

Unapproved Minutes

Annual Meeting

Spring Hills Estates Road Improvement and Maintenance Association, Inc.

September 15, 2024

- Call to Order:** Lisa Taylor-Cunningham, President, called the meeting to order at 3:09 pm. The meeting location was 4701 Golden Spring Circle with remote option via Zoom available.
- Roll Call:** Dianna Sommer, Secretary, reviewed proxies and accounted for shareholders in attendance via in person and via Zoom. Attendance consisted of eight (8) in person, five (5) via Zoom, and fourteen (11) proxies, for a total of twenty-four (24) shareholders represented. Twenty-two (22) homeowners are needed to reach a quorum. Lisa moved to certify the quorum and Mike Robbins seconded. The quorum was certified as attained at 3:11.
- Approve Agenda:** Lisa Taylor-Cunningham asked for a review of the agenda. She recommended moving the approval of the budget until after new business so we might hear the road committee report and the dues proposal. There were no other comments or changes requested. **Diane Carson** moved to accept the agenda with the change, seconded by **Glen Turner**, and was approved without objection.
- Approve Minutes:** Lisa Taylor-Cunningham asked for review of the Draft minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting. Diane Carson pointed out a typo, Mike Robbins, not Mike Price on the road committee. Diane also suggested we add in a comment regarding the exception for small security signs in front of house. **Pat Abood** moved to approve the minutes with corrections, seconded by **Mike Robbins**, and the motion was approved without objection.
- President's Report:** Twenty-twenty-three (2023) was again a challenging snow year but almost all the feedback on Glacier's Edge Maintenance (GEM), our snow removal vendor, was very positive. Many homeowners in the neighborhood are using them as well. We recommend going with GEM again for the 2024/25 season. Their flat rate bid for the season shows a 5% increase.
- We did not do any road work this summer. Overall, the road is in pretty good shape. We do expect to start paving again in 2025.
- Treasurer's Report** There was a motion to move the Treasurers Report, new budget, to after New Business to allow for discussion by road committee and proposed change in dues. Glen made the motion and Dean Carson seconded it.

Patrick Cunningham reviewed the current standing of the budget and cash. All assessments were collected. The exception is that one homeowner has only paid half and is making payments. This is a financial hardship case.

He highlighted that we did pay insurance after the draft budget was sent out so the numbers are a bit different. Overall, we have approximately \$100,700 cash on hand.

Four properties sold during the 2023/24 year and we collected money from resale certificates.

Because of the high cash standing, the board proposed reducing dues by \$100, to \$850 annually.

Old Business

Snow Removal Services: GEM

Discussion about what was included in the snow removal bid. Grading and sanding were provided by vendor as needed. They were proactive at providing these services, but they were not in the base bid. This amount was \$1300 for 2023/24.

Lisa was primary contact with the vendor. Homeowners were encouraged to contact the board rather than contact the vendor directly. This is for clarity.

Road Committee Report

The neighborhood Road Committee is currently comprised of Dean Carson, Patrick Abood and Mike Robbins. Dean made the report from the road committee. Below is the written report submitted to the Board.

Traffic, Speed Limits, and Signage

We had discussions with traffic engineers at the Muni. We talked about the issues of speeding, cars sliding off the roadway, children at risk, high traffic volumes from people cutting through to/from O'Malley and the adjoining subdivisions. We discussed the existing signage and speed humps.

Here is a summary of our discussion:

1) Changing speed limits would only affect those who are already following prudent speeds. Most drivers drive at a speed that they consider to be comfortable, regardless of the posted speed limit. Before and after studies have shown that there are no significant changes in average vehicle speeds following the posting of new or revised speed limits. Furthermore, research has found no direct relationship between posted speed limits and accident frequency.

2) Striping the centerline actually increases driver speed because they become more confident that they have an established lane.

3) More signs reduce the effectiveness of existing signs. (This may result in the removal of the speed limit sign between the double speed humps, since it blocks the "Curves Ahead" and cautionary "15 mph" signs. They will check their database of signs in the neighborhood.) The S-curve warning sign and speed limit sign were both installed based on neighbor requests many years ago.

4) "Children at Play" signs distract drivers from seeing children in the roadway and should be removed. "Children at Play" signs are not recognized by the State of Alaska or the Federal Highway Administration as official traffic control devices – and are no longer installed on public streets in Anchorage.

