

Whiting Station Board of Trustees Annual HOA Meeting

Station Hall Ballroom – October 7, 2024

(Pending formal Board approval at the next Board of Trustees meeting on October 15, 2024)

(To receive a Zoom invitation: register at “Resident Connection” on www.whitingstationcommunity.org under the Homeowners Association tab and follow the instructions)

Board Members Present: Mickey Ribera, President; Carney Siciliano, Vice President; Joe Hearon, Treasurer; Jon Michalski, Secretary; Trustees: Ralph Ruggiero, Barbara Hubbard, Jim Farley

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING called to order at 7:03 PM

Initial Comments: *Mickey Ribera*

This being our Annual Meeting, Mickey recounted some significant activities and projects accomplished during the past year:

- Proposal, vote, and passage of an Amendment to our Covenants placing restrictions on home ownership and rental properties
- Completion of our new Multi Game Court area
- Ongoing roadway sealcoating
- Addressing critical pool repair issues
- Completion of irrigation system upgrades
- Election of new Trustees

Approval of previous meeting minutes: All Board members previously reviewed the draft minutes for September 17th BOT meeting. With no discussion, Mickey filed a motion to approve these minutes; second by Ralph; all approved.

Treasurer’s Report: *Joe Hearon*

Joe highlighted the significant efforts our Budget Committee members contributed to analyzing and proposing the 2025 Budget.

Despite encountering some unexpected expenses in 2024, overall, we are doing well with finance operations and noting that additional assessments were not necessary to fund the expenses for needed work.

Joe reiterated a previous recommendation for homeowners to utilize their banks’ bill pay services to submit monthly HOA fees. There is typically no charge to set up, and it ensures your payments will be submitted on time.

Bus: *Jon Michalski*

Regular bus operations continue to run smoothly. Our dedicated volunteers, Joan Forgione and Lou Ann Breaks, have done a great job planning, scheduling, and coordinating many enjoyable lunch, shopping, and points of interest trips all throughout the year that

supplement our regular schedule of local shopping trips each week.

Our bus driver, Lori, continues to serve our community well, providing safe travel, and courteous and friendly assistance for our residents. In addition, Lori has scheduled and coordinated taking the bus for all required routine maintenance services, recall campaigns, and required motor vehicle inspections, all of which are currently up to date.

Lawncare/Snow: *Barbara Hubbard*

Snow – We had minimal if any snow this past winter. The good news is we only used about 20% of the budgeted funds so we had little to recoup for the 2025 budget.

Lawncare – This year’s lawn season was hot and dry which resulted in new seeding not taking healthy root (unless homeowners significantly supplemented their lawn watering). The number of resident complaints this year was typical and generally consisted of issues that are seasonally dependent:

Most complaints in the early spring season were related to mowers marring lawns. Barbara noticed that most of the damage was caused by soft and overly moist ground (which occurs mostly in the spring months). Most of the time, this significant soil softness and moisture occurs when there is an overabundance of trees with very low hanging branches. The low branches create excessive shade and, most importantly, a lack of proper light and air space. The ground does not get a chance to dry between rains. To correct this, Barbara recommends trimming all trees so that hanging branches are at least 20-25 feet above ground. This helps provide at least light (not direct sun) and air space so that the ground can dry up a bit. We are proud of our neighborhood and the number of trees we have. However, they need to be groomed and maintained to maintain a healthy lawn.

Later in the season (once the tree pollen started falling), most complaints were concerning the blower clearing of patios. Residents complained that they saw their neighbors’ patios being blown off while the workers left their patios with debris. Barbara raised this issue with the Turfmasters manager. Apparently, when the HOA Board approved a three-year contract with Turfmasters in 2022 (for the 2023, 2024, and 2025 seasons), in an effort to minimize excessive cost increases, several lawn services were deleted

from this contract. Services removed included the blowing from flower beds around homes (during spring and fall cleanup) and the weekly blowing of rear patios or low-lying decks. Turfmasters will blow the patios and sidewalks if grass clippings are left; however, the thorough blow cleaning was no longer a contracted weekly service. Some workers were still blowing patios simply because all other communities they service still include this service and they would forget. As a result of all complaints, Barbara revised the 2025 contract (at an added cost to our budget) to include the blowing of flower beds around homes and the weekly blowing of walkways, driveways and rear patios. Residents should note that, due to many people leaving decorations on their front porches during lawn services, Turfmasters will no longer (readily) blow our front porches.

An additional important note on the cost of lawn services: there will eventually be another cost increase in lawn services due to a new directive from the Ocean County Department of Public Works, which no longer allows lawn contractors to dispose of grass clippings, branches or leaves at our county recycling centers (even though the material is coming from a Manchester community). This new directive will have a serious cost increase on all lawn service providers, which will ultimately have an impact on our community's cost of service. Turfmasters did not add this cost increase to our 2025 contract; however, we should anticipate this cost increase in future service contracts.

Looking ahead, Manchester Township will be conducting a special pickup of leaves and brush on Tuesday, November 5th. Please use this opportunity to dispose of any branches, small brush and leaves. All items must be placed on our main roads (not fingers) in neat, consolidated lines on the roadway edges, with leaves separate from neatly piled branches, each no longer than 4 feet in length. Brush or branches mixed with leaves will NOT be picked up.

Architectural: *Carney Siciliano*

As a recap of the year, Carney stated that during 2024 there were 135 applications processed, with 126 (93%) approved, 5 (3.7%) denied, and 3 pending for spring.

