

**CAREFREE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION**  
**September 12, 2024 OPEN GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MOMENT OF SILENCE-** Please remain standing for a Moment of Silence for our Servicemen and woman, the Police, Fire Fighters, & First Responders. Also, remember all our dear Carefree friends and neighbors that we have lost throughout the years. Most of us have been personally affected or know families that have suffered losses due to September 11<sup>th</sup>. Yesterday we came together as a Country and shared in memorials to remember how our great Country was attacked by terrorists. We must never forget the sacrifices made by so many to ensure that we continue to enjoy our safety and freedoms. I also am asking that everyone share a moment of reflection and prayer for all the victims, our military, first responders, civilians, and our great Country. We must NEVER, NEVER, NEVER FORGET! We must also continue to pray for peace in the world, especially in Israel and Ukraine.

**ROLL CALL** President Recanati, Present; Frank Bracco, Present; Marie Persichilli, Present; Cathy Stanton, Present; Steve Jakalow, Present; Ray Mecca, Present; Joe Palmerson, Present. Let the record reflect that all Board Directors are present.

**THERE WILL BE NO SIGN-IN SHEET, QUESTIONS WILL BE TAKEN AT THE END OF THE MEETING- If you have a complaint or concern please make an appointment and bring them to the Board for discussion.**

**MOTION TO APPROVE JUNE OPEN GENERAL MEETING MINUTES:** Motion accepted and Minutes are approved.

**John A. Bacchione, Mayor and Shawn Thomas, Director of Public Works** attended our meeting to introduce the new robo-garbage cans to our community. Mayor Bacchione explained to the community that after a review of the Township expenses and the workman's compensation claims the Township will be instituting that all of Berkeley Township will be converting to robo-garbage cans. "This year the township insurance went up 1.4 million dollars, so we had to figure out how to save money, we came up with the idea to institute robo-cans. If we don't come up with ideas to save money these additional expenses are passed on to our Berkeley Township tax payers." A sample garbage can on wheels was presented and he informed the community that all households will receive 2 free garbage cans, one for garbage and another for recycling. The cans will be available in two sizes, 65 or a 90 gallon can. The service of our sanitation workers to bring the cans from the curb to your home, provided that the resident is physically incapable of moving the cans themselves will continue. To qualify for this curb service the resident will be required to provide a doctor's note each year. Garbage bags put on the curb are a violation of our Township ordinance. The robo-can has a tight fitting attached lid and will sustain 40 mile an hour winds. Shawn Thomas recommends the 65 gallon robo-can. "We would like to start this process in January". Mr. Thomas recommends that if you put your old garbage can out when you receive the new cans they will dispose of the old ones. Your first two cans are free, if you need an additional can the cost is \$65. Terri LiCausi demonstrates how easy it is to roll the can. Thank you Mayor and Mr. Thomas.

**Marie Allen from Alcoeur Gardens, Residential Alzheimer's Care Community** –" I represent Alcoeur Gardens which is a Alzheimer's community located on Route 166, we only serve people with Dementia or Alzheimer's. If you or a loved one is starting to lose their memory, Alcoeur Gardens is there for you. It is a small community, with 19 beds. I will be coming back to speak

with the owner operator of the facility, she is a registered nurse and doing this for 40 years. I have some brochures if anyone is interested see me and I will answer any of your questions. I thank you for your time". Thank you Marie Allen.

**Nicholas Recanati, President-** Our Code Enforcement Committee has added two new volunteers. So we now have 4 members on this committee and they are investigating your complaints. Every month, I stand up here and stress the importance of obtaining permission from the office prior to starting any upgrades, changes or additions to your property. This is serious; this avoids imposing sanctions and fines. Please check with the office **prior** to doing any work to ensure that you have the all the proper permits filed with our office and our approval prior to starting your projects.

Ocean County Prosecutors office has re-scheduled our case against Alliance Paving. Hopefully we are successful and are awarded the \$20,000 that the former president spent on that illegal company for our parking lot. I will keep you all updated.

