



## HEBGEN LAKE ESTATES OWNERS ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 638 WEST YELLOWSTONE MT 59758

### Meeting Minutes – Annual Homeowners’ Meeting October 10, 2019

#### Board Members in Attendance:

Vonda Laird, President  
Cindy Freedman, Vice President  
Treasurer, Ron Mahtesian

#### Others in Attendance:

Approximately 30 owners attended the meeting besides the Board

The meeting was held at the Povah Center in West Yellowstone and commenced at 6:00pm on October 10, 2019.

#### Guest Speakers:

1. **Jason Brey, District Ranger, Hebgen Lake Ranger District** – Updated the homeowners on the status of the North Hebgen Multiple Resource Project (Tree Trimming along Rainbow Point Road). Currently, US District Court Judge Dana Christensen ordered an injunction preventing work from going forward as planned until a final decision is made on the case. A court hearing is scheduled for November 7, 2019 and could be appealed to the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit. Ranger Brey said that the project could resume at the earliest in the summer of 2020 depending on the court ruling. Ranger Brey explained that trees colored in “orange” stay while trees colored in “blue” will be cut. Ranger Brey added that along Rainbow Point Road, a swath of tree trimming will extend 400 feet on either side of the road. The main purpose of the project was to moderate fire damage and provide a safer evacuation route for the community.
2. **Charles Fleming, Hebgen Lake Estates Water and Sewer District President** - Updated the homeowners on the status of a new back-up well behind the Cook’s house on community property. Charles said the they got good results with this first test site that may not require a second test site drilling. The former back-up well containing unsafe levels of arsenic would likely be turned over to



## HEBGEN LAKE ESTATES OWNERS ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 638 WEST YELLOWSTONE MT 59758

the fire district for fire suppression. Charles reported that main well had a generator installed to prevent water service going down in the event of a power failure. A homeowner living by the sewer area complained about the smell of sewage all summer. Charles said that more oxygen could be added to mitigate the smell and that the WSD was working on it.

- 3. Robbie Pohle, Game Warden, Montana Fish & Wildlife** - Gave a talk about bear awareness. Robbie mentioned a recent citing of a bear in our community. Robbie emphasized that bear proof containers for garbage was an important deterrent as well as proper disposal of garbage when picked up by vendors. Robbie also reminded our homeowners that bird feeders attract bears to the area. One homeowner mentioned that another homeowner continues to feed foxes despite neighbors' protests. Robbie mentioned that one of his roles is to educate people and feeding wild animals has its dangers and can attract the larger predators.

### Items Covered & Action Items

President Vonda Laird recounted discussions she had with appropriate people about the following:

- 1. Yellowstone Ranch New Owners & Gallatin Valley Land Trust (GVLТ) Partnership with Ranch** – President Vonda Laird recounted discussions with Peter Brown of GVLТ. A second row of fencing poles have been put up along the front entrance of YR on Rainbow Pt. Rd. adjacent to existing fencing. And additional poles and later fencing would be installed along perimeter behind Grizzly Bear Loop. The reason given was to protect rows of trees which will be planted in that area until they mature. GVLТ told Ron Mahtesian that new owners would honor raising & lowering the original fencing to enable bison migration. A large Barn and living quarters are currently being built necessitating the removal of approximately 17 feet of dirt below the structure. This dirt has been moved along the border behind Grizzly Bear Loop to establish a 10 - foot berm.



## HEBGEN LAKE ESTATES OWNERS ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 638 WEST YELLOWSTONE MT 59758

2. **Weed Management** – According to President Vonda Laird discussions with Bob Gotshall said this year was a wet season and he got a late start on weed spraying. There are still some misunderstandings of how the weed spray map on our website works and whether new owners were not informed on its workings. According to prior Board Members, Property Manager, Debbie Griffin, has control of the weed spray map on our website. It was thought that Members can opt in or opt out of weed spraying by notifying either the Board or Debbie. Also, it is questionable whether the weed spraying contractor uses the current map when he sprays the community. Board should follow-up with Debbie and the weed contractor.
3. **RID Tax Assessment** – According to President Vonda Laird, our RID foe HLE had a tax assessment increase of 15% in FY19 and is going up to 18% in FY20. Vonda feels that we are unjustly being burdened with larger tax assessment increases compared to the larger RID districts. Treasurer Ron Mahtesian did some preliminary analysis and confirmed that HLE RID FY20 tax assessment increase of 18% represents the 10<sup>th</sup> highest increase in the 74 RID's. Also, when compared to 30 similar funded RID as HLE, our district came in 3<sup>rd</sup> in tax assessment dollar amount increase and 2<sup>d</sup> in the tax assessment percentage amount increase. A working committee was formed with Ron Mahtesian, Peg Mendenhall, and Kerry Taggart to further analyze HLE RID data in an attempt to reduce tax assessment increases.
4. **HLE Website** – President Vonda Laird introduced a new owner Josh Crank who had expressed an interest in assisting with any design or aesthetic changes to the HLE website. Debbie Griffin, Property Manager, would continue to make regularly required routine changes/updates to our HLE website. While President Vonda Laird would also have access to the HLE website to respond to e-mail inquiries from homeowners.
5. **Dumpster Rental for Community Clean Up** – President Vonda Laird talked with Republic Services of Bozeman about the cost to rent a dumpster for community clean-up. Vonda said it would cost \$1,300 for a month's rental. The assembled homeowners showed little interest. So, it was recommended that this opportunity be brought up again closer to Springtime.
6. **Retiring Board Members** – President Vonda Laird said Cindy Freedman's term will be up following the annual meeting. Vonda ask the assembled homeowners to



## HEBGEN LAKE ESTATES OWNERS ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 638 WEST YELLOWSTONE MT 59758

consider serving on the Board. No one came forward but Vonda asked everyone to consider serving on the Board.

