

The FYI

A Private Residential Community

Newsletter for the Edgewood Townhouse Association

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Preserve. Restore. Maintain.

Robert Bruce Trafton,

President, Edgewood Townhouse Association etapresident@email.com

The past month has been the most challenging time for volunteer members of the Board of Directors. Our Association is a not-for-profit business with an annual income of over \$350,000. The Board, duly elected by the membership, is tasked with the responsibility to manage our nearly twelve acre property, conduct the day-to-day business activities, and exercise the most prudent decision-making in the discharge of their fiducial duty. The Board is assisted in their management by a part-time professional manager. Clearly, serving as one of the nine Board members is a complex enterprise.

Each month the volunteer Board members meet for ninety minutes to conduct the business of the Association. Decisions to allocate our \$29,880 of income for the month are only one of the matters that need to be made during these important business meetings. We also address policy issues, insurance matters, maintenance reviews, project planning, pool use problems, and parking issues.

A few homeowners expressed a desire to speak and introduce their concerns and opinions during our monthly business meetings, and although their concerns and opinions are important and valuable, as a courtesy to the current elected volunteer Board members, please express those concerns and opinions at one of the four quarterly business meetings. Another opportunity to express concerns or opinions is to write a letter to the Board. The Board reserves an opportunity at each business meeting, under the New Business banner, to read aloud letters submitted to the Board prior to the meetings. As a courtesy, please permit the currently elected Board to conduct its fiducial responsibilities on behalf of all homeowners.

At the April 3rd Special Meeting, we heard a comment from two homeowners that financial reports have not always been timely. To address this matter, the Board has recruited professional bookkeeping firms for interview. We are currently in the process of selecting and hiring a professional bookkeeping service beginning in May. Once on board, we will be able to produce, with complete regularity and in timely fashion, monthly, quarterly, and annual financial reports important to all homeowners.

Another item we heard was to seek ways to cutback on services. We have revised our lawn and hardscape services for Fiscal Year 2018. We have cutback our service to a mere eleven site visits this year. Normally we have twenty-four site visits per season. Our contract laborers will stand-in for the remaining thirteen site visits.

Last, we heard concerns over the Reserve Fund (RF). Some homeowners felt that the RF should be funded and maintained at a higher level. Indeed, a few homeowners suggested that the RF should be preserved over conducting maintenance and restoration of facilities. However, the RF must be used to pay for unexpected needs, as well as planned projects like foundation stabilizations and groundwater infrastructure improvements. The Board's fiducial responsibilities – the restoration of facilities, maintenance of common elements, vendor services, and the preservation of market values are sometimes challenged with maintaining high levels in the RF – keep the money in Reserves or spend it to maintain the facilities.

The Board will be seriously considering options to both maintain and grow the RF and its fiducial responsibilities to maintain all common elements, facilities, grounds, and vendor services. As we move forward, we will need your support. See you at the April 24th Quarterly Open Forum Business Meeting.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April Quarterly Open Forum Business

Meeting: Tuesday, April 24, 2018 at 7 pm in the Clubhouse.

Special Speaker: Kevin Reimer of American Family Insurance.

Next Regular Board Business Meeting:

Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 6.30 pm in the Clubhouse

ETA Tea

Wednesday, May 16, 2018 at 2 pm in the Clubhouse

Special Meeting Architectural Hearing for the Placement of Heat Pump on Common Ground:

Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at 6.30 pm in the Clubhouse

July Quarterly Open Forum Business

Meeting: Tuesday, July 24, 2017 at 7 pm in the Clubhouse.

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Monthly Checking Activity

EDGEWOOD TOWNEHOUSE ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Monthly Business Meeting

Preserve – Restore – Maintain

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. Board members present were: Bruce Trafton, Darell Bidstrup, Christine Donahue, Sharon Kimble, Michael Maulding, Don Pasquali, Jennifer Smith, and JoAnn Wilson. Also present was Frank Gaddini, ETA Director of Operations and Facilities. Four homeowners were in attendance (1WW, 27WW, 120WW, 173WW).

Approval of Minutes: The Board unanimously approved the minutes of March 13, 2018.

Standing Reports:

1. Facility Report: Submitted
2. Treasurer's Report: Bruce Trafton announced the retirement of Michele Coney, effective April 3, 2018. Mary Ann Arnone, the homeowner selected to fill the vacant Board seat, then joined the Board members at the table. The new Treasurer will be elected at a future Board meeting.
3. Website Coordinator: See Old Business below.
4. Swimming Pool: Closed
5. Clubhouse Coordinator: No report submitted
6. Hospitality Coordinator: No report submitted.
7. Welcome Coordinator: Pending

Old Business:

1. Website Redevelopment Update: ETA webmaster Dan Goodlett demonstrated the features of the secure portion of the new website.
2. Residency Issues/House Trades: Board members Darell Bidstrup and Don Pasquali will present their research on house trades at the next Board meeting.
3. Bookkeeping Services: Frank Gaddini has begun to provide firms with our specifications for bookkeeping services. Some appear to have difficulty meeting these specifications so he will contact additional firms. He anticipates having three firms to interview before the end of April.