Remember we have updated the Rules and Regulations to add that all persons **must** obtain a permit from our office to place a dumpster in their driveway. The dumpster will not be allowed to remain on any property in Carefree for more than 30 days. It is not fair for the neighbors that have to stare at a dumpster next to their house for months.

We are a restricted 55+ community. When you purchase your property you sign an agreement to abide by all our governing documents. That means that you must have someone 55+ residing in the home. If you violate this mandatory requirement, sanctions will be enforced. Don't say you didn't know this, ignorance is not a defense. Update: Berkeley Township lost their court case regarding under age persons purchasing properties in our senior communities. That means that anyone can purchase the property however **the mandatory requirement that a person 55 or older lives in the house stands.**

Housing for Older Persons Act (HOPA) forms will be sent out next month. We will be instituting a \$500 fine to each household that does not return these forms to our office with the required IDs. HOPA is the age verification required by the Federal Government to ensure our senior 55 status.

There is an election November 10<sup>th</sup>, we have 6 available seats and wish everyone all the luck in the world. Make sure you vote. There are a lot of rumors going around about hiring a management company; I personally do not feel hiring a management company is the right thing for our community.

I want to congratulate our office staff, they work very hard, and this month they collected \$33,000 in fines and liens. Let's give them a round of applause. Thank you.

## **DIRECTORS REPORTS**

**Marie Persichilli, Secretary-** Nothing to report at this time.

**Cathy Stanton, Treasurer-** Welcome back everyone, it is good to see you all. The financials will be in this month's Gazette. We will be taking money out of our fund because we just replaced our air conditioner and boiler and I will let Steve tell you all about that. Thank you so much. Financial reporting as of 8/30/24 with reference to Merrill Lynch Accounts:

Capital Reserve Balance forward at 7/31/24	\$920,277.53
Dividends/Interest/Market Gains (August)	6,245.03

Deposit 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter Transfer fees	<u>21,250.00</u>
TOTAL IN CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT 6/28/24 (\$200,000.00 Restricted Funds)	\$947,772.56*
Special Snow funds (Restricted)	<u>50,000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS IN MERRILL LYNCH ACCOUNTS 8/28/24</b>	<b>\$997,772.56</b>

\*Includes Money Market Fund \$367,203.94

Please note Restricted \$100,000 CD matured on 8/28/24. As of 8/30/24 those funds are temporarily parked in the Money Market Account pending renewal of said closed CD. On 9/4/24 the purchase of the renewal/replacement \$100,000 CD was finalized at the rate of 4.10% for a period of 18 months.

**Frank Bracco, Vice President-** It is that time of year that I remind everyone, if you have special needs, dialysis for an example, register with the police department as soon as you can, in case of a snowfall and you can't get out of your house, they will come and get you and take you for your appointments. But you must register and if you know of someone that fits these requirements ensure that they also get registered. Thank you.

**Ray Mecca-** I want to let you know that by the end of the year we are looking at a new contract for lawn and snow maintenance. We are currently working on that and we have multiple contracts to consider. After we finalize our decision, the contract must then go to the FAC and also to our attorney for review and his approval. Thank you.

**Steve Jakalow-** Good Afternoon. The pool is closed. First I would like to thank our badge checkers they did a great job this year. Seeing everyone using our pool makes me feel good. We had a great season. October 5<sup>th</sup> in this building between 3-5 pm we will have our annual flu clinic. This is a free clinic sponsored by Good Neighbor Pharmacy, details are in the Gazette. We will have another free clinic on November 2<sup>nd</sup> between 3-5 pm. Cathy mentioned the replacement of the air conditioner and boiler, it is all completed, it was inspected and passed and the funding for this project is covered by our Capital Reserves. We have redone the horseshoe pits, according to the Falcon Study we were allowed \$1,000 to complete this project, we spent around \$500. They should be completed within the next week or two. Have a great afternoon.

