

I'On Assembly Board of Trustees Meeting
August 21, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Julie Hussey, Bob Adams, Lon Waggoner, Stephen Wood, Michael Spalding, and Simon O'Shea

Management Company: Emily Simpson

Absent: Mary James

Homeowner Forum: Monika Bonn Miller, 37 Jane Jacobs; Leah Lindemuth, 67 Sanibel; Antonia Fokas, 34 Fernandina; Richard Bondy, 107 Civitas St.; Tara Plummer, 182 Ionsborough; LaVon McNaughton, 137 Jake's Lane; Nancy Carstens, 108 Civitas St.; Richard Bennett, 14 Fernandina; Brian Wildstein, 15 Frogmore; Alex Chalmers, 17 Duany

Guests: Lt. Don Calabrese and Lt. Trevor Simmons from Mt. Pleasant Police Department

Monika Bonn Miller joined the meeting to inform everyone, that she and Leah Lindemuth have been speaking with Ginger Black, and they will be bringing back the community wide yard sale on the first Saturday in November. An ad will be put in the Post & Courier and will also be posted to Nextdoor.

Richard Bondy joined the homeowners forum to inform the Board that they temporarily have a window unit AC on the second floor of their garage. The unit will be in place for a couple of months, as they are working on remediating mold.

Leah Lindemuth joined the meeting to discuss safety, security and crime with the Lieutenants present from the Mount Pleasant Police Department. Leah followed up with Emily on the non-working dock cameras, and wanted to know specifically how long they had not been in operation for. Emily stated that the cameras worked off and on for a long time, but recently have stopped working. Leah wanted to know if we are attempting to fix the cameras, and Emily told her that the Amenities committee has been working very hard at this and in figuring out what the best solution would be for this area. Simon chimed in and stated that this is something we have been looking into non-stop for the past two years, and is an extremely hostile environment and with tenant issues in allowing or helping us install any equipment to fix the problem. Companies have been out and provided

us quotes, and they all involve some sort of cooperation from the tenant in the Creek Club. Since we are in an active arbitration with the tenant in the Creek Club, they have been less acquiesce to our request. But we have absolutely been working on fixing the issue.

Monika asked about installing cameras at the entrances, and wanted to know if it would be a deterrent for any crimes. Lt. Simmons stated that the cameras at entrances would not be a deterrent, but more of a tool. Lt. Calabrese mentioned that cameras are good for evidence but do not prevent things from happening. They both recommended to remind owners to lock their cars at night and use lights to deter any crimes. Monika asked the Lieutenants if they recommended neighborhood watches. Lt. Calabrese said that the purpose of neighborhood watches was for neighbors to come together to share information, and was highly popular previously during the time of no cell phones, emails, Nextdoor, etc. Now, Nextdoor seems to have taken the place of neighborhood watches, as you join your specific neighborhood and can post alerts to inform other neighbors.

LaVon McNaughton joined the homeowners forum to ask for an update on the Creek Club lawsuit and when the Assembly may expect the payment of the funds and what the total principle amount comes to. Julie stated that the total that has been set aside is just over \$2.1 million, and we are unsure how that amount will be divided up. Julie informed everyone that we have invited Justin Lucey and his team to come present to the community on October 19 which will be held at Town Hall in the Council Chambers, so there is enough space for residents to attend, and we are expecting everything to be resolved prior to this presentation. Julie stated that the funds are being held in the court, and there is a tiny amount to collect, but the rest of it is in place and should not take a long time to receive. Stephen mentioned that there are a lot of other expenses and fees to be paid from the gross amount and the check the Assembly will receive will not be near the gross total amount.

Tara Plummer joined wanting to understand that there are not any additional plans to add lighting or surveillance throughout the community, and if it is recommended that owners provide additional lighting and surveillance to their properties.

Before proceeding to the open forum with the Mount Pleasant Police Department, Julie asked if any other homeowners had any non-safety related questions. LaVon asked if the outcome of the Creek Club lawsuit would allow us more access to the Creek Club and Bob stated this does not change as the Assembly has a lease

agreement with the current tenant in the Creek Club. And in order for this to change, the Assembly needs to wait until the initial lease term is up and to pay the \$1million to have the remainder of the lease terminated.

