



## A Short Walk Down Memory Lane

### Description

by Tom Blakeman, March 14, 2020

*Selected excerpts from The History of Hot Springs Village*

*If you have not seen and read this history of our Village you should. It is lengthy, some 441 pages, and is available in PDF format. It was written in 2000 and had limited updates through 2006. Given that this is our 50th Anniversary it is timely to take a look back.*

*There are ongoing comments on Nextdoor and other media continuing to blame CCI for all of our present-day issues. Many apparently think Cooper alone made all the decisions all along the way. There are many who think that our Board of Directors should only set policy and have no active role in administration. There is continuing debate about how/when the lot situation and their devaluing occurred. And, of course, there is constant commentary about our election integrity and the security and purpose of our gates.*

*These excerpts may clarify some things, may dispel some myths and correct some long-standing beliefs: [note that some color/emphasis/italics have been added for clarity]*

**1970:** *Only John A. Cooper employees and close business associates were available to serve on the POA Board until 1974.* In December 1974, Article XII was amended to increase the number of Directors to seven (7).

**1973:** *By the year 1973, all members selected to serve on Standing Committees were residents.*

**1974:** At the September 18, 1974 meeting of the Board, the General Manager, Elwood Bell, stated: *“that all private access roads had been blocked by cable.”* The Board then adopted the resolution: *“that all temporary provisional access to the Village be permanently closed without exception, and that all traffic entering or leaving the Village will be through authorized controlled access points.”*

**1975:** *In May 1975, the two policy-making bodies, CCI and POA, were independent of each other.*

Even though the two corporations (CCI and POA) were destined to function in close association, the ***Board of Directors of the POA, for the first time, was making the policies without direct influence of the CCI.***

In 1975 the membership of the Board of Directors was changed from five to seven members and the terms of office from four and six years to three-year staggered terms. ***During the past 25 years, consideration has been given to increasing the number of Board members to nine, but action never occurred;*** therefore, the number of members of the Board and terms of office has remained unchanged for 25 years.

**Vernon Smith: President, 1975-1976 – *The first president who was elected to the Board of Directors by the Membership and elected president of the Association by the Board of Directors.***

**Alan (Al) Klein: General Manager, 1976-1994 – *Al Klein was the first General Manager to be employed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership.***

**Robert (Bob) Reik: Director of Finance and Treasurer, 1977-1991 – *Bob Reik was the first Director of Finance and Treasurer to be employed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership.*** Previous Treasurers were Thomas Dees, 1970-1974, and William Putman, 1974 to 1977.

**POLICY AND MANAGEMENT** – During the first four years, particularly 1970 through 1973, the Hot Springs Village Board of Directors developed policies, made most major management decisions, developed procedures, and provided leadership of the Association.

A study of the minutes of the Board of Directors indicates that ***the Board functioned in large part as both policymakers and administrators. The administrative role of the Board was evident in the governance of the Village for more than 20 years,*** although its role in administration was attenuated as years passed. In the middle nineties to 2000, the Board of Directors deliberately and aggressively took steps to move totally away from administrative functions and to focus only on policymaking.

**2002: Economic and Fiscal Impact Study** – The HSV BOD approved a proposal from Wayne Miller of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to perform an updated Economic and Fiscal Impact Study of Hot Springs Village for \$10,000, of which the POA would support a maximum of \$5,000.

**2003: National Recreational Properties Inc. – *The Hot Springs Village Board of Directors entered into an agreement with National Recreational Properties Inc. of Irvine, California for the sale of foreclosed lots in the POA's inventory. NRPI purchased all lots in the POA inventory for \$500 each, which includes one year's worth of assessment payments. After the initial purchase, NRPI will continue to purchase a minimum of 50 lots per month, if available, for \$500 each for the first five years of the contract and \$1,000 each for the last five years of the contract.*** NRPI opened its local operations at the East Gate in the vacated Cooper Land Development offices.

**2006: Election of Board Members – *Ballots were numbered to prevent tampering and were returned to an independent auditing firm for counting. Election Day Committee was abolished.***

***These foregoing excerpts are only a sampling of the extensive information in the History. Property owners, particularly those who are now or will be our leaders, are encouraged to take some time and read the full text (below). After all, if you don't know where we have been how can you chart the course of our future?***

[History-of-HSV-from-Tom-Blakeman](#)

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