

OPEN GENERAL SHAREHOLDERS MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 14, 2023 1:00-3:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

ROLL CALL- Nicholas Recanati, Here; Steve Jakalow, Here; Ray Mecca, Here; Cathy Stanton, Here; Frank Bracco, Excused Absence.

Motion to Approve November Open Meeting Minutes prepared by Cathy Stanton. Minutes approved with an addendum submitted by Cathy Cafagno. (Addendum will be attached to November Minutes)—“...in October’s minutes, I asked will an audit be prepared yearly and when will the 2023 Audit be made available for Shareholders to view?” President’s response was “probably at the end of the year.” In November’s minutes, “Can the Board verbally inform Shareholders at our meetings of both our balances in the Operating and Capital Reserve accounts? If they could, even though a profit/loss appears in our monthly Gazette which some Shareholders who are for one reason or another may not read it or fully understand it, would have another way to being informed. Lastly Director Stanton correct me if I am wrong, I don’t recall saying “to volunteer to assist in fixing things that are wrong” Can I hear a playback, or have it confirmed it was the transcriber’s interpretation of what I was saying regarding the fact I informed the Board I will volunteer to assist them, and also mentioning today, any Committee that needs assistance like I have already.” *Thank you Cathy for your comments and they will be added to the minutes. The 2023 Audit will be ready to present at our January Open Meeting because we are still waiting for responses from the Auditors. A final statement of the 2023 year end Capital Reserves and the Operating Budget balances will be completed by the January 2024 meeting. We have deposited approximately \$80,000 this year into our Capital Reserve fund which represents our mandatory Transfer fees. We are on target with properly funding that account this year. Being out meetings are mid-month it is difficult to have an accurate account until the following month but if anyone wants to have a copy of these reports, please come to the office and they will be provided.*

Before the Board votes on the 2024 Operating Budget, we want to send out a special thank you to the Finance Committee for drafting the budget and a very special thank you to Frank Ferina, [who assisted us while vacationing in the Philippines] in finalizing the budget and formatting it for the community. Frank is a great asset for our community. The Board only votes for the acceptance of the Operating Budget, the Shareholders do not vote. The Operating budget is based on the actual projected expenses for the up-coming year.

- Carefree’s 2024 Yearly Operating Budget is \$968,400-Homeowners Association Dues for 2024 will be \$150 a quarter; \$600 a year. BOARD DIRECTORS VOTE TO ACCEPT CAREFREE’S 2024 OPERATING BUDGET --- **VOTE: NR Y; FB Y (submitted by sealed envelope); MP Y; SJ Y; RM Y; CS Y. APPROVED.**
- Carefree’s Special Assessment will be \$366 per household; \$240 for past-due mandated Capital Reserve funds and \$126 for the replacement of the roofs (\$204,000). This

payment is broken down into two payments of \$183.00 due March 1, 2024 and September 1, 2024. BOARD OF DIRECTORS VOTE TO IMPLEMENT THE 2024 SPECIAL ASSESSMENT – **VOTE: NR Y; FB Y (submitted by sealed envelope); MP Y ; SJ Y; RM Y ; CS Y. APPROVED.** All Shareholders will receive a letter with a voucher in the mail explaining the new payment procedure; by eliminating the coupon books the community saves \$3,000. Persons that will have difficulty paying the Special Assessment can come to the office to make special arrangements.

President Recanati announced that the Board is currently exploring the possibility of selling two tracks of vacant land owned by the association to a developer that would build new homes using the same models as the community. If this is possible, and the community is able to sell this property it would be a win-win for the community, it would provide much needed revenue for our Capital Reserves and the new homes would add additional yearly HOA funds towards our yearly Operating Budget. We are in the very early stages of discussion and will continue to advise the community. Remember the Board does not have the authority to move forward with this project without a Shareholder vote. IF and when the Board learns we are allowed to move forward, a vote must be held and each Shareholder will have the opportunity to vote for it or against it, understand the majority of our Shareholder votes will be the final decision, not the Board. The Board will NOT move forward without following all proper process. If we are able to accomplish this sale, it would increase the value of our community and avoid any future financial issues.