5) Speed humps are difficult to get approved, so additional humps would not be recommended.

6) Through traffic will be studied and quantified. This study will be done in September and October of 2024. Generally, this time of year is when Muni staff collects a lot of their data on local roads because school is back in session, and they can get a better feel of how traffic circulates through the neighborhood. The data will be processed and turned into a report sometime in October for most of these neighborhood streets that have had similar requests. The last study was done in 2014.

Cut-Through: Drivers using neighborhood streets as a cut-through route is a common cause of speeding. If the evaluation of Our Rd shows that additional traffic calming devices would be merited it could reduce the quantity of cut-through traffic if they are forced to go even slower across this cut-through route.

Road Maintenance/Service Areas: Because Spring Hill Dr falls outside of the Anchorage Roads and Drainage Service Area (ARSDA), it is not eligible for additional traffic calming devices through the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. As mentioned above, Our Rd is an ARSDA road and would be eligible for traffic calming projects which could help the speeding problem on Spring Hill Drive. Below is an excerpt from the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program Policy Manual:

"The Department will also work with the Homeowners Association outside of any other established service area....A Homeowners Association will need to provide a request letter to the Traffic Engineer that indicates assurance of financial responsibility of construction and maintenance of any devices approved."

The characteristics of Spring Hill Dr and the presence of existing speed humps means there are only a few paths forward that would likely yield meaningful results.

1. Radar Speed sign (Posts "Your Speed.")
2. Diverter (an island or other means to narrow the roadway)

7) The hills in the subdivision already have advisory speeds of 15 mph. As far as people sliding off the roadway despite signs and speed humps: "You can't fix stupid."

8) Additional stop signs: It is generally bad practice to use stop signs to slow down traffic. Stop signs are a good tool to control the orderly flow of traffic at busier intersections, but when it is put in for the purpose of slowing cars down, the drivers can become accustomed to not seeing opposing traffic at the 3-way stop and will begin to roll through the stop sign or blow through it altogether. Studies consistently show that "unwarranted" stop signs are not effective at reducing speeds through a neighborhood. The Muni is proactively removing these "unwarranted" stop signs in different places around Anchorage when have projects come through to slow down traffic with physical devices like speed humps.

2024 Roadwork

10 years ago, the long-term plan was to accomplish \$10,000 of asphalt overlay each year. This was deemed to be preferred over annual crack sealing. This plan changed to \$20,000 every two years to improve efficiency. We got about 50 percent complete. The pandemic interrupted the work, and it has not restarted. This was due to the increased cost of paving due to lack of labor and increased asphalt costs.

In 2023 we accomplished much needed crack sealing, and it was not necessary to do it again this year.

I propose that we budget \$50,000 next year to get back into the plan to have the entire road resurfaced.

Additionally, Spring Hill Drive on the curves to/from Abbott Road has exposed asphalt edges. This will allow the roadway edges to begin cracking. There may be some other areas that will require similar work. I propose that we budget \$10,000 to have these areas filled with topsoil and grass. Per the covenants, shareholders will be responsible for maintaining the area adjacent to their lots.

Lisa thanked Dean for his report. No action at this time.

Signage and Road hazard: Healthy discussion of child safety and options to slow down traffic. Andrea Allen questioned what can be done to slow down traffic on Spring Hill. Their house and the Matthew house across the street have children that often play together just after the curve at the south end of Spring Hill. They had "child at play signs" until they were told by the board to take them down.

Can we put a stop sign at Silver Spring Circle?

More speed humps?

Dean pointed out that these suggestions have already been made to the Muni in years past. The Muni's response was that we already have as much signage as possible; more would be distracting to the drivers and thus less safe. Speed humps provide a challenge to emergency vehicles. Muni cites evidence that "Child at Play" signs are not effective. Susan Miller, and several others, expressed solidarity with Andrea. Susan suggested we might write to our city council member for help

Dean said if we were to add a stop sign ourselves or change road way, the Muni will take it down and fine us.

Question to Andrea was did she feel the signs in her yard were effective? She responded Yes.

Pat Abood commented that he found the neon "child at play" effective for him. **Question** was could be find a way to allow these signs? Best one of these signs was "Drive like you live here".

