



The Town Homes of Townsend Woods

11/06/2025

Townhomes of Townsend Woods Association Meeting Minutes November 3rd, 2025 6:30 pm – 7:37 pm at the Sycamore Public Library

Officers present: Salena Taylor (President), Anastasia Kocher (Vice President), Valerie Myers (Treasurer), and Sally Riccardi (Secretary).

Members Present: 36 in person, 5 on Zoom (that's 40.5% of the association)

The meeting opened with Pledge of Allegiance, followed by roll call of the officers.

Review of Meeting Minutes

Motion made to accept the previous meeting's minutes, motion seconded, motion passed.

*As there were many questions and comments during the meeting, the questions and comments will be listed at the end of these minutes in order to keep it organized. There was also quite a bit of talking happening at the same time. I caught as much as I could, but I likely missed some things. I am sorry for this.

President's Report

- Improvements
 - As the street parking has been getting more and more dangerous, the board members began enforcing "No Street Parking", per the bylaws, to the best of our ability. We began putting notices on cars that were regularly parked in the street. Since we started this, the street parking situation has dramatically improved. We will continue to enforce this bylaw, in order to see continued improvement.
 - Landscaping: We had Green Acres come to clean up the front entrance and remove a dead tree and an extremely overgrown weed. Their quote for the work was significantly less than the landscapers we were contracted with at the time. Which is why we had them do it.
 - After hearing many complaints from unhappy homeowners about the landscaping company we were using (Clausen), we attempted to re-negotiate the contract so Clausen would perform some of the duties homeowners were unhappy about. They refused to re-negotiate the contract. As it was very late in the season, and most landscapers are already booked for the year, we spoke with Green Acres about finishing out the fall and providing snow removal for the winter. We also spoke with our lawyer about our contract with Clausen and terminating it. There was nothing in our contract with Clausen preventing us from terminating the contract early and no early termination fee. Therefore, we voted as a board and the majority ruled in favor of terminating that contract and moving forward with Green Acres for the remainder of this fiscal year.
- Fall/Winter Expectations
 - Green Acres will finish our fall landscaping season, including a fall cleanup. This will entail trimming/pruning bushes, cutting down and removing summer growth/plants, cleaning up the beds, and doing a final mow for the season. Landscaping season concludes on November 15th.
 - Green Acres will also do our snow removal this winter. They will be out plowing (streets and driveways) after 2 inches of snowfall. They will salt the streets but NOT the driveways (the salt eats away at the seal coating and causes faster deterioration of the driveway) or walks. They WILL shovel all walks and front porches.
- Garbage Day Policies
 - You can put your garbage cans out on Sunday evening, not before 5:00 pm.

- Bring your cans back in Monday night by 7:00 pm (or as soon as you are able, but it must be done Monday night).
- At all other times, your cans must be INSIDE your garage. Not in front of the garage, not in your backyard or side yard (for those that have one). They must be INSIDE.
- Notices and Violations
 - Parking Notices: since we began enforcing the No Parking rule, we have placed 14 notices on cars. The issue was resolved each time. Each time those cars stopped parking on the street. So, no violations needed to be sent.
 - The process of issuing warnings and violations comes directly from our bylaws. Here it is:
 - First, we notice a violation or are informed of a violation by a homeowner.
 - Second, we write up a warning letter stating the by-law being violated, the exact violation, and the name/address of the homeowner. In this letter, we give a specific date the violation needs to be rectified by. This date is chosen on a case-by-case basis based on how long we think it should take to fix the violation, generally between 2-10 days.
 - Third, if rectified by the date, no further action is needed. If NOT rectified by the date, the homeowner receives another letter, this time it states that they are in violation, and they have a given amount of time (usually a few days to a week) to request a meeting with the board to present their case (if they do not believe they are in violation). This letter also lets them know that if we do not hear from them by this new date, they will begin incurring daily fines for the violation until it is rectified.
 - Fourth, if we do not hear from them, they begin incurring daily fines for the violation.
 - If at any point in this process the violation is rectified, and then happens again later, we must legally start the process again from the beginning.
 - This process is the law. This is how we, as a board, are allowed to enforce the bylaws.
- Contacting the Board
 - Please reach out to us whenever you have a question, a concern, or anything at all. You may do so by calling one of the board members (contact info is listed at the end of this document), emailing the board at thtwboard@yahoo.com, or using the contact us form on the website: www.thtwassociation.com
 - If you call us and we don't answer, leave a detailed message. We will get back to you as soon as possible.
 - If you email us and you don't hear back after 2 days, please send a follow up email.
 - When contacting us to report a specific violation, please be as thorough as possible. Give us as many details as you can. Names, addresses, locations, what the violation is, even a photo is helpful.
- Next 2 HOA meetings are scheduled for
 - Wednesday, January 28th, 2026 @ 6:30 pm
 - Monday, April 13th, 2026 @ 6:30 pm
 - Location to be determined.

