

Budget Ratification Meeting minutes, March 13, 2025
Elk Creek Elementary School

Board members in attendance:

Wade Hiers
Paul Swenson
Jane Spooner

Members in attendance:

Mike and Cathy Rheinberger
Jack and Barb Pleva
Mike and Carol Crowley
Brian Senjem
Bill Martindale
Bob Althage
Ronnie DeManna
Yoanna Adrian
Tom Washburn
Jay Genender
Veris Simms
Rick Koth
Richard Merrick
Paul Graver

Members represented by proxy:

Randy Jensen
Daniel McAtee
Tiffani McKnight
Michael Lagos
M. Gail Hite (Lot 5 & 6)
Susan Festag
Troy Oughton
Carl Price
Ching-Shyan Chen
Mark Wallace
Paul Hudgens
Barbara Benning

Wade Hiers called the meeting to order at 6:10pm

The members were invited to partake of the homemade lasagna prepared by Wade! Yum.

Jane made a motion to approve the agenda, Paul seconded and the motion was approved.
Jane made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the February 26 board meeting and to approve the minutes, Paul seconded and the motion was approved.

Jane read the amended meeting minutes from the November 1, 2024 board meeting. They included an important vote to increase the liability insurance. Paul made a motion to approve the amended minutes, Wade seconded and the amended minutes were approved. Wade provided a brief recap of the January 30, 2025 meeting.

- **Budget**

- **Budget Retraction:** Wade explained that the budget was retracted at the January 30th meeting because the board was not confident in its accuracy. This led to the scheduling of the current meeting.
- **Wildfire Mitigation:** Kelleigh McConaughy from Elk Creek Fire District spoke about wildfire mitigation, emphasizing the importance of maintaining forested areas in a healthy manner to make them safer in wildfire situations and resilient against infectious bugs.
- **Pine Beetle Prevention:** John Sepulveda from Splintered Forest discussed a mountain pine beetle mitigation program, offering free assessments for community members and various prevention services, including spraying, pheromone packets, healthy forest management, and bore injection poison for actively attacked trees.
- **Discounts for Services:** Splintered Forest is offering discounts on their services to community members, with an estimated 20% discount on normal spraying costs, reducing the cost from \$500 to approximately \$400 for 20 trees.
- **Sign-Up Process:** Wade explained the sign-up process for the pine beetle prevention program, directing members to Splintered Forest's website to request a free estimate and mention their membership in the Douglas Ranch community to receive the discount.
- **Board Member Terms:** Wade explained the staggered terms for current board members to maintain continuity, with some members serving two-year terms and others serving three-year terms.
 - **Current Terms:** Wade detailed the current terms: Matt Adrian and Jane Spooner will serve two-year terms ending January 1, 2027, while Paul Swenson and Wade will serve three-year terms ending January 1, 2028.
- **Resignation and Replacement of Board Member:** .
 - **Resignation Details:** Wade announced that Dan McAtee, who was elected at the October 6th meeting, resigned shortly before the January 30th meeting due to his inability to serve effectively as he spends little time in Colorado during the winter.
 - **Replacement Plan:** Wade explained that instead of making an appointment, the Board decided to hold an election to appoint a replacement to ensure community trust. Nominations would be taken from the floor, and the person with the highest number of votes would be appointed by the Board.
- **Communication Methods:** The Board discussed the use of email to send meeting notifications rather than USPS as the cost of mailing to all members is nearly \$30 for just postage. The members were unanimous in their approval of this method of communication. Members requested that the Board look into text alerts for important notifications.

- **Budget Presentation:** .
 - **Budget Overview:** Paul Swenson presented the budget for the 2025 calendar year, detailing administrative expenses, liability insurance costs, professional fees, income tax, asset management, and reserve expenses.
 - **Fund Allocation:** Paul explained the plan to move excess funds from the checking account to a premier savings account to gain more interest, aiming to increase the reserve funds to around \$100,000.
 - **Projected Expenses:** Paul detailed the projected expenses for 2025, including administrative costs, website maintenance, liability insurance, professional fees, income tax, and asset management activities such as road maintenance and ditch maintenance.
 - **Revenue Sources:** Paul outlined the revenue sources, including HOA dues, carryover fees, and bank interest, projecting a total revenue of \$48,625 against expenses of \$47,450, allowing for a small increase in reserve funds.
 - **Reserve Fund Management:** Paul discussed the importance of maintaining and growing the reserve funds to cover future expenses, including road overlays, culvert relining, and other community asset maintenance.
- **Asset Management and Reserve Funds:** Paul discussed the allocation of funds for asset management and reserve expenses, including road maintenance, turnarounds, and steps to the open space.
 - **Road Maintenance:** Paul detailed the allocation of funds for road maintenance, including patching and crack sealing on Baldwin Court and May Long Court, and future culvert inspections.
 - **Turnarounds:** Paul explained the need for turnarounds at the ends of dead-end streets to ensure fire trucks can safely navigate the area, with plans to start surveys and grading plans this year.
 - **Open Space Steps:** Paul mentioned the plan to build steps to the open space, with a bid from Sanchez for \$6000, ensuring the steps are safe and meet court order requirements.
 - **Reserve Fund Allocation:** Paul discussed the allocation of reserve funds for various projects, including road overlays, culvert relining, and the Douglas Ranch Dr. egress clearing, with a focus on maintaining community assets.
 - **Future Planning:** Paul emphasized the importance of planning for future expenses and maintaining a healthy reserve fund to cover unforeseen costs and ongoing maintenance needs.
- **Turnarounds for Fire Safety:** The board discussed the need for turnarounds at the ends of dead-end streets to ensure fire trucks can safely navigate the area.
 - **Fire Department Requirements:** The current turnarounds at the ends of dead-end streets are inadequate for fire trucks, necessitating the creation of wider turnarounds to ensure safe navigation.
 - **Survey and Grading Plans:** Paul mentioned that the board plans to start surveys and grading plans this year to determine the exact requirements for the turnarounds, with the goal of ensuring fire truck access.

- **Private Property Easements:** Paul explained that the turnarounds will require easements on private property, and the board will work on obtaining these easements to facilitate the construction of the turnarounds.
- **Approval of Budget:** The budget for 2025 was approved by a majority vote, with 22 votes in favor and 8 against.
- **Egress Project:** Wade announced the egress project led by Kelleigh McConaughy to ensure safe evacuation routes in the event of a wildfire

Wade made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25pm, Jane seconded, motion was approved.

- Follow-up tasks:
- **Board Member Replacement:** Put out feelers and discuss with the community to find a volunteer for the vacant board member position. (The Board)
- **Budget Review Committee:** Ensure Richard Merrick joins the Budget Review Committee to help with the budget review process. (The Board)
- **Communication Methods:** Look into free group texting services to enhance community communication alongside email notifications. (The Board)
- **Turnaround Access:** Get survey and grading plan drawings for the turnaround access at the ends of dead-end streets. (The Board)
- **Insurance Coverage:** Discuss with the community what the current insurance covers, especially in the event of a catastrophic event. (The Board)
- **Homeowners Insurance Impact:** Investigate if the lack of turnarounds affects homeowners' insurance premiums. (The Board)

Jane Spooner
 DRPOA Secretary
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