

CEO-2022-05-07 Community Updates

Dear Greenville Overlook Neighbors,

The neighborhood continues to buzz with activity as we enter the final months of Spring and head outdoors to enjoy longer stretches of daylight and warmer temperatures. Spring is also a time for renewal, and in that spirit the HOA Board is excited to share the latest community updates. Along with relevant news and information, you can expect each monthly newsletter to focus first and foremost on the primary purpose of the HOA, which is to perform five specific (and critical) services for our community: Snow Removal, Landscaping, Storm Water Management System Maintenance, Architectural Review, and Violation Management.

Summary of Awarded Contracts and Costs

One of the first priorities of the HOA Board was to re-establish a strong roster of vendors needed to perform the five critical services the community requires. And frankly, our vendor list was in shambles as last year two Greenville Overlook HOA vendors resigned due to resident interference, and two other vendor contracts were not renewed due to poor performance. In addition, the HOA assumed the maintenance of roads when Toll transferred them to the HOA this past summer, requiring us for the first time to hire a vendor for snow removal. And finally, New Castle County Government sent the HOA a violation letter in August 2021 demanding that Greenville Overlook improve its Stormwater Management System (SWMS) maintenance. As a result, the new Board had to immediately and quickly solicit, vet, and hire five vendors while ensuring reasonable costs.

To ensure diligence in selecting new vendors, the Board established a policy to receive at least three vendor proposals for each service contract. Collectively, the Board researched and identified over 40 vendors and conducted comprehensive cost analysis and contract negotiation which

resulted in our hiring the best vendors at the best cost. The Board spent significant time researching, contacting, evaluating, negotiating, and executing the following contracts:

Annual Contracts

- **Management Company** in the amount of \$14,400 was awarded to Brandywine Valley Properties.
- **Lawn Service the Landscaping & Lawn** in the amount of \$20,520 was awarded to Mike Mitsdarfer Lawn Service.
- **Snow Removal** in the amount of \$15,500 was awarded to Mike Mitsdarfer Lawn Service.
- **Storm Water Maintenance** in the amount of \$11,500 was awarded to McDonald Lawn & Landscape

Special Project Contracts

- **Tree Relocation and Installation.** Addendum Contract with Ace Property Solutions to move 25 trees required by residents and replace 37 dead trees as guaranteed by original contract at no cost. Moving trees cost \$2,844.
- **Storm Water Management System Clean Up.** Awarded to McDonald Lawn & Landscape Contractors for \$5,600 + Dump Fees (\$360 estimated). This contract was

required to comply with New Castle County Government cited violations of our SWMS.

- **Storm Water Management System Clean Up - Part II.** Awarded to McDonald Lawn & Landscape for \$4800. This contract covers the significant cleanup required in the SWMS area not controlled by New Castle County.
- **Dangerous Tree Removal.** Awarded Rickerman Tree Service to cut one dangerous tree, and one dead tree in the GVOL Common Area at a cost of \$1,890.
- **Budget Audit.** Awarded to Robert C. Bezgin for \$2,000 to conduct an audit of our 2021 finances.

A complete list of all contracts is available on the community website GVOL.net.

Summary of Contract Work Performed to Date

With vendors selected and contracts in place. Work is well under way in most areas. Below is an update on the work status of each new contract:

- ***Snow Removal.*** The HOA took over Snow Removal for the first time as Toll Brothers dedicated the roads to our HOA in the summer of 2021. The Board worked with the vendor to ensure that the roads were salted

and or cleared. Of the \$15,500 appropriated, only \$3,325 was spent for the year.

- ***Landscaping & Lawn.*** Mitsdarfer has begun the Landscaping and Lawn Maintenance services. The vendor has cleaned up the front entrance area, spread weed control, provided new mulch, and planted flowers. Grass cutting in the common area has begun with the first of 25 turf cuts required per year.
- ***Storm Water Maintenance System Clean-Up.*** McDonald has cleaned up our SWMS and remediated the problems with our retention ponds, basins, etc. identified by New Castle County Government. We requested the New Castle County inspectors to review the work and they have indicated that we made significant progress in addressing the violations.
- ***Storm Water Management Maintenance.*** In order to remain in compliance with the County and avoid future violations, Mc Donald was hired to perform maintenance on the SWMS six times throughout the summer and fall. We continue to work closely with the vendor and inspectors to ensure we remain in compliance with the New Castle County regulations, and that our retention ponds

and basins remain clean of debris, weeds, and invasive plants.

- ***Budget Audit.*** The audit is scheduled to begin in May 2022 and should be done by the summer.
- ***Tree Relocation and Installation.*** The prior Board entered a contract with Ace Solutions to plant 124 trees at \$27,000. The project aims to complete the tree planting that started last May 2021. The new Board assumed the contract and has worked with Ace to complete the contract. The work to be completed includes replacing 37 dead trees and moving 25 trees to another location per the request of residents. The vendor has already moved 25 trees to other areas. Thirty-seven trees are scheduled to be planted by the end of the month. Another inspection will occur at the end of May to identify and replace additional dead trees as per the contract.

ARC Committee Activity

During this Spring season we have seen an increase in the number of ARC requests submitted for review. The ARC committee and our Management Company have quickly responded to every request, including applications for new pools, fencing, pavers, and many other additions to property. There have been 14 ARC requests to date since November 2021.

