

Archdale Civic Association / General Meeting

Minutes
2024.05.16

Opening

The Archdale Civic Association / General Meeting was called to order at 7:03pm on 2024.05.16 at North Charleston Fire Department Station 8 by Marty Besancon.

Present

From the sign-in sheets

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve Minutes from February 15 General Meeting Minutes. Motion put forward by Dale Linker, Seconded by Angelika Dorsch-Buckner, Vice President. Motion approved. (Available online www.OurArchdale.com/aca)

Treasurer's Report

1. The Treasurer's year-to-date report was presented. (Available as a handout at the registration table.) It was noted that every officer is new this year and everyone is still learning new jobs. The Board thanks members for their patience and is committed to have accountability for the money. Rhonda Sweatman is the current Treasurer and opened report then turned it over to the previous Treasurer, Cindy Varnado. As of the meeting date we have collected \$14,211 with donations to date at \$1,100. We are short of budget by \$3,300. Money has been deposited in the bank and bills have been paid including \$990. for the accountant who did the tax filings for 2016-2022. Funds totaling \$5,200 was put into a high yield account. A question was asked about the original budgeted funds of \$15,000.00 for lawn mowing and the reduced budget amount. The response was we had not renewed the contract with the lawn mowing company at that time and reduced the amount of mowing when the proposed mowing contract was over our budgeted amount. Another question on why the postage is so expensive? Our response was because we have to send out approximately 800 letters and then we have to send out a second mailing to those who do not respond. He asked why we could not send out emails also and we said we do send emails instead of mail to everyone who has given us their email address.
2. Membership: As of the meeting date we have 32% of the 800 homes in Archdale join since the membership drive was launched in late February. History has only about half of the homeowners pay the Association Fees which are \$50.00 a year. A question was asked regarding raising the membership to \$60 or \$75? The President stated a reluctance to raise fees as we might lose more members and people have the option now to donate additional funds to help with the budget or if they want something specific done.

Old Business

1. Administrative/Neighborhood Update
 - a. Website Business & Services listing update. The board has completed the review and final edits of the Business Listing for the website to have businesses list their services. The President had a meeting scheduled with our Webmaster, Krista McCracken, to discuss options for posting on the web, but Krista asked to reschedule. The listing should be up and running very shortly before our next General Meeting. The listing fees for ACA members will be \$50.00. For a non-member of the ACA, it will be \$100.00. This will help generate money

for our budget. A member stated problems with a neighbor who runs a plumbing business out of his home. The board's response was we are looking at problem issues in the neighborhood with businesses that can be addressed by Dorchester County. The member said Dorchester County has not been much help. The Board noted they are also going to add information to our website with additional Dorchester County information to help residents report violations.

2. Volunteer and Events Announcements

- a. Community Spring Spruce, Sat. March 9th, 9am-12 Debrief. Volunteers met at Archdale Hall. Although it was a rainy day the weather held off long enough to get Archdale Hall clipped and cleaned and looking good. Two days later the wood was hauled off. The ACA has hosted one day site specific events for many years. This was the first year we expanded to include the common areas throughout Archdale and encouraged neighbors to continue to spruce up throughout the year. Since then, we are aware of about 15 people who have continued to spruce up the neighborhood and making a difference. One of the businesses has offered to do one treatment to get rid of ant hills on the Boulevard. We have never had enough money to maintain all common areas so we are asking all our neighbors to take ownership of the islands, common areas, whatever makes the neighborhood look nice. Members were asked to sign a sheet on the back table if they would like to help in certain areas of landscaping.
 - b. Welcome to Summer! Neighborhood Fun Day, Sat. June 8th, 9:30am-12:30
This is the latest event to be added to the events that have been developed over the last few years. Christmas gathering at the food truck in December. Spring Spruce clean up in March. Summer Fun Day in June, and September Community Yard Sale fund raiser for the neighborhood landscaping. This free event will be held at Archdale Hall. Invite your neighbors. We can use some volunteers. Help with set up/break down - Help with craft activities - Help monitor giant bubble making activity - Help monitor balloon twisting activity. Help create balloon hats, animals, etc. Supplies/Instruction provided to learn - Loan games for this event or help monitor if needed - Loan tables, chairs, or other equipment - Help serve snacks: popcorn, lemonade - Help develop additional activities. If there are games you would like to bring, please do. Cornhole is one of the games, Horseshoes. Contact the President if you would like to sign up. A lady in neighborhood would like to start a library she said her husband could do the construction on the box and they would like to have it at Archdale Hall. We will start off with a book swap at the Summer Fun Day. The Information will be on the Facebook, website and on the reader sign.
3. Picnic Tables for Archdale Hall. We purchased two picnic tables. Ted and Elenor Hucks put water sealer on the tables. Ted, Jimmy Henson and Charles Besancon put them there. We have chains and locks on them. We spent \$400.00 and have \$1000.00 left and we will be thoughtful on how we spend the rest of the money. Ted is working on trimming more trees and Ellis Axon sprayed for weeds. We could have Game days at the picnic area. If people use the area, they need to take their own trash when they leave.

