

May 4, 2024 REMARKS

Good morning. I'd like to welcome you to the Spring 2024 Membership Meeting; my name is David Wiecking, my family has owned 15 Dune Road since 1991, and I am President of your Board of Directors.

INTRODUCTION of BOARD MEMBERS:

These people sitting at the front table are (the bulk of) your Board of Directors. I'd like to ask them to introduce themselves, and mention their responsibilities.

As an added treat, I'd like to introduce those past Presidents who are joining us here today. Sharon Adams and Jeff Sella have each agreed to monitor the vote count near the end of the meeting. Other past Presidents still in the community include Tris Kruger (briefly in 2016), Paul Spataro in the late 1990's, Joe Woolman in the earlier 1990's, and Dick Creswell from 1971. I found in my notes from my intended farewell talk in 2016 that I'd served with 31 other Board members during my first run. Having previously served with Margie and Bob, this group lets me add six more names to that list.

Others community members have contributed to the operation of the Association this offseason. I'd like to recognize the contributions of Val Peizer, who handles a lot of our publications such as the beautiful Annual Directory and your beach and parking passes, that will be available closer to Memorial Day. Also Marty Schecter and CFC Quality Control Consultant Chuck Taylor. And Steve Larsen, who has been helping us with some of the Beach Replenishment issues, which I'll get to in a few minutes. And Mark McCullough, who is at least partially responsible for the fact that all of our full-time Beach Patrol members have returned to us this summer. And we've had other community members help out with CFC projects and social events. And we're grateful to all of them.

INTRODUCTION of NEW COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

We have had a few property turnovers since last summer. If any of our new members are with us today, I'd like to ask them to stand up and introduce themselves.

In a community of this size-227 residences and several businesses, it's unfortunate that we also lose community members by natural causes, each of whom is mourned by many friends and neighbors. Occasionally, these losses are splashed across the front page of sports sections all across the country; sometimes we don't find out until much later. We have no organized process for commemorating those no longer with us. I'm not going to mention any names because I don't want to slight anyone of whom I'm not aware. But they are most assuredly missed.

MINUTES:

Is there a motion to approve the minutes of last September's meeting?

OPENING REMARKS:

According to the Association's governing documents, 8 members of the Board are elected to staggered 2 year terms in the annual elections each Labor Day weekend, and the ninth is a past officer, usually the immediate past President. We seek community input when we can, but we are charged with making ALL the decisions in running the community except one: the actual approval of the Board-recommended annual assessment. Without this step the Board cannot legally require that the members pay this fee.

As a reminder, our budget process is already a bit screwy due to our existence as a fundamentally resort community, and the times when most people are here. Delaware law now governs some of our timing in ways it didn't when I last stood before this august assemblage as President in September 2013. Our budget year started a bit over one month ago. We have a carryover in our Operating Account that is generally enough to fund our operations until the assessment is approved,

invoices go out, and assessments start coming in.

Most of the work on the budget draft that went out in the required mailing a few weeks ago was done by Bob Wood with input from the various committee members. Bob, Kerry Hall and I sat down I think only once to go over one of the early drafts; we publicized a few of the early drafts on the website, and, as required by Delaware law, we circulated a summary of the budget prior to the February Board meeting and invited community comments on the draft. I want to thank the community members for trusting us enough that we received no comments at that meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

At this time, I'd like introduce Treasurer Bob Wood to give his summary of the past year's finances. But I'd like to give special thanks to Bob and Solutions for pulling together the information to create a handout that shows our financials as of March 31, which was the end of our Fiscal Year.

BACK TO ME

I'm going to intersperse the next part of my talk with various committee reports; this is an alert to everyone that if my talk seems to start to drift towards your committee, your turn to speak is near.

This is the 15th time I've given a President's report to the Membership; in the past I've arranged the order of topics in different ways. Sometimes east to west, or vice versa. Sometimes alphabetically. Today, I'm going to go by elevation, starting with the lowest lying parts of the community. Yes, I'm going to start off by talking about drainage. Swales. Soil permeability. And downstream conditions outside our community that we can try to influence, but in realty can't directly control.

