

**Austin's Colony Home Owners Association  
General Board Meeting  
Date: 9-8-2014**

Call to Order:

President Eric Henderson called the Austin's Colony Home Owners Association Board of Directors Meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Board members present: President: Eric Henderson, Vice President: Mike Davis, Treasurer: Tony Tasillo, Secretary: Jacqui Peterson, Members: Calvin Wade, Brenda Brown, Joseph Mitchell, Pat Dallas

Guests: Greg Owens (Councilman District 3), Hugh Walker (Bryan Deputy City Manager), Eric Buske (Bryan Chief of Police), Melinda Hayes (Neighborhood Police Enforcement Office), Grant Carrabba (Architectural Control and Austin's Colony Developer), Tandy Bone and Toni Myers (Property Services Representatives from BCS Equity Realty).

Attendance: 60 homeowners attended the meeting and 84 proxy votes were returned making a total of 144. The meeting needed 116 homeowners including proxy votes to continue (26% of homeowners in Austin's Colony) and so President Eric Henderson declared the meeting had a quorum and could continue.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the 2013 Austin's Colony Home Owners Association General Board meeting were read by Jacqui Peterson. There was a motion to accept the minutes as read and this was seconded and approved by all present.

**TREASURERS REPORT**

The Treasurers Report was read by Tony Tasillo. Expenses for Fiscal Year were \$46,469.24. Projected income was \$56,400.00. Assets of the Austin's Colony HoA include \$53,955 in checking and \$55,297 in savings accounts. There was a motion to accept the report as read and this was seconded and approved by all present.

**COVENANTS, CODES AND RESTRICTIONS (CC&R) REPORT**

The CC&R report was read by Mike Davis. 17 complaints were received through the association's website (austinscolony.org). Violations included a) multiple families at one address, b) overnight street parking, c) architectural control (building something on property without permission) and general issues such as a) yards not mowed, b) landscape not taken care of, c) trailers in driveways and d) privacy fences in disrepair.

Mike Davis also reported that follow ups of reported violations would now fall to our property service providers BCS Realty. As board members we tend to look at the temporary nature of violations before a violation letter is sent. One concern for CC&R is sheds in between homes which are a violation against Fire Codes; for example a shed between homes can help a fire to spread from one property to another.

Other complaints have been about the number of trees or shrubs in a neighbor's yard. Mike suggested that members visit the homeowners' website (<http://austinscolony.org>) and click on covenants and restrictions where a map will appear; find your street on the map and that will show which development phase your home is in – then select your phase for a copy of the CC&R for your home. Each front yard should have 2 trees (native or crepe myrtle) and 8 shrubs/bushes. One member asked if she could remove the rose bushes on her property, Mike replied that she can as long as she replaces them with 8 shrubs or bushes of her choice.

### **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

Eric Henderson read the Presidents Report which included the following topics:

*Speed Limit on Austin's Colony Parkway:* This was changed since the last HoA meeting to 35 mph as an ideal speed for slowing to 20 mph for the school zones.

*New Park:* A new park will be built on the Thornberry-Bullinger intersection

*Change in Management Services:* Management Services were changed to BCS Equity Realty who will take on violation follow-ups which had been performed by the HoA Board of Directors in the past.

*Changes in Board Members:* President Bettye Pool, Vice President Richard Burnham and Secretary Bart Labowitz retired. Eric Henderson was elected by the Board as the New President and Mike Davis as the new Vice President. Member Peggy Bloomer left the board when she moved from the neighborhood. New Board members elected by the Board this year included Joseph Mitchell and Pat Dallas.

*Landscape Services:* Bids were invited for landscape services this year and Green Team won the bid.

*Land Developers:* Mark Carrabba is turning over the duties of Architectural Control to Grant Carrabba

*Annual Dues:* Current HoA dues are \$120 a year which pays for landscape services, utilities and management services. As a board we try to be responsible with this money. The board members are all volunteers and do not get paid for the time and effort they provide.

Currently there are 51 properties in Austin's Colony in arrears over 90 days; some homeowners have never paid their dues and are enjoying the benefits. As a board we cannot utilize collections for these unpaid dues and can only impose liens on the properties in default. Legal fees for imposing liens come out of the HoA budget that we all as homeowners pay as our HoA dues.

*Web Master:* Gary Thomas the webmaster of [austinscolony.org](http://austinscolony.org) was introduced.

*Election of Board Members:* 2 current members of the board need to be re-elected for a second 2-year term, Eric Henderson and Tony Tasillo; there is also 1 vacant seat available on the board. Ballot forms were distributed and members asked to vote.

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

### ***Grant Carrabba***

Grant described the masterplan for sidewalks through the neighborhood to the Green Briar sub-division with a small park as a resting place for walkers. He described the park as having some benches and statues as a place to rest while walking the neighborhood. The Carrabba's will be responsible for maintenance (mowing, irrigation and trash pick-up) for one year after the park construction and after that it becomes the responsibility of the HoA. A HoA member asked who was responsible for mowing and maintenance of the section between Thornberry and Austin's Estate and Grant said it was the responsibility of the Carrabba's but bids were out for maintenance. A HoA member asked who was responsible for the brick pillars between privacy fences on Austin's Colony Parkway. Which are now in disrepair – Grant said he will find out and report back. A HoA member asked if Green Briar Park was part of our HoA and Grant responded that it is not part of the Austin's Colony HoA.

