



The Many Faces of Hot Springs Village

Description

By Lloyd Sherman, February 13, 2021

Preface

Before I launch off into the motivation behind this writing, I would first like to dedicate this article to the workforce (primarily non-exempt employees) of the Hot Springs Village Property Owner's Association (HSVPOA). By this, I mean to communicate to those who most often interact with and serve the property owners. Over the past several years I have continued to hear ground noise that indicates that property owners or board members don't appreciate those who work hard every day to serve this community. I can assure you that this general attitude does not exist and that it was a planted notion from the highest level of POA Management and then either passively or actively supported by senior managers. I can assure you that any stated objections from property owners were directed at the senior management levels and not to those at the actual workforce level or their immediate supervisors. One of the problems in today's society is that if you tell people something long and often enough, they will begin to believe it is true. With the exception of a very few incidents that have been discussed with me over the years where a property owner had an issue with an employee, the comments I have received have been very positive towards our POA employees. There will always be exceptions to rules, but the general rule of thumb is that the property owners appreciate and cherish the POA employees and any concerns have only been with the highest levels of management.

We can always try to do better and the message I would like to deliver today is that all of us need to do a better job of understanding each other and working together to make the Village the best it can be.

The Good and the Not So Good

The Good – The wife and I have only lived here for about 6.5 years but we both love it here and don't know of any other place we would rather be. For the most part, the majority of residents are very friendly and helpful. As stated in the Preface, there are always exceptions to the rule, but I will discuss that later.

The neighborhood we live in is most likely very similar to those most of you live in. We are an active neighborhood and have many social get-togethers and we get along well. We have organized neighborhood dinners, golf outings, etc. Much like our feelings about the Village, actually, parallel those of our neighborhood.

As a community, the Village is very giving and active in clubs and organizations. Property owners have amazed me with the dedication they have to volunteer their time to various clubs, organizations, and activities. Even to the extent that when something like staff turnover creates a hole in our operations, here come volunteers to lend their time and expertise in any way they can. And they do so without the need to be compensated. It is truly amazing and goes directly to the character of the Village in general. Most of our property owners love the Village and will stretch themselves to any extent necessary to help make it a success. They generally do so, with little to no recognition for the time and effort they have expended; nor do they really expect any.

You would think based on all the friendly, accommodating, helpful residents we have, that all is calm and peaceful here in the Village. But other than the calm, serene, and peace the actual location brings to us, there remains an undercurrent of distrust and hostility that keeps raising its head.

The Not So Good – Many of the residents of the Village are retired and have moved here to basically stay in retirement. The latest demographic data shows the average age to be 68, while the average age in Arkansas is 37.7. I would say a huge majority of those who have retired here came from what they considered a successful career. The not-so-good offshoot of that, however, can be that many of the retired individuals consider themselves “experts”. If utilized properly, those residents should immediately become part of **The Good**. But alas, the Village has seen a pattern through the years that those retired “experts” are property owners and do not have a say in how the Village is run. So now we have taken a potential **Good** and turned it into a **Not So Good**. This has led to much frustration which then turns into distrust on the part of the property owners. While it most likely will not happen, we really need to find a way to put the talents and expertise of our property owners to better use.

This then leads into an area that has become a huge problem for not only the Village but our Nation as a whole. Social Media. This platform has created a huge market of “armchair quarterbacks”. Again, if used properly this forum shouldn’t have turned into the malicious, vengeful, and hateful platform that it has become. Someone simply attempting to make a suggestion is now likely to start at a minimum a skirmish. All because someone doesn’t agree with them and often the comments turn nasty and hurtful. We just had a GM resign for what he says was related to this type of activity. It appears to me that coming back from this abyss is going to be nearly impossible, but I would hope that by spreading the word, we can educate our employees and property owners on what type of damage negative input might be creating and ask for more tolerance and understanding.

So now to get to an area that won’t be popular with many. I mentioned above that the average age in the Village is 68, which means a large portion of our property owners is at or above that age. I have found that as I age, I am becoming less tolerant of situations and people. While I had heard for years that older people just got grumpier, I had never done any research. Well, I have now done some and it seems to me that understanding only this one aspect of life in HSV might serve us all well.

There is plenty out there to read on this issue, but I am going to provide a few notable quotes from **Anger and the Elderly** (<https://capitaleap.org/blog/2013/03/01/anger-and-the-elderly/>) before I make

my wrap-up:

“If you are an adult, either a caregiver or simply an individual with an older person in your life, you may be noticing that that person increasingly seems angry, short-tempered, intolerant, or simply nasty.”

“One thing to remember is that both age and illness can often [intensify](#) personality traits that an individual may have had their entire life. The person who always wanted to be the center of attention becomes more demanding. The person who often found fault with others now seems to be hypercritical and even mean in his or her opinions of others. The person who was always somewhat intolerant of anyone different or not like them now seems downright bigoted. Rudeness, a tendency to interrupt, neediness, and manipulation may all become more pronounced as a person ages.”

“Part of the reason for this is that some older people simply become less sensitive to others as they age.”

“Older people may, similarly, not be aware of, or not buy into today’s norms regarding the use of certain words or racial or ethnic slurs. Bigotry, intolerance, or attitudes that were quite common in their day are usually no longer tolerated in polite company. But they often seem to neither know nor care.

Wrap-up – None of the above can be used as an excuse for not being civil, but maybe all of us can use it to try and better understand where certain attitudes come from. I suggest we all need to do a better job of relating to each other and trying to be more tolerant. From personal experience, I can tell you that some communications received by the Board, and I assume by staff, can be very difficult to swallow or absorb. They can be mean-spirited at best and often downright degrading.

What I would like to convey is that regardless of who you are dealing with, civility should be the word of the day. POA employees, Board members, and property owners deserve to be dealt with in a civil and business-like manner.

So please don’t shoot the messenger. My only interest is to find ways to help calm the waters.

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Date Created

02/13/2021

Author

lynn

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