EXTERNAL DRAINAGE:

Our drainage efforts have been 2 pronged this offseason. Margie Cyr and Paul Bradley have been continuing their conversations with Sussex County Conservation, which along with DeIDoT and DNREC have been attempting to make changes to the

conditions between the west end of our community and the Assawoman Canal, primarily the swales along Kent Avenue. Some of you may have noticed that Kent Avenue was repaved recently. I know for a fact that this work was planned for LAST spring, but was delayed. I strongly suspect this was because of the still incomplete planning for the drainage improvements (which includes replacing 2 blocked culverts that run under Kent Ave and take storm water away from our community) was reworked. So it looks like DelDoT will have to slice up their brand new asphalt in the near future to do this work. Yes, Margie, it is now your turn to talk about the efforts to nudge others to improve the external drainage adjacent our community.

INTERNAL DRAINAGE:

In the past six weeks, we've had Harry Caswell Plumbing in the community jetting out every single driveway culvert and drainage pipe in the community. They did most of them in late March, but had to stop due to the level of water in the west end of our ditches. However, April brought us very little rain-and that's not just an observation from the street; that's from someone that actually laid down in many of the swales to peer through culverts. Bone dry. There were a very few culverts that were unable to be cleared the last time MBA had Caswell do this work in 2018? Those we did clear out. Also Addy and Evergreen were not done several years ago because funds ran out.

I now have a much better list of which culverts are the stainless steel ones, many of which are sufficiently rusted that their useful life is done. We've discovered that a lot of the debris in driveway culverts is gravel that's fallen off various driveways, and occasionally the large rocks, known as rip-rap, that surround the openings of many driveway culverts. However, despite these physical shortcomings of the system, every time this offseason we've had a large storm, the majority of the water gets to the downhill end of our community and drains away as fast as the external piping allows. It's not always easy to see, because usually the surface of the water is pretty still, but underneath, it's definitely moving. The work Margie discussed should speed

up this process somewhat. But it's not going to affect those last few inches that frequently sticks around until it infiltrates into the soil, or evaporates.

You may recall that one of the justifications for the drainage work done in 2022 was that deeper ditches would indirectly allow the ground water table to be lowered quicker. This would indeed be true if our community was entirely sitting on sand. Admittedly it mostly is, but all the construction since 1959, and all the vegetation that accumulates in various yards, means this doesn't always happen. I can point to 2 specific instances of this: about a year ago we installed a monitoring well in the side yard of #3 Bridge-about 20' back from the ditch. This allows us to compare the ground water level to the level of water in the adjacent swale. I stopped recording numbers after a while, because the levels usually matched after about 36-48 hours. On the other hand, the 2 lots immediately behind Seaside Village frequently have standing water on the surface, even though the adjacent recently dug ditch is about a foot lower and is dry. The incredible amount of mature vegetation on these lots seems to not allow the water to percolate into the ground.

Can we tell you with any certainty what we're going to do next? Not really. In the past we've been told that there is no point in MBA having a survey done to find the location of each driveway culvert, because the ultimate problem is west of us. Most assuredly the surveys I have from 1991 show culverts that we replaced or relocated starting almost 20 years ago. I really hope we get some clarity on the external situation in the near future. But even though there are some culverts that should probably have been replaced a decade ago, they are still permitting water to flow. Unfortunately, many of them are lower than the adjacent ditch.

And just let me point out that this problem is going to get harder and harder to solve as sea levels continue to rise and Delaware continues to sink. Margie and I have attended meetings of Bethany Beach and South Bethany's Resiliency Committees, and they're moving ahead with obtaining grants to start elevating some of their streets-in particular York Road, which is at the traffic light just south of York beach

Mall and is directly adjacent Jefferson Creek. In fact, they mentioned something in their discussions that I hadn't considered before: the fact that more fill or asphalt they bring in to elevate the road raises the weight on the road and makes it sink quicker. South Bethany is talking about raising the height of their canal bulkheads.

One last item on this topic: our new landscaping company has as part of their contract clearing debris out all of our swales 4 times a year to keep them functioning as well as possible. They have not yet done their first such clearing, but it should be in the next month or so.

Rising out of the drainage system, we encounter our roads. We had a new Reserve Replacement study done this offseason. The report notes that some portions of our roadways are at the point where seal coating is not as effective, and the asphalt shows signs of what's called "alligating", which is essentially the surface breaking up into small pieces. This can be seen mostly at the west end of some pineside streets, and especially near where there has been a construction project that brought heavy truck traffic. Yes, there is a correlation between the ground water level, and how "mushy" the underlying road base is, and how quickly the surface "alligates".

While there might be a time when someone stands in front of this body in the future and says "we're planning to elevate all roads in our community to a five foot elevation because we're tired of them going under water", but that's not today. I do have area maps showing how much of the community would be under water at jogj tide given a specific amount of relative sea level rise that I should remember to post on the website just in case you don't have enough to worry about.

