

Lakes POA Organizational Meeting Minutes
The Lakes Property Owners Association Board of Directors
Date: December 13, 2024
Time: Meeting commenced at 12:00 PM
Location: Lake POA Office 400 Waccamaw River Rd. Suite E

1. Call to Order

Chairperson: Christopher Ophardt, President
Christopher Ophardt called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM.

2. Public Notification of Meeting

Christopher Ophardt confirmed that the meeting notification had been published, posted, and distributed following transparency principles.

3. Roll Call

Present:

- Christopher Ophardt, President
- Stan Fortune, Director-at-Large
- GG Criscuolo, Director-at-Large
- Sally Gorman, Director-at-Large
- Larry Stevens, Director-at-Large

Excused:

- Julia Stafford, Director-at-Large (hospitalization)

Vacant Positions:

- One (1) Board Seat

4. Adoption of Agenda

- Motion to adopt the agenda made by Larry Stevens.
- Seconded by GG Criscuolo.
- Vote: Unanimously approved.
Decision: The agenda was adopted.

5. Election of Officers for the 2025 Board of Directors

Secretary Position:

- **Nomination:** Sally Gorman
- **Motion:** GG Criscuolo
- **Vote:** 4 yes, 1 abstained (Stan Fortune)
Decision: Sally Gorman was elected as Secretary.

Treasurer Position:

- **Nomination:** Larry Stevens
- **Motion:** GG Criscuolo
- **Vote:** 4 yes, 1 abstained (Stan Fortune)
Decision: Larry Stevens was elected Treasurer.

Vice President Position:

- **Nomination:** GG Criscuolo
- **Motion:** Sally Gorman
- **Vote:** 4 yes, 1 abstained (Stan Fortune)
Decision: GG Criscuolo was elected as Vice President.

6. Discussion and Approval of the 2025 Budget

Summary of Discussion:

- A 5% assessment increase to \$465 was previously approved to fund road reserves based on the Reserve Funding Study.
- Concerns raised about historical assessment accuracy and incomplete records inherited from the prior management company, including disorganized financial documentation.
- President Ophardt emphasized the importance of transparency and suggested a detailed community communication plan outlining the rationale for the increase and addressing concerns about historical budgeting practices.
- Budget lines require further refinement, particularly regarding administrative expenses and management service costs.
- Board recognized the need to reconcile discrepancies in past assessments and ensure legal compliance for future budgets.

Key Issues Identified:

1. **Incomplete Records:**
 - Financial records before 2012 are unavailable, creating uncertainty about past assessment approvals.
 - Current records inherited from the prior management company are disorganized, slowing progress.
2. **Assessment Discrepancies:**
 - Historical assessment increases appear inconsistent with governing documents.
 - Legal risks identified if assessments are found to exceed authorized limits.
3. **Budget Line Inaccuracies:**
 - Some budget lines, such as administrative expenses, appear inflated or misallocated.
 - Proposed contract costs for management services differ from actual billed amounts.

Proposed Actions:

1. Conduct a legal review of the 5% assessment increase and historical assessment practices.
2. Place additional funds collected from the increase into an escrow account until concerns are resolved.
3. Engage the Budget and Finance Committee to refine budget lines and provide a comprehensive analysis for the 2026 budget.
4. Notify the community of the assessment concerns and the board's plan to address them.

Motion: GG Criscuolo

Second: Larry Stevens

Approve the 2025 budget as presented, with the following conditions:

1. **Assessment Concerns:** Assessment-related concerns will be flagged for legal review to ensure compliance with governing documents and legal requirements.
2. **Transparency:** The Board will commit to transparency by clearly communicating the identified concerns and actions to the community.
3. **Budget Refinement:** The Budget and Finance Committee will be tasked with conducting a detailed review of the budget and developing a refined proposal for the 2026 fiscal year.

This motion ensures that the 2025 budget is approved while addressing key concerns and committing to future improvements."

- **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Decision:** Board Approves 2025 Budget

7. Review of Standing Committees

Architectural Control Committee (ACC):

- Pat Higgins, as stated, will remain the chairman.
- Focus on improving tracking and workflows for applications.
- Transition to a digital submission process via Welcome Management.
- Explore whether to implement a fee system or continue using deposit checks.

Finance and Budget Committee:

- Chair to be identified
- Tasked with conducting a detailed review of budget lines over the next nine months.

Stormwater and Road Committees:

- Coordination is needed due to overlapping responsibilities.
- Larry Stevens would like to lead Stormwater with Stan Fortune, Ken Atkinson and Jack Price would like to remain on the Road Committee

Action Item: Finalize committee roles at the next meeting.

8. Establishment of Ad Hoc Committees

- **Election Committee:** Chair to be identified.
- **Maintenance Committee:** Intend to nominate Ken Ferrante to continue as Chair
- **Community Engagement Committee:** Intend to nominate Michelle Ferrante to continue as Chair; Sally Gorman will assist.
- **Safety Committee:** Intend to nominate Ken Ferrante to continue as Chair.

Action Item: Formalize committee roles at the next meeting.

9. Approval of 2025 Association Business Calendar

Proposed Schedule:

- **Monthly Board Meetings:** Second Monday of each month.
- **Quarterly Meetings:** Varied times to increase community participation.
- **Annual Meeting:** October 25, with placeholders for November and December meetings if quorum issues arise.

Motion: GG Criscuolo makes the motion to approve the proposed calendar.

Second: Larry Stevens

Vote: Unanimously approved.

Action Item: Distribute the calendar to the community with clear communication about the importance of participation.

10. Adjournment and Closing Notes

Motion: GG Criscuolo makes the motion for Adjournment

Second: Larry Stevens

Vote: Unanimously approved.

1. **Budget and Finance Committee:** Conduct a detailed review of financial allocations for 2025 and prepare a refined proposal for 2026.
2. **Community Communication:** Notify residents about the budget concerns and outline plans to address historical issues.
3. **Legal Review:** Seek a formal opinion on the validity of past assessment increases.

The meeting adjourned at 1:24 PM.

Minutes Prepared By:

Sally Gorman, Secretary

Approved By:

[Signature of Board Secretary]

[Date]