Legal Services Report and Policy

At the January 2022 Zoom Board meeting, a resident asked for a report on the cost of legal services in 2021. Unfortunately, we could not provide

complete information because we had not yet received all the legal bills. Since that initial request, we received all the statements from the HOA attorney and following is the information requested:

- Of the total \$9,148.22 spent in 2021 on legal fees by the previous Board, \$1,743.53 was spent on legal advice regarding the dispute on the anchor request, \$1,455.19 for legal assistance regarding the tree project, and \$4,997.50 for legal advice for the special election, including over a \$1,000 for the attorney to attend the election.
- Since the November election, the Board spent \$158.00 for legal assistance in 2021. And so far in 2022, the Board has required less than two hours of legal assistance during the past 4 months excluding the \$200 per month retainer required by the attorney contract.

To avoid spending deficits and unchecked and unauthorized legal costs, the Board established a new policy requiring all requests for legal services to be approved by the HOA President. The HOA informed our attorney, and he will not engage on any requests unless approved by the HOA President. With this new policy in place, we expect to remain well within the \$5,000 budget appropriation for legal services.

Resident Complaints and Violations

The Board has received numerous complaints from neighbors ranging from poor property conditions to wild animals being kept as pets, unapproved fixtures in front yards to residents running commercial businesses out of their homes. Our community documents specifically state that these complaints (and others we have not included here) represent violations of our ByLaws. All residential property needs to be maintained according to our Bylaws and Architectural Regulations. Certified letters were sent to homeowners in violation of ByLaws and those cited were directed to correct

the situation. Work to strengthen both compliance and enforcement of our Bylaws is ongoing.

Community Bylaws Review Committee:

The committee met this month to begin our review of the community Bylaws. The group conducting this work is diverse and includes several previous and current HOA Board Members, ARC Committees members, and residents including Ann North and Marko Strukelj who graciously volunteered their time.

Spring Clean Up

In the spirit of Spring cleaning, please inspect your property and ensure it meets our standards for maintenance and upkeep, as outlined in our ByLaws; doing so not only keeps the neighborhood beautiful and enjoyable for all, it helps increase the value of our homes—a significant investment made by every homeowner in Greenville Overlook. To support this effort, our property management company, Brandywine Valley Properties, will continue to inspect our neighborhood two to three times a month.

Responsibility for our Roads, Sidewalks, and Signs

As documented in our community records, in the summer of 2021, Toll Brothers transferred responsibility for the community's roads to the HOA. As a result, the streets became private and we now bear the cost of repairing and maintaining our roads, sidewalks and street signs, as well as removing snow.

The HOA Board is researching the option of transferring responsibility of our streets to DELDOT, which would give them accountability and costs for repair and maintenance of these community assets. According to discussions with our State Senator, the transfer of the assets is time-consuming and costly. The Board will conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine how to proceed in the best interest of the community. If we do not transfer our assets to DELDOT, we will need to hire an engineer to conduct an Asset Management Study to inventory our assets and create a plan (including costs) to maintain them. More updates on this topic will be forthcoming as we learn more.

Financial Report and Budget Surpluses

Over the past five years, the HOA Board has accumulated an Operating Budget surplus of \$90,000 plus a Reserve Fund surplus of over \$100,000. The Board voted to retain the surpluses to offset any future resident fee increases that may be needed, and to cover any unexpected expenses that may arise as a part of repairing and maintaining our community assets and systems. We project that the current 2022 Operating Budget will also have a surplus as a result of fiscal management and underspend on several line items. To review all Financial Reports, please see the reports on GVOL.net .

Community Activities

The HOA Activities Committee hosted two community events in our common area field at Odyssey Drive and Athena Court. A big *thank you* to Danielle Quercetti and the many volunteers who worked tirelessly to make these events a big success. And a big shout out to the many residents throughout the community who attended. The HOA Board is inviting new members to join the Activities Committee to ensure we generate even more event ideas and volunteers to make the events happen. Please contact Danielle at quercettis@gmail.com if you are interested. We welcome events in our community and please remember, all events and costs must be pre-approved by the HOA Board. After the event, a Reimbursement Form (available on community website at GVOL.net) must be submitted to the President and reviewed by the Board for reimbursement of all approved expenses.

Law Enforcement and Community Safety

The HOA continues to work with the New Castle County Police to keep our community safe and we are happy to report that no additional criminal incidents have been reported since the Fall. Please remain diligent by locking your doors, arming your security systems when away, keeping your garage doors closed, and keeping adequate lighting to deter bad actors from targeting your home.

In Closing

In addition to my above thanks to the **Activity Committee** and all those who worked to make our community events possible, I want to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude directly to the **HOA Board members** Chuck Xu, Bing Zhang, Karin Thomas, Alvenia Scarborough, Hugh Wang, and Danielle

Quercetti; in addition to our **ARC Committee members** Karin Thomas, Jodie Pezzner and Harish Mital. I also want to give a special thank you to Lon Chen for his work as our webmaster. Without the collective contribution of time and energy from these neighbors, none of the above-mentioned accomplishments could have been realized.

And of course, thank you all for your continued support of the HOA and its work in service to the community. Together, we can ensure that Greenville Overlook is the most desirable place to live and own a home in Wilmington.

Warm Regards,

Michael R. Nardo,
HOA President