



WAKE UP, VILLAGERS!

Description

Recent events and decisions by the HSVPOA Board of Directors bring up some serious concerns for the future of Hot Springs Village.

1. Garrison resigned from the Board as the new Board was seated. Yet, he supposedly informed the Board in March of his intention to resign. The seat should be filled by the person who received the next largest number of votes. Will it be? The word is "we've never done this before". OK, let's not do things a certain way because we never have before. That's archaic thinking.
2. The position of General Manager was posted in-house, but not posted to the property owners. Why is that? And, was it posted nationwide? Were recruiters offered the chance to find the right candidate?
3. It's strongly rumored the position will be filled by a current employee. While this person is certainly a hardworking, dedicated employee, does this person have the advantage of having worked elsewhere, gathered the knowledge, well-rounded experience, and innovation necessary to take The Village in a new direction? Or, are we going to be doing things the same way and expecting a different result?
4. The old Board promised to wait for the new Board to find a General Manager. Did they? Or, are they just waiting to vote in their candidate? It would be easy now that the Board is short one seat and the new players will have an equal number of votes. With the swaying of just one new Board member, the decision of the old Board becomes reality. Instead of rushing the decision through, have they ever considered contacting SCORE (Senior Corps of Retired Executives) to come in, run the operations, analyze the current staffing, provide training and assist in the search and selection of a new GM? I believe their services are free and they just request expense reimbursement. John Paul's interim services are certainly admirable, but we need someone from the outside to look at our operations in a different light.

5. The Board is much too small to properly represent 14,000+ residents. In my humble opinion, the Board should be a minimum of 13 members.
6. Am I mistaken or do there seem to be great number of “closed” executive and board meetings? When asked why, the response was something like “We just need the people to go back to being retired.” Does that mean they don’t want us to know what’s going on? Surely not.
7. In that same vein, it has been suggested we incorporate, outside the gates, form a City that would encompass the community of Hot Springs Village. This would provide us with city councilmen from each area, mandate all open meetings, release salaries and benefits of each and every employee to the public, require audits under the Single Audit Act for any Federal flow-through money of \$750K or more, open us up for Federal and State Grants, and help with fixing our infrastructure. But, the voices of experience and reason say, “no, that would just create another level of bureaucracy and we would be overwhelmed with administrative overhead. Not only that, but why would residents outside the gates want to be part of our City when we would control the votes and they would end up paying for our needs?” Wise words and so very true.
8. The positions of Corporate officers should never be filled with employees! The Corporate Treasurer is also the controller. This doesn’t make sense. Where are the checks and balances? She is basically approving what she has authorized. Was this done so that no one would question certain expenses? Was this done to validate a salary increase? We had a very qualified, dedicated corporate Treasurer. He was summarily dismissed. Why?
9. On the topic of salaries, what happened to the most necessary and very important salary survey? It was to be done to bring salaries into line with the industry and geographic area. Hourly employees are paid too little and mid and upper management may be being paid too much. This needs to be done to keep the talent and properly bring all salaries and wages into line. And, is this constant “musical chairs” with staff a result of our paying them too little? When one resigns, many apply for the open position in order to move up a grade or earn a few more cents per hour. Then, the position they vacated is posted at a rate in excess of what the employee was making, when they moved from that position. We’re losing talent and experience in many areas due to this ongoing shuffle. Wouldn’t it be better to pay them what the job and their performance are truly worth? Because they are indeed our most valuable assets!
10. What was the deal worked out with Greg Jones? Who benefits and what are the cost savings, revenue-generating advantages to the property owners? Did anyone run a cost savings, revenue pro forma to see if this was a good deal for all concerned?
11. Assessment increases will be strongly recommended. The only way I could vote for an increase is if a fixed percentage is set aside, in a restricted account, for the benefit of repairing, upgrading and maintaining our current infrastructure. This percentage should be something greater than 90% of the requested increase.
12. And, last but certainly not least, we had Podawiltz, Sherman, and Foltz in position to take The Village in a new direction. Podawiltz was forced out by removing her from the Chair position, Sherman was a lame duck who lost on almost every decision and thereby felt powerless and Foltz’s position as Treasurer was given to staff. The stage was set and now we’re getting ready

to see we do not have adequate fiduciary oversight and property owner representation and we're getting ready to repeat the mistakes of the past.

Let your voices be heard, it's YOUR Village! Contact the Board members and let them know we don't like the new direction, which is actually the direction of the past. It didn't work then and it won't work now.

By Jama Lopez, April 30, 2021

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Thank you for reading. If you like, please comment below. **We love to hear your opinion, but comments must be made using your first and last real name, or they will not be accepted.** If you would like to submit an article for publication, please contact us through this website. Be sure to bookmark this website. Click [here](#) to visit the Hot Springs Village People Facebook Group, also known as POG (Property Owners' Group).

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