ATHERTON COMMON UNIT OWNERS ASSOICATION

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 11, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Dick Stout at 4:15 pm. Also in attendance was Director Pete Eiche, Director Art Brault, Secretary Joan Ferguson, Treasurer Howell Mitchell, and Capital Reserve Chairman Kevin Eagan. In addition, Unit Owners Linda Madden (Unit 2), Kaki Lochhead (#16), and Richard Lack (#17) attended.

Financials. Mitchell reported there are no foreseeable operations issues, except for the drowned tree near the pond which was recently removed. The operations budget is slightly under budget year-to-date by $38,792.

An on-going project (septic system replacement for Units 43-45) and Units 28-30 and 31-33 building exterior painting set to being June 17, will be expensed to the capital reserve. (Secretary note: final cost of the system replacement came to $40,178 – just over the projected $40K and final invoice was paid June 13 following a final walk-around.)

Septic Systems. Eagan commented that he and Karen were very happy with the project – the old tank was removed and two tanks (in accordance with state law) installed in the field just behind their unit. He admitted that while they had planted three bushes very near the tanks area, the excavator dug them up and replaced the bushes (beyond the tanks) the same day without damaging them. The Board members agreed the project was efficiently completed with the leveling and seeding of the route of the vehicles (from the cul-du-sac entrance to the tanks installation site). All state inspections were completed before the contractor left the area.

The next step is to inspect the Unit 34-36 system as it received a poor write-up in 2016 when the last full inspection was completed. Eiche said the contractor told him the d-box was in good condition, but that the tank's baffles need to be replaced at a cost of about $400.The Board agreed that although funds were budgeted for two system replacements, it may be that there will be no need to make any further system replacements this summer. The decision to replace the baffles will be deferred until the inspections are completed.

The Board agreed the 14 systems need to be inspected as another baseline to make future decisions related to replacement or repair. Eagan endorsed an inspection, adding that several D-boxes had been replaced in 2016 but other issues may well surface in the near future.

Stout explained that the state now requires a 3,750-gallon septic tank capacity but the two approvals for system replacement (Units 43-45 and 34-36) are grandfathered for two tanks. Any future replacements, however, will require removal of the current tanks and replaced with the larger capacity tanks.

Building Painting. Stout said the initial rot repair costs were nearly $2.4K (out of $6K budgeted) but it is likely more repairs will be needed as the pressure washing will reveal other rot. (The 2024 planned painting budget is $35K, with rot repair at $6K. See approved budget attached to the annual meeting minutes.)

Other. Although no work order has been placed, Madden asked the Board to inspect the land grade behind Units 1-3. As Unit 2 landscaping appears not to be level with the Units 1 and 3 landscaping, her unit occasionally gets water in the basement following rain and snow melt. She suspects that her middle unit landscaping has sunk to a lower level over time. She also requested (no work order on file) that the landscapers mow behind her unit as the other units are regularly maintained. Eiche agreed to

discuss the two issues with the Desrochers.

Madden also said the exterior paint on her unit looks bad and there is rot. Eiche said he would check with Descrochers to see what paint cycle Units 1-3 is in, as that building may be on the next cycle.

She also asked if phone service is poor among other residents. Several of the meeting attendees advised that cell phones should be set on Wi-Fi calling setting and that will ease the issue. (The Wi-Fi setting automatically switches to more local services wherever the cell is located.) Brault explained the entire valley has service issues because 5G service has shorter distances between routers and towers. And while the services were building more towers, they aren't currently sufficient.

Lochead asked if she should have a cap on her chimney. She was advised that a cap will prevent animals from getting into the system and it is the responsibility of the owner to install and maintain the cap and chimney flu – see handbook published in 2021. Brault added that if the fireplace is use (and most heating exhaust from the furnace is channeled through the chimney), the chimney should be regularly inspected and cleaned as creosote buildup will rot the interior.

She also asked if rails should be installed on all front entrances steps as a matter of safety. It was noted that in 2017 the Association owners agreed to grandfather all the front and rear rails that had been installed and that they would be maintained by the owners. Future installations by Unit Owners would be considered by exception, principally based on safety, as they are considered to be on common land.

Mitchell said, and the Board agreed, the installation would be a topic for the annual meeting – as agreement is needed among Unit owners for the ground rules of installation and maintenance. It was noted any Association-wide decision to install rails would require a substantial special assessment.

Lochead added the driveway repairs (Units 16 and 17) to direct the water during storms and snow melt works well and thanked everyone who had a role in the repairs.

Eiche asked if the painter contract is clear on which porch interiors are painted and which are not. (Unaltered porch interiors are painted, the others are not per the handbook.) Lockhead also wanted to ensure the windows are not painted shut as she recently replaced her windows. (Most new window sashes are vinyl and therefore not painted. Original wood sashes are painted and should be cracked open to dry by the owner.) Desrochers will be consulted prior to start of the painting.

The next Board Meeting will be Monday, Sept 9 with location and time TBD.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Ferguson
Volunteer Secretary