



MAY 2018

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FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.

I am pleased to announce that the BPOA and the BHOA signed a long-term commitment to the Constable's service at our March monthly meeting. The outline of this agreement was sent out last month by Board Member James Gilmer. In short, the BPOA and the BHOA are committing to Constable's service for six years. The BHOA has agreed to pay the BPOA a sum of \$200,000 for the ongoing clubhouse and pool renovation project. The first \$100,000 installment of that payment was made on the execution of the agreement, and an additional \$20,000 will be paid on the anniversary of the agreement for the next five years.

The BPOA and the BHOA also agreed to start negotiating on a long-term capital contribution agreement to address the lack of funding for capital expenses in the Use Agreement between the two associations. This will start in earnest to keep the momentum going between the two boards. Getting to this point in the relationship between the BPOA and the BHOA has been a long time coming, and much work is left to do to ensure the continued mutually beneficial relationship between the two associations. The \$100,000 contribution from the BHOA, as with all the money collected, will go towards the cost of the current Clubhouse and Pool project. In the short term, this means that the current contingency of approximately \$37,000 (5%) turns into \$137,000. This is a huge relief for the financing of the building and allows us more flexibility to address the inevitable construction changes that occur. More on this below.

The Clubhouse and Pool project is coming along. However, unfortunately, in January and February alone, we lost more than 21 working days due to rain and inclement weather. In addition, in the past few weeks, the steel rebar required for the foundations has also been very difficult to procure for several reasons. As of this writing, the foundation piers are in place and underground work is beginning. The project has also had a few regulatory issues as well. The City of Houston is in the process of determining if an additional manhole will be required for our sanitary connection. This was not part of the approved construction plans, but the City has final approval on all field changes even if they were permitted without it. The additional cost of the manhole is projected to be around \$5,000.

The pool contractor has also run into issues with the existing plaster

coat. The initial assumption was that the pool has been plastered one time. In fact, the pool had been plastered three times, with each subsequent layer placed above the previous one. The plaster is so far from the base concrete coat that is just flaked off. Because of this, the lane line tiles and the lane targets (the crosses at the end of the pool) will need to be replaced. They just fell off once the plaster came down. The original intent was the cut these tiles out of the plaster and leave them remaining as they were in decent shape and did not need to be removed. This change costs approximately \$9,000 and was approved by the Board at the last meeting. Finally, Center Point energy has also been an issue. The contractor is trying to set a temporary power pole to bring the tennis court lights on sooner than the completion of the building. Center Point was scheduled to come out at the beginning of February, then the middle of February, then the beginning of March... As soon as we can get this pole set we will be able to bring those lights back online.

We received an updated schedule from the contractor as well at the last board meeting. The estimated completion date is now the middle of August. We had arrangements with the City of Houston to get a temporary operating permit for the pool to open the pool before the building would be completed, but the City has now said that will not be possible. Thus, unfortunately, the pool will not be open on Memorial Day this year. We have planned with the pool operator to open the pool as soon as the building is open. We are also looking at having an open swim season in the fall without lifeguards and are reviewing this possibility with our lawyers and insurance providers.

As many of you know, our office manager Stephanie is also the president of the Briarhills Dolphins. Because the Briarhills Pool is currently under construction, practices this summer will be held at the Lakes of Parkway Community Pool. Registration is now open for the 2018 summer season. Please read the information on the Dolphins website before registering your swimmer(s): <https://briarhillsdolphins.swimtopia.com/>

Circling back to the long-term capital contribution agreement discussed earlier, part of this discussion requires the BPOA to provide

(Continued on Page 3)

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Emergency	911
Constable (<i>Closest Law Enforcement</i>).....	281-463-6666
Poison Help	1-800-222-1222
Library and Community Center.....	832-393-1880
City Services.....	Call 311
Citizens' Assistance.....	713-247-1888
Public Works.....	713-837-0600
Neighborhood Protection.....	713-525-2525
Animal Control.....	713-229-7300
Wild animal problem	713-861-9453
Hazardous waste.....	713-551-7355