### ***Greg Owens***

Greg reported on the issue of Blinn College potential for building on Old Reliance Road. An expansion could include new buildings at the current site or another site. We do not know Blinn College's short or long range plans, and Blinn College representatives appear to have not made definitive plans as they seem to be focusing on the beginning of the Fall 2014 session. Basically no new information is available.

### ***Hugh Walker and Greg Owens***

Hugh and Greg gave a presentation on plans by the City of Bryan to initiate a new skateboard park and showed plans of how the skateboard parks might look. The city has two of these parks already and they are popular. Greg and Hugh were floating ideas to the HoA assessing the potential for building one in Austin's Colony. A HoA member asked who would carry liability insurance for this park and the response was that individuals carry their own insurance. Greg suggested that HoA members join the neighborhood site <https://austinscolony.nextdoor.com> and post feelings about having a skateboard park. There was a poll at the meeting for against having a skateboard park in Austin's colony; two members were for it and the remainder against it. Councilman Greg Owens asked HoA members to call him anytime if they wish to discuss the issue.

### ***Chief Eric Buske***

Chief Buske reported on crime trends in Bryan and Austin's Colony. The city has seen a 40% decline in crime since 2009 and is now leveling off. He stated that there are several SCAMS currently affecting Bryan residents the two main ones are a) the grandchild scam and b) the jury service scam. Chief Buske said be aware of scams and be skeptical of anyone wanting \$ from you by telephone. For Austin's Colony specifically, the common issue is disturbance calls with 6 disturbance calls received in the last year. There have also been 2 vehicle burglaries where the vehicles were left unlocked.

### ***Melinda Hayes***

Melinda Hayes our local law enforcement office reiterated the issues put forth by Chief Buske. She suggested that joining <https://austinscolony.nextdoor.com> would serve as a virtual neighborhood watch for our community. Some HoA members brought up the issue of the short cut from the Pecan Ridge neighborhood and Austin's Colony at Pleasant Rose. Officer Hayes said that the shortcut was put in place as a route for children to walk to school but would look into whether it can be closed off or if the local school can monitor this shortcut. Officer Hayes reported the following upcoming events:

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2014: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension – Child Safety Seat Check Up. • Time: 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. • Location: Bryan Towne Center (near Target), 3125 Wildflower Drive, Bryan

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2014: National Night Out. See <http://www.bryantx.gov/police/> for block party registration.

Crime Watch – suggested that this is done by blocks in Austin's Colony and that team members can buy signs for \$35

A member of the HoA, the pastor at the local church on Austin's Colony Parkway thanked the police officers that helped trace the owner of a lawnmower left on the church property this summer.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### ***Halloween Plans***

There have been justified complaints about the amount of traffic in the neighborhood, particularly Settlers Way during Halloween. This issue was presented at the HoA General Meeting in 2013 but was too short notice to do anything for October 2013. Since then the board of directors has discussed this issue at length because of safety issues such as police, fire or medics needing to get in for an emergency. We have a come up with a plan of action for Halloween 2014. 2-3 bicycle certified, off duty police officers will be hired to cruise up and down Settlers Way and order any driver that is stopped or driving excessively slowly to move along or park and walk with their children. The cost will be \$35 per officer per hour with a 2-hour minimum. We will pay for 2-3 hours and believe the cost is negligible when compared to the traffic nightmares experienced each Halloween.

President Eric Henderson asked the homeowners in attendance if there was any new business that they would like to introduce. These included:

- 1) Were plans for a community pool on the agenda? This was on the agenda a few years back but the community was not in favor because of cost and liability issues.
- 2) How many homes currently in Austin's Colony? 446 homes with the expectations of doubling this in the next 10 years
- 3) What is the website for Austin's Colony? <http://www.austinscolony.org/>

- 4) There is a lot of street erosion what can be done? This is a city and not a HoA issue
- 5) Is the Solar Screen sign in someone's front yard a violation of the CC&R? Yes it is – we will take steps to get it removed.
- 6) Are political signs in someone's front yard a violation of the CC&R? No. There is a limit to the number of signs but State Law trumps HoA CC&R directives
- 7) I want to build a pool how to I go about it? Send your question with pool plan through the website for architectural control. The builder of the pool will get a permit to build from the city.
- 8) My neighbor has build a bright pink birdhouse and stocked it with pigeons, it is visible from my yard and the pigeons are an annoyance what can I do? If it can be seen from your yard it is a violation and we will look into it. If the pigeons are more than 2 and are considered pets this also is a violation against the CC&R. Make a complaint on the form available at <http://www.austinscolony.org/>

### **ELECTION RESULTS**

Members of the HoA voted to elect Eric Henderson and Tony Tasillo for a further 2-year term. HoA member Jason McConnell stated he was interested in filling the vacant seat on the board.

President Eric Henderson motioned that the meeting be adjourned and this was seconded. The 2014 Annual Austin's Colony HoA General Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm