

**Property Owners Association of The Villages  
General Membership Meeting  
January 17, 2023**

**Called to order:** by Cliff Wiener, President at 7:10 pm.

- Board members present: All, except: Tita Dumagsa, Ash Marwah, John Kastura, Dan Warren and Steve Lapp, excused.
- Members present: Approximately 190, with over 200 watching via live-streaming.
- Organizations present: Hospital Auxillary, Sun Kool, Realty Executives and Seniors vs. Crime.
- December membership meeting minutes read by Reb Benson and unanimously approved.
- Treasurer Report by Jerry Ferlisi: December, Income: \$53,035...mainly from ad renewals; Expenses: \$20,864; Net Gain: \$32,170, with a net loss for the year of only \$2,241; Operating Funds: \$153,708.
- Raffle: Three winners of \$30 each announced.

**Announcements:**

- Cliff mentioned membership dues now \$15 per year, went into effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Cliff talked about the Vials for Life Program, going over the process and stating its importance.
- Cliff mentioned Mr. Blocker and Chief Cain's replacement...Brian Twiss...on ambulance service in February; Cheryl Chestnut, The Villages Hospital, in March; and that we have speakers lined up thru August/September timeframe.
- Cliff mentioned Dan Warren, on NSCUDD Board, and he were at the last NSCUDD meeting and raised the water meter reading concerns with the Board saying they will look into it.
- Nehemiah Wolfe, Community Watch Division Chief, discussed the Chirp Program they recently started. Residents can get a whistle with a placard that they can use when in distress; such as fall in their driveway and cannot get back up. Mr. Wolfe stated he hopes residents will respond if they hear a whistle from a neighbor or when out walking, etc. To date they have given out 4,500 whistles. Cliff mentioned these will be available on each membership meeting, with over 100 given out at this meeting.
- Ken Knodel discussed, starting today, the New Member Program where all new members will receive a New Member Bonus Card that is good for discounts at 12 vendors (mainly restaurants) for a calendar year. This is above and beyond the discounts members received via our discount partners. He also mentioned that if existing members bring in a new member, they will get the Bonus Card also. Cliff said this card is much like the ones the High Schools sell for \$10.00 or more.

**Questions:**

- A resident asked if his medical alert button can be tied to cell phone towers and then to Community Watch versus the separate firm that responds if his button is activated. **Ans:** Mr. Wolfe said he could not make that happen, would have to inquire with the local government on that capability.

**POA Hall of Fame Award:** Peg Tackett, on behalf of Bill Schikora and the family, came forward to accept the award for Bill being inducted into the POA Hall of Fame, posthumously. Cliff mentioned the many accolades that Bill accomplished as a Director on the POA Board and as a District 2 Supervisor. Peg mentioned Bill's goal in life was to work hard for the residents.

**Speaker:** Cliff introduced Patrick Walsh, Covanta Energy, who provided a video and slide presentation.

- Covanta is the largest Energy Waste Facility (Efw) operator in North America with 48 facilities in the US, Canada and Hawaii; and they also have plants in Europe and the United Kingdom.
- There are 10 facilities in Florida...more than any other state...with the local one, Covanta Lake (which opened in 1991), in Okahumpka.
- Efw process: waste is brought directly to the facility and unloaded in the tipping room, then thru the storage pit and mix area where unwanted items are removed, then into two combustion units where 2,000-degree temperatures turn material into steam and ash via a closed loop system.

Includes a state-of-the-art pollution control system (using lime and scrubbers) that is monitored via an automated systems control center. Added benefits:

- Steam converted to electricity...about 14.5 Mw/hour (sold to Winter Park) at Covanta Lake.
- Recycled ferrous and non-ferrous metals...about 60 pounds per ton of trash at Covanta Lake.
- Inert ash reused...at landfills for waste cover; with one Florida plant using the ash as a base on road paving projects.
- Covanta strives to be good stewards of the environment and within the community.
  - Post-emission data is live on their website.
  - 99.98% of their emissions is basically water vapor, oxygen and carbon-dioxide.
  - They are over 90% below allowable limits regarding metals emissions.
  - They have minimal methane emission (methane having the most impact on the ozone layer). The US is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest methane producer since 70% of waste is at landfills, while other countries incentivize not using landfills (Germany is less than 1% of waste at landfills).
  - They have a high safety record at Covanta Lake; which is reflective in over 20 of the 38 employees having more than 20 years with the company.
  - They have other programs, such as Rx4 Safety and Fishing for Energy, that provide benefits.
- The Villages entered into a contract for waste disposal with Covanta in October 2020 when they saw this as the better carbon footprint and best cost method. The previous way was:
  - Recycle items to Tampa – that market collapsed to where it became an expense versus income.
  - Trash to Wildwood transfer station then trucked 160 miles to landfill in Georgia.
- Pertinent questions included:
  - Is Covanta a public or private company? **Ans:** They were public until December 2021 when a Sweden firm purchased them and they went private.
  - Any competitors? **Ans:** Yes, they operate all but 3 facilities in Florida run by other companies.
  - Can Covanta Lake handle increased Villages growth? **Ans:** Yes, they have a growth curve set up.
  - Assume generated electricity is sold and why not to The Villages? **Ans:** It is sold to Winter Park via Duke Energy based on market price and index based. When purchase power agreement expires in 2024, they hope to establish an agreement with The Villages, but that will require cooperation with SECO, Duke Energy and Seminole Electric.
  - All recycle material is burned not recycled? **Ans:** True, except recovered metals are recycled.
  - What should not go in trash bags at the curb? **Ans:** no chemo items, electronics, batteries and radioactive items. Feedback is provided to trash haulers when these items are found.
  - What about hazardous waste? **Ans:** Air pollution system can handle what is not caught via initial screening.
  - Is the ash tested? **Ans:** Fly ash is mixed with heavy ash and tested every 6 months.
  - Why no other recycling? **Ans:** Because it is not cost effective. Their agreement with The Villages has an annual review to see if the recycling market has improved to where it would be cost beneficial to reinstitute curbside recycling.
  - Is there a potential for composting? **Ans:** No, this would have to be done prior to delivery of trash to the facility.

There was a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:47pm that was seconded and unanimously approved.

Submitted by: Reb Benson, Secretary