and emergency replacement costs. This project was anticipated by the 5-Year Plan and completed within budget. The President thanked Joe Moeller for coordinating this work.

Reserve Study

President Purdy reported that, to support our physical facilities maintenance and meet the new requirements of the Maryland Homeowners Association Act, the BPRA will hire an outside expert to conduct a reserve study. The study will identify the lifespan and remaining usable life of our facilities, and the amount of money needed to maintain and eventually replace all major components. Starting with October 2022, the BPRA is required (by the new state law) to fund the reserve study results in the annual budget. The completed study should be available in spring or early summer of 2022.

Policy and procedure updates

President Purdy thanked the Governing Documents Committee for its rewriting of the BPRA Plan of Organization (approved by the Board at its November meeting). The Committee is planning to work in 2022 on the: documents retention policy, the conflicts of interest policy, and potentially the land use covenant enforcement policy

eSoft Planner

President Purdy reported that eSoft Planner is the BPRA's new online assessment collection and pool check-in system. This was the first year for BPRA to use the online system, as the Board contracted for its use in early 2021. As a new system, several bumps in the road were experienced both for its administration and its use. Our 2021 COVID guest rules did not help, and some quirks in the online system also were problematic. President Purdy noted that this coming year (2022) should go more smoothly as the processes are refined, instructions are improved, and members become more familiar with the system.

More information about use of the eSoft Planner online assessment collection and pool check-in system will be coming out early in 2022, both with the 2022 assessment notice and on the website. BPRA members feedback has fluctuated in assessing how easy or how hard it is to use the eSoft Planner system. The Board plans to work on simplifying the instructions members must follow to complete their online registrations, and hopes to organize events at the pool in the spring of 2022 to help people complete the online registration process.

The eSoft Planner public side has 2 main parts to it: (1) your Profile – basic information about you and your household, including family members and (2) Swim Membership – where you pay your assessment and set up pool check in. If you have information in your Profile but are not enrolled in a swim membership, you will not show up in the computer for pool check-in.

All members are encouraged to pay with a credit card online this coming year. Members will not be charged any fees to pay with a credit card, as BPRA will be absorbing those costs. Paying by credit card reduces the workload to process the assessment payments, especially for the Treasurer and our bookkeeper.

Guests

President Purdy reported that the Recreational Facilities Policy (the pool rules) has been revised to expand the relatives of members who are exempt from guest fees (Section 210 of the policy). Children, grandchildren, parents, and grandparents of Members are exempt from guest fees.

Potential Season Pass elimination

President Purdy reported that the BPRA Board is considering the elimination of the season pass option for pool use. Without the season pass option, BPRA members would need to complete both parts of the eSoft Planner system (the profile and the swim membership) to use the pool. President Purdy noted that a survey on the season pass option is ongoing and that members still have an opportunity to respond. Information on how to participate in the survey is available in the October issue of *The Bugle* and on the StrathmoreBelPre.org website. The Board intends to accommodate any concerns raised in feedback, including concerns about the impact on single-person households.

Budget

Treasurer Dave Pullen reviewed the recommended FY 23 Budget, covering the period March 1, 2022 to February 28, 2023, and invited members to comment, prior to the Board's acting to finalize the Budget at its January 2022 meeting. (NOTE: if the Bylaws Amendment up for vote this year is approved, the proposed budget amounts are unaffected and the proposed budget, if ratified by the Board, simply applies to the calendar year 2022.)

The Treasurer further noted that most of BPRA's spending focuses on the pool and the grounds. The budget does include pass-through items for the Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association and the Dolphins Swim Team. BPRA technology costs have increased because of eSoft Planner. The dues increase (which was previously approved by the General Membership) is being used to build up the Association's reserves. The Association is in a strong financial position to conduct its business; and the recommendations of the 5-Year Plan have been followed in the budget.

Collections of Overdue Assessments

Treasurer Pullen reported that after at least 3 attempts requesting payment, the Board will authorize referral of any homeowners who have not paid their BPRA annual assessment to the Association's law firm for collection action. This is part of BPRA's written Collections Policy.

The Treasurer also reported on the status of Assessment collections activity, noting that 85% of the members paid by the end of the grace period on March 31, 2021, but that other homeowners have made either no payment (15 homes) or only partial payment. A little over \$27,000 is due (including collection costs). The Treasurer expects that the Association will recapture it all. He also noted that the BPRA Assessment Assistance Committee is available for members who can demonstrate extraordinary circumstances keeping them from immediately paying their BPRA assessment.

Questions and Answers

Strathmore Bel Pre Civic Association Treasurer John Bogasky thanked BPRA President Purdy and the rest of the BPRA Board of Trustees for their work keeping the pool and other facilities operational throughout the COVID pandemic and for implementing the new software.

Adjournment

President Purdy again thanked everyone who was present and urged everyone to come to the annual Town Hall meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, December 7, at 8:00 p.m., on Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Swan, BPRA Secretary