Lieutenant Calabrese thanked the Board for having himself and Lt. Simmons present at the Board meeting. He proceeded to inform those present about the set-up of the police department. There are 8 patrol districts and falls on a first line supervisor and they report to a bureau commander, who then report to a captain. The department rotates officers in and out of communities, so you get to see different people and supervisors, in order to not get stuck on the same one person. Lt. Calabrese stated if anyone sees anything out of place to call them, and to dial 911 instead of the consolidated dispatch center. The dispatch center answers calls for all of Charleston County, so when you call you get a call taker and as they are typing it, another dispatcher reads it and dispatches the correct agency. Lt. Calabrese said they want residents to call for any sort of matter, because it is a puzzle, and any pieces of information will be helpful in solving crimes. Lt. Calabrese presented some recent numbers he received from the crime analyst, and last week in Olde Park there were 2 stolen vehicles both with keys left in them and doors unlocked, and last month in I'On two vehicles were also stolen, 3 out of the 4 have been recovered and 1 is still outstanding. The police find that the majority of these cases are because keys are left in cars with doors unlocked. Lt. Simmons touched on remote keyless entry into cars, and if the key fob is within a certain proximity of the vehicle, the vehicle can be unlocked and turned on. Monika asked if keeping the keyless fob in a metal box would help to block the signal. Lt. Calabrese and Lt. Simmons are not familiar with this approach and have not heard if it works or not. They also reported that in August there had been a total of 15 car break -ins Town wide and out of the 15, 13 were unlocked and were in residential neighborhoods. The MPPD is seeing that when cars are close together, people will come through and see which cars are unlocked and they are looking for cash, guns and any high dollar amount items. Leah asked Lt. Calabrese and Lt. Simmons to speak about gang activity within the community. Lt. Simmons stated that gang activities have increased and is a sensitive subject dealing with certain areas as it turns into trying to prove the gang activity. Gang activity doesn't take more than a couple of people to form a gang and does not have to have colors or some type of identity. Richard Bondy asked if he understood them correctly, that if we see something that should be reported that we call 911, Lt. Calabrese confirmed that yes, you should dial 911. Richard touched on the fact that typically 911 is called for a life-threatening emergency and Lt. Simmons that the system will filter the

call to a non-life threatening line. The police needs any and all sorts of information in order to track incidents. Some communities that get hit repeatedly, is because they do not lock their cars, and the word gets out. Nancy Carstens thanked everyone, and stated she is looking for a recommendation for security cameras and lights and asked for when people speak to state their names since she is remote. Lt. Simmons said ethically they, the police department, cannot provide recommendations, however, Tara Plummer stated she recently had cameras installed and will provide the company information to Nancy. Tara mentioned she had a question about lighting, because there is a park in the back of her property and it is very dark at night, and asked if it would be recommended to add down lighting in the trees and asked if it would help be a deterrent. Lt. Calabrese said that lights are one of the best deterrents for crime. Lon mentioned he understands being proactive and not reactive by dialing 911, and asked what would be the best way to educate our residents. Lt. Calabrese said they periodically post about the 9pm routine on Nextdoor, basically to tell people to lock cars, turn on porch lights, etc, and suggest notifying as many residents as possible of these things. Lon asked if they are able to talk about an incident that has been reported to MPPD with pictures, license plate numbers, etc. specifically a vehicle doing donuts in the Creek Club parking lot. Lt. Calabrese commented that he has all the information and still needed to do a bit of research, as they need to identify a victim. Bob informed them that the HOA, I'On Assembly, is the victim in this case. Lon brought up the ongoing activity in Phase 11 and speeding through the community. Lt. Calabrese reiterated that it is important to call 911 and report any suspicious activity. While the Lieutenants were present, Julie mentioned that the HOA owns the Creek Club, docks and marsh walk and the current tenant hires off duty police officers for the events and sometimes the information is not clear on how it works which causes residents to be frustrated. Julie asked when the next citizens police academy is, and Lt. Calabrese stated it is coming up. Julie praised the program and encouraged residents to attend the multi-week course. Lt. Simmons stated they are trying to do a program called Coffee with a Cop, and said they would like to work together and set something up for the community. Emily will be in touch with Lt. Calabrese and Lt. Simmons in setting up Coffee with a Cop.

