

Grounds Minutes: Monday, April 2, 2007, at Charles Town Pool

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Members Present: Paul Antes, Kay Konicek, Margo Bates, Jeanne Oliver, Hal Sheridan, Meryl Sclater, Jean Paulus, Jane Lange, Frank Lange, Bruce Gilleylen

Ponds

1. Neil Sclater has provided a map of University Place showing the ponds and their functions as well as the fountains and the littoral areas. This first version will be used for the pond flyers to give residents easy reference when reporting pond issues. The Pond committee has prepared a flyer for warning signs and a map numbering the locations of the ponds. Jeanne recommends keeping the numbers for the ponds and on future irrigation maps referring to the pumps by their locations, for instance "Tabby Stone Pump." This system has been in place and now seems to override other references. **Flyers will be distributed the week of April 9th to all homeowners.** It has been posted on our web page.

2. Kay Konicek called Florida Fish and Wildlife (F&W) about a dead white pelican at the edge of Lake Jackson (No. 14) behind her house. She wanted to inform them in case further investigation of its death was needed. However, the F&W respondent indicated indifference: "When they die they die." Paul will call the chairperson of the Sarasota Audubon Society to discuss the possible causes for a young pelican to die at one of our lakes. Scott (TLC) removed the pelican. He had been watching that pelican and believes it may have starved to death. Other future concerns relate to the chemicals used on our ponds. However, the bird could have been eating from other lakes in the area.

3. Jeanne reminded everyone that TLC will charge for any additional work they are asked to do, and some tasks are quite expensive. While charges relating to the irrigation, pumps and landscaping are reported to Lisa and Melissa at TLC, all other items/issues must go to Dominic at AMI. It is best to stick with the reporting instructions on the second page of the Job Description.

4. Paul wants the committee to try to get volunteers to do more. For example, people can do more to clean up trash. He would like to see it as a community effort. Kids may be able to get community credit at school for getting involved. Paul suggests sending out a flyer to get people to participate.

Nature Trails

1. Hal reports that ant holes on the trails are a constant problem. Jeanne is getting two bids (from TLC and Fahey) to try to get rid of the fire ants. Hal recommends first using a product that he found successful on his property. He has offered to treat the paths himself to see if it will work. Terry Williams has treated the paths in the past. Jeanne says that she will get the two bids and also consider Hal's offer to treat the trails before paying for a vendor.

2. The canoe launch on Pond # 14 cannot be used because vegetation is clogging it and this needs to be cleaned out. We will need to get a bid from Aquatic Systems for dredging it to make it usable.

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3. Hal described the armadillo holes on the nature trails - they are not deep and can easily be filled in by observant walkers who simply kick dirt back in. There is no way to get rid of the holes because the armadillos will return and dig again. Gopher tortoise holes are much bigger and deeper than the armadillo holes. The tortoise holes should be marked with sticks and yellow tape. Hal has identified several tortoise holes on the nature trail next to Riva Trace. He will get the tape and take care of marking the holes.

4. **At the Charlestown Trail, there is a rocky area that sometimes floods.** Bill Cowdright has volunteered to do the research to find out whether a small bridge could be built in that area. It is a wetland so there may be restrictions. If it is acceptable, he will work on building a small bridge, similar to what he has done at the Crowley Museum (Myakka).

The Pond 14 trail has a wet, muddy area caused by seepage from an underground spring. Neil Sclater has suggested that we cover this section of the path with some concrete landscaping blocks.

5. **Getting the children involved: Hal suggests starting nature clubs** for boys and girls or scout troops for neighborhood teens. The teens might get interested in helping in the neighborhood. Jeanne recommends working through the schools. She said there are ponds that could be studied for environmental science projects. It would take a lot of organizing, but it is a good idea to see if we can generate some interest. It could be presented at a meeting. Jeanne has made an effort to interest some of the parents but never got any call-backs. Most believe that if youngsters do some of the cleanup and are involved in the natural areas they will care more about the property.

Pools/Recreation

1. Margo reported that Alex of AMI has done some small repairs: door trim, bathroom floor drains. Air intakes that ventilate pump rooms need replacing; both swimming pools were power washed, but only look good for a short time. The paint peeled off the rafters from the power washing. We will be painting the walls and rafters. Some ceiling fans will be replaced; others can be repaired. Committee members have volunteered to install the new ceiling fans. Margo is getting estimates for the painting.

2. Parents have talked about a problem at the Charlestown Pool with empty plant beds. Children playing in the area send mulch flying all over the area. Parents requested something be done about the mess near the place they sit to watch their children playing. Margo is getting estimates for putting in 3 inches of concrete. The mulch will be removed and the **beds filled with concrete**. Also the **surface will be painted to provide a border offering contrast to show the edge of the pool**. A darker tint on the overall concrete would not show the dirt as much. Margo presented the bid for the concrete fill at the pools. **It is \$1,250 for 300 square feet of concrete around the pool**. We are waiting for other bids from AMI. The pool would have to be closed for 7 – 10 days. It should be done in the summer when there are fewer residents.

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3. Outdoor fans at Seven Oaks Pool have been recommended in addition to the fans to be replaced at the Charles Towne Pool. Some were removed because they were damaged, but without the fans it is uncomfortably hot for any gathering.

4. Frank L. asked about hiring a handyman to do some of the small jobs in the neighborhood. Could we hire a resident? Does HOA have liability insurance for residents doing work . . .?

5. Pool Closings: Mandatory pool closings because of algae and mold. Pools will be closed April 2-4 and 5-8 alternately. One pool will remain open during treatment of the other pool.

General:

1. Bruce recommended having an annual maintenance schedule for closing the pools during the summer months at the same time each year. Then residents would know in advance when to expect the pool closings. The only concern would be to have someone here to monitor the work being done.
2. UP is searching for a new fountain vendor. Sarasota Fountains is no longer under contract with UP and TLC is filling in.

Looking ahead, the committee sees the need for more community residents to step-up and volunteer. Hopefully, the present sub-committees will eventually work independently with Board supervision. The Grounds committee as it is designed is quite overwhelming for one person to oversee; and therefore, will become difficult to maintain. Recruitment of a new chairperson will be very difficult if not impossible because of the excessive time commitment. The objective at this time is to put in place job descriptions and materials relevant to the tasks and needs of each sub-committee. A more limited focus may present a more reasonable/less daunting job description for recruitment of interested residents. Booklets will provide new members and residents with relevant information concerning the upkeep of University Place Grounds.

Respectfully,
Meryl Sclater
Grounds Secretary