Treasurer's Report

- Valerie provided attending homeowners with a detailed financial statement.
- The first page showed all of the money out (checks written) for this fiscal year which began April 1st, 2025. There is a new column at the far right identified as "category" to help homeowners understand which budget category each check fell into.

- For this year's budget thus far:
 - We are slightly over on lawncare and snow removal due to the change in companies mid-season and the removal of a dead tree (the tree was dying due to a fire, and the cost of removal will be reimbursed to us by the homeowner) and the removal of an extremely overgrown weed.
 - The retainer fee for the lawyer is \$5,411.
 - We had to have a few driveways seal coated this year because they were starting to crumble. This was brought to our attention at the last meeting in July. Board members went and physically looked at the driveways in question. They were crumbling and the professional opinion given to us was to seal coat them before winter, which we did. This money was already budgeted under sealcoating, so we came out even in that category.
 - Association insurance went up slightly.
 - Office supplies: There was an increase in the cost of the website that we didn't plan for. This also covers ink for our printer, stamps, envelopes, paper, and mailing labels.
 - Maintenance/Repairs:
 - This covers driveway repairs, lightbulbs, or any other unforeseen issue.
- Proposed Budget (for fiscal year beginning 4/1/2026)
 - We need to budget for the audit in the next fiscal year, which was quoted at \$5,000-\$8,000. So, we have budgeted \$10,000 which will cover the audit and our tax accountant fees.
 - Maintenance/Repairs: We've budgeted \$30,000, but we have never actually spent that much. Some things covered in this category include driveway repairs, lightbulbs, sidewalk repairs, gutters, sinkholes and drainage. This coming year we plan to seal coat all driveways (then every other year after that). Driveway repairs will happen on non-sealcoating years. The plan is to alternate each year between seal-coating and driveway repairs.
 - A homeowner inquired about how the order of driveway repairs was decided. The last company we used put together a list based on how bad each driveway was.
 - Contrary to what some homeowners might think, only 1 member of the board has had their driveway repaired. The rest of our homes are very far down on the list.
 - Roofs: We will only be re-roofing 1 building this year.
- Based on the proposed budget and the repairs this aging association needs, we will need to raise dues by \$10 effective 04/01/2026. This brings dues to \$120/month.
- The account balances are listed
- As there are concerns about the existing money, the budget, and the expected income, we would like to remind everyone that this is an aging association. The money that was placed in CDs to grow was put there, knowing one day we'd have to use it. Now is that time. We are using SOME of the money from the CDs to cover the difference while we work on these big projects that need to be done (sealcoating, driveway replacements, roof replacements, etc.). Once these projects are finished, we can stop pulling from the CDs and begin growing them again for the next big project. It is a thin line we're walking between taking care of an older association while not raising the dues to an excessive amount. We will absolutely need to raise dues several times in the coming years, but we're trying to balance between the two things.

Vice President Report

- We are currently researching and collecting bids/estimates from multiple companies for the following services:

- Landscaping/Snow Removal (preferably an all-in-one contract without extra charges based on number of snow events, price per pound salt usage, etc. so our budget can be more accurate)
- Gutter cleaning/repairs
- Sidewalk repairs (not homeowner's porches, these are homeowner responsibility)
- Driveway seal coating

New Business

- Opinion Poll Results:
 - Out of 101 polls that were sent out, 36 were returned. That's 35.6% of the association.
 - Regarding the question about bylaws:
 - 21 said they do not want the bylaws changed at all.
 - 2 said they'd like a few bylaws changed
 - 11 said they'd like all of the bylaws changed.
 - Regarding the question about in-person meetings versus zoom meetings:
 - 20 indicated an interest in in-person meetings
 - 16 indicated they prefer zoom meetings.
 - As this was just a poll to find out opinions of homeowners and not a vote for or against anything, nothing will be done to the bylaws at this time. This was not a definitive answer as to whether the bylaws should be changed or not. It did give all of us, the board and the homeowners, an idea of how many people in the association are even willing to respond to communication from the board.
- Trustee Position:
 - Only one homeowner filled out the poll with their information as being interested in joining the board. As was stated in the poll, since there was only one interested homeowner, there was no need for a ballot/election. That homeowner was Fred Taillon. He will be interim trustee from November 3rd (today) until the end of the term (March 31st).
 - Please join us in welcoming Fred Taillon to the board. He is excited to help make this neighborhood better.

