

Brookside of Livonia

A Condominium Community

Brookside Board of Directors

Thomas A. Cash, President
John Waterworth, Secretary/Treasurer
William F. Borrelli, Member at Large

Gregory P. Razook, Vice President
James A. Williams, Member at Large

Property Management Co. – Marcus Management Inc.

Ralph Marcus, President

Martha Saum, Property Manager

April, 2012 Newsletter

The One Thing All Co-owner's MUST Do Once a Year

A message from Ralph J. Marcus, President and CEO of Marcus Management, Inc.

Most folks choose to buy a condominium because they wish to simplify their living responsibilities and leave the duties of care and maintenance to others. This thinking is quite natural and is why retired persons and professionals with many work responsibilities choose to buy condominium units as their homes. And while the various motivations for choosing a condominium style of living are both noble and practical, there is one primary responsibility that many condominium owners cognitively choose to skip; participating in the Association's Annual Meeting.

Brookside of Livonia's track record of Co-owner participation in the Annual Meeting is, by all accounts, below normal. In fact, the books and records of the Association seem to indicate that there may have been only one (1) meeting at which the necessary number of Co-owners were present to conduct the business of the Association. And since that one meeting (or perhaps a second), every annual meeting held since the inception of the community has been a waste of association funds in terms of achieving the primary purpose of the meeting, which is to elect the members to the Board so that they can represent your interests in the community. We estimate that as much as \$3,000.00 has been spend to date on meeting expenses without being able to conduct a proper meeting.

So, what has been happening since there haven't been enough participating Co-owners in the election? The Board has, according to the Bylaws, continued to volunteer their time and technically have been either been appointed to fill vacancies or continued to serve until their successor, or themselves, were elected. Bottom line, the Board continues to serve without being elected by the owners.

So, why is this a problem? Well, the lack of Co-owner participation has eroded the democratic principles upon which your community is supposed to function. Members of the Board may feel, at times, obligated to continue to serve the community since no one else has stepped forward to serve, and most members don't participate at the meeting.

So, what should you be doing? You should be attending the annual meeting, and if you can't attend the meeting, you should be assigning your proxy vote to establish quorum for the annual meeting so that owner voting / election of the Board can take place.

So, why is this so important and why should I participate either in person or by Proxy? Because it's your money, and it's your community. Confusing the thinking of "I moved here so that I wouldn't have to take care of anything outside my home or be bothered with contractors, etc." with the thinking that you don't need to participate in the election of the Condominium Board, creates a vacuum of leadership and focus. The current members of the Board don't share this thinking and if they did, there wouldn't be anyone on the Board.

So, what's the bottom line? Simply put, if you don't wish to volunteer to be a Board member and handle issues on a weekly basis, at least have the sense of community to spend either 2 HOURS A YEAR attending the Annual Meeting, or at least 10 MINUTES A YEAR filling out and mailing your proxy vote for the annual meeting so that Annual Meeting can be properly held.

So, what happens if I ignore this plea for participate? The existing Board members will most likely become dejected and feel if most owners don't care enough to vote, why should they continue to put in so much time working for the owners. They'll resign, the Board won't be fully seated, and your business affairs, i.e. how YOUR money is spent, will be made without owner representation.

Your Board of Directors is embarking on a the creation of a Consolidated Master Deed and Bylaw, which is necessary to remove all of the Developer friendly language from those documents and address post-construction realities. In order to amend the Master Deed and Bylaws, 2/3rds of all Co-owners must vote for the changes. There are many, many changes that need to be made in these documents to provide clear and Co-owner friendly governing language. The Board, and Marcus Management, will be expecting 100% participation in the voting. There will be educational meetings set up so you'll be informed as to the changes being made and why the changes are deemed advantageous for the community.

All you'll have to do is either spend 2 hours, a year, at a meeting, or 10 minutes, a year, sending in your Proxy. Either way, this is your once a year responsibility as a Co-owner in your community. Voting will be set up in a system that allows for your participation, and we will go door to door if need be in order to get the will of the people recorded at an official meeting.

Please plan on your participation. We will be holding you to your once a year responsibility!

Your Brookside Board of Directors
and Marcus Management, Inc.

Summary of 2012 Annual Meeting

Opening by Tom Cash - President

Election Results for Board of Directors

To conduct an election this year a quorum of 49 Co-owners had to be represented, either in person or via proxy. We had 31 Co-owners at the meeting with another 4 represented by proxy. Therefore a quorum was not reached and the Board will remain seated for the next year.

