



HSVPOA GM Opening Report at 2021 Retreat

Description

General Manager Shares Ideas at the HSV Board of Director 2021 Retreat

At the 2021 Board Retreat, the Interim General Manager, John Paul, had a lot to share with the Directors and guests. The Retreat was held on May 12, 2021, at 8:30 a.m. and was hosted at Diamante Country Club in Hot Springs Village.

Paul said his goal as Interim General Manager is stabilization for the employees. Paul said, “they have been pulled in a lot of different directions.”

“In the first 40 years, we basically had two General Managers. There was also someone here with Cooper in the first couple of years. After that, Al Klein was here for 15 years and Dave Johnson was here for 15 or 16 years, or more than that, probably 18 years. We’ve had two general managers in the first 40 years. When we hire a new General Manager this time we will have 9 in 10 years. That does not lead to stability. The employees that we have here are very good at what they do, but they’ve been pulled in a lot of different directions, whichever the way the wind was blowing over the last ten years. What we need to do is give back focus on doing the right thing for the right reasons. This is my opinion.”

Paul continued, “this Retreat Agenda is going to tackle some major topics that I believe what people in the Village are asking for and wanting – wanting to know what we can do to enhance these issues or make them better or take care of it.”

“The key issues I see facing the POA is number one, security. I think the pandemic has proven to all of us that a lot of people are wanting away from where they are and to move to a setting like this that has security...It is a beautiful place to play and is reasonable in price. Those are the things that have always attracted people to the Village and I think that is going to continue...,” explained Paul.

Gates and Crime

One of the biggest draws to the Village are the gates. We are gating a city. “We may be the only gated city in the country and it is a very hard thing to do, to control the ingress and egress. Being private

makes it a lot easier for us to do, legally and morally. The gates will continue to be an issue, on who we let in and how we let them in and how we control it,” stated Paul.

“If you look at the crime statistics of Hot Springs Village, they are very, very low compared to the rest of the cities in Arkansas or in the country. We think the gates are the reason for this,” said the GM. Paul explained how there will be a technology presentation that will help us with the gate situation.

FRATF/Balboa Club Renovation Plans

The FRATF is doing a wonderful job looking at deferred maintenance.

A plan has been put together regarding the “long-awaited decision on renovation of the Balboa Golf Course and Club House. We put a plan together that I think is a very doable plan to show some progress in that area. What we want to do is take one of the worst eyesores we’ve got right now and turn it into a very productive, ongoing facility that will have some viability and some life to it.”

PPP Loan

When the PPP loan is forgiven, a lot of it will go into reserve funds. Paul said, “I read in the paper that some of the PPP loans may take 8 or 9 years to be forgiven. We don’t think we are in that shape. We’ve dotted all the i’s and crossed all the t’s and we meet all the criteria and it is just a question of them to get around to doing it, to give us the go ahead on that. But until we do, those funds are basically at the mercy of the SBA [Small Business Administration] and whether we have to pay it back as a loan or get it forgiven. We are 99% sure it will be forgiven. But it is a matter of time and timing with the SBA.”

Marketing

Fortunately, the pandemic has done a lot for our marketing. “Where we had 400 houses for sale, we now have in the low double digits that are available,” said Paul.

We were fortunate that Cooper did all the marketing in the first 40 years. When they left, they turned over the marketing to us and we weren’t ready for it.

Staff Resizing and Retention

Paul stated, “both he and Charles King were tackled with resizing the staff. “When I stepped in for a few months as Interim GM before Charles King was hired, we both saw the need to downsize the upper levels of management. Seven key positions were eliminated, either combined with other duties. These were upper-level management positions. The result of this, if you include benefits, was somewhere between a million and a million three. I think we’ve done our job at the top of the food chain here in getting the right size management that we need. This represents a real-life savings of right at a million dollars. If you include benefits, it could be as much as a million three.”

Paul explained, “you will hear a lot about our problems hiring workers. Just like everybody else is having right now. I know the governor has moved to do away with the \$300 that they are paying people not to work. That will help. We’re seeing a little bit of a movement in that position where we can hire

workers back, but we're still having problems with that. Right now, I think Tom [Heffer] will point out that we're 16 workers down in golf maintenance, alone."

"Those are actual savings in actual dollars, but that is not realistic, nor sustainable. We've got to get those people back on the payroll and get back to work. So this is one of the problems we are going to have to overcome in the future," stated Paul.

Kim Massey of H.R. will also talk about other factors of recruiting and retention of staff.

The GM invited everyone to help themselves to the continental breakfast and lunch.

By Cheryl Dowden, May 13, 2021

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Date Created

05/13/2021

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