Work accomplished during 2024 included:

- Overall street lighting was improved
- Resealing of Morning Glory Lane went smoothly
- All quarterly basin inspections were completed in compliance with DEP requirements
- Basin #2 tree removal maintenance completed
- New recreation walkway work completed

- Maintained focus on unsafe/dying trees within common grounds, removing high risk trees

Work in progress includes:

- Repaving of Finger #35 damage from 101 MGL water line break
- Although the County Engineer imposed additional drawing requirements for the Schoolhouse Road sidewalk project, it is still expected to be completed in October
- Clubhouse parking lot perimeter tree replacement proposal is on hold for HOA, pending submission to Manchester Township Zoning Office for Tree Code compliance (a slow process)

Opportunities ahead include ongoing painting of First Energy electrical boxes and the next phase of roadway sealcoating.

Carney appreciates the opportunity to serve our community the past two years and thanked his team, Ed, Larry, and Mike, along with Board members, for supporting him throughout his time as Trustee.

Clubhouse & Pool: *Ralph Ruggiero*

Some accomplishments to highlight from 2024:

- New refrigerator
- Repairs to metal roof area
- Refinishing of dance floor and stage floor
- New security camera system
- New computer system
- Replacement of pool house roof
- Major pool leak repairs (completed with only one week delay to pool opening)
- New pool area furniture

During Dave's absence due to health issues, we are currently using contract cleaning and maintenance services. We wish Dave well and anticipate him returning as soon as he is able.

Looking ahead, next Spring our pool will need resurfacing to complete the restoration following the emergency repairs performed earlier this year.

Irrigation: *Jim Farley*

Well 3 controller was replaced with a unit that can phase into a smart irrigation system down the road.

Jim adjusted sprinkler schedules to optimize start times and zone run times for cooler weather operation. He will post revised schedules.

Winterizing of system will be performed on or about November 1st.

Jim has been in discussion with Jersey Shore Sprinklers about building in more time to perform a more thorough and detailed evaluation of sprinkler heads performance for each property and zone when they start up the system next Spring.

Residents Club: Deb Cassens.

Debbie highlighted the bagel bash, two karaoke nights, and Labor Day party event as some of the special events this past year. A special thanks to Carney Siciliano and his band for the pool party entertainment!

Coming up on November 2nd is the Annual Craft Fair. We need lots of baking volunteers to provide items we can sell at the event. This is a significant fund-raising source for the Residents Club each year, so an abundance of participation is very much appreciated!

Member Q&A

(RD—23 MGL) expressed thanks to the Board of Trustees for the efforts to maintain and improve our community, stating that we have the best streets, clubhouse and pool among all other communities in the area.

(MS—311 GD) reiterated prior inquiries about electrical [junction/distribution] boxes still in need of repainting, stating that they have not had any responses from JCP&L inquiries. Carney responded that homeowners must ask First Energy to open a “maintain facilities ticket” for box to be repainted. Mike Madorma added that the NJ Board of Public Utilities is the liaison for all utilities-related issues throughout the state, and the BPU is a resource for resolving matters such as this.

(AB—528 PLN) expressed concern about vehicles not observing the posted speed limit on Lacey Rd, asking what can be done. Mickey indicated that it is a lengthy process with the county to request and conduct monitoring, traffic studies and approvals for any kind of intersection modifications. Some things observed elsewhere would be higher visibility speed limit signs, or strobing pedestrian crossing signs.

(MM—96 MGL) requested that the pre-emergent [crabgrass] application next Spring be scheduled earlier in the season, as last year it was performed much later in the Spring than best practices indicate. Barbara will discuss the Spring schedule with Turfmasters.

Also, regarding lawncare, it seems that pesticide flags marking every residence following application typically remain there for an excessively long time. Can they be picked up (for possible re-use) prior to the next scheduled lawn mowing? Barbara responded that homeowners may remove the flags themselves but will mention to Turfmasters.

Election Results for 2025 Board: Lynne Sweezo

Lynne explained the process, which began back in August. It involved a team of volunteers who printed,

prepared, and mailed the ballots listing four candidate names. This was followed by a ‘Meet the Candidates’ event scheduled early in the cycle where floor nominations resulted in three additional candidates. Two hundred valid ballots were cast, with seven Trustee appointments as follows:

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Votes</i>
Jim Farley	193
Joe Hearon	195
Jon Michalski	197
Jacki Scampato	129
Barbara Hubbard	161
Russ Krischik	126
Mike Madorma	127

There were also 9 other write-in candidates, each with insufficient votes to elect.

Special thanks to our volunteer Tellers, Lou Ann Breaks, Maggi Knapik, Janet Sawyer, and Kathy Webb; our Judge of Elections, Joan Forgione; and our Election Committee Chair, Lynne Sweezo!

Mickey introduced the newly elected 2025 Board Members who will be seated on January 1st, 2025. The interim time will be one of transition and mentoring. New members must meet within 10 days to determine Board Officers for the next term.

The Board and homeowners attending recognized the dedication and valuable contributions of Carney, Ralph and Mickey, who will be leaving the Board at the end of this term.

Adjourn Being no further business or discussion, Mickey filed a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe seconded, all approved. Meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM

Next Regular Meeting and Open Forum: Tuesday, October 15, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Clubhouse.

*Respectfully submitted by
Jon Michalski, Secretary*