



## Sonoma Pines Homeowners Management Ltd.

### **Board Meeting Minutes October 11, 2023. 3:00 – 5:00 PM**

**Location:** Clubhouse, 3999 Sonoma Pines Drive, Westbank, B.C.

**Attendance:** Randy Benson, David Reid, Jim Burkinshaw, Don Porter, Willie Riewe, Tom McEwen

**Regrets:** Kelvin Mathiuk

**Recorder:** Ida Seib

**Guests:** 3 residents attended

**1) Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 3:00 PM

**2) Finalize Agenda**

Addition: Communication to residents after office hours.

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sonoma Pines Board of Directors approves the agenda as presented with one addition being "Communication to Residents After Office Hours".

Moved by: J. Burkinshaw Seconded by: D. Reid Carried with all in favor.

**3) Approval of Minutes**

Draft SPHM Board meeting minutes of Sept. 11/23. (posted on SP website)

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sonoma Pines Board of Directors approves the draft minutes of September 11, 2023.

Moved by: T. McEwan Seconded by: D. Reid Carried with all in favor.

**4) Correspondence**

None

**5) Reports**

a) Chairman – Randy Benson – see attached report

b) Treasurer – Jim Burkinshaw – please see attached report

The August financials were presented – (posted on SP Website)

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sonoma Pines Board of Directors approves the Sonoma Pines Homeowners Management Ltd. August 2023 Financial Statements.

Moved by: D. Porter Seconded by: D. Reid Carried with all in favor.

c) Maintenance & CSC Liaison – Dave Reid – verbal report - no written report

d) Safety & Security Liaison – Don Porter – please see attached report

e) Club House & Social Committee Liaison – Tom McEwen – verbal report - no written report

f) Irrigation and Landscaping Liaison – Willie Riewe - please see attached report

g) Communications – Kelvin Mathiuk – no report

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sonoma Pines Board of Directors approves the Board report.:  
Moved by: D. Porter    Seconded by: J. Burkinshaw    Carried with all in favor.

**6) Alteration Request Applications**

- a) The following alteration requests that have been previously reviewed and approved by the Board Maintenance Liaison and Community Services Coordinator between September 8/23 and October 5/23:

|                       |        |                            |
|-----------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| 2202 Alvarado Trail   | Multi  | Install upper deck awning  |
| 2391 Mesa Vista Court | Single | Install lower deck hot tub |

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sonoma Pines Board of Directors approved the above alteration requests.

Moved: D. Reid    Seconded by: J. Burkinshaw    Carried with all in favor.

- b) The following alteration requests that have been previously reviewed and denied by the Board Maintenance Liaison and Community Services Coordinator between Sept. 8/23 – Oct. 5/23: **N/A**
- c) The following alteration request(s) require Board approval: **N/A**

**7) Old Business**

None

**8) New Business**

**a) Statutory Holiday pay for administration staff**

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sonoma Pines Board of Directors approved to pay statutory holidays to all administrative staff.

Moved by: J. Burkinshaw    Seconded by: D. Reid    Carried with all in favor.

**b) SP Board Chair position transition**

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sonoma Pines Board of Directors accepted the nomination of David Reid as Chair of the Sonoma Pines Board effective Oct. 11/23

Moved: J. Burkinshaw    Seconded by: Tom McEwan    Carried with all in favor.

Randy Benson is resigning from the Board.

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that Sonoma Pines Board of Directors accepted Randy Benson's resignation, effective October 11, 2023.

Moved by: D. Reid    Seconded by: T. McEwan    Carried with all in favor.

**c) Communication to Residents After Office Hours**

The Board recommended that a “call out list” be put together and distributed to Board members. This is to ensure there is a means of contacting personnel should an emergency notification need to be sent out after office hours, on a weekend or a statutory holiday. Instructions for sending out mass emails with “BCC” to be clearly written.

**Motion: BE IT RESOLVED** that the Sonoma Pines Board of Directors approved this process.

Moved by: J. Burkinshaw    Seconded by: D. Reid    Carried with all in favor.