Call to Order: 7:02PM by Julie Hussey

Approval of Minutes:

Bob Adams provided Emily with some amendments to the July 17 meeting minutes. Stephen Wood made a motion to approve the amended July 17, 2023 I'On Assembly Meeting Minutes. Bob Seconded. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

President's Report:

Julie mentioned that the President's report occurred during the homeowner's open forum, when a resident asked about the update for the Creek Club lawsuit.

Julie stated that the CV-9 committee has been meeting regularly and will be having another meeting to learn more about the property and the data that was collected from the Preserve I'On website.

Treasurer Report:

Bob pointed out that our legal fees to date total around \$72,000 in legal fees, and have received an additional \$38,000 in legal invoices which puts us at \$110,000 which is over the budgeted amount of \$80,000. This has an impact on whether the expenses will exceed the budgeted amount and the finance committee is making a detailed review on the spending. We were also hit with an unexpected increase above the 15-20% we budgeted for the insurance renewals, and came out to be \$15,000 over the budgeted amount.

Bob mentioned that the committee is just now beginning to work on the preparation of the draft 2024 budget. Bob pointed out that Emily does the main work on preparing the draft budget, and the committees plan is to present a recommended 2024 budget to the Board in the October or November Board meeting. Bob stated that costs for legal, insurance and landscaping will be increasing in the 2024 budget, along with the reserve study recommendation of putting \$300,000 into the reserve fund. He wanted to make this known as we continue to work on the budget.

Julie questioned the current deficit of (\$130,918) and Bob mentioned that as of now the committee is thinking it will be somewhere between \$60-\$130k, but we are trying to take a deeper dive into it. What makes it difficult is that some expenses are paid at the beginning of the year and other expenditures finish in the middle of year, which makes it difficult to project expenses for the upcoming months, and as of now we are expecting a shortfall for this year. Stephen and Michael asked what happens when there is a shortfall and where the funds come

from. Bob stated that the funds will come from the reserve account, which will then be owed back to the reserve account in 2024.

Michael asked how property sales are going in the community. Bob said we are catching up on the budgeted amount for transfer fees and in July we collected around \$15,000 in transfer fees.

Simon brought up that there are numerous items that need to be budgeted for in 2024 for repairs and/or replacements. There were discussions amongst the Board about this and Emily reiterated that the capital and reserve budget is approved in March or April of each year, and the operating budget does not include these types of projects. Also stated that it will be a multiyear project to update the playgrounds and several other items that are aging and need to be updated. Bob asked for all the committees to identify specific issues that need to be addressed.

Michael asked if there is a plan or a resource to use for planning out expenses that are aging and will need to be addressed in the next couple of year. Emily stated that this is where the reserve study is extremely helpful, as it lists all the infrastructure items, along with playgrounds, bulkheads, etc. and their remaining economic years.

Amenity Report:

Simon reported that the amphitheater and playground subcommittees will reconvene after summer vacations.

He mentioned last week, American Dock & Marine replaced several severely rusted bolts at the boat ramp landing, along with a piece of wood that was failing.

Lon asked about the paint on the main dock ramp and that it has gotten worse. Emily reminded Lon and Simon that the Board decided to wait until the boating season comes to a close before repainting it, which will still be under warranty. Simon stated some of the boards might need to be replaced, and Emily said that replacing any boards will be the only added cost since the paint is still under warranty, but this is on Emily's radar to have completed in late October or early November. Simon also asked if Emily can check with them on the product they use, because it does not seem to hold up well with the amount of foot traffic we have at the docks.

