

Braeburn Valley Civic Association

Sections I & II

Minutes

Nov 9, 2022

Braeburn Valley Civic Association Meeting

Location: Bayland Park 6400 Bissonet St

Board Members: Bert Ruiz President (present)

Darren Spriggs Treasurer (present)

John Loe Vice President (present)

Johnathan Soffar Interim At Large (present)

Barbara Haney Secretary (present)

- I. 6:30 pm Meeting called to order by Bert Ruiz. Introduction of the board, including Jonathan Soffar, who will serve as interim At Large officer until the April meeting and elections.
- II. Review and Approval of July 22, 2022, Minutes. Approved by Jeanie Spriggs, George Mercado seconded it.
- III. Treasurer's Report by Darren Spriggs. Two reports are attached: Annual Operating Budget for the year and the Annual Budget compared to YTD actuals through Nov 8, 2022.
- IV. Annual Fee Increase Discussion. The current annual resident fee is \$300 and covers private back door waste pickup services and landscaping. The last contract with the waste company was signed in 2014. The company originally known as VF and now known as Green for Life (GFL) has imposed two rate increases this year; the first in March and the second in August. The last rate increase before this year was in 2010.

In August, the board was notified that our monthly waste fee increased, effective September 2022, by \$547 from \$1873 to \$2420 per month, an increase of a bit more than 29%. The board requested and received a proposal from other waste companies and received one back from Texas Pride, whose estimate was more than \$200 higher than the current company's new fee. The landscaping service of common areas fee increased from \$500 to \$575 per month during the last administration.

1. Bert shared that, per the deed restriction, the board is responsible for setting annual fees. He also shared that while a fee increase does not require a vote from property owners, the board felt it is important to seek input before setting the new fee. Darren Spriggs, the Treasurer, provided two reports: a balance sheet of annual revenue and expenses and a worksheet showing year-end revenue expectations factoring in 3 different rate increase scenarios that outlined the following:
 - i. If the annual resident fee is increased to \$388 to match the level of increase of the waste company (29.2%), the projected year-end surplus will be \$6,934, assuming every resident pays his annual fee
 - ii. If the annual resident fee is increased to \$375 (25% increase), the projected year-end surplus will be \$5,819
 - iii. If the annual resident fee is increased to \$350 (16.5%), the projected year-end surplus is \$3,644

Resident questions:

1) From Christine McKeon, how often do we think there will be an increase? Bert Ruiz mentioned that there had been two increases in 2022 for waste services, so there could be more increases coming that are unforeseen from both waste services and landscaping services.

2) Another resident asked how much money we have in reserves. Darren Spriggs responded that there is about \$80,000 in savings. Bert Ruiz pointed out that other unforeseen unbudgeted costs can also occur, so having savings in our accounts a benefit. Bert shared that additional civic association operations costs may include: website fees, attorneys, repairs to neighborhood assets (entry sign), and debris removal.

3) Concerns were expressed by resident Max Mokhayeri, a property owner who resides on Valley View and purchased his home in 1995 when the yearly fee was \$95. He questioned the need for a private trash pickup company when other neighborhoods in Houston use the city service for trash pickup. He also expressed a desire for city services because they also offer recycling services that this community does not receive because it's not included in the current private service. Bert Ruiz pointed out two reasons we do not use the city: 1) the main reason is that the use of private waste service and annual fees are outlined in the deed restrictions, and 2) the private trash pickup is offered twice per week, compared to the city of Houston service which picks up once a week. Additionally, GFL provides back door pickup, so aesthetically it's more pleasing and a benefit to those not physically able to move trash bins to the curb. Bert Ruiz also pointed out that the city reimburses our community for a portion of the waste cost. An informal poll of those in the room was taken, asking attendees who would have interest in exploring city service. Only two property owners communicated they would have an interest in city service. Bert then reminded attendees that the meeting and agenda topic was for the board to communicate the new fee, not vote on whether we discontinue private trash service as outlined in our deed restrictions.

4) One resident asked when the last landscaping increase had happened. Bert responded that he was unsure, but there had not been an increase in the last few years. We are not in a time-bound contract, but this company has serviced the community for at least 15 years.

Lance Rosborough made a motion that the board considers the \$50 increase. John Loe seconded that motion. No resident in the room moved to disagree. After collecting input, the board moved forward with a \$50 fee increase from \$300 to \$350 annually, below the 29% waste service increase (see calculations above). The new fee would go into effect in 2023 and be reflected in the notices that will go out in the next several weeks.

V. 7:15 pm Traffic Speed and Volume Control Project

1. Project Update: Derrick Hee and Cheryl Kerry serve on the Traffic Study committee with Bert, representing our neighborhood. The good news is process is still moving forward. Data collected included traffic counts and the speed of vehicles. Based on data from Braeburn Valley Section I and II, the highest traffic volume comes through Braes Bayou and Braeburn Valley Dr, which were nearly 1000 vehicles per day. The city communicated that majority of cut-through traffic is traveling north and south through Bonham Acres, and not east or west, so Wanda near Fondren is not considered a major issue, contrary to what the residents of both Braeburn Valley I and II and Bonham Acres believed. The city recommends exploring a small section on Braes Bayou, between Braeburn Valley Dr and the church, and turning that section into a one-way street, heading north, so that drivers could turn into our neighborhood but not exit onto Braeswood from Braes Bayou. Bonham committee members do not agree with that recommendation, so the city was presented with a secondary recommendation to add another partial barrier on Wanda, near Lugary, that would allow cars to enter their neighborhood, but then cars could not exit onto Fondren. Separately, the committee is also exploring a turn lane off Fondren onto Braeswood drive.

2. Timeline – the city is still reviewing the data. However, the process goes through several depts, including the police and fire depts. Upon completion of that process, the neighborhoods in the affected region will have the chance to take a vote to approve or disapprove of a temporary structure(s), and test the partial barriers. Then new data will be compiled after the trial period. The data will be shared with the residents and put to another vote before a permanent structure(s) can be installed. The city should reach out around Thanksgiving when they finish the count/data and get back to the committees with their recommendation on the two partial structures on both Braes Bayou and Wanda.

- VI. 7:40 pm New Business/Announcements/Presentations. Nothing to report.
- VII. 7:41 pm Braeburn Crime and Safety Report: we are looking at vacant houses. There is concern that people are living in a house on Braes Bayou dr and Wanda. There have been a couple of coyote sightings in the neighborhood. Police caught drug dealers near the Maison de Ville condos earlier in November. Lance Rosborough reported suspicious activity between a car and SUV parked at the vacant house in Hideaway Circle.
- VIII. 8:00pm Motion to adjourn by Christine McKeon and seconded by Lance Rosborough.

Submitted by

Barbara Haney
Secretary, Braeburn Valley Civic Association

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