

## TREE, BRUSH, VEGETATION AND NOXIOUS WEED COMMITTEE

MINUTES, AUGUST 18, 2017

**CALL TO ORDER: 1:00 pm**

**PRESENT:** Peggy Olds, Karen Pachman, Pam Harris, Larry Raymer, Laura Frazier.

Guests: Pat Bonneville, Scott Winegar, Gary Williams

**INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME:** Peggy welcomed guests and members. Gary Williams, new Surfside HOA President introduced himself and briefly discussed his background and outlook as Surfside's newly-elected President of the Board of Trustees (BOT). Committee members and guests introduced themselves and provided background on their areas of expertise.

### OLD BUSINESS:

- **July Minutes:** Draft July Committee minutes had been circulated via email for revisions. Pam Harris moved and Larry Raymer seconded approval of the minutes. Unanimous consent on minutes; they will be submitted to the Board for approval at tomorrow's BOT meeting.

- **Information/Education Outreach:**

Septic Tank Drainfield Vegetation Planting: Karen Pachman presented pamphlets and information from Thurston County and Pacific County offices on suitable plantings for septic tank drain fields. Several members have reported the need for costly drainfield repair or replacement due to tree root or other vegetation damage. These pamphlets describe appropriate vegetation choices for drainfield surfaces.

Yellow Flag Iris: Larry Raymer presented information concerning the possible health risks of removing Yellow Flag Iris. Yellow flag Iris is another noxious weed but not classified Class A by Washington state. It is a very aggressive plant and can invade our canals, lakes and waterways. The County is not able to help with or eliminate this on private property. Larry commented that he and Gil recently evaluated all Surfside HOA-owned properties and discovered much noxious weed (Gorse, Scotch Broom, Yellow Flag Iris) not only on Surfside-owned but on private property too.

The committee discussed the need for much better information to members in a variety of formats to combat noxious weed management. Complaints will still be taken on noxious weeds and brush, and investigated by the committee, with referral to Pacific county for class A weed infestations.

Motion: Larry Raymer made the motion and Pam Harris seconded for the committee to work with Kimber to add/revise these two information pamphlets to the Weekender or other Surfside online venues and enclose this information in the New Member Bags. Adopted unanimously.

- **Member request follow-up:**

Peggy Olds met with Mark Scott, Surfside resident and IT specialist, about the member request to make it easier to locate the GIS tree height maps on the Surfside website. Mark was very helpful in outlining alternatives and suggested it would be very easy to put an “easy” button icon on Surfside's homepage that would take you directly to the Building and Tree height color-coded GIS map page. Mark volunteered to do this work after he completes some previous commitments. Laura will follow-up with Mark within the next month to implement these changes.

- Complaint # 4796: After many phone calls and on-site meetings with the property owner, this complaint has now been closed. Compliance with covenants achieved.
- Complaint # 4814: After many phone calls and on-site meetings with the property owner at their request, this complaint is now in the process of being completed.
- **Other Old Business: none**

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Tree Report /Discussion:** Laura presented her report for August 2017. Four (4) new complaints were added to the existing thirty (30) complaints and twelve (12) were closed. We currently have twenty-two (22) outstanding complaints. See Laura's attached report. Karen Pachman asked if the person filing the complaint ever receives feedback about the status of a complaint. Laura indicated they can call her to get updates, but the complaint filer doesn't automatically get updates.

The committee agreed to recommended modifications to the complaint form to include the complainant's e-mail address and specify a link to the tree committee minutes which include the monthly compliance officer report. Laura agreed this could be easily done as this would be a simple administrative change to the form. No policy changes are needed. If the complainant is willing to include their email address when filing out a complaint, Laura can send them the complaint number once the complaint has been validated. Or they could call and get the complaint number if they prefer not to leave an email address.

It was also recommended that Laura revise the second page of the Tree Complaints Status Report: Outstanding Complaints to show just complaint numbers and the status of the complaint for posting with the Committee's minutes each month. With these changes, the complainant could track the progress toward completion via the Surfside website and Laura's monthly Tree committee compliance report. This way all parties involved can track the status of a complaint via the complaint number by accessing the committee's minutes each month. This process revision will free staff time from office calls/visits, improves transparency for all, provides factual information for any Surfside member interested in tracking committee work, while still providing privacy to the specific parties involved in the individual complaint process.

- **Proposal Policy or Operating Procedure Regarding Property Boundaries:** Peggy requested the committee consider a policy or operating procedure recommendation be presented to the BOT that the Surfside HOA will not define property lines or mark over height trees for property owners. We have recently had several requests by owners to “mark” their trees and/or define property lines when a tree complaint was filed against a property. This may incur legal liability for the HOA and is inappropriate for volunteers or staff to do as we are not trained to do survey work nor have the proper equipment to do such a task. Larry Raymer mentioned a similar policy had once been included in our procedure manual but removed 10 years ago. Gary Williams also remembered this and asked Laura to find the wording in our old records. All thought this would be a great policy to have in writing as several landowners in recent months had been quite insistent that it was Surfside HOA’s job to provide this service if a complaint was filed. Peggy and Laura will work on a draft policy for review and discussion at the next meeting.
- **Equipment Purchase:** Peggy discussed the need for improved and/or new equipment for field checks. Binoculars would be very useful aid to help in our investigations as it is very difficult to see some property boundary stakes or delineate specific trees to measure when they are distant from the road or shrouded with ground vegetation. Committee members and staff do not trespass or access property without owner permission, and binoculars would aid in siting for vegetation management with this in mind. Members spend significant time and money to clear a valid complaint, and deserve the most accurate readings we can provide. In the past, Larry commented he used his personal binoculars to aid in field checks and Peggy mentioned she had also used hers. Laura stated binoculars could be used not only by the Tree committee but also by the Architectural and Waterway Committees too, and could come out of the administrative budget because they could be used for a variety of purposes. Larry Raymer made the motion to purchase binoculars with a cap of \$200.00; Pam Harris seconded. Committee unanimously approved. Peggy Olds agreed to research the purchase with the help of Pat Bonneville.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm**

**The next meeting: *September 15, 2017, 1:00 at the HOA office.***

kjp/po 8/18/2017