Landscaping:

Next, we're moving up to things that grow out of the ground. Landscaping. At this time, I'd like to introduce our Landscaping Chair Holly Fluty Dempsey for her report.

CFC:

In addition to the landscaping that grows out of the ground, MBA also puts solid

structures in the ground known as fences. Fences have gates. Gates have locks. Other things are placed in the ground known as signs. And footwashes at each dune crossing. Sorry, but that's the best way I could come up with to transition into the Community Facilities Report by Chair Don Deraska, who has arrived last night from an offseason in Florida.

BEACH PATROL:

We also have people during the season running around known as "employees". We have great employees. Despite the challenges faced up and down the coast by other patrols to become fully staffed, we are absolutely thrilled to have all of our full-time beach patrol members returning this year. We believe this is partially due to the fact that we're an awesome community who show them great respect and admiration. We believe our pay is very competitive with other patrols. And they have great leaders. Holden Wingate is returning to Captain the patrol, and Beach Chair Mark McCulloh has been working behind the scenes with Holden and Treasurer Bob Wood to get things ready.

COMMUNITY PATROL:

We also have our Community Patrol, who are responsible for enforcing the privacy of our beach. At this time, I'd like to ask Chair Kerry Hall to introduce their new leader and say a few words.

SAND:

And now to our most important asset-our Beach, which as usual is in pretty decent shape compared to our neighbors. After spending a significant amount of money with the engineering firm that does this kind of work, MBA was told a few years ago that getting an actual permit to participate in a dredging project was unlikely. There was a requirement about 10 years ago that any sand, dredged from DE owned offshore borrow sites and placed oceanward of our beach would need to be marked as open to the public. This alarmed us, but we realized that the best way to grow our

beach was to install row upon row of dune fencing, which has done an incredible job of building up the amount of sand in our dunes. Personally, I might have waited a bit longer between fence projects to let the more westerly parts of the dune system build up to a higher elevation, but we have trapped a phenomenal amount of sand by this system, and we should all thank those who worked on this during my “seven year vacation”.

Then we were told that a condition of such a permit would be that MBA would need to do the engineering necessary to find a new offshore borrow site that we could conceivably use in the future. Not having anywhere the resources to do that, MBA abandoned its efforts to obtain these permits.

DNREC has changed its tune, and, at least in theory, is working on a formula to charge communities such as ours for the use of this sand. Originally, we had no idea how much that might be, but our recent information is that this will be incredibly minimal, especially compared with shelling out millions of dollars on the engineering work ourselves. As I mentioned in the meeting announcement, like Sea Colony, we currently anticipate we would only participate in a dredging project in case of a significant emergency. But we’d most assuredly need to have the appropriate permits in place beforehand. These permits are likely to be good for 10 years.

Technically the highest points in the community are the peaks of our dune crossings, which approach 20’ elevation in some places. We haven’t yet made a final decision, but I’m leaning towards putting the full mobimats where they have been in previous years (Addy and Errett), with the addition of a new section at Bayberry on the part that slopes uphill from the street which seems to be the most eroded portion of our crossings.

COMMERCIAL:

Something else we have on our property are Commercial entities, which provide valuable services within walking distance of our homes. At this time I’d like to introduce Commercial Committee Chair George Rayburn.

BUILDING:

And we also have a great many houses and other buildings on our properties. At this time, I'd like to ask Building Committee Chair Margie Cyr to give her report.

SOCIAL:

Lastly, what we have on our property are you, our members. One of my best memories of my first run on the Board was the 2009 celebration of 50 Summers of Middlesex, possibly because that was also the day I stepped down after my first 5 year run as President, although the subsequent 55 Summers of Middlesex celebration in 2014 wasn't too bad. The Social Committee is working on plans for a similar event this coming Labor Day weekend. I'd like to introduce Social Committee Chair Kate Munteer to give her report.

BUDGET:

I mentioned a bit about the Budget earlier, but I'm now going to ask Bob Wood to make any more comments he might want to add before we have the actual vote on the Assessment. If you have a question that you think directly relates to the budget, either for Bob or anyone else up here, feel free to ask in a few minutes. If you have more general questions, well, we'll have some time to kill while the votes are being tallied.

MOTION; VOTING:

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

OTHER GENERAL QUESTIONS;

MOVE TO ADJOURN