Financial Report by John Waterworth – Secretary/Treasurer

Enclosed with this newsletter are the following financial documents:

- The 2011 income and annual operating expense statement
- The 2011 non-operating expense (from Reserves) statement
- The 2011 balance sheet (list of assets and liabilities)
- The status of the Reserves for the Villas and the Estates

Questions regarding these documents should be sent to Martha at MMI.

Master Deed and By-Laws Update Status by Ralph Marcus - MMI

Brookside's current Master Deed and By-laws contain multiple items that the Board feels would be in the best interest of the community to revise. The Board is hoping to have any proposed changes ready for the Co-owners to review in the fall. A meeting will be conducted to explain any proposed changes. An affirmative vote of 2/3's of Brookside Co-owners will be required to execute the new documents.

Review of December 2011 Survey by Tom Cash

Enclosed is a summary of results from the December 2011 survey. The Board had hoped for greater participation than the 1/3 of the Co-owners who responded to the survey, however, the Board was very pleased with the quality of responses received and would like to thank those who did respond. The Board assumes that the survey results are a good sampling of the community.

Garage Sales:

The Board has decided not to limit garage sales in the community. We are recommending that Brookside residents follow the established City of Livonia rules. Enclosed are copies of the City of Livonia rules and Brookside's NEW ***Garage Sale Request Form*** which must be submitted to obtain permission to post garage sale signs on the Brookside common elements. The Board will revise the Rules and Regulations to reflect these changes.

⇒ There are plans to hold a ***Community Wide Garage Sale*** this year, if you are interested in participating please contact Martha at MMI. When more details are available those who sign up will be notified.

New Street Signs:

The Board is reviewing a proposal for new street signs. New stop signs, including street signs, are proposed for the main intersection of Brookside Circle and Brookside Court and new sign is proposed for the exit onto Farmington Road. The estimated cost is \$4,000 including installation.

Website:

The survey results indicate the Brookside community is satisfied with the current website. If you have any suggestions or ideas you would like to see on the website contact Martha at MMI.

Landscaping:

We will be planting flowers at the Brookside entrance as in previous years. The Board is currently not planning to landscape the mailbox area(s), also, we are not planning to plant flowers this year at each of the Villas units due to the poor quality of the beds.

⇒ The Board is asking for the community's help regarding our landscaping. We are establishing a ***Landscaping Advisory Committee*** to obtain Co-owner's ideas on how we can improve the Brookside landscaping. The committee's ideas will be reviewed with the Board. If you were not at the Annual Meeting and are interested in participating on the committee, please contact Martha at MMI.

Other General Survey Comments:

Parking:

Parking issues are addressed in the Brookside Rules & Regulations. Snow emergency parking is not allowed and violators could have their cars towed. The Board will review this issue.

Holiday Decorations:

A suggestion was made to ask for volunteers to help with the decorations in 2012, there will be a sign up sheet at the fall meeting.

More use of Email:

Currently not all Brookside Co-owners have email. The Board will review this issue.

Community Directory:

The publication of a community directory was suggested. The Board will review this issue.

Renters:

The By-laws are very clear that renters must comply with all Brookside rules, any Co-owner who observes a violation can contact Martha, preferably in writing. Limiting of the number of rentals allowed in Brookside will be reviewed as part of the Master Deed and By-Law re-write project.

Safety/Lighting:

Simple screw-in Photocells could be installed on the exterior light fixtures by the Co-owner. Honeywell has a timer that replaces any light switch that will automatically turn lights on at dusk and off at dawn. If you would like information on this timer please contact Martha at MMI.

The Board is currently planning to have a representative from the City of Livonia attend our fall informational meeting. The Neighborhood Watch Program will be discussed.

Q & A

Please report any concerns of **wild animals** to Martha at MMI.

Painting shutters on the Villas buildings was discussed. The Board will investigate a possible warranty claim as well as painting and/or replacement costs.

Speeding on the Brookside streets is still a concern. Co-owners are encouraged to contact Martha at MMI with information regarding violators. ***A majority of those speeding in the community are residents, PLEASE slow down and obey the traffic signs in our community.***

Other Information

Brookside Light Reference Guide:

Included with this newsletter is a Brookside Light Reference Guide. Please refer to it when reporting lights out in the Brookside community.

Villas Pest Control:

Villas Co-owners should contact MMI if bug & insect pest control is required in their unit. Submit a work order to MMI who will pass the information on to Eradico, the Co-owner will then be contacted by an Eradico representative to set up an appointment to address the problem. There will be no charge to the Co-owner.