**9) In-Camera Session held from 4:00 – 4:30.**

**10) Next Meeting – November 6, 2023 (3-5 pm)**

**11) Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

**Board Chair Report  
October 11, 2023**

**This will be my final report as board chair for Sonoma Pines. As we all know too well, life sometimes happens in ways we don't expect, and as a result we are forced to adapt and make changes. Such is the case for me. My wife and I will be moving at the end of this month. We have thoroughly enjoyed being part of this community, and we are sad to leave. But we have made many good friends, and hope that by moving "just down the road", we can stay in touch. As board chair, I would like to thank my fellow board members for their hard work and willingness to step up and lead the various volunteer committees that are so important. Their leadership has made it possible for many residents to share in the day to day work that makes this the great community it is. Thank you to the office staff for communicating with me, and for keeping the gears of administration running smoothly. Thanks to our CSC, John Higman, and the maintenance staff for keeping our community maintained and beautiful. And I would also like to thank the community at large for allowing me this opportunity to serve, and for the support that I have felt. I submit my resignation from the board with the assurance that I leave the leadership in good hands, and that Sonoma Pines will continue to thrive and be a great place to live.**

**Respectfully,  
Randy Benson**

## **Treasurer's Report**

September 11, 2023 Board Meeting

Finance Committee members: Don Clark (Vice-chair), Suzanne Larouche (Secretary), Roy Evans, Murray Sadler, Bill Dartnell and Jim Burkinshaw.

The July Financial Statements were reviewed and have been submitted to the SPHM Board for approval.

A complete summary and update of our Contingency Reserve Fund investments has been completed and will be updated on a monthly/quarterly basis.

The Finance Committee has made a number of recommendations to the Board to simplify and clarify our banking arrangements; also to allow for the re-investment of funds in our CRF accounts that have matured or are maturing shortly. These are in the form of proposed motions which will be discussed at today's meeting.

We continue to make progress on variety of issues; a formal Finance Committee Terms of Reference, CRF and Investment policy, Accounting Processes and Controls, Audit inquiries, GST refund, SPHM credit cards, rationalization of RV lot rental rates and a variety of miscellaneous issues.

## Safety and Security Update

### Oct.11/23 Board Meeting

- 1) I have asked our CSC, John, to get quotes on the cost of 2 new handicap parking stalls to service our patio and upper clubhouse areas. One quote will be for the complete job from groundbreaking to finished product, and a second quote where ground prep. and irrigation line relocation would be done by SP resident volunteers.
- 2) Due to ongoing safety concerns, the Board has approved the No Parking Curb Painting next to the crosswalk at the entrance to Solana Place.
- 3) Long weekend upper gate problems were due to both software and hardware issues and should be rectified by Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>. As long as parts are available.
- 4) Those residents that purchased extra fobs this past summer for fire evacuees and summer guests that were staying with them may want to return them to the office and get their refund. All fobs are programmed to open both the car gates and walk through gates along with the clubhouse and gym they also record the residents address whenever they are used. Should you lose or misplace them and they are used for any illegal activity you would be held responsible by the Board.

Report prepared by: Don Porter  
Safety & Security liaison

## Report for October 11, 2023 Board Meeting

Over the last month I have been in contact with Asahi Landscaping over various concerns that have been brought to my attention. I have met with these individuals to address their concerns. I spoke to Evergreen Irrigation today to discuss their process of blowing out the irrigation systems in an attempt to reduce repair costs in the spring. They have assured me they blowout each zone at least twice or more until all water is removed. They also put a notification on your door where the blowout could NOT be completed. When the blowout is complete there will be a new ribbon on the outside valve/piping. Their staff will be wearing vests or other identification.

**IRRIGATION COMMITTEE** – Irrigation committee held a meeting on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023. John reported that blowouts will begin on Oct 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>. Asahi will finish mowing about 10 days after the final blowout.

Chris submitted his irrigation repair report – 404 call outs this year, up from 301 call outs last year. There was an email sent out about checking the inside shutoff valve for irrigation system for single family homes. This was done to try to prevent damage to the irrigation system. This was discussed with Chris prior to being sent out.