- Why weren't the people living around this area asked first?—*Nothing is happening yet. If and when it becomes a reality, anybody within 200 ft. from that area will receive a letter from the town to inform them that they can attend the town meeting with the planning board and lawyers to state their concerns. These concerns will be considered prior to being approved.*
- Why bring this up if it is premature? – *We wanted to ensure that the community is fully aware of the intent of the Board.*
- It is a park on Bimini, you receive funding for that park you cannot sell it.—*We are currently exploring our options. If we are unable to sell the land because it is a park then the deal is done.*
- I know the property and I live behind it, it is a big eyesore, it looks terrible; if they comply with your rules and it makes us money, go for it. *Thank you.*
- Does Hovnanian still own that property? – *That property was supposed to be your community center. The property is owned by the community.*
- I live next door to that property what will be built next to me? How do I know it will not end up as a trailer park like next door? – *Only houses.*
- Terry LiCausi explains the intent of the land and how the former Boards tried to maintain the park but it turned out to be nothing but a dumping ground and hang out for undesirables. To maintain the park properly it would cost the community and our Shareholders lots of money.

Cathy Stanton addressed the piece of land on Port Royal and knew that a former Board wanted to implement a trailer park and we opposed it. You may think we as a Board are different from you; we bang our heads against the wall, trying to find ways to bring in money. We have volunteers working hard, events and Bingo. We appreciate that. This is a thought process in the very beginning stages. We are just trying to help you guys so we don't have to keep raising the dues. We have a parking lot that must be done and other projects coming in the near future. The assessment is necessary to avoid borrowing the funds from the bank at least 9% interest. It is easier to bleed a little now than hemorrhage later, I am for all of you, the roofs must be paid for and that is why the extra \$126 is needed. We have no choice. If you have any ideas to help the situation we welcome you. We are dedicated and working for you.

- You raised the Special Assessment from \$240 to \$366. Is it because of the roof? *Yes. We have to pay \$150 plus an extra \$183 all in March? The Special Assessment is due in March and September. That is \$400 extra dollars that homeowners have to put out when they live on Social Security, how can we think this can possibly be done? If you can't do it, come to the office to work out a special payment plan.* When we had the power point meeting I talked to you after that meeting (Nick) and I said there was no way we can pay \$240 all in one shot, and you said we will work that out. Now we have two times to pay. *Yes that is correct. If you have problems come to the Board and we will assist those people.* People should not have to come to you and disclose their personal financial information. That is none of your business. *The Board will work with all Shareholders that request help.* This is the first time we are hearing about this roof. *That is because the roof also came as a surprise to the Board and we just finished the job the other day.*
- I moved here in June and there was no disclosure that you were short in your accounts to my attorney. This money should have been in your reserve account. *It was not, that is why we have the Special Assessment, the previous Boards did not fund the Reserves. Please come to the office and I will show you the records, there was total disclosure on the website in also the minutes. If your attorney requested financial information it would have been supplied.* I was the President of my association, I lived there for 35 years, and I have never seen an increase like this.
- I fully understand the need for the Special Assessment and the Roof, listening to the Shareholders present today, they feel that two payments of \$183 will cause them a hardship, is there any other way to assist these Shareholders? *Yes, those that will have a hardship can come to the Board for a special payment schedule.*

President Recanati informed the community that Falcon Engineering will be conducting a Capital Reserve Study at the end of January 2024 and this will assist the Board with the proper financial planning for future Capital Reserve Funding. When this report is completed we will share it with the Shareholders.

Special Assessments and Operating Budget payments must be billed separately.

Directors Reports:

Marie Persichilli sent out a special thank you to our association employees and also our maintenance employees. I recently have taken over the management of the office and I have to say we have terrific workers; they are all working very hard to serve all of you. If you have any issues please contact me directly and I will do my best to resolve them. Without their hard work we would not be heading forward in the direction we are, thank you to all our office staff and Joe and John from maintenance. They are all part of our team!

