

COUNTRYSIDE PROPRIETARY
GROUPS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
November 15, 2023

1) CALL TO ORDER

- Meeting Called to Order via remote attendance at 7:03PM.
- Attendees: Penny Francke (Chair), Pamela McGraw (Oakridge), Diane Blunt (Welbourne), Terri Hess (Foxfield), Barbara O'Connor (Belmont), James Krips (Rokeby), Timothy Shamble (Oatlands), Tim Pope (PMP), Matt O'Donnell (Advantage Landscape)
- Absent: Ron McNulty (Morven)

2) COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATION

- Approval of the Agenda. Terri moved to approve the agenda as written; Barb seconded. Jim asked if this was the correct time to add an agenda item. Penny advised that agenda items should be submitted to the Chair and Tim Pope at the latest in the week before the meeting, so that the agenda can be finalized and distributed in a timely fashion. Jim asked to add "PMP Oversight of contract work" to the agenda; agenda with addition approved unanimously. (Please note the added item was NOT addressed due to time overruns.) Jim moved to accept the October 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes as written; Barb seconded. Approved unanimously.
- Terri moved to confirm the unanimous e-vote approval to award the 2024 contracts for Landscaping, Snow Removal, and Tree Services to Advantage; Barb seconded. Approved unanimously.
- Penny updated the Committee on further negotiations with Republic, including changes in bulk pickup (charges will apply) and price adjustments, all of which were reflected in the BOD Budget discussions. Terri moved to approve the Republic amended contract; Barb seconded. Approved unanimously.
- Barb moved to confirm the unanimous e-vote to award the contract for the Powell retaining wall to A&A Fence; Terri seconded. Approved unanimously. Work scheduled to begin December 1, 2023.

3) RESIDENT & GUEST PARTICIPATION (5-minute limit per speaker)

- None.

4) ADVANTAGE ITEMS

- Monthly Report
 - a) Matt advised that regular mowing, trimming, edging, and weeding has ended for the season.
 - b) Leaf Removal scheduled week of 11/13.
 - (1) Diane reminded Advantage NOT to remove White Pine Tags and to blow the majority of those fallen pine tags back under the White Pines, to serve as a natural, self-provided mulch.

- (2) Tim Shamble had forwarded an inquiry from a resident about shredding the leaves to use as mulch. Matt explained that Advantage's equipment doesn't shred the leaves sufficiently for this; they'd have to take the leaves to a recycling center for processing into shredded leaf mulch, which is more expensive than just buying leaf mulch. This is not an economical approach for this year; the committee can consider other alternatives next season. Pamela had already submitted a September Courier article on how residents could process their leaves into mulch. Advantage will investigate options for next year and will report how many truckloads they collect this year.
- c) Plant replacements: Pamela is concerned about 4 Beautyberries at the pond that she thought were not doing well; she believes it is too late and that the plants are dormant; cannot determine the health of the dormant plant. Matt supports planting dormant plants and feels this is the best time to put them in. Matt pointed out that the plants will be covered under warranty, and will be replaced if they are unacceptable in the Spring. Pamela requested that the plants installed be compared against the varieties specified on the invoice.
- d) The second lime application is scheduled for December. Jim Krips expressed concern that several areas in Rokeby were missed in the first lime and aeration treatment; Matt committed to get Rokeby caught up once the soil retesting and possible third lime treatment is done.
- Pamela made a motion to **not** accept Advantage's Invasives Removal proposal; Diane seconded it in order to discuss it. Pamela would like to set expectations, scope, and objectives. Diane and Terri to follow up with Tim P to make sure their areas of concern are included on targeted lists. Matt raised concerns that many areas need attention, including areas of English Ivy, Greenbriar vines, and honeysuckle; he suggests treating 50' into the woods, rather than 10'; otherwise the invasives will grow back too quickly. Penny reminded the Committee that bids for grounds (and other) work over \$5,000 require three quotes; when Jim questioned that requirement, Penny read from Resolution 48, Contracts/Bid Policy and Guidelines, Section 1 (q.v.). Advantage can provide smaller quotes for specifically targeted areas to allow the committee to manage its remaining budget more efficiently. Matt advised that the quoted work will be for cutting back the invasives, but chemical treatment (which may be required later) would have to be bid separately. The motion to NOT accept the submitted proposal was approved unanimously.
 - Spring Annuals: Matt needs a decision in January. Matt to put together a proposal so the committee can e-vote in January.
 - Monument Sign Plantings Discussion: Pamela believes the installation does not match what was decided upon. Matt agrees the Potentillas should be white. Matt and Pamela will meet on site with the crew to review requested adjustments. Tim P will coordinate the timing.
 - Diervilla Discussion: Pamela believes the newly installed Diervilla on Algonkian are sub-par stock. Matt notes that they are under warranty; if they don't flush out in the Spring, he will replace them. Pamela requests that going forward, Advantage should not deliver stock that looks like those Diervilla.
 - Tree List: Tim P and Advantage are working on a proposal for tree work to address the remaining items on the Tree List; Matt is confident that the proposal will address all the trees that were left on the Tree List as Priorities 2 and 3 (Priority 1 trees have already been addressed). Policy reminder: For trees that come down in wooded areas, the debris is left in the wooded area.

