

# *Pheasant* Tales



September 2018

## Annual Meeting Announcement

The community's annual meeting will be held on **Monday September 24, 2018** beginning promptly at 7:30 pm in the New Life Christian Center located at 9844 Mallard Drive Laurel, MD 20708. We are thankful to NLCC for allowing us to use their space for this purpose. **All homeowners must check-in before the meeting begins. Check-in begins at 7pm and will end at 7:20pm.**

Annual meeting packets with the proposed budget, meeting agenda and proxy votes were mailed and should have been received by all homeowners at this time.

This is a very important period in our community. Come out and let your voice be heard!

## Names and Numbers to Know

Below are some contacts you might find handy:

- **Joanne Robbins-Tidewater Property Management** Phone: 443-548-0910  
[jrobbins@tidewaterproperty.com](mailto:jrobbins@tidewaterproperty.com)
- **District 6 Police Station-Beltsville**  
4321 Sellman Road Beltsville, MD 20704  
[police\\_district6@co.pg.md.us](mailto:police_district6@co.pg.md.us)  
301-937-0910
- **Bulk Trash Collection Appointments**  
Via telephone: 301-883-4748  
Online:  
<http://bulkytrash.princegeorgescountymd.gov/>
- **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission**  
Customer Service: 301-206-4001  
Water Emergency Service: 301-206-4002
- **Baltimore Gas and Electric**  
Customer Service: 800-685-0123

## Community Improvement Updates and Reserve Study Overview

The board would like to extend a special note of thanks to our maintenance committee chair Jeff Harris for his hard work and diligence in coordinating necessary community repairs. Paving work was performed in July to address some much needed repair work on Dove Circle. This work reflects a temporary fix to the bigger problem of our community's aging infrastructure. Services were contracted with H and H Tree Experts in August for the removal of twenty-four dead and/or diseased trees and the grinding of twelve stumps located on community property. These maintenance projects are necessary as neglecting them proves more costly in the long run.

Our last community reserve study was done in approximately 2014. Engineering and Technical Consultants (ETC), the company that performed the previous study, has been contracted to complete an updated study to include an engineering/drainage study. An assessment of the wall on Boise Road will be included in the evaluation at no additional cost to the community. What exactly is a reserve study you might ask? A reserve study is "a long-term capital budget planning tool which identifies the current status of the reserve fund and a stable and equitable funding plan to offset ongoing deterioration, resulting in sufficient funds when those anticipated major common area expenditures actually occur". Essentially, it ensures that the HOA has sufficient funds in a reserve account, separate from the operating budget, to perform the anticipated repairs that are associated with normal deterioration and associated inflation of said repairs. The consultant, in this case, ETC comes in as an unbiased third party to identify present and potential future repairs along with the projected costs to address them. It is then up to the HOA to ensure that we collect monies, typically by way of our quarterly assessments to meet those costs. Unfortunately, our reserve account has not been sustained with adequate funds to address our community's needs. For many years, the HOA assessments remained the same and were not raised incrementally. This was not optimal for long term needs as now we do not have sufficient funds to perform the work that is necessary for a community that is greater than forty-five years old. While it is distressing to some, these infrastructure repairs are what drive the increases in assessments and make them necessary. **An HOA assessment increase of ten or twenty-five percent will be presented to the community for review and input at the annual meeting prior to voting on the budget.**



I must be very direct here. Our community is severely lacking in leadership and volunteers. At this time, we have no board officers. Our president, vice president, treasurer and secretary have resigned their positions. Our bylaws allow for nine board members and we presently have five total. There are no persons who have stepped up to indicate interest in serving as a board member so there were no names to list on the ballots that were sent with the annual meeting packets.

So what does this mean? Well, we have contracted Tidewater Management to handle the financial affairs of our community. This means that they will collect payments, issue statements, maintain the financial ledgers, make payments to our various vendors in addition to other financially driven tasks. Well what is left to do you ask? Imagine Pheasant Run as your home, not just the neighborhood in which you live. In your personal household, if you hired an accountant to perform your financial duties, pay your bills, balance your accounts, pay your taxes; you would still be responsible for getting estimates for necessary repairs, determining which contractor should perform them, giving your accountant the green light to pay the contractor, etc. Well, despite Tidewater's involvement, the HOA is still responsible for communicating with the towing company and other vendors, answering requests for architectural changes, performing community walk throughs, keeping the community informed, answering homeowner complaints and concerns, sending out notices to homeowners of violations, identifying those repairs that are necessary from a safety and liability perspective amongst so many more. There are many responsibilities and only a few hands on deck. Unlike Tidewater who is being compensated for their services, our board and committee members are unpaid volunteers giving of their time, efforts and talents solely because they want to be active contributors to the community in which they live. They are not employed by the HOA, but rather are working to help Pheasant Run be a better place. I challenge you to ask yourself, what is *your* contribution?

It has been suggested that we move to full management due to the poor showing from homeowners. While that is certainly an option, having full management does not release us from our obligation to where we live! The management company acts on the authority of the board. The board and its elected officers act on behalf of the community as a whole. We can choose to take more of our limited resources, that can be put to better use toward repairs, and pay an outside entity to do what we can and should be able to do ourselves. Even if full management is implemented, we would still need active board members and officers to instruct the management company on the needs and decisions of the community.

**THIS IS OUR COMMUNITY. THIS IS WHERE WE LIVE.** This simply cannot continue. There will be those that will throw this flyer away and will not show up to the annual meeting or any other meeting for that matter. I am hopeful that the majority of you will care enough to show up and get involved in making change and getting work done. We cannot continue to sit back and say that "someone else" will step up. If everyone takes that attitude, then no one steps up and **nothing gets done**. We have many people with talents that they can contribute. Are you good with finance/accounting? We need you. Are you very organized? We need you. Are you comfortable being a leader? We need you. Would you like to help, but don't know in what role? We need you. **If you are reading this, then I am speaking to YOU...** We need **YOU**. Let's come **TOGETHER** and get moving. Many hands make light work. The choice is yours.

Tyra Estwick, HOA Board Member