Steve Jakalow reported the status of the roof. After last week's rain, we went into the attic to ensure that we had no leaks. All's good! I also want to give a special thank you to Joe Styler and his department; he worked very closely with the Solar Company and the roofing workers. We completed the project on time. The cost of the roof was \$204,000 which included 29 sheets of plywood @ \$65 a sheet and the township permit cost \$4,428. Premier did a great job. Any questions please direct them to me.

Cathy Stanton big shout out for the Network of Neighbors for ticket sales for their New Year's Eve Party, tickets will be sold December 19th we will send out a robo-call for persons that are not at this meeting. We appreciate your support. Merry Christmas. Also, when Santa was here for the tree lighting, I took pictures of the children with Santa and if you want them, they are on the table in the back of the room.

Ray Mecca Is everybody happy with their grass? See me next summer. I have nothing else at the moment.

COMMITTEE AND CLUBS—The clubs and committees presented year end checks.

1. A/C High Rollers- Fran Lucante/Theresa LiCausi-\$2,000 + \$1,500 = **\$3,500**
2. Bocce- Ed Pruzinskis-**\$500**
3. Chair Yoga- Carol Bendl-\$2,000 + \$1,300 = **\$3,300**
4. Corn Hole- Sue and Luis Segovia---**\$247.00**
5. Friday Dance Party & Exercise- Terry Regina & Rosemary Kosinski-\$3,000 + \$1,000= **\$4,000**
6. Galavangers Club-Fran Newsome-**\$2,313.18**
7. Gazette-Joan Quinzer-\$3,500 + \$3,500= **\$7,000**
8. Shareholder's Kitchen- Barbara Tupper/Leslie Zakrewski-\$9,300+\$4,000=**\$13,300.**
9. Social Club- Mary Puleo-\$2,500 + \$4,500= **\$7,000**
10. Woman's Club- Sue Pruzinskis-\$8,750 + \$4,150= **\$12,900**
11. Entertainment- **\$321**

GRAND TOTAL AFTER TODAY'S MEETING-

\$54,381.18

THANK YOU! GREAT JOB DONE BY ALL OUR COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS.

Cathy Stanton- Thank you to all our volunteers that help to keep our dues low. Freecare has an announcement.

John Stanton, Freecare- Freecare is doing fine. We have been installing smoke alarms for the Red Cross and we are just about completed and I will be returning all the unused smoke alarms. If you need one, please call me but we will be ending this service.

Bob Kennedy- Skee ball will start on January 8th, we are working on the schedule, they will be available January 2nd. I want to wish everybody a Merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Joe Palmerson- We gave out turkeys at Thanksgiving and I thank all the volunteers that helped. Marie Persichilli suggested that the 30 left-over turkeys be distributed that evening at Bingo. Free tax preparation after January 15th it will be posted on the bulletin board, it will be done every Tuesday at Silver Ridge Park from 1-3pm. We will have free CPR and Heimlich training on January 17th. We have had a few fires caused by people leaving their microwaves on for more than 5 minutes at a high temperature. I wish everyone a very Merry Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

President Recanati- You heard that great contribution made to the community. We need more volunteers, we depend on our Shareholders. Thank you. I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