5) Pond Report

- AEC monthly report reviewed. Tim P will follow up with AEC and fountain vendor to determine the best winter plan for the fountain/aerator.

6) PMP REPORT

- Monthly Financial, Major Projects, Invoice Tracking reports and future expenditures reviewed.
 - a) Pamela mentioned that she would like to plant some milkweed around the pond, but it is getting too late in the year so maybe do it in the Spring.
 - b) The Committee agreed that any remaining Grounds budget funds after invasives would be used for tree removal.
- Tree list
 - a) Tim P is working through the list in priority order (see previous discussion on upcoming bid). Jim asked about a common tree limb overhanging private property; Tim P had already asked the contractor to remove it while they were on the property and they did not do it so he will have them go back on Friday.

7) OLD BUSINESS

- Oatlands Stream Enhancement Update: A third bidder declined to bid because it was too small a job. Looking for a third bidder; required for this scope of work. Virginia Wetlands says we do not need permits if we don't go into the stream, so we need to decide exactly what we want to do because we could then re-scope the project. The Permit discussion is complex, and we have gotten mixed input from the various vendors. One says if we touch the stream, we need a permit (not sure from whom); another vendor said if you don't touch below the tree line, you don't need a permit. The root system is holding the bank, so if you cut the tree, and leave the stump/roots, they will eventually decay and impact erosion. We need advice on scope and permitting requirements from Chris Stone, the Loudoun County contact, but he is difficult to reach. Scope should be clarified in 2024.
- Neighborhood Signs: Jim moved to accept the proposal for 23 Aluminum Composite Material (ACM) signs from Signs By Tomorrow for an amount NTE \$35,000; Barb seconded the motion. The ACM signs have a life expectancy of 15-20 years (versus 7-9 years for the "3-D" PVC signs). Selection of the ACM option will allow the Committee—with Board approval for advancing additional Reserve funds—to replace all 23 "neighborhood" signs (i.e., all but "CountrySide" signs) at the same time instead of in multiple phases spread out over 20+ years (as suggested in the Reserve Study), which will mitigate the risk of consistent product availability, differing color/dye lots, fading, cost increases, design changes, etc. It also eliminates the need to prioritize 1-2 neighborhoods' signs at a time for replacement over other neighborhoods over multiple replacement cycles. Motion approved unanimously.

- At 777 & Cromwell there is a CountrySide sign with an unsightly wooden contraption around it. Tim P to take a look at it for removal of the wooden framing.
- Parking Resolutions 233 and 234 have been reviewed by legal and revised to reflect that advice. Resolution 125 requires the President and Secretary to issue an opinion on whether proposed/revised resolutions impact the rights and privileges of owners/residents; once those opinions are available, both the Resolutions and the opinion will be published in the Courier and on the website for resident review and comment, with a Board of Directors vote to be scheduled after the required review period.

8) NEW BUSINESS

- Tree Removal Bids: Pamela moved to accept Destiny Tree Services' bid in the amount of \$23,512.50 to address the Priority 2 and 3 trees on the Tree List; Terri seconded the motion. The Committee discussed the uncertainties in the Destiny bid (e.g., comments like "tree not found") and was not confident that the scope of work was aligned with the tree list. The motion was withdrawn. Terri moved to accept the Advantage bid in an amount NTE \$25,000 for the work. Tim P confirmed that he and Matt (Advantage) had closely reviewed the tree list, and he was confident that the scope of work matched the requirements of the tree list. Five (5) Yes votes, one (1) No (Pamela/OakRidge). Motion carried.
- PMP oversight of contracts – Added to agenda at the beginning but not discussed due to lack of time. Jim requests moving it to the next meeting.

9) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- 2024 Budget Update: Grounds 2024 budget was reduced slightly. Based on feedback during the BOD Budget Meetings, Penny advises that the Grounds Committee tries to spread its spending out more evenly throughout the year, wherever possible. It should be noted that there are contingency funds for storm damage and snow removal; in fact, the snow contingency fund has sufficient funding that the 2024 line item for snow removal was reduced to \$0 with the understanding that any necessary snow removal will be funded from that contingency account.
- The Loudoun County Zoning Administrator has issued an opinion on how Short Term Rentals should be administered within CountrySide. Details on what is/is not permitted are contained in the Opinion Letter, which is available for review on the CountrySide website.
- The HOA office lease runs out in December; we will likely move to a location on Ridgetop Circle.

10) ADJOURN

- Terri moved to adjourn; Jim seconded the motion. Approved unanimously. Meeting Adjourned at 10:59PM.
- Next regular meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held remotely at **7:00PM on Wednesday, January 17, 2024.**