Motion: If you wish to put up a temporary "child at play sign" make a formal request to the road committee. Motion made by Mike Robbins and seconded by Ben Montes. Motion approved without objection.

Ivan Bucinsky also asked about signage at the northern end of Spring Hill Drive. Although they did some work to recontour their drive to increase visibility, it is still very dangerous. He questioned who took down the Speed Hump sign by his house. Comment was that it was taken down by the city after our request for a review.

The city has planned a road study for Our Road and Spring Hill drive, due to start after school begins, so now. This report should be concluded in October. Suggest that we wait for the study results before we contact the Muni again.

2024 Roadwork. The recommendation was that we return to paving in 2025 and keep the amount at \$25K. Webb Paving appears to still be in business despite reports to the contrary. The road committee has noticed areas on the big curve where the area next to the pavement is washing out from water. It is recommended to pack this area with dirt and plant grass to minimize erosion. The subdivision might pay for the work but the homeowners would need to maintain it.

Mike Robbins discussed water issues with respect to his drive. He has done some work in the past but the problem still exists. Problem is that grass has grown up and doesn't allow the water to enter the culvert so it flows to the first place it can, which is Mike's driveway.

Pat Abood pointed out that we have low areas in the neighborhood, also in front of the Sommer and Montes house on Silver Spring Circle. It

would be very hard, and prohibitively expensive, to regrade the neighborhood. There just isn't anywhere for the water to go.

Mike Robbins asked if there were any actions? No

WhatsApp – status of Spring Hill group. This group was set up last fall but saw very little interest. Dianna will send out information on this again.

Status of 4601 Golden Spring covenant Waiver Request: The Board engaged a lawyer, Mike Jungreis, to look into this matter. Basically, he said we could file a lawsuit to stop it but it would cost at least \$10K and would have a 60% chance of success. In November, the Board sent a note to the homeowner that we didn't object to the addition of driveway access onto Jupiter. The second part of the process for the homeowner was to get approval from Jupiter folks. As far as we know, nothing has been done yet.

New Business

Treasurer's Report Patrick Cunningham presented the 2024/25 budget as sent to the homeowners. Key items in the budget included the GEM bid of \$21,546 for plowing, \$1300 for sanding and grading, \$25,000 for paving and a \$100 reduction in annual dues.

Pat Abood suggested we try and negotiate with the vendor for a reduction or at least no rise in the contract. He does this routinely in his business and suggested that the road committee might be in a better position to negotiate. The Board must approve the contract, but Lisa agreed that the road committee would be in a more effective position.

Glen Turner suggested that we could leave the current amount in the budget as a not to exceed and allow the road committee to negotiate

Glen also stated that as much as she would like a reduction in dues, she also understands that there will be a need for future road work. It is better to pay a little now than a lot later. Diane Carson agreed with this view. Pat Abood also agreed.

There was also discussion about how much money should be in the budget for paving in the coming year. This amount is currently set at \$25K. There is also \$25K from the 2023/24 budget that was not spent. Since we don't know what the road will look like in the spring and don't have a current bid for work, it was suggested that we leave the amount in as is and reevaluate in the spring.

Motion: Glen Turner moved to approve the budget with the dues unchanged from last year. Mike Robbins seconded. The motion carried without objection. 2024/25 Dues will remain at \$950.

Election of Board: Three positions on the Board are open for 2024-2025.

Lisa Taylor-Cunningham confirmed that she is stepping down. Patrick Cunningham and Dianna Sommer agreed to be considered for the coming year.

Andrea Allen and Mike Robbins both agreed to be considered for the board.

Patrick Cunningham nominated by Ben Montes Seconded **Dean Carson**
Dianna Sommer nominated by Dean Carson seconded by **Pat Abood**
Andrea Allen nominated by Lisa Taylor-Cunningham seconded by Glen Turner

Mike Robbins nominated by Pat Abood seconded by **Diane Carson**
All accepted the nomination. We will have 4 board members for 2024/25.

Next Meeting: The next Annual Meeting will be held on the third Sunday in September per the By Laws. This will be September 21, 2025, at 3:00 pm, location TBD.

Adjournment: Mike Robbins motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by Dean Carson. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.