OTHER UTILITY SERVICES

Street light problem.....	713-207-2222
.....	(then 1 then 4)
Power out/emergency	713-207-2222
Gas leak suspected.....	713-659-2111
Before you dig.....	Call 811

BRIARHILLS SERVICES

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Amenity tags	281-558-7422
Tennis courts.....	281-558-7422
Pool parties.....	281-558-7422
Clubhouse rental	281-558-7422

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

Please support the businesses that advertise in the Briar Hills Beat. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all Briar Hills residents to receive the monthly newsletter at no charge. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 888-687-6444 or advertising@PEELinc.com. The advertising deadline is the 8th of each month for the following month's newsletter.

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Article Submission.....	briarhills@sbcglobal.net
Advertising.....	advertising@PEELinc.com

POA OFFICE INFO

OFFICE HOURS 2017

Monday – 1:00pm – 4:00pm

Saturday – 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

And by appointment

**Due to the construction of the clubhouse, the BPOA physical office is closed indefinitely. However, the BPOA Office Manager will continue to maintain the above regular office hours during this time period, except on these days:*

November 25, December 25, December 30.

OFFICE CONTACT

Street Address.....
..... 14300 Briarhills Parkway, Houston, TX 77077

Mailing Address

..... P.O. Box 940548, Houston, TX 77094-7548

Telephone.....281-558-7422

Email

briarhills@sbcglobal.net

Website

www.briarhillspoa.org

Every resident is encouraged to register in the Briarhills POA website. This allows you to have access to various up-to-date information about the BPOA that is not available to the public. You will also be able to immediately receive, by email, important announcements. Your information will only be used for official BPOA communication and will not be shared.

SWIMMING POOL

A pool tag is required to access the pool amenity. Check the Briarhills POA website for information on how to obtain a pool tag.

TENNIS

A key is required to access the tennis court amenities. Check the Briarhills POA website for information on how to obtain a tennis key.

CLUBHOUSE

Closed for construction.

POA MAINTENANCE FEES

Invoices for BPOA dues are mailed in early December. Please contact the POA office if you do not receive your invoice by December 15. Non-receipt of the invoice does not preclude payment of the dues.

The above information is subject to change without prior notice.

(Continued from Cover)

a multi-year budget analysis to help the BHOA understand future capital costs. After the Clubhouse and Pool project is completed, the next major issue is the playground. The playground is well beyond its useful life and needs to be replaced. In full disclosure, my wife is a landscape architect with KGA / Deforest Landscape Architects. They do exactly this type of work, developing neighborhoods and community centers throughout greater Houston. They have done a preliminary design and budget for planning purposes for us and presented it to the Board last month.

With the budget information from KGA/ DeForest, the Board is putting together a 10-year budget analysis that takes into consideration rate increases, savings, capital improvements, capital replacement costs, and our loan debt service on the Clubhouse and Pool project. With this document we will be able to more clearly communicate the long-term goals of the Board to you, the resident, and be able to share this with the BHOA to generate support on their end for financing. We hope to have this done this spring.

The next few months will be dominated by discussion related to financing and rebuilding the long-term savings of the BPOA. The Clubhouse and Pool project consumed most of our savings and bonds. Those funds need to be replaced and planned for. The Board has moved

to create the accounts necessary to keep track of these finances by having a General Operating Fund, a Rainy-Day Fund, and a Capital Reserve Fund. Currently a fourth account, titled Construction Project, is in use for the duration of the Clubhouse and Pool Project.

The General Operating fund is as its name implies: the money collected and used for general operating throughout the year. This is the primary account of the BPOA, which all funds are passed through. The Rainy-Day fund is our short-term savings account. This account, according to our auditors, have enough funds to cover six months of operating expenses in a typical year. For us, that would mean a savings fund with a minimum of \$200,000 - \$250,000. This money would be used for deficiencies in the Budget that were not accounted for (i.e. major disasters like Harvey where we project a 10% loss in revenue the subsequent year due to delinquencies), or for major operating expenses that arise (like a major increase to trash and recycling services).