7. **Volunteers for Working Committees:** President Vonda Laird spoke about setting up working committees under the direction of a Board member(s). Working committees would be able to delve into appropriate areas of concern such as RID Tax Assessment increases, pool property, spring flooding, tennis court seeding, and covenant changes.
8. **Financial Statement as of September 30, 2019:** Treasurer Ron Mahtesian presented the current financial statement for Homeowners' Association. Total revenues were \$38,939.21 minus expenses of \$5,919.35 left a balance of \$33,019.86. Ron mentioned that some 28 homeowners were delinquent in paying current and prior years HOA fees. Reminder letters were scheduled to go out this month.

### Unfinished & Ongoing Business:

1. **Turn Lane (Hwy 191 onto Rainbow Point Road)** – President Vonda Laird conveyed her discussions she had with the MT Department of Transportation. Accordingly, the project is scheduled to start in June 2020 and will be completed in 2 months. Construction would provide for a 90 degree turn lane on North & South side of Hwy 191, and a straightening out of roadway onto Rainbow Point Road. The existing parking lot would be relocated elsewhere.
2. **Pool Property** – Louis Robinson is the current owner of the lot on which the abandoned and dysfunctional pool is located. Non-payment of property taxes amount to over \$100,000. This problem has remained for years without resolution. President Vonda Laird suggested a working committee be formed to consider options and solutions. The homeowner adjacent to the pool expressed a desire to purchase the lot if tax liens were dismissed. On a different tact, a safety issue (contaminated pool water and a breeding spot for mosquitoes, etc.) could be raised for action to be taken. Ron passed out color pictures of the pool as of September 2019. Homeowners were asked to consider volunteering for the pool working committee. Vonda will follow up with the County.



## HEBGEN LAKE ESTATES OWNERS ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 638 WEST YELLOWSTONE MT 59758

3. **Spring Flooding** – President Vonda Laird had a copy of the Morrison-Maierle report on our flooding issues along with their recommendations. The flooding still exists to varying degrees according to the rate of snow melt. Yellowstone Ranch has made some drainage improvements in areas where water typically forms into a swamp. But, in the meantime, a large barn has been constructed of which the impact on flooding is not known. John Dodd complained that water build up was still by the roadways and land by his house on Moose Drive. A working committee was suggested by Vonda to address problems and identify possible solutions and maybe work with Morrison-Maierle. Steve Shealey volunteered to be on the working committee. President Vonda Laird will provide Steve Shealey with a recent report that Morrison Maierle prepared on HLE flooding.
4. **Tennis Court Seeding** – President Vonda Laird suggested we form a working committee to consider options and decide how and when to seed the former tennis court. The lot is approximately 2/3 of an acre and is loaded with weeds. Grass seed has already been bought but efforts in the past to dormant seed the area in the Autumn were unsuccessful. Ron Mahtesian passed out color pictures of the tennis court area as of September 2019. Homeowners Jim Laird, John Dodd, and Charles Fleming volunteered for the working committee to seed the former tennis court area.
5. **Covenant Changes to Increase Enforcement** - President Vonda Laird fielded questions from the assembled homeowners at the meeting. Problems with the Finney household still exist in wintertime whereby automobiles are lined up across their driveway on Moose Drive to prevent the snowplow from making a snow berm in front of their driveway. This creates a safety hazard for other automobiles to clear the obstructed roadway on Moose Drive. Some attempts to notify the Sherriff to come by and admonish the Finney has not changed the recurring problem. Another problem with some households was that abandoned automobiles and other abandoned machinery and trailers were kept on properties in violation of covenants. These examples of household's repeated violations of our covenants were voiced by the assembled homeowners at the annual meeting. One idea surfaced to strengthening our community covenants to include administering fines after sending timely warning letters to violators. Vonda suggested we form a working committee to consider options to increase our enforcement capabilities but reminding everyone that it takes 75% of the homeowners to effect changes to our covenants. Former Board Member Russ Mendenhall expressed difficulties with his experiences with another HOA to get enough people to respond. One suggestion was to send out changing



## **HEBGEN LAKE ESTATES OWNERS ASSOCIATION**

PO BOX 638 WEST YELLOWSTONE MT 59758

the covenants on the proxy form that accompanies the annual meeting agenda emphasizing home values could be devalued on account of violators keeping abandoned automobiles and debris on their property. Ryan Linhart, US Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer and homeowner was going to determine what he could do about automobiles parked on roadway. Homeowner Ed Millspaugh volunteered for the covenants review working committee?

President Vonda Laird brought the annual meeting to a close at approximately 9:30 pm.