**Joe Palmerson-** Good Afternoon folks. I have information about the senior freeze and also for the utility assistance program and you can get copies on the desk where the office gals are sitting.

**Nick Recanati, President-** As you can see this Board is really working hard. I will call the clubs:

#### **COMMITTEE AND CLUB REPORTS—**

- A/C High Rollers- Terri LiCausi-Trips are going well.
- Bocce- Susan Pruzinskis & Ed Pruzinskis- Bocce has ended and I want to thank everyone that participated, you made it successful. Hope to see you next year.
- Book Club-Painting- Lynda Schmid-Discusses the rules and regulations about garbage. The book we are currently reading is The People We Keep, Allison Larkin. I also have a copy of Heidi's book if you are interested in borrowing it. Heidi lives in Carefree and is busy writing her second book.
- Chair Yoga- Carol Bendl-Bev is a great teacher.
- Corn Hole- Sue Segovia- Corn Hole started this week and we added a few new players and if anyone is interested in becoming a sub let us know.
- Election-Janet Cooper Chair- We have 6 seats and 8 candidates that have submitted their resumes for the Board. After we meet with all the candidates their resumes will be

posted on the bulletin board. Candidate's night is October 10<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 pm, we are asking the shareholders to prepare their questions to ask the candidates.

- Finance Advisory Committee – Dick Abato- We assist the Board of Directors mainly the Treasurer. Routinely we help prepare the monthly income statements and the balance sheet. Around now, we start to work on the Operating Budget and the Capital Reserve Funding for next year. We review the contracts for the various projects to assist the Board. Over the past year, we did the roof contract, the ac and boiler contracts, the pool contracts; we looked at contracts for the lawn and snow and made recommendations to the Board. I am working on finalizing the tennis court and pickle ball court. I am waiting for one more proposal and then the FAC will make the recommendations to the Board, hopefully we can get this done this year. I am looking into the cost of a generator which is a huge project. We are also looking at concrete bases for bocce. We are still looking for people to volunteer for our committee, if you are interested please send me your resume. We also do the audits for the clubs and Bingo. The clubs bring in over \$20,000 which helps our Capital Reserve Fund. Bingo revenue pays for the shopping bus and other projects. Thank you.
- Freecare- John Stanton- If you don't have a File for Life please see Ron. We have plenty of wheelchairs, potty chairs, walkers, canes etc. Contact information is in the Gazette.
- Gazette-Joan Quinzer- I am presenting a check for \$5,000 from the earnings from the Gazette for January –July.
- Men's Club- Ed Pruzinskis-We were very successful with the poolside café, we started on July 4<sup>th</sup>. This was the first time we did this and I think we did a damn good job. Thank you to all the guys that worked so hard to make it happen. We had a bus trip to the Surf light theater and dinner at the Captain's Inn. The Veterans Luncheon is 11/9/24 tickets are \$20. We will be hosting Carefree's New Year's Party.
- Neighborhood Watch- Joe Palmerson- We will be giving out free turkeys for Thanksgiving. September 26<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 is our Neighborhood Watch meeting. We will be having our congressman, senator, our mayor and many other distinguished guests. We will have another robo-can presentation. We will address squatters, scams and many other pertinent issues.
- Shuffleboard- Ed Pruzinskis-Looking forward to a good season.
- Skee-ball- Bob Kennedy- We are looking for more players and subs, if interested please contact me.
- Social Club- Mary Puleo-The winner of our \$500 50-50 lives in Berkeley but attends our exercise classes. October 3<sup>rd</sup> is the Lunch with the Bunch, tickets are \$12 our guest speaker is TJ Fallon who is a historian and has visited all the grave sites of our American Presidents and Vice Presidents, he holds the Guinness Book of World Records for accomplishing this in one year. When he speaks he makes history come alive.
- Woman's Club- Sue Pruzinskis-Our next meeting will be hosting a health fair with 23 vendors. This event is sponsored by Silverwoods and is free. We will be hosting Beacon of Life for our October meeting, pizza will be served. We have rescheduled our Fall Fest for October 19<sup>th</sup> 5-9 Dinner and a DJ tickets are \$23. We will have Brian Forman and

Kate Moriarty discussing Medicare, Wills and Estate Planning. And of course our Christmas Party will be held at the Clarion.

