



HSVPOA Board Wrestles 5-13-20

Description

By Former Board Director, Frank Leeming, April 13, 2020

POA board wrestles over job descriptions, spending authority and fiscal policy at work session

The new board of directors continued its campaign today to regain control of the Property Owners' Association by wrangling with staff over language outlining various duties.

Tension focused on a proposed job description for the POA treasurer. For the first time, the new board has named a treasurer – Dan Aylward – who is not a staff employee.

CEO Lesley Nalley expressed fear a non-staff treasurer would interfere with POA employees, particularly with CFO Liz Mathis. She wants to ensure the separation of duties. and that the treasurer's actions do not interfere with future audits.

Aylward said the treasurer should be able to have access to all POA records.

The meeting debated the proposed “unencumbered access” language.

Director Tucker Omohundro said the language should be simplified so it says the treasurer should be given access to whatever information he wants, and if he is denied, he can come back to the full board. This approach is likely to be adopted at next Wednesday's regular monthly meeting.

Board chair Diana Podawiltz said the board needs to know what reports are currently being gathered by staff so it can determine which ones it wants to see.

Changes proposed in the job description for board chair and vice-chair will not be adopted. At Chuck Alvord's request, the POA's attorney will be asked about defining the board/corporate secretary's duties. He grappled with Podawiltz on the secretary's duties. Like the new treasurer, this board has appointed a non-staff person to be its secretary.

“Not everyone knows what the secretary is supposed to be doing,” Diana said. “That's why I'd like to

see it spelled out.”

That may work for this board, Alvord said, but the next board may want the role changed and then the bylaws would have to be changed again.

Nalley, who attended the meeting remotely, agreed with Alvord.

In the end, the board agreed the language should be left alone, and more detail could be spelled out elsewhere. To see the proposed job descriptions, [click here](#).

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The board next turned to procurement and contract policies. There has been criticism about earlier boards giving Nalley too much authority – the power to approve purchases up to \$50,000 without board approval. Nalley pointed out that power is spelled out in her contract.

Podawiltz said “a lot of things have changed” since her contract was approved.

It would be “dangerous” to “take that responsibility away from staff,” Nalley told the board.

Podawiltz said spending control is ultimately the board’s responsibility. To see the proposed procurement policy, [click here](#).

“We need to get a better handle on our finances,” Omohundro said.

Treasurer Aylward, who often spoke so softly he could not be heard, suggested a limit of \$10,000 would give the board an opportunity to review more spending before it takes place.

Mathis said all purchases and work orders for more than \$10,000 are put out for bid. She said her staff works hard to get the lowest prices.

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When discussion turned to a proposed new fiscal policy, Mathis agreed it was a good idea to consolidate the many policies.

Podawiltz pointed out everything revolves around finances and the budget. Rebuilding the Balboa Golf Course is a perfect example, she said. “This is something we have to deal with,” she asserted.

The directors emphasized the importance of transparency and timely reporting of financial information.

To see the financial policy the board was discussing, [click here](#).

The POA’s new Finance and Planning Committee has its first meeting at 4 p.m. tomorrow. It will be broadcast on the POA’s YouTube channel – [Click here](#).

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The last two work sessions have given property owners the best opportunity in years to see their government in operation. The meetings, which have been “attended” by between 150 and 200 viewers, have shown a good give and take between directors and staff as they drive toward a consensus.

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If you’re keeping track, the number of new coronavirus cases reported in Arkansas rose on six of the last 14 days. Governor Asa Hutchinson said last month Phase One of re-opening the state should not begin until there were 14 consecutive days of declining numbers. His plan was based on federal guidelines.

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