The Capital Reserve fund is intended for capital expenses both long-term and short-term in nature. Short-term expenses include replacing pool pumps, roofing, park benches, etc. Long-term funding is for replacement of amenities, such as the current clubhouse project and the potential playground replacement project. The funding for this

(Continued on Page 4)

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ATTENTION BRIARHILLS DOLPHINS!

The deadline to register for swim team is Saturday, May 12th. We are almost at full capacity so please hurry and register today if you would like to be on the team.

All practices will be held at the Lakes of Parkway Community Pool.

Visit our website at briarhillsdolphins.swimtopia.com to register and learn more about the team.

We look forward to another fun season and can't wait to see everyone at the first practice on May 14th!

Go Dolphins!

(Continued from Page 3)

account is more subjective. The capital reserve study the BPOA did prior to undertaking the Clubhouse project recommended that the association have enough money to replace all the amenities every thirty years using the insured value as the baseline. So, by that logic, if we are insured for \$1,000,000 for the buildings and grounds, we should have enough in savings in thirty years to equal \$1,000,000. How we get to that goal, whether by straight savings or other investments, is yet to be decided and needs more discussion.

A top priority of the Board is making sure that the next generation of residents has the funding necessary to maintain the amenities. Over the next few months as we negotiate with the BHOA and receive feedback from residents, we should have a much clearer vision of how to achieve this goal.

Alec Luong, AIA

President

Briarhills Property Owners Association

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THE BRIAR BEAT IS LOOKING FOR SUBMISSIONS!

The Briar Beat would like to build community between neighbors by sharing in each other's celebrations and losses. Thus, please submit news of any birth, wedding, or death of a Briarhills resident, or a family member of a resident, to:
bhillspoa.briarbeat@gmail.com



POA BOARD ELECTIONS: CALLING FOR CANDIDATES

The election for new POA Board members will be this September. Every Briarhills POA homeowner currently residing in the neighborhood is eligible to run for the Board. Now is a good time to start thinking whether you can be a part of this great opportunity to be involved in the management of our neighborhood.

The Briarhills POA Board is comprised of seven members – The Directors. Three Directors seats are up for election this year. After the new Directors are elected, all five will get together to vote for the Officers of the Board: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Directors are also assigned specific duties such as: Architectural Control, Safety, Pool Management, Maintenance, and Community Relations.

Interested candidates need to provide a written bio to include their professional background and their interest in running as well as any other information they wish to share with the other residents for why they should vote for them. These descriptions will be published in the August edition of the Briarbeat for distribution to all the residents prior to the election. ALL CANDIDATE BIOS ARE DUE TO BACK TO THE POA FOR PUBLICATION BY NOON, JULY 14 VIA EMAIL ONLY.

If you have any questions, or would like to talk to one of the current Directors, please send an email to briarhills@sbcglobal.net or call 281-558-7422. Please also check the website, www.briarhillspoa.org, for any updates/announcements on the election.



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SALTED CARAMEL BROWNIES

Caramel

1/2 cup granulated sugar
4 tablespoons unsalted butter (or salted, but then ease up on the sea salt)
Heaped 1/4 teaspoon flaky sea salt (or 1/8 teaspoon table salt, more to taste)
3 tablespoons heavy cream

Brownie

3 ounces (85 grams) unsweetened chocolate, roughly chopped
1 stick (4 ounces or 115 grams) unsalted butter, plus extra for pan
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon (5 ml) vanilla extract
Heaped 1/4 teaspoon flaky sea salt or 1/8 teaspoon table salt
2/3 cup (85 grams) all-purpose flour

Make caramel: Set a square of parchment paper over a medium-sized plate. Lightly butter or coat the parchment with a spray oil, just as an added security measure.

In a medium, dry saucepan over medium-high heat, melt your sugar; this will take about 5 minutes, stirring if necessary to break up large chunks. By the time it is all melted, it should be a nice copper color; if not, cook until it is. Remove from heat and stir in butter. It may not incorporate entirely but do your best. Stir in cream and salt and return saucepan to the stove over medium-high heat, bringing it back to a simmer and melted again any sugar that solidified. Cook bubbling caramel for a few minutes more, until it is a shade darker. Remove from heat.