**Nick Recanati, President-** October 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm we will be hosting Candidates Night. I also want to mention that Vinny Zenna is working on marketing the property for sale on Bimini. I want to thank everybody here for making me President, I had a terrific Board behind me, my term is up at the end of this year and I am not seeking reelection. I am having heart surgery tomorrow, hopefully everything turns out alright. I just want to thank everybody.

**Marie Persichilli, Secretary-** It has been office protocol that when you file a complaint with the office that you must sign your name. We understand that many people do not want to sign their name for fear of retaliation. I fully understand this from my own first-hand experience of making a confidential complaint to the former board which did not remain confidential. The former Board member did not protect my identity and I have personally suffered retaliation. We need you guys to be vigilant and report these things to the Board. We have new code enforcers and we are always looking for more. If you have a legitimate complaint bring it to the office, you don't have to sign your name and the Board will investigate the complaint and take appropriate action.

#### **FROM THE FLOOR**

- *Who are you looking to sell the land to and for what?* We are looking to sell it to a developer to build houses that match the homes in the community.
- *Sheds, what are the requirements?* We updated the rules and regulations to allow the sheds to be placed in the back of your property and they no longer need to be touching your patio. You can get the updated rules from our office. All sheds require a permit and approval from our Carefree Code Official.
- *I was talking to Joe (Palmerson) and I noticed we have that Welcome Committee and we have not had anything done. I will take it over and I have Joe's support to take it over.* MaryLou is in charge of the Welcome Committee and she wants to set it up as an informational meeting breakfast. The Board supports whatever she has planned. We can ask MaryLou to contact you. *I can contact her myself.* Do whatever you want to do.
- *Question regarding a tree that was cut down and placed on the common area. Who do I call?* The tree was the property of someone in the West. Please contact the office and we will contact the West on your behalf.
- *What about the issue I raised about Management Companies that I asked you to address? I want you to address the fact whether a Board can bring in a Management Company without the Shareholders being able to vote and that you can make an amendment right now that if a Board wants to bring in a management company it must go out for a 2/3 Shareholders vote. The community should vote on it!*

**Marie Persichilli-** Let me address this question. I have already reached out to our community attorney to verify whether or not the board has the power to hire a management company without the Shareholders being able to vote. I have not received his answer yet. I know that there has been a lot of gossip about hiring a management company in our community. We have been self-managed and governed for 40 years, which saves all of us a lot of money. There is a very fine line that the power of hiring a management company could go either way and that