The committee is continuing to work on the field infrastructure tagging system of PR (pressure regulator) and BF (backflow) valves.

There are some irrigation clocks that do not have protective boxes covering them. Chris will follow up to purchase some PVC boxes and install them over the clocks.

Mike Wilding has been appointed to the WFN Advisory Board for the Prairie Region which includes Sonoma Pines. Mike has had one meeting already with a second meeting scheduled for October 4<sup>th</sup>, where they will be discussing the water situation. We look forward to having updates from Mike at our future meetings. Congratulations Mike.

Filtration – Evergreen Irrigation was asked to provide a quote for a filtration system on our irrigation lines. The committee felt the cost was too high and we could do this work ourselves. The committee decided that Candalera would be a good test area for this installation – we will install an in-ground box and install an inline strainer this spring for a cost of approximately \$750.00

Concerns were raised about homeowners making alterations to the irrigation system. John to add some wording to the alteration request form that will require irrigation installations to be reviewed prior to backfilling.

Water Conservation – **a.** Discussion on a long-range conservation plan, **b.** Suggestion to meet with the landscape committee at a separate meeting. Willie to bring forward an idea on xeriscape landscaping to the landscape committee for information and possible meeting between the two committees to discuss plantings and water conservation possibilities.

**LANDSCAPE COMMITTEE** – The landscape committee held a meeting on October 10th, 2023. We completed the work on the terms of reference for the committee which will be forwarded to The Board for approval. The committee held a work project on September 22<sup>nd</sup> to deal with more dead plants and shrubs around the clubhouse area. We removed the dead plants, split other plants and replanted to fill in other areas. We started edging and removal of rocks from trees.

The committee continues to work and provide feedback to John our CSC on landscape concerns that he identifies. After the last meeting some of the committee members reviewed a couple of distressed and dead tree issues and provided feedback to John.

We discovered that our approve list of trees and shrubs that are listed on the website are outdated, October 2015, and should be updated. The list of approved perennials, dated May 2018, should also be reviewed at the same time. This will be added to the work list of the committee.

The committee will be having another work project around the clubhouse area on October 21<sup>st</sup>. We will also be doing work at the oval garden on October 27<sup>th</sup>.

The committee continues to look at opportunities to improve the beautification of our community while reducing water consumption, maintenance and water costs. Since this has become a big concern within our community, I have

provided some basic information. You can go to the link below “The 7 Principles of Xeriscape” to see what this landscaping is all about. Within each of these guiding principles there are additional tips and information.

## **THE 7 PRINCIPLES OF XERISCAPE** [How to Xeriscape | Okanagan Xeriscape Association](#)

### **1) PLANNING & DESIGN**

To begin, think about how you would like to use your property and what features it could have. For example, would you like a patio, a big shade tree, a butterfly garden, or a vegetable garden? Where do you need pathways? How much sun is there in different areas? Are there views you want to frame or things you want to hide?

Next, you can make a scale drawing of your property, house and any plants or features that you want to keep. Then try out your ideas using overlays of tracing paper. This will help you envision your finished garden and accurately locate the features you desire, as well as plan the sequence of work.

### **2) SOIL PREPARATION**

Whether you have sandy soil or clay soil, the addition of organic matter such as compost and manure will help your plants to thrive. Organic matter increases moisture retention and feeds your plants naturally.

Spending time and money to create good soil in your garden will ensure healthy plants and save you time and money by greatly reducing maintenance, plant replacement, and water use.

### **3) PRACTICAL TURF AREAS**

Traditional turf grass, as it is commonly maintained, is the most labour-intensive, water-thirsty, chemically-addicted landscaping. Have only as much lawn as you need for activities such as children’s play areas.

Lawn grows best in at least six inches of good soil, with lots of organic matter and good drainage, in a flat location in the sun and away from tree root competition.

Choose a turf grass mix that is suited to the climate. In hard to mow areas, such as slopes, plant low-maintenance, drought-tolerant ground covers instead of lawn.