New Business:

1. Reading of Homeowner Letters: President Trafton read a homeowner letter (145WW) about conducting an anonymous homeowner survey to gain ideas for building community. Two letters were read from a homeowner (27WW) on the subjects of (a) posting the meeting agenda and (b) schedule for paying homeowner dues.
2. Waivers: None received this month.
3. Debriefing: Special Open Forum Board Business Meeting Held April 3, 2018: Board members offered their thoughts on last week's special meeting which was ably facilitated by homeowner Liz Denecke. The members expressed appreciation to Liz, acknowledged the thorough and professional way Frank Gaddini explained a wide range of subjects, and noted the excellent homeowner turnout. Important "take-away's" from the meeting included interest by some homeowners in: (a) more numerous and timely financial reports; (b) enhanced communication regarding expenditure planning and options for cut-back management; and, (c) exploring ways for interested homeowners to more actively contribute to the well-being of ETA.

Announcements:

1. The next Quarterly Open Forum Meeting: Tuesday, April 24, 2018, in the Clubhouse at 7:00 PM. Guest: Kevin Reimer of American Family Insurance.
2. Hearing for Placement of a Heat Pump on Common Grounds: Tuesday, May 22, 2018, in the Clubhouse at 6:30 PM.
3. The next regularly scheduled Board of Directors Meeting: Tuesday, May 8, 2018, in the Clubhouse at 6:30 PM.

Executive Session

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

JoAnn Wilson, Secretary. Email: etasecretary@email.com

KNOW YOUR RATS

Rats have been sighted in our community over the past months. In fact, we currently have eight buildings where we are actively using bait to abate these furry disease infested pests. Rats are considered as carriers or transmitters of more human diseases than any other life form, except maybe the mosquito. More than 15,000 rat bites are reported each year in the United States alone. All rat bites should be treated by a doctor. Some of the diseases that can be spread from rats to people are bubonic and pneumonic plague, murine typhus, salmonella, leptospirosis, Hantavirus, and tularemia.

Rats take care of injured and sick rats in their group. Without companionship rats tend to become lonely and depressed. Rats have excellent memories. When happy, rats have been observed to chatter or grind their teeth. Rats make happy "laughter" sounds when they play.

Rats succumb to peer-pressure too, just like humans. Rats are prone to disregard personal experiences in order to copy the behavior of their peers. The urge to conform is very strong. Although very curious animals, rats are also shy, and prefer to run away than confront a potential threat. A female rat can mate as many as 500 times with various males during a six-hour period of receptivity—a state she experiences about 15 times per year. Thus, a pair of brown rats can produce as many as 2,000 descendants in a year if left to breed unchecked. A rat matures sexually at age three to four months. An average rat's life span is two to three years.

Tolerating rats is *not* something most of us want to do. For many reasons people and rats are unlikely to coexist peacefully. But coexist we will, as perhaps more than any other wild animal, rats have adapted to living among humans.

The best way to control rats is to discourage them from taking up residence in the first place. Typically, conditions that support high rat populations are left until there is a real crisis at hand. Then the poisons are used or trapping employed to reduce the population, only to leave unaddressed the cause of the problem in the first place. Any effort to limit rat populations must be followed by taking the necessary steps—exclusion and sanitation—to make sure the same problems never happen again. **Continues**

KNOW YOUR RATS *Continued*

What is the best way to get rid of rats? The best way to control rats is to discourage them from taking up residence in the first place. Typically, conditions that support high rat populations are left until there is a real crisis at hand. *The most single important rule to get rid of rats is to deprive them of two basic needs – food and shelter.* Rats will eat anything a human will, and more.

Keep trash sealed and take it out when you throw food away. Keep food sealed and in closed containers. Keep foodstuffs in metal or glass containers with tight fitting lids. Tidy inside the house and around the garden - *less clutter means fewer places to hide.* Put outdoor rubbish bags in metal bins with securely fitted lids to stop them feeding from contents. Clean up pet food and bird seed debris, and store pet food in robust containers with fitted lids - *preferably above ground level.* Keep patios free from debris and keep clutter to a minimum. If you have a compost heap don't include organic food waste, as this will attract them.

