

**Property Owners Association of The Villages
General Membership Meeting
November 15, 2022**

Called to order: by Cliff Wiener, President at 7:00 pm.

- Board members present: All, except Dan Warren and Steve Lapp, excused.
- Members present: Approximately 55, with about 250 watching via live-streaming.
- Organizations present: Hospital Auxiliary, Florida Blue and Seniors vs. Crime.
- October membership meeting minutes read by Reb Benson and unanimously approved.
- Treasurer Report by Donna Kempa: October, Income: \$10,186; Expenses: \$18,692; Net Loss: \$8,506; Operating Funds: \$126,237. Donna stated expenses were higher since we made our annual donation to the Hospital Auxiliary (for scholarships) and that revenue will pick up in November and December with advertisers renewing their ads.
- Raffle: Three winners of \$30 each announced, all three donating their funds to Support Our Soldiers

Board of Directors:

- Len Hathaway introduced the Board members (present) for 2023 (Cliff Wiener, Jerry Ferlisi, Reb Benson, Tita Dumagsa, Sal Tornante, Ash Marwah, John Kastura, Gil Windsor, Mike Gross, Gary Search and Ken Knodel) with unanimous approval of a Motion to close the nomination process and unanimous approval of a Motion to approve the members (note...this included Steve Lapp and Dan Warren who were not present). With officer nominations and Board swear-in in December.

Announcements:

- Cliff discussed that for the first time since the POA started in 1975 we are forced to raise membership dues from \$10 per year to \$15 per year effective January 1, 2023 due to increased expenses; stating printing costs went up 40% with little notice.
- Dan Myslakowski provided a check for \$813.73, from campaign distribution funds, to Gary Kadow for Support Our Soldiers. Gary mentioned their program also supports Christmas for the children. This donation helps ensure the 68 families in need will receive a Christmas dinner this year along with the Christmas Party his church will run for the children. Cliff mentioned folks can adopt a family so they will have a nice Christmas and Gary added that more than one family can adopt a family, especially one with many children.
- Cliff talked about the Vials for Life Program, going over the process and stating its importance.
- Cliff mentioned the next member only shredding event will be on April 15th at the same location as the last couple years; more information to follow in the January Bulletin.
- Cliff mentioned the food donation at this meeting for the St Vincent de Paul food pantry and about having this donation again next December.
- Cliff mentioned possibly Steve Lapp on cutting the (cable) cord in December; Patrick Walsh, Covanta Energy, in January; Mr. Blocker and Chief Cain on ambulance service in February; and, Cheryl Chestnut, The Villages Hospital, in March.

Questions:

- A resident asked if the Independent Fire District would come up again? **Ans:** Cliff said he is not sure, but that it could be brought up again.
- A resident asked who her friend can contact given their notice, based on a complaint, to remove the gravel in their front yard and plant grass within 30 days; stating it was this way when she bought the villa. **Ans:** This is a complaint driven issue, that she should contact Deed Compliance and work out a solution that is adequate and affordable.
- What can be done about the missing gate arms, etc.? **Ans:** Cliff said first that we are truly not a gated community and that the card system is no longer adequate, given the growing population, requiring a new software program at all gate houses. Be patient, the updates will be done shortly.

- A resident mentioned they got documented approval of house changes in their previous Homeowners Association to ensure no issues when it came time to move. **Ans:** Cliff mentioned ensuring all exterior changes on your property go thru the Architecture Review Committee (ARC).

Speaker: Sal Torname introduced Ms. Lorena Spence from Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services who provided a presentation on their functions and on consumer fraud.

- Ms. Spence went over what the office regulates and/or inspects within Florida, which includes:
 - Scales (over 16,000).
 - Price verification...inspectors have found about 95 issues recently of price discrepancy.
 - Travel Agents (over 9,200).
 - Motor vehicle repair shops (over 22,000)...biggest issue: quoted one price and higher price when work is done.
 - Moving Companies (over 1,100)...biggest issue: wanting more money, beyond contract price, when household goods delivered.
 - Health Studios (over 2,600).
 - Fair Rides (over 400)...ensure safe rides plus investigate incidents and accidents.
 - Telemarketers.
 - Gas pumps...check for fuel quality and skimmers. Found 169 skimmer in 2015 (first year looking) and 1,534 in 2019. To minimize threat: pay inside, use credit (not debit) card.
 - Charitable organizations...must register with them (some exceptions, such as religious organizations, etc.). Go to Check A Charity at their website to confirm the legitimacy and further information about a particular organization.
- Ms. Spence went over the different types of scams (cold calling, phishing, dumpster diving, change of address, steal, skimming, etc.) and how to minimize the threat:
 - Review all bills and bank statements for irregularities.
 - Shred...shred...shred.
 - Watch who may be looking over your shoulder at an ATM, etc.
 - Be cautious using the internet.
 - Do not give out your social security information.
 - Use credit fraud alert and/or freeze.
 - Check your credit report at least annually (everyone gets one free check a year).
- Florida Do Not Call program...works okay for those registered telemarketers, but does not help for telemarketer fraud...recommendation, just hang up. Can also download apps to address this (ATT Call Protect, RoboKiller, etc.), but note that some charge a fee.
- Scammers target seniors. About 1 in 5 folks over 65 are impacted with billions lost per year. A recent survey showed Florida as #3 nationally in fraud cases, with one-third of the top cities listed. The Villages is #4 of the top 10 cities in Florida for fraud (Miami/Ft Lauderdale metro area is #1).
- Ms. Spence said to please contact them if ever an issue or need information (1-800 HELPFLA or floridaconsumerhelp.com); adding there are over 41,000 complaints per year. She mentioned going to their website for a wealth of information, such as the resource guide, and to subscribe to their monthly newsletter.
- Pertinent questions included:
 - How about the Red Cross? **Ans:** Do not address this organization since it is a national one.
 - Does anyone go after scammers? **Ans:** Yes, but it is an arduous task.

There was a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10pm that was seconded and unanimously approved.

Submitted by: Reb Benson, Secretary