New Business

1. Low Maintenance Landscape Plan Development. We have been developing options for low maintenance ground cover plants in common areas, where feasible to improve the appearance of common areas and reduce the cost of mowing. Slowly changing the Islands, they were cut twice a week and looked like nothing but weeds. The \$19,380 proposed budget for mowing from the landscaper this year for was reduced to \$10,260 with any money saved being put towards low maintenance landscape. Marty Besancon presented a display of photos of the 30 common areas along with a map of their location in each neighborhood. Also included was a numbered list of each common area and which of the 8 ones were being maintained by the landscaper, by volunteers, or by no one. Some have big areas and some have small areas. Many areas have no grass. Marty presented a copy of low maintenance ground cover plants from the Clemson Extension website and noted that Home Depot and Lowes have low maintenance ground cover plants for sale. She then displayed photos taken to represent the low maintenance plants used by nearby neighborhood's, shopping centers, and businesses. Festival Center, Belk at Northwoods, Lowes, Wescott and others have Juniper Plants which Juniper Plants can live up to 100 years. Asian Jasmine is another plant that is widely used in area shopping centers, hospitals, and subdivisions. These may be options for Archdale. We have \$1300.00 to start low maintenance landscaping and want to start with the small common areas at the entrance of the main streets off Archdale Boulevard. These areas were marked on the display. Plans are to go to a neighborhood and plant low maintenance plants one weekend.
2. The board plans to update the website later this year to include quarterly events, special events, and expanded Dorchester County contact information.
3. March Meeting with Dorchester County Officials Debrief. Attendees included: Jason L. Ward, County Administrator; Daniel T. Prentice, Deputy Administrator & CFO; John Frampton, County Attorney; Rita May Ranck, Dorchester County Council District 3; and Marty Besancon, ACA President. Dorchester Council Officials wanted someone to take over the pond in Sterling Forest. The original owner was the developer who defaulted on taxes. The current owner purchased the pond in a property tax sale in 1994. This owner also defaulted on paying the property taxes and is now deceased. The estate/family wants someone else to take over. The county attorney reported on what the owner would be required to do: pay \$40,000 to bring the pond up to meet current regulations; on-going maintenance and repair costs to continue to meet government regulations; potential fines for non-compliance; and the need to purchase additional commercial liability insurance. It was obvious that the Archdale Civic Association is not in a position to take on these expenses and liabilities. During the conversation, county officials were made aware of the ACA cutting the grass on Archdale Boulevard and that we did not own that property. County officials checked the records and confirmed that Dorchester County is the owner. The County Administrator promised to take on cutting the grass three times per year. Marty also made a request for a sidewalk or pathway along Archdale Boulevard. Our County Council representative, Rita May Ranck, promised to check with the county on scheduling the grass cutting and on potential funding of a sidewalk or path through the Safe Streets Program.
4. Nomination to fill ACA Board Vacancy: Nominations for Board Members- two members Brett Stevens moved here in 2019. Grew up in North Charleston. He is interested with helping with security, and encouraging young people to join the Association. David Bumgarner moved into Archdale in 2015. He is a City of Charleston Fire Department and wants to help the ACA. Combined Motion to nominate two board Members First by Cindy Varnado and Second

by Dale Linker. Motion passed Congratulations to our New Board Members. With 5 Officers and 4 Board Members we now have a full ACA board.

Public Comments

Questions on reporting complaints. Use the Dorchester County website to report issues. The Archdale Civic Association website also has information on reporting code violations to Dorchester County. The board is reviewing if additional county information should be added. The ACA website also has contact information for the board. We receive requests from members wanting the board to help with issues in the neighborhood or reporting items to Dorchester County. Let the Board know about complaints, such as one of the members said his neighbor was burning without a permit. Neighbors have complained to the president regarding a trailer being in the road. The owner has health issues and may need help moving things. All questions are answered on Archdale Facebook by Vice President Angelika

Questions on membership listing were asked. How do I pay my dues? Answer - Info is on the membership letter that was mailed or emailed and is also on the website. A request was made to post the list of paid members on the ACA website to clarify who is a member. This could be a list of addresses without names. The board will look into options for doing this next year as ACA members present expressed interest in some form of web membership posting.

Announcement

We received an emailed letter from ATT stating they will be upgrading services in Archdale, which involves digging for lines. They will put door messages when they will start digging.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at time by Marty Besancon. The next general meeting will be at 7:00pm on 8/15/24, in the meeting room at NCFD Station 8.

Submitted by Joe Friend Secretary June 19, 2024
Archdale Civic Association