Good sanitation is the best and most economical way to control rats. Clear away any rubbish piled close to buildings to expose burrows and openings that rats might use to get in. This includes birdseed, grass seed, and other possible foods kept in garages and/or outbuildings. Store and dispose of garbage properly, so that rats can't get into it.

If you feed your pets outside, leave the food out for just long enough to be eaten, and then remove it. Clean up pet droppings from the yard every day. Remove old wood or rubbish from the property since these are regular rat hangouts.

There are no truly humane ways to kill rodents, only methods that are less inhumane. Rats are killed with poisons, snap traps, glue boards, and maze-type traps that drown them.

Currently we are using contractors that have placed black bait boxes, inaccessible to pets, in inobtrusive locations around the buildings that have reported rat activity. We *can* win this war with your help.

Looking Back Over March 2018 Facilities and Operations Report

Frank L. Gaddini, etadirector@email.com

This report is a review of facility and grounds work performed in March 2018.

Originally, March, named after the Roman god of war, was the very first month of the Roman calendar. Symbolically, we can make sense of the arrangement. In the Roman's geographical region, the grips of winter are just beginning to lose their hold in March. It makes sense that a year should begin as a new season of life begins too.

Interestingly, before Mars became popularized as a warmonger, Mars was actually the fertility and agricultural deity. Mars oversaw the new growth of spring, and encouraged the continuation of life (fertility, sex, procreation in human, plant and animal realms).

Whether a god of war or agriculture, the personality of Mars is charging, unrelinquishing and brutally assertive. We find this kind of fervent focus in the month of March too. At this point in the year, there is no stopping the burgeoning birth of new life. March (and Mars) is a high-speed locomotive on a single-focused monorail with only one objective: *Explosive Expression!*

Temperatures during the month were relatively normal for the season. Daylight and darkness finally reached equilibrium on March 20th, and the advance towards the longest day, summer solstice, June 20th ensued.

During the month, we recorded and completed one-hundred-thirteen (113) jobs. We completed Phase 3 of our annual Roof/Gutter Maintenance during the month cleaning thirty-five roofs and gutters and applying moss control to these roofs in our southeast quarter. Our roofs are in great condition!

Two restoration repair projects were driven by building inspector reports during the sale process of two townhomes were addressed: The first was at 152 Brae Burn where twenty-six sheets of patio and exterior wall siding were replaced. This project included deconstruction of the existing paneling and installation with new pre-primed, pre-painted exterior wall panels; inspection of structural base plates and wall studs with replacement as necessary; new insulation where necessary; new vapor barriers; new patio rail caps; and a final coat of paint. Our second project was at 170 Brookside. We replaced the second-floor balcony deck's wooden handrail and steel balusters.

Another extensive and complex restoration project started in March at 5 Westbrook Way. We replaced the entire flat roof/deck of this Jamaica model townhouse. The flat roof/deck serves as a balcony over the unit's kitchen. We replaced all of the wood decking plates and laid a new single membrane PVC roof sheet, including new thermo insulation and proper elevation pitch for rain water to drain, as required by current building code. This project also included all new gutters, downspouts, and handrail. In the end, we will have replaced twenty-six sheets of 4X8 foot exterior wall siding, including the party patio wall and the southwest, second floor corner wall at 9 Westbrook Way; and nearly 120 feet of new trim.

With our roof contractors, gutters and downspouts were replaced at 5 and 16 Westbrook Way; 90, 148, and 152 Brae Burn; and 170 Brookside Drive. An excavation contractors excavated and installed a new 4 inch groundwater drain line at 136 Westbrook Way. During the weekend rains of March 23rd, our storm drain in the driveway behind 2 Westbrook Way was impeded by tree roots, and required a commercial root cutter to cut through tree roots in our 12-inch drain line.

On our grounds, lawns, cultivated shrubs, a panoply of sprouts responded to the steady rains, longer days, and warmer temperatures. Our contract laborers (college students) mowed the lawns and blew the hardscapes (sidewalks and driveways). They also engaged in shrub bed restorations at 147 Westbrook Way and 170 Brookside; excavation of a light pole damaged by the 2016 Ice Storm; poured concrete sidewalk, and restored the front door stoop at 54 Westbrook Way.

As of this reading, though, we are well into April, the fourth month of the year, which is often considered the second month of spring in the northern hemisphere. The name *April* is rooted in the Latin *Aprilis* which is derived from the Latin *aperire* meaning "to open" – which could be a reference to the opening or blossoming of flowers and trees, a common occurrence throughout the month of April and especially at Edgewood Townhouses. Enjoy the beauty of nature around us.