Pour out onto parchment-covered plate and transfer plate to your freezer. Freeze until solidified, (about 20 to 30 minutes in a decent freezer).

Meanwhile, or when your caramel is almost firm, make your brownies: Heat oven to 350°F. Line an 8x8-inch square baking pan with parchment, extending it up two sides. Butter the parchment or spray it with a nonstick cooking spray.

In a medium heatproof bowl over gently simmering water, melt chocolate and butter together until only a couple unmelted bits remain. Off the heat, stir until smooth and fully melted. You can also do this in the microwave in 30-second bursts, stirring between each. Whisk in sugar, then eggs, one at a time, then vanilla and salt. Stir in flour with a spoon or flexible spatula.

Assemble brownies: When caramel is firm, remove it from the freezer and chop it into rough 1-inch squares. Gently fold all but a small amount of caramel bits into batter. Scrape batter into prepared pan, spreading until mostly even. Scatter remaining caramel bits on top. Bake in heated oven for 30 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Cool thoroughly — a process that can be hastened in the freezer, which will also produce cleaner cuts — and cut into squares or other desired shapes.

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In reading the Energy Corridor Magazine, we saw a source for the best route to and from the Energy Corridor. For information go to www.energycorridor.org/waytogo to find your commute solution or call 281-759-3800. They are working to make living in the Energy Corridor better. Another one of their projects is to build more sidewalks in the area.

Real Estate Update: As of February 2018 in the Houston market, new listings were down 6.3%, active listings down 2.7%, and average list price down 0.4% compared with February of last year. We have been seeing an increase in the past couple of months, but the March and April statistics are not out as of yet. We seem to be recovering from the effects of Harvey, but as all of you know this will be a slow process.

Homebuyers generally start their search online. First they see the front of the house and, if they do not like what they see, they move on to the next house. They are looking for exterior improvements, such as landscaping, fresh paint, new door,

windows, siding, garage door, and a new roof. They also want energy efficiency and easy maintenance. Though the interior needs to be fresh and clean, it is the outdated mechanical and structural issues that come up during inspections that can lose the sale.

We seem to have been reading a lot recently - this time about myths. Lemon is not a great way to clean a disposal. The juice will corrode the metal parts, and coffee grounds will accumulate in pipes and clog them. The best natural cleaner is baking soda. The test button on your smoke detector is not foolproof. It only tells you the sound is working, not if the sensor that detects smoke is working. Use real smoke such as lighting a match, blow it out, and hold it near the detector to check it.

We hope that you have had the opportunity to take a short trip through our hilly parts of Texas to see bluebonnets and other spring flowers. I leave tomorrow for the great city of Johnson City for my annual trek to enjoy nature's beauty.



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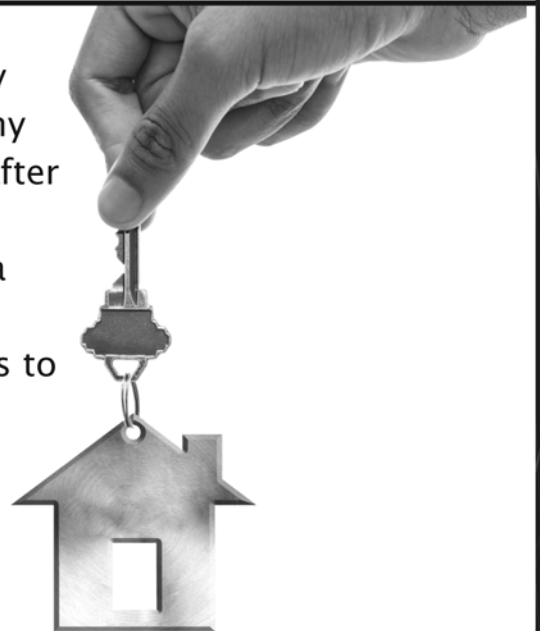
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