### **4) EFFICIENT IRRIGATION**

Group plants with similar watering needs in the same irrigation zone. Shaded areas need less water than sunny ones, so they need to be on different zones.

For plants that must have supplemental moisture, water deeply (one inch per watering is recommended) and less often so the water soaks down, causing plant roots to grow deeper where they will be less vulnerable to drought. Be sparing with water in the spring so plants are encouraged to grow longer roots.

In the driest weeks of the summer, one inch of water per week is sufficient for a healthy, mulched vegetable bed or lawn. To find out how long to run your sprinklers, **measure the time it takes to fill the one inch depth of tuna cans as you water in each zone.**

Drip irrigation is the most efficient use of water. Maintain automatic systems, and ADJUST THEM REGULARLY to compensate for seasonal changes and weather. Do not water in the heat of the day.

Make Water Work has an excellent PDF guide with tips on how to [Make Water Work Smarter in Your Yard](#).

### **5) APPROPRIATE PLANT SELECTION**

Each variety of plant has growing requirements for light, moisture and soil that need to be met for it to thrive. To find water-wise plants suited to your garden’s conditions [search our Plant Database](#).

All plants will need watering until they are established. However, if you cannot water, choose plants that are extremely drought-tolerant and plant them in the fall so they can get their roots established before the next summer’s drought.

Creating diversity by using a large variety of plants, will invite beneficial birds and insects into your garden, thereby dramatically reducing pests problems.

Make Water Works has also put together a [Plant Collection](#) PDF with great recommendations for drought-tolerant perennials, shrubs, grasses, and trees. Check out our [Planting Guidelines](#) page for planting instructions and maintenance guidelines.

### **6) MULCHING**

Mulch is like a protective blanket over the soil. It will conserve soil moisture, reduce weed growth, prevent a hard crust from forming on the soil surface, and protect plant roots and the soil from extreme cold and heat. This vital component of xeriscape gardening can be used in any existing landscape. Be sure to weed and water thoroughly before mulching.



Organic mulches such as compost and well-rotted manure also build up the soil and feed plants so that chemical fertilizers are unnecessary.

Rock mulches intensify heat around plants and your home. They make it difficult to weed and clean up fallen plant debris. Weed seeds will grow in the dust that accumulates under the rocks on top of landscape fabric.

## 7) MAINTENANCE

**As with any garden, it is very important to maintain your xeriscape garden, and the tasks are similar. However time and costs will be much reduced compared to conventional landscape maintenance. Here are the common maintenance tasks:**

### WEEDING

When all bare soil is mulched, weed growth will be minimized. Weeds are much easier to pull out of mulched soil. Pull any weeds before they go to seed!

### WATERING

By selecting plants that are suited to the dry climate, mulching all exposed soil, and grouping plants by water needs, watering will be drastically reduced. Over-watering weakens/stresses plants which makes them attractive to pests and diseases, generally creating more work. Adjust automatic water systems with changes in weather and watch for leaks.

### MOWING

If you still have a lawn but have minimized its size, mulched it, refrained from using chemicals on it, watered it less often for longer so it has a deep root system, and used appropriate turf grass species, it will require much less mowing and care.

### FERTILIZING

Organic mulches will slowly feed your plants so their growth will be healthy and sturdy, eliminating the need for chemical fertilizers. Chemical fertilizers tend to cause rapid weak growth, which attracts insects and leads to more maintenance chores such as staking and pruning. Organic mulches will also improve your soil.

### PEST CONTROL

Unhealthy plants are the ones most likely to attract pests. In a xeriscape garden plants are healthy because they are growing in their desired conditions and are not being over-watered or over-fertilized. Pest problems are minimal. Nature can usually take care of them. A garden that has a lot of diversity in the plant material will attract many beneficial insects, creating a natural balance. If you must deal with a pest control issue, use manual or organic methods so that good/predator insects are not killed off.

### PRUNING

When plants are located to allow for growth to mature size and they are not being over-watered or over-fertilized, pruning chores will be minimal. Over-watering and over-fertilizing can both lead to rampant unwanted growth.

Submitted by

Willie Riewe

SPHM Board