

LAUREL VALLEY ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Great Smoky Mountain Heritage Center

July 09, 2011

OPENING REMARKS:

Townsend Police Department:

Townsend Police Chief Ronnie Suttles addressed the assembly regarding the following issues:

- Laurel Valley is not officially located within the Townsend city limits, however, the Sheriff's Department has given his department jurisdiction to respond to 911 alarms and medical calls in Laurel Valley.
- As a courtesy he or his officers attempt to patrol Laurel Valley at least once a day.
- Issued a strong request for Laurel Valley residents to post reflective house numbers to facilitate emergency personnel locating our houses.

Townsend Fire Department:

Fire Chief Don Stallions provided the following information:

- The department is staffed solely by volunteers.
- All volunteers have received training according to national standards and have won statewide recognition for their skill level.
- The department has taken voluntary budget cuts this year,
- Equipment is specialized and expensive. The department is in need of an additional pumper truck.
- All Laurel Valley residents are encouraged to buy a \$50 membership in order to qualify for free fire response. Otherwise, the charge would be \$500 to respond to a fire.
- Echoed Chief Suttles' request for residents to post the blue reflective address stickers where they can be seen from the road.
- The fire department is also raising money to build a firehouse next to the Back Porch Restaurant. All donations are appreciated.

ANNUAL MEETING:

Jerry Roper, President, called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. He introduced the parliamentarian Judy Poulson.

Topic: Board Elections

Discussion: Candidates for the Board of Directors were introduced: Melody Silverberg, Joe Rizzo, and Ron Penn. There were no nominations from the floor. Residents who had not voted were asked to cast their ballot. Two volunteers assisted the secretary, Patsy Hunt-Durkin, count the ballots.

Action: Ron Penn and Melody Silverberg were elected to the Board.

Topic: Laurel Valley Volunteer Efforts

Discussion: Thanks were given to all the committee members who help to keep Laurel Valley functioning. Jerry stressed that everything these volunteers do is for the betterment of our community and our neighbors, not for the board. Volunteers are invited to join any of the committees.

Action: The following Committees and individuals were recognized for their efforts:

- The Landscape Committee: for keeping our front gate so attractive with flowers and seasonal decorations. Members include Betty Jones, Margaret Haire, Sara Berry, and Sam Jones.
- The Welcoming Committee: for putting together a Welcome Booklet for newcomers. It is also posted on the Laurel Valley website. Patsy Durkin is the board liaison and members are Lois Ann Wodarski, Sandy Williams, Cindy Brooks, and Laura Ward.
- The Finance Committee: They have made recommendations regarding bank account maximums, informal audits, and are looking into book-keeping proposals for contracting out our accounting needs. Members are Richard Cramer, Sara Klisz, Linda Bennie, Yvonne Sanders, and Dave Stillwagon. Sara Berry, treasurer, is the board liaison.
- The Back Gate Committee made up of Tim Stringfellow and Reid Franks have done a great job of repairing and keeping the snow gate functioning.
- The Data Committee represented by Charlotte Appleton has been working with board liaison Ron Penn to consolidate our computer programs and add Quick Books.
- Our Monthly Meeting Facilitator Jim Rose has been invaluable in helping board members set goals and stay on track with their various committees.
- Clean-up Committee, composed of Buddy Hughes, Jerry and Betty Roper have helped clean up downed trees from wind and rain storms in a timely manner.

- Trash Compacter volunteer, Alan Doyle, has been helpful with making sure the compacter was kept in good working order.
- The Social Committee consisting of Becky Dannelley, Cathy Rudd, and Linda Gullufsen have planned our social functions.
- The Bear Committee chairman, Betty Jones, reported a successful year.
 - There have been no black bears needing to be trapped and re-located for two years now.
 - This committee in conjunction with Lisa Stewart of Appalachian Bear Rescue and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has developed a model program for providing for black bear safety. Education and communication have been key components. TWRA has been so impressed with our program that they have asked us to present it to others in TN. and N.C.
 - Brochures and refrigerator magnets for rental cabins with rules for bear safety have been distributed.
 - All residents are urged to comply with these recommendations to keep our bear population and our residents and visitors safe.
 - She thanked the other volunteers on the Bear Committee who are Carolyn Franks, Cathy King, Ronald Dolislager, and Dave Rudd.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS:

Jerry introduced the board Members. He thanked them all and especially thanked Patsy Hunt-Durkin not only for her many duties as Secretary, but for also assisting him and the Treasurer with her duties. The Board would have had a hard time operating without Patsy this past year. He added that this Board has worked well as a team and things have gone smoothly. They have all made an effort to keep the membership informed.

BUD HOPKINS, SECURITY:

Bud said he had taken some of the good ideas of the previous Board and continued with them. A neighborhood watch committee has been formed. A form with instructions for obtaining emergency reflective house numbers has been developed and distributed. Bud highly recommends that residents purchase and install these house numbers. New surveillance cameras have been added at the front gate. They consist of six digital cameras which can record license numbers of cars. These should be helpful. Despite these efforts, it is difficult to totally secure things as our community is open during the day to contractors, renters, golf course users, restaurant patrons, etc. The back gate or snow gate is now only available for use by residents with a key card. This should help deter break-ins in that area. This gate now has been converted to electricity. The sirens of emergency vehicles will open the gate automatically. There have been three break-ins of rental cabins within the past year. These have occurred at Tolliver Trail, Kurt's Corner, and Sister Lane. There were reports of three additional attempts to break-in that

were unsuccessful. Bud encouraged residents to be vigilant and to report any suspicious behavior.