Spring Reminders (See Rules & Regulations for details):

- Co-owners must have an approved Alteration / Modification Request Form to make any exterior changes.
- Villas Co-owner's cannot perform any landscaping in the common elements, including the landscaped area immediately in front of each unit.
- One pot or planter can be placed on a Co-owner's front porch.
- One pot or planter may be placed immediately under the unit address.
- One "Shepherd's Hook" (for hanging flower baskets) in the mulched area is allowed.
- Bird feeders of any type are not allowed in the Villas.
- Any item attached to a Villas deck will have to be removed. The only exceptions to this rule are the "saddle" type planters which rest on the deck handrails or changes that have been approved by the Board with an Alteration / Modification Request Form.

Villas Painting:

The Villas Painting Project will continue later this spring. A notice will be sent out when a painting schedule is available.

Addresses to be painted this year:

32908, 32909, 32910, 32911, 32912, 32913, 32914, 32915, 32916, 32917, 32918, 32919
32920, 32921, 32922, 32923, 32924, 32925, 32926, 32927, 32928, 32929, 32930, 32931
32932, 32933, 32934, 32935, 32936, 32937, 32938, 32939, 32940, 32941, 32942, 32943
32944, 32945, 32946, 32947

Villas Walkway Leveling:

The Villas Walkway Leveling Project will also continue this spring as weather permits.

Addresses of walkways to be leveled this year:

32900, 32902, 32904, 32906, 32912, 32913, 32917, 32919, 32923, 32927, 32932, 32938, 32943, 32945, 32948, 32949, 32950, 32954, 32959, 32969, 32973, 32975, 32977, 32979

Brookside Spring Walk Through

The Board is planning a walk through of the community later in April. If you have any concerns you would like noted in the walk through please contact Martha at MMI.

Dryer Vent Cleaning

As many as 15,000 fires start in the laundry room every year when lint from clothes dryer builds up and catches fire. These fires account for an average of 10 deaths, 310 injuries, and more than \$84.4 million in property damage. If your dryer vent hasn't been cleaned in the past year or two, it probably needs it. Please be on the safe side and have your dryer vent cleaned on a regular basis.

Sump Pump Note

Please check to insure your sump pump is working properly. Pour a bucket or 2 of water into the sump and the pump should start. If you have any problem with the pump please contact Martha at MMI.

Included with this newsletter:

- a) 2011 Financial Report
- b) December 2011 Survey Results
- c) City of Livonia Garage Sale Rules
- d) Brookside Garage Sale Request Form
- e) Brookside Light Reference Guide
- f) Updated Brookside Rules & Regulations

Property Manager Contact Information

Ralph Marcus, President
Martha Saum, Brookside Property Manager
Marcus Management, Inc.
28545 Orchard Lake Road Suite A
Farmington Hills, Michigan 48334
Martha email: mraum@marcusmanagement.net
Phone: 248-553-4700
Fax: 248-553-4750

DECEMBER 2011 SURVEY SUMMARY

Date: 12/20/11

Participation				
Estates:	4		14.3%	
Villas:	30		39.5%	
Anonymous:	2			
Community Total:	36		34.6%	
<hr/>				
1)	Limit Garage Sales			
	Yes	No		
Estates:	1	3		
Villas:	21	9		
Anonymous:	2	0		
Total:	24	12		
	66.7%	33.3%		
<hr/>				
2)	Upgrade Street Signs			
	Yes	No		
Estates:	3	1		
Villas:	18	12		
Anonymous:	2	0		
Total:	23	13		
	63.9%	36.1%		
<hr/>				
3.1)	Frequency of Website Access			
	Often	Occas	Seldom	Never
Estates:	0	0	2	2
Villas:	1	9	14	6
Anonymous:	0	1	1	0
Total:	1	10	17	8
	2.8%	27.8%	47.2%	22.2%
<hr/>				
3.2)	Website Req'd			
	Yes	No		
Estates:	2	2		
Villas:	19	8		
Anonymous:	2	0		
Total:	23	10		
	63.9%	27.8%		
<hr/>				
4)	Mailbox Landscaping			
	Yes	No		
Estates:	1	3		
Villas:	12	17		
Anonymous:	1	1		
Total:	14	21		
	38.9%	58.3%		

All comments returned on the survey were categorized. Any topic with more than one comment has it's own category.

Landscaping:	33.3%
Street Signs:	22.2%
Garage Sales:	18.1%
Website:	6.9%
Parking:	2.8%
Christmas Decorations:	2.8%
Misc:	13.9%