concerns me. I think what Frank and Terri are raising is if we could do Resolution which is a way of voting where all the Shareholders will be able to vote whether or not they want a management company and also put protection in our bylaws that something this serious would require a 2/3 Shareholder vote. All the other communities are being faced with this same issue, because it is hard to get good volunteers to be up here and try to please people. Let's face it some people like what you do and others do not. Some people will want a management company and some will not. I will speak from my own personal experience; I have lived in many different HOA communities but the last one was in North Carolina. We had 1024 households and we paid \$249,000 a year to the Management Company which was paid out of our HOA yearly dues. Sure, it sounds great to have someone come in here and run your community and you don't have to worry about it but remember the management company is a for-profit business and it will cost you the Shareholders, and I strongly feel that decision should be all the Shareholders decision not the elected Board's decision. Even though we may not all agree, we all have an equal share in our community and you must all have the equal right in making a decision this serious with the management of your corporation. I have served on this Board and I know it has been a very hard couple of years because we discovered so many things that had to be addressed and corrected, I can assure you moving forward our community is in great shape. We have corrected so many of our issues, the other surrounding communities are hurting because they are faced with the new law which was passed in January of this year regarding the Capital Reserve funding and most of them have not been funding their Capital Reserves. What you need to understand, this is not optional, it's mandatory. So with that fact, we were actually ahead of the ball even though our previous Board did not fund the Capital Reserves. Our by-laws were written to enforce all the transfer fees collected must fund our Capital Reserves. Because it is a by-law the Board was forced to institute a Special Assessment to put those funds back because it violated our law. We were fortunate that someone had enough sense when they wrote those bylaws to put that in there because that generates on the average of \$80,000 to \$100,000 a year towards our Capital Reserves. I praise whoever that was, it was ingenious. Unfortunately for a couple years we did not have an operating budget, and we exceeded our operating expenses. In 2022, I know it sounds like a broken record, we were approximately \$220,000 short of our 2022 operating expenses. That shortage of money came out of your reserves. Moving forward we must put that money back, so you should all take a bow, because I know you made the sacrifice by paying the Special Assessment and it has been very hard for many of our Shareholders to come up with that money. After announcing this shortage, we never expected the roof needing to be replaced, which caused the Special Assessment to increase, but if we would have had the funding in our Capital Reserves we would not have had to increase the Special Assessment because we would have had the money to pay for the roof. So being we didn't have any money in the Reserves, no funds to pay for the roof you got a special assessment. If we follow the new mandated law and fund our Capital Reserves properly you should never have another Special Assessment. The Falcon Engineering Group who completed our Capital Reserve Study, informed us that the required yearly funding is \$242,000.00. This is protection for you as a homeowner and Shareholder. I will give you an example, a young fellow was purchasing a home in an HOA, due to the new law his mortgage company checked their Capital Reserves and found that the community did not maintain the property so very expensive repairs were necessary and their projected Special Assessment

would be \$20,000. Thank God for that law, his mortgage company would not approve his mortgage unless he was able to raise the additional \$20,000 for this Special Assessment. He did not have the additional \$20,000 so he was unable to purchase the property. This new law saved him from purchasing in a HOA community that was financially under water. The new law is probably one of the best laws that the State has ever passed for those of us that live in HOAs. It will protect each and every one of us. Capital Reserves must be funded every single year. It is not a choice, it is mandatory. It's the law. The Board takes a lot of hits, many decisions we make are not our own but we must enforce them. It is very hard telling you; hey it's going to cost you more money. If you compound all the increases in inflation, and the additional funding requirements for your capital reserve study, and then some want to consider the possibility of a management company this will outspend a lot of people in our community. I am a firm believer in the demographics of our community and I think before any decisions are made, you need to consider the people who live here. There are many people that reside here that live on very little incomes and we all need to do the best for them. I am not running for your board again, but when you do decide who you are going to vote for, please understand it is not about yourself it is about all the 1614 households we are elected to represent. It is a tough job, but I'm proud of serving with this Board. I also have to give the recognition to many people that started alongside of me, that had the dedication to serve and worked very hard work to find the things that were wrong and help to correct them. The FAC has been excellent; other people have been fabulous, people stepped up to the plate and worked their tails off getting our clubs together. I want to acknowledge each and every one of you for all the good that you have done, whether you believe it or not. Without you this would not have been done. It took much more than just the Board. Moving forward, understand for those of you that may be coming onto this board, everything is in a good place, and this Board will pass that baton forward to them and if they continue to follow forward, you will all be safe, secure and managed very well. With that I thank each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart and God bless all of you. Remember it doesn't matter whether or not you like someone, we all have the equal say in our community, this is our community and we all love our community and must all work together. Any of us that have had any job, have worked with people we may have not liked, but we all had to learn how to get along with each other to get the job done. The job is for our community to move forward in a positive way. Thank you very much.

- *Before you all leave this Board, you all better protect our community from a few being able to hire a management company.*

**All Sitting Directors are in support of not hiring a Management Company.**

Meeting Adjourned- Next Meeting October 10, 2024 @7:00 pm- Candidates Night  
Minutes Prepared by Marie Persichilli, Secretary  
Carefree Board of Directors  
September 15, 2024