In response to the harsh winter, Bud also formed an Inclement Weather Committee to assist with ideas for clearing roads more quickly. At George McCampbell's request, the committee recommended adding two additional salt shacks at strategic locations. This will allow George to reduce the time needed to clear the roads of snow and ice by 40%, which will make his job more efficient.

Teddy Edwards commented that she was happy that she did not see or hear any fireworks in Laurel Valley this past week-end of July 4th.

PATSY HUNT-DURKIN, SECRETARY:

Patsy thanked the Welcome Committee which worked hard this year in developing a Welcome booklet. She said Lois Ann Wodarski was having difficulty finding some of the new part-time residents at home to deliver the Welcome booklet. If residents have information as to when these new persons are here, she asked to be notified. The booklets are also available online at the Laurel Valley website. Any suggestions or additions to the booklet would be appreciated and can be made through e-mail.

Patsy reported the Board is trying to make the Laurel Valley web-page more user friendly. She encouraged residents to utilize it for information. The Board minutes are now posted there. In the future she is hoping the proxies, dinner forms, invoices, & anything pertaining to the annual meeting can be added. This would save money on postage and time spent stuffing envelopes. This year a system was put in place that cut the stuffing time from 10 hrs. to 2.5 hrs.

Converting our accounting system to Quick Books has been another major effort in which Patsy has been involved. It has taken a year to get all the names, addresses, lot numbers, and phone numbers entered. One frustration is not getting informed when people sell their homes. We now have 398 members and 514 lots.

KEN FERGUSON, ROADS:

Ken presented a power point presentation with pictures of some of the problem road areas. He talked about the past, present, and future with regards to our roads. George McCampbell has been helpful in providing information as to how our roads were constructed. Unfortunately many of the early roads were poorly built with organic fill and stumps which have now degraded resulting in sinking areas. Poor drainage has been another problem along with heavy traffic and heavy construction trucks.

Weston Paving of Maryville was recently contracted for \$82,000 to pave the Mountain Loft area which had not been re-surfaced in over 10 years. They did a good job of getting rid of organic materials at the edge of the road. The Christy Lane area was long-armed due to our wet spring. The overhanging greenery was creating a safety issue in places.

Future projects are being prioritized. The biggest concern is repair of our road beds rather than the aesthetic of re-surfacing. Everyone likes the fresh look of re-paving, but that is not going to solve our road problems in the long run. The area of Laurel Road and Cooper Hollow is the number one priority. We have contracted with an engineering firm to begin taking soil samples through drilling in this area on July 11. We should have results by the first of August. This information will be distributed to the membership. The High Springs Trail is dangerous for snow clearing and needs to be looked at. Another area that has experienced some slumping is Sequoyah Village. Laurel Road looks worse than it is structure-wise. Because we don't know what the cost of repairing road beds will be, we prefer to concentrate on making our road beds tight and safe and good for the long run rather than just re-surfacing for temporary looks. We will continue to patch areas as needed in a cost-effective manner. Basically the re-paving rotation comes down to needs rather than wants. We will continue to re-pave, but on a needs basis.

Lakeside and Laurel Rd. had a major water leak which was repaired by Tuckaleechee Water. The flags are still there, but need to be removed.

There is currently over \$200,000 in our road maintenance reserve allocation as of June 30, 2011.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Sara Berry, our treasurer, was absent. Jerry Roper presented some financial information to the group, with the caveat that he only had a limited amount of information. Several specific questions were raised regarding the report, but could not be answered at this time. Jerry assured the group that a more detailed report would be provided to the members in response to those questions.

Jerry reported the Board used the services of an accountant during the past year, and as a result, Sara and Patsy have been working at setting everything up on Quick Books.

For next year the dues have been left at \$550 per lot.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS / ASSOCIATION MEMBER COMMENTS:

Topic: Clearing Power Line Right of Ways and Subsequent Erosion of Hillsides

Discussion: The Board was asked if there is a way for the board to work out a compromise with Alcoa Electric about clear cutting the banks under the power lines. The last time they cut, there was nothing left to hold the banks back and they have eroded as a result. Laurel Road is a case in point. The Board was unaware of erosion on Laurel Road, but agreed to investigate the concern. There is a legal right of way under the power lines, which the utility maintains.

Action: The Board will contact Alcoa Power to discuss their policies concerning clearing right of ways.

Topic: Clogged Drainage Ditches and Culverts

Discussion: A question was asked regarding cleaning of drainage ditches and culverts and how that fits into road maintenance plans. The Board contracts for ditch cleaning. A recent storm washed debris into a driveway on Clearwater Circle, causing the homeowner to replace 12 tons of gravel. This was because of clogged driveway culverts nearby. The by-laws state every property owner is responsible for keeping their driveway culverts clean. The board can bill the property owner if the board has to do it for them. Clogged ditches and drains are a concern in a number of areas in Laurel Valley.

Action: The Board will discuss this complaint at the next meeting and discuss possible corrective actions.

Topic: Salt Shacks

Discussion: A question was raised about the salt shacks, specifically for clarification of the decision to purchase the model chosen rather than construct permanent structures. The concern was that the shacks were unfinished and might have to be replaced soon. The Board purchased the shacks based on a Road Clearing Committee recommendation and input from the contractor who is responsible for the roads. After pricing a range of options, these buildings were felt to be the best value available under budget limitations. The Board also reassured the assembly are not completed. They are going to be stained and lattice work installed underneath to hide the lack of underpinning. One building has had to be located recently and this would not have been possible with a permanent structure.

Action: The Board will oversee the completion of the shacks. Volunteers to help with painting or installing lattice would be appreciated.

Topic: Social / Dinner at the Barn Event Center

Discussion: Everyone was reminded of tonight's dinner at the Barn Event Center with a social hour at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m.

Action: None

Reid Franks made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded and approved by a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:46 a.m.