



May 14, 2008

Dear Member:

Happy May... or maybe March! Hard to tell with the crazy weather. It is wonderful to see all the green and flowers again! After going through a drought last summer, we just had 6.5" of rain in four days. May's average is 4" and max is 8". So, if the ducks are taking up residency in your backyard temporarily, you know why.

The OHCA leadership had a busy winter. We got the financials statements from last year approved as well as the budget for FY09, which will be here any minute. July 1st!

We also had some difficult business. In a special call meeting, the community members voted to have one member of the Board removed from the Board. At this month's membership meeting, however, the community voted Mr. Jeff Wagemann to take the vacant seat on the Board. A big thank you and congratulations to Mr. Wagemann for running and volunteering his time to the community. We also have a new Financial Secretary, Garth Wells, who has also offered to head up the Auditing Committee. Thank you Garth!

We let go of one issue with which we have been struggling for it seems a millennium. Well, it has been more than a decade. The Master Plan, which was started over ten years ago, was put to rest in a Special Call Association General Meeting on 2/2/08. At that meeting, the community voted to release the Board from the Master Plan and come back in a year with a new plan. This does not mean that we are trashing all of the design and effort that went into the Master Plan. It remains an asset of the community and one we will draw from when the designs coincide with the latest in environmental codes. And the Board promised, upon being released from the Master Plan, that they would have an alternate design for the remaining drainage problems in the community. This is in process and there have been two site meetings with the OHCA engineer and some community members.

At a Special Call Association General Meeting on 12/1/08, the community and OHCA engineer discussed the installation of rocks in the swales in the neighborhood. At its 12/13/08 meeting, the OHCA Board approved proceeding with the placement of rocks in swales, and during the first few months of 2008, rocks were added to the swales on Cross, Fishing Creek, Booker and Louis. Even with the recent 6.5" of rain, the swales on these streets held up. There was some flooding at the end of Fishing Creek and Cross, but it drained pretty quickly. Shore and Creek and part of Washington did not hold up so well.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ROCKS CANNOT BE PARKED ON. IF THEY ARE PARKED ON, THEY WILL BE CRUSHED TO THE POINT OF BEING A SOLID PIECE OF FILL WHICH WILL CAUSE TOTAL FAILURE OF THEIR DESIGN, WHICH IS TO PROVIDE FOR DRAINAGE AND STORAGE OF STORM WATER.

For a couple of reasons we stopped adding the rocks again. Due to the County holding some of our tax funds, we did not get the full funding this past November and so we have to make sure the current funds will last through November of this year. Additionally, it is important that we prioritize the projects to be sure that the most severe drainage areas are resolved first

It looks like our worst drainage areas are Shore, Creek and part of Washington. We have been having meetings with the property owners on Shore Drive to come up with a resolution for the very bad flooding on this street. And we are going to start meeting with the property owners on Creek Drive to facilitate some solutions for the problems on that street and on the adjoining properties as well.

During these meetings, something very important has come up which needs to be addressed to all of the community members. Oyster Harbor Citizens Association owns all of the roads in the community with the exception of Arundel on the Bay Road and Thomas Point Road. And as it is shown on your survey attached to your mortgage or deed, your lots don't necessarily extend all the way to the road by which you access your lot. This property, owned by OHCA, is called a Right of Way (ROW), and the roads are not always centered in the ROW. As a result, part of what might look to be your front yard may be owned by OHCA. A good example is my house on Fishing Creek Road. Almost half of my front yard is OHCA ROW. And as a result, any time, money and effort I put into a garden on the ROW is at my own risk as OHCA has full rights and ownership of the ROW. My use of this ROW in no way changes the OHCA ownership and/or rights to the ROW. So, if you choose to place a garden or landscaping on the OHCA Right of Way, please understand that it is at your own risk (OHCA could assert its right to build a swale or do something else on its ROW). It is your choice as to whether you maintain the land on the ROW. If you do not wish to, OHCA's landscaping company will maintain it.

As you are all probably aware, there have been some serious crime problems in Annapolis over the winter. Annapolis, as our State Capital, is no different than any other city in this regard. The Annapolis Police Department and Anne Arundel County have been working together to help solve this problem and have had some success. But the fact that our neighborhood is near a city does not change. And we have to remain vigilant in watching our neighbors' houses and calling the police with any details that seem out of place, cars that don't belong, etc. Knock on wood, we have had no serious recent incidents in the neighborhood of which I am aware. The patrolling of Oyster Harbor being done by AA County Sheriffs seems to be working very well. They even have rescued a dog!!

I want to give special thanks to Joanie Stone and Rhoades Whitehill for their efforts over the winter. Joanie has been working tirelessly on community property and compliance and Rhoades and his elves have worked very hard on our piers, marinas and the Fishing Pier at the Beach.

As always, please do not hesitate to call or email me with comments, questions, etc. My email is dsswell@aol.com. My phone numbers are 410.571.5588 and 410.693.8771.

I wish you all the happiest and safest of summer seasons!

Brooke

Brooke Doswell
President, OHCA