Open session

- Concerns were raised about how to make sure renters in the association are following the rules.
 - Someone suggested we allow them to come to meetings and make the bylaws available to them on Facebook.
 - The board believes that homeowners are responsible for their renters. When the renters violate the bylaws, the homeowner is sent the letter and issued the fines. This should be enough to encourage them to make sure their renters are following our bylaws. The bylaws are available to everyone on our website, which is free to use, open to the public, and doesn't require an account (such as Facebook).
- A few homeowners had concerns about being fined for their garbage cans being out past the 7:00 pm deadline, or the following day when the garbage trucks don't come.
 - We would like to assure everyone that if they just call us and communicate with us what their circumstances are, we are here to help.
- A homeowner had a question about visitors parking on the inner curb of our association and whether they would be fined or not.
 - We would like to assure everyone that the issue is parked cars that never move and cause a safety hazard to the neighborhood. Visitors that are not staying too long will not be given a warning. We are looking for repeat offenders, the ones that are causing the problem. Again, if there are circumstances that we need to know and you are issued a warning, just call us.
- There was quite a bit of discussion/concern regarding the changing of the bylaws.
 - We'd like to be very clear here:

- WE ARE NOT CHANGING THE BYLAWS
 - We are not allowed to without 75% of homeowners approving it. Also, they have to approve of the actual changes, not just the idea of changing them.
 - Again, we ARE NOT changing the bylaws.
- Another discussion over the course of the meeting was in regard to Zoom meetings versus in-person meetings.
 - The board heard the homeowners' interest in in-person meetings and we then scheduled our very next meeting for in-person. We have offered in-person meetings for the last year and have never received enough interest from homeowners until now.
 - The meetings were held via zoom for convenience and accessibility. If in-person meetings are still desired by many homeowners, then we will continue to hold them in-person.
- There was a question about snow removal and how in years past, the plows would tear up the grass where they pile the snow. They were wondering if we can allocate a few guest spots to hold the snow instead of the grass in front of homes.
 - A few suggestions were made: plow snow into areas between buildings (that's quite a bit more grass to fix come spring), plow snow into retention pond areas (this costs an extra \$1,000 at least, per occurrence), ask the plow company to fix the damage at the end of winter (since it's the same as the landscaping company).
 - Another homeowner stated that they asked us to do this last year and we didn't.
 - Last year, we didn't notice the damage until we had already fired that company. They were not going to come back and fix it. If we stay with the same company, they will fix it, which they always have in the past.
- Regarding the new quotes that Anastasia is collecting, a homeowner wanted to know if they would have access to these quotes BEFORE the board votes on them, so the board can hear the opinions of the homeowners.
 - This is something the board has not thought of before. We will see what we can come up with. Many times, we have short deadlines to make decisions or the quote changes. So, it just depends on a few things. We will definitely take this idea into consideration and see what we can do.
- Homeowners would like current contracts to be accessible to all homeowners. Perhaps posted on the website. Another homeowner offered to help Anastasia find local businesses for the quotes she's looking for.

BUDGET

The proposed budget for the next fiscal year (beginning 4/1/2026) was discussed at length. Due to the level of simultaneous discussion, an official vote could not be conducted. Therefore, we will take this vote at the next meeting on Wednesday, January 28th, 2026. We hope this will not only give homeowners more time to review the budget but also give board members time to make some changes to the budget based on feedback from the homeowners. We are open to any and all ideas. Please reach out to us with any suggestions.

Motion made to adjourn, motion was seconded and meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.

Salena Taylor <i>President</i> 331.240.9171	Anastasia Kocher <i>Vice President</i> 815.501.0167	Valerie Myers <i>Treasurer</i> 815.899.0120	Sally Riccardi <i>Secretary</i> 630.387.9381	Fred Taillon <i>Trustee</i> 847.721.6839
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