

MINUTES, ANNUAL MEETING
VENETIAN SHORES HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION
JANUARY 21, 2023

Board Members Present:

Danette Newberry, President
Jim Doran, Vice President
Judy Starr, Secretary
Rebecca Callahan Newman, Treasurer
Kathie Carr, Director
David Engel, Director

Absent:

Chuck Crescenzo, Director

Guests:

Captain Derek Paul, District Commander, Sheriff's Office
Sergeant Greg Johnson, Islamorada Sheriff's Office

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Danette Newberry, President. She welcomed the guests and the approximately 50 residents in attendance. Following that, Danette introduced the members of the board.

Guest Speaker, Captain Derek Paul. Captain Paul spoke about the work of the Sheriff's office, including: (a) Enforcement of speed limits on roads, including Venetian Boulevard, and on the water. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission helps with enforcement on the water. (b) Interim, on-site care for the large numbers of migrant people who have been landing in the Keys, until federal officers can take over. Many boats are crossing the Florida Straits, mainly from Cuba (smaller improvised and motorized craft) and Haiti (larger sailboats, landing mainly at Ocean Reef). The aid that the governor has offered has been essential to free officers for their actual crime-related duties. (c) Community policing is the policy and desired practice in Monroe County, and Sheriff Ramsey "sees us as an example" of that. Captain Paul praised the neighborhood's Crime Watch efforts, thanking John Cooper for his work. (d) The security system at the main entry and exit area has been helpful in solving crimes. Captain Paul offered to assist us in getting the internet connection that we need in order to get time-stamped recordings from the cameras there.

Financial Overview. Rebecca summarized the financial status of the VSHA. Membership has averaged 250 households, about half of all eligible homeowners, and dues are \$150/year. So far this year, 150 households have joined; we anticipate more joining, as many neighbors tend to join throughout the course of the year. Annual revenues have averaged just under \$40,000. Expenses (lighting, irrigation, landscape maintenance, et al) average just under \$20,000. This leaves nearly \$20,000 for discretionary spending that includes upgrading the landscape as well as other

improvements such as, a few years ago, the security system at the entrance. We have about \$27,000 in the Operating Account, \$47,790 in the Reserve Fund, and \$7,000 in the Special Project Account, which is dedicated to the Annual Party. That account is funded by newsletter ad revenues; member dues are not used toward the party. The Landscaping Fundraising Committee has raised \$12,200 to date. To speed up the landscaping of the medians, the Board will also be seeking business sponsors.

Landscaping. Jim reported that we have been moving down the medians, and adding only native plantings. The irrigation system near the front needs repair, and the Board will consider adding to other medians. These projects together could cost \$10,000-\$15,000. The purpose would be to ensure that plantings take and stay. We have lost plantings in the past, and an irrigation system would help to protect the neighborhood's investment. Canal ends will be allowed to grow higher than they have been in the past few years, in order to provide shade, and all cutting of plantings along the canal ends will be in accordance with DEP regulations. The roadside by the canal ends is being weeded. The Board is seeking additional help from the Village with maintenance costs.

Annual Party. Judy reported that the next Annual Party is scheduled to take place on Saturday, March 11, 6:00 PM at the Islamorada Fish Company. There will be food, background musical entertainment, and likely a fire dancer, as well as ample parking on both sides of the building. Door prizes are planned as well. Donations from neighbors who own local businesses would be welcome. Admission is free to all VSHA members. She thanked the party's sponsors, Coldwell Banker Schmitt, specifically Brian Schmitt, for their continuing support.

VSHA Website. Jamie Engel, who has kindly volunteered to manage the VSHA website, invited any neighbors with stories about Venetian Shores to submit them to the website for publication.

The Board answered several questions by attendees about neighborhood related matters.

Adjournment. Danette adjourned the meeting at 11:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Starr, Secretary
VSHA Board of Directors