SHAREHOLDERS COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

- Marge Diana- "...I have volunteered for 12 years and I was upset when I learned there was a volunteer appreciation luncheon given because I was not invited...everyone in this room has volunteered why weren't you all invited, why haven't we had an appreciation dinner since before the COVID, I think that was the last one...Every one of these Board members thanked all these volunteers, shouldn't that have been enough? ...How do you invite some and not all?...Why did they do that?...I am going to volunteer no matter what, write something in the Gazette, thank you volunteers but we can't have a dinner. I want an apology."
- Lisa Kay- "Lawn Service. Why are we paying for a service we are not receiving, and the newsletter stated that we could not get out of that contract. Why not? I know that attorney; you can get out of this contract. Look around you; does it look like anyone out there can shovel snow? I can't.... You don't send a payment to grass cutter when you have 1600 people say they can't get out of their driveway and had to pay someone else... I live on Bimini and a deer was hit in front of house...the driver left with a broken front end. I called Berkeley police and he suggested that I come to a Board meeting...I walk my dog 4 times a day and these drivers do not stop, you can't get across the street...curb you dog law is to pick up after your dog not walk in the street...deer poop is everywhere...there are only 2 animal control officers in Berkeley and it takes days to pick them up."
- Aida Fastag-Carvajal- "...I come to the meetings as much as I can, I try to stay informed and then I find out things were approved... Aren't we supposed to vote on these things, we need to hear the dialogue and why the Board votes...We are all in this together, I understand the difficulty, when did the Board vote to remove the snow?" *The Board did not vote to remove snow; that would be a Shareholder vote. "When will the Board vote on a new grass cutting contract?" We will start discussion and negotiations in July 2024. We tried to break the current contract but it would have cost us too much money. Turfmasters contracts ends at the end of 2024. "You are also volunteers and it is hard, so thank you."*

- Cathy Cafagno- Article V Officers of the Corporation Section 4. Secretary- ...By-laws do not mention in his/her absence how minutes will be taken. "If recorder was kept on stage versus in the back of the auditorium, it would be beneficial in terms of verbal clarity when Board and speakers are at the podium."

Article V, Section 5, pg1-16 The Treasurer reads: The Treasurer will also prepare a monthly comparison budget. "Who has taken over that responsibility since the Treasurer's resignation? Can I get an answer?" *Our bookkeeper Judy, whom is very qualified, prepares all the financial statements and reports and she would give them to the Treasurer and the Treasurer reports them.* "We are receiving this info in the Gazette, but didn't this month. Why and when will Board be reinstating it?" *I believe this month the budget will be in the Gazette. We will be doing the year-end statements and that should appear when it is completed.* "So we will be keeping that monthly statement in the Gazette for transparency?" *Yes, Always. The problem is that we did not have the profit and loss completed and we were working on the budget. So it was not ready to meet the Gazette deadlines for publication. But if anyone wants a copy, they can request one from the office.* "Thank you. Let me continue. Will the Board give a brief statement at open monthly meetings what our operating and reserves balances are?" *Absolutely, we can do that.* "What about yearly audits?" *Yearly audits are not required. They are required bi-annually. Moving forward that is probably what the new Board may do.* "I also found out that you can do a yearly review and that saves a lot more money." *Financial Reviews have always been done yearly by the community accountant that prepares our taxes. That is a normal procedure.* "I just want to finish by saying I called Mr. Evans (DCA), Bureau of Homeowner's Protection's Association Regulation Unit, informed me that while NJ does not require HOA's to conduct Audits, a monthly accounting must be made available to all Shareholders. He suggested that I put it in writing. I am only saying this because we know the past history and we do not want a repeat of this Board not providing access. I want to thank this Board for trying and I want to see a financial statement moving forward." *Regarding the monthly financial statement available to all Shareholders, as we have said for the last 2 years that I have been on this Board, the records are available any time you care to look at them, come to the office. There is nothing being hid from you, if you don't see it in the Gazette that month, feel free to come to the office. This is open records, the Board knows that, and they are always available. You are entitled to see them. Like I said earlier, sometimes it is a problem getting them to print before the Gazette deadline.* "I want to thank all of you, and I now that you are working hard, I am not here to criticize. I just want to make sure we never go back there again." *Understand, when Community Affairs tells you that your financials must be made available, he is correct, if they are not printed, you can still obtain this information from the office.* "I appreciate your time in answering my questions".

Joan Quinzer- Explains the submittal dates for publication in the gazette to the Shareholders.

NEXT OPEN SHAREHOLDERS MEETING January 11th 1:00PM
ADJOURNMENT