



Vecinos de la Cholla meeting March 23, 2024

Meeting called to order at 9 a.m. and minutes from last meeting were approved.

Board members introduced themselves per member request.

- Pat Sledge – President (Longtime resident, former board member)
- Charli Keller – Vice President (Full-time resident since 2015, former Board member)
- Lew Felton – Secretary (Longtime resident and longtime Board member)
- Selina Jo Welle – Treasurer (Full-time resident)
- Laurie Weber – Board member (Longtime resident, former Board member)
- Jerry Ketelhut-Toleu – Board member (Longtime resident, former Board member)
- Aron “Benji” Brown – Board member (Full-time resident, Liaison to City offices & SBR)
- Dot Freeman – Board Member (Full-time resident since 2017)
- Chrissy Gronau - Board member (not present)

FINANCIAL REPORT:

President Sledge called for a correction in the line items for road grading and waste removal being in the wrong spot. It was noted that the Association collected \$25,000 in membership dues in February. Total paid members is 391 with hopes to achieve 500 paid members in the upcoming months. Motion was made and seconded to accept financial statement with changes requested. Agenda changes were briefly discussed by President Sledge.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Road Maintenance:

President Sledge met with Juan Mesa from SBR to discuss road grading. The grader had been down, and parts were ordered. Meanwhile, maintenance was minimally achieved with the tire dragging method. A schedule for road maintenance within Cholla is being established. Many roads need to be maintained less often than the main ones, but still need attention. Concerns were expressed regarding the narrowing of the main road from Esmeralda into Choya and possible safety issues resulting from that. Aron noted that SBR asked the city for help, but their equipment was down as well.

Parks and Environment:

Charli Keller discussed plans for the park. A landscaper was hired to prune the trees, deepen the water wells, remove weeds and haul away the debris for \$400.

Plans are being made to establish a Memorial Tree program which will allow members to purchase a desert friendly tree in honor of a loved one. A donation of \$300 will cover purchase, planting and perpetual care of the tree, and a memorial plaque. Funds raised will go toward improvements and maintenance of the park. Mesquite and Ficus trees were mentioned as possibilities and nurseries need to be contacted to see what would be readily available and desert friendly. The Board will research the feasibility of installing a drip system for watering.

It was suggested that a Cholla Clean-up day be planned in conjunction with Earth Day and Puerto Peñasco's clean-up efforts on that day.

President Sledge stated that we need to come up with possible projects for the remainder of the year and reminded members that when these are put into place, money for the projects would come from funds already in the bank and be recorded as a pre-paid assessment so members will not pay any more.

Security:

Juan Pedro is doing a great job. President Sledge will be setting up a meeting with Gerry Caballero and the Comandante to negotiate for some more help. Right now, the association is paying for the ATV gas, and the ATV still belongs to Lew. The Board needs to look at possibly purchasing the ATV from Lew for exclusive use by the officers assigned to Cholla. Comments were made about how responsive Juan Pedro is to calls and concerns.

Clubhouse:

It was reported that Harry Luker changed out the pressure tank for the water system as the pump was continually running and a check valve was leaking. It was pointed out that weeding needed to be done in the clubhouse parking lot. Also areas of deep erosion present a risk for people to be injured. The Board will hire someone to solve both problems

Water:

The Board will research the cost and feasibility of bringing power and Internet service to the water stand pipe area so that an electronic metering system can be set up. This way each water delivery driver would have to enter a code to activate the flow and measure the water delivered. This would simplify assessing the carriers for the amount they draw.

The Board will also investigate the feasibility of installing a large reserve tank to have water available for residents in situations where none is coming from the city pipeline. Also, a reserve fund for maintenance and replacement of water system hardware. President Sledge will be meeting with Ramon regarding payment to Oomapas for water delivered through the standpipe. It was agreed that operation of the water standpipe is the responsibility of the association and needs to be operated and monitored by the association. Water costs have increased due to the loss of the "early pay" discount, as well as the city increasing their rates. Having the association manage the standpipe will help assure that water is always available to the residents of Choya.

Garbage:

Aron reported that many people have come in to his office to pay their garbage service. He reported that notices were sent out warning Vecinos of fines assessed by the city for people placing garbage out without a sticker. The city considers this practice littering. A motion was made to have signs made and positioned in 5 or 6 spots around Choya to alert people to the fines assessed for littering. Cost is estimated at \$50 for 18 x 18 aluminum signs. A motion was made and passed unanimously to obtain the signs and Lew will be in charge of placement.

It was noted that many people are taking their trash with them rather than pay for a sticker. Since it is illegal to bring trash into the United States, they dump it at the “rest stops” on the way to the border. These were created by the federal government but abandoned many years ago and there is no one to pick up that trash and dispose of it at the dump.

Membership:

Jerry introduced the goal of having a “welcome package” available to new owners and real estate agents who sell homes in Cholla. This would outline the association’s mission (which is being developed), rights as members, services provided and the expenses that the organization has, along with dues and website information. There is a need to remind people that the association is not like the “HOA’s” in the states which dictate color of the house, landscaping, etc. The Vecinos is an organization providing services for Cholla Bay (roads, signage, parks, etc.) which are not provided by the city. This packet would be a great way to familiarize property owners with the association. A draft was given to the board to review.

BANK TRUSTS

President Sledge brought up the bank trust issue and the ongoing confusion. Some people have gotten written clarification that their original trust was included in the extension, while others have not and are still searching for answers. The Board’s advice to all is to take your trust to an attorney that you are comfortable with and have it looked at individually. There are MANY different opinions and different information on which trusts are included in the 50-year extension. Check into your trust individually as the Board has not had success with getting a solid confirmation on who is expired and who isn’t. It might be a slow process but continue looking until you get your answer.

OTHER BUSINESS

Pat asked if Aron could pursue getting the old electric poles removed at some point. There was discussion about contractors who fail to perform and do not return deposit money. Lew asked if there were any recourse individuals had to recoup their losses. Aron clarified that to file a complaint you needed documentation of the work to be performed and what money was paid. You can file a police report, but documentation is needed. He said a signed, written contract with a copy of the contractor’s ID card was necessary. He added that all payments to the contractor should be documented with a signed receipt.

An update on the Dahlstrom house sale was not available. One will be requested from Tavane McCombs, the listing agent.

ADJOURN

Motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m.