Simon reported that numerous wooden boards along the marsh trail have been replaced. Simon asked Emily about a plan to prune back areas on the trail where it is getting narrow and asked if the Greenery walks the trail to prune areas that need

pruning. Emily stated that the Greenery had started this week on cutting back areas where vegetation has been growing into the path causing the path to be narrower in certain areas. We hope this will be completed no later than the end of next week. Michael asked about the tree roots and areas on the path that are showing erosion. Emily informed the Board that the Landscaping committee is aware of this and have asked the Greenery's construction team to walk the path and identify ways for us to prevent the ongoing erosion of the path. Recently, the committee received a quote to top dress the path which was around \$40,000 but instead of spending this amount of money the Landscape committee agreed it was important to come up with a plan to help prevent any further erosion.

Lastly, Simon informed the Board that the inspections for the playgrounds will be completed in September, since the company has been busy with inspecting school playground inspections.

Landscape and Infrastructure Report:

Julie presented the Landscape and Infrastructure report, and pointed out that the top dressing of Saturday Rd park and Maybank Green south-side path have been completed, along with installing the Loropetalum plants in Perseverance Park and drift roses in the island at Boathouse Close.

Julie touched on the conversations the committee has been having with the Greenery regarding top dressing the marsh trail. Years ago, when there were less houses it was easier to transport the gravel to the path, and nowadays it is harder and more labor intense, which is the reasoning for the high cost. Committee members are very good at notifying Emily of any issues along the marsh trail.

The committee has been working on getting the best services for our landscaping contract, such as reviewing other contracts from other companies or a part time member with horticulture experience. Julie mentioned that our landscape crew has a new crew leader who used to be a spray technician for the Greenery and is currently being trained in the new position. It is important that the committee continues to work with the Greenery to maintaining the beauty of I'On.

Lastly, Julie asked if there is anyone who would be interested to serve on the Landscape and Infrastructure committee to reach out to Emily. Currently there are 3 members, and there used to be members with engineering experience, which would be great to have back on the committee.

Covenants Report:

Lon reported that there are currently 23 properties who are actively being sent violation letters for non-compliance. There has been an increase in response time to violations once the letters are sent.

A motion was presented to the Board from the committee that was discussed in executive session, for fining a property for outstanding violations for landscaping and exterior maintenance \$100 a week. *Stephen seconded. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

IDC Liaison Report:

Stephen reported that roughly 100 items have been presented to the IDC this year, and July and August are a little slow due to summer vacations but anticipate the rate to increase a bit.

Stephen stated that earlier today he had circulated a communication to the Board which will be sent to residents via email blast and in the newsletter to allow for a roughly 30-day period for public comment on the revised IDC guidelines. Stephen mentioned the main changes are reducing sections which were repeated in several areas of the guidelines, reducing the ambiguity by using the word “should” versus “must” or “may”. There were no material changes to make any guideline more restrictive than previously.

Bob stated he appreciates Stephen’s willingness to present the revised guidelines to the community to obtain feedback and is important to give our residents a say with these guidelines.

Communications Committee:

Michael mentioned there are 50 additional copies of the 2023 directory, and if you need one, please pick one up from the I’On Assembly management office.

Michael said owners need to contact Emily to update their contact information for next years directory.

Lastly, Michael informed the Board that the directory advertising revenue will be below budget for the year by about \$3k-\$4k.

Bob mentioned the need for the Board to take a more proactive approach to phase 11, even though the Assembly is not liable if anything happens. He is aware that the I’On Company met with the Mount Pleasant Police Department, and the no

trespassing signs were removed. He asked if the Board should meet with Vince and encourage him to somehow secure the area. Three board members indicated a willingness to meet with Vince Graham only to discuss resolving the existing and ongoing trespassing and nuisance activities on Phase 11 but the board made no decision at the meeting if or when such a meeting would take place.

Secretary: No Report

Other Business:

There being no further business to come before the Board of Trustees, the meeting adjourned at 8:16pm. The next meeting will be on September 18, 2023 at 6:00PM and will be held at 159 Civitas Street.

Respectfully submitted by _____
Michael Spalding, Board Secretary