

**Royal Pines Country Club Estates, Inc.**  
**Homeowners Association Annual Meeting**  
**March 7, 2017**

With a quorum being present, President Michael Johns called the Annual Meeting of the Royal Pines Homeowners Association to order at 6:35pm on March 7, 2017. He thanked Jeff Fischer for opening the Tavern for the meeting.

President Michael introduced Paul Sommerville, District 2, Beaufort County Council Member. President Michael thanked Mr. Sommerville for his work in helping with the Hurricane Matthew clean-up.

Mr. Sommerville thanked Royal Pines for having a board that reached out to him when it came to getting help for the clean-up. Royal Pines is unique in that most of our roads are state roads which qualified us for FEMA help. He then explained how he went about getting help for Beaufort County in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. He is still working on getting marine debris removed, which takes more time because they must try to locate the boat owners. The county had to dip into the reserve fund to pay some of the cost. They are now lobbying at the state level to seek more help with the enormous cost of clean-up. Mr. Sommerville commented that county taxes will probably need to be raised to help rebuild the necessary reserves. They are also looking at what needs to be done to upgrade our storm drainage issues. After a brief question and answer period that included questions regarding the convenience centers, smell at the Mitchell dump, and other refuse issues, Mr. Sommerville gave out his cell number, thanked the association for allowing him to address the meeting, and agreed to remain in the lobby for short time if anyone had further questions.

President Michael thanked Mr. Sommerville for the information he shared.

**Looking Back:**

President Michael gave a report on what has been accomplished over the last year:

1. Membership continues to grow each year. We are now up to about a third of the total ownership.
2. The following is a list of the community activities that the HOA was involved in:
  - Second Annual Armed Forces Recognition
  - Meet Santa
  - Easter Bunny
  - Christmas Caroling
  - Yard Sale
  - AARP Safe Driving Course
  - Second year of the Royal Pines Times Newsletter (volunteers needed for delivery)
1. General Improvements and Maintenance
  - New plantings at the entrance and hiring a regular maintenance individual
  - Split-rail fencing along the boulevard medium to deter those who would drive across the medium
  - Mowing the common areas
  - ARB issues to help with the general appearance of our community. We are still seeing covenant violations but fewer than in the past because many are headed off by the ARB before they happen.
1. Website update – President Michael asked Bill Farrar to speak about the Website. Bill commented that several weeks ago he took over keeping the site updated and he is trying to make it a more integrated site: calendar of events, current newsletter, and board meeting minutes. Anyone is welcome to send him articles and information that is positive and relevant to Royal Pines. The HOA website is not the proper forum for airing negative issues and will not be used for this purpose.
2. ARB – Bob Kiessling commented that fifty-eight projects were approved this past year. The most common were fences, tree removal, sheds, and garages. Five new home starts were also approved, as well as some patios. We currently have two active lawsuits in progress, one fence and one structure (which were not commented on because they are ongoing legal cases). The board is obligated by the Covenants to enforce the Covenants, By-Laws and ARB regulations. Bob commented that he meets regularly with the county to

check on building permits and the county is now working with the HOA on making sure residents who come in for building permits also have HOA approval.

3. We now have a Welcome Wagon box that is being delivered to new residents. The box includes:
  - Gift coupon for the Tavern and other local businesses
  - Introduction to the HOA
  - Copy of the covenants – letting them know that the covenants are being enforced
  - Copies of recent Royal Pines Times
  - Information about the Garden Club, common covenant issues, membership application
1. Yearly Financial Report – Treasurer Dorothy Hodges made available a copy of the 2016 year-end report to compare to the 2015 year-end report.
2. President Michael commented that several civil matters regularly come up over which the HOA has little or no authority: lost dogs, speeders, children driving golf carts unsafely, and street lights. Michael suggested that the best and most timely way to deal with these issues is to call the appropriate enforcement authority immediately (police department, SCE&G).

### **Looking forward**

1. The board requested an annual dues increase starting in 2018. If enacted, the new fee will be \$85.00 per year. The HOA board will vote on this at the next board meeting.
2. Covenant Issues – one of the main issues is with Covenant #17 dealing with trailers. It has been agreed upon over decades that this is a boating community and people have been looking the other way when it comes to trailers. We are now dealing with large motor homes which are self-driving and not on trailers. Therefore they are not addressed in the covenants. After a board discussion it was decided that we would make homeowners/renters aware of the fact that campers on trailers are not allowed to be stored in Royal Pines, as per Covenant #17. Homeowners will be informed that they may request a variance which will not be unduly denied where adjustments can be made so that they correspond with county rules: the vehicle must be stored in the rear or interior side setback behind the front of the building, garage, or carport. President Michael mentioned that realtors have made comments regarding how homes with prominent trailers are deterring from the overall street scape of the community.
3. ARB Guidelines and the Covenants – they do not always compliment each other. The board will be working on this matter this year. Article 1, section 5 and 6, of the By-Laws lays the groundwork for strengthening the ARB Guidelines.
4. Increased awareness of community expectations with more Newsletter coverage promoting good behavior in the community.

### **Voting**

President Michael commented that we still need a secretary. He opened the floor for nominations. President Michael thanked those that are rotating off the board, which include Michael Johns – President, Trisha Vanderspiegel – Secretary, and Al Vanderspiegel – At-Large. Returning members are Dorothy Hodges – Treasurer, Zofia Prather – At-Large, Bob Kiessling, - ARB, and Bob Hilsen – At-Large.

### **Slate of Nominees:**

**President:** Melissa Klingenberg

**Vice-President:** Karen Hardy

**Secretary:** ---

**At-Large Members:** Harvey Taylor, Gwen Taylor,

President Michael opened the floor for any other nomination. After a few minutes Jeff Fischer moved that the nominations be closed and that the proposed slate of officers be approved. Motion seconded and all approved.

### **Questions and Comments**

President Michael opened the floor for questions and comments:

1. Regarding the financial statement: Why was there such a large difference in the membership deposits between 2015 and 2016? Dorothy explained that the previous treasurer used a program that has a substantial cost each time a new treasurer is elected. She has changed this to an Excel program that anyone will be able to use. She was not able to transfer any of the previous treasurer's data over. Michael also commented that in past years the deposits included not only dues but ARB fees and there was no way to know which went where.
2. There are more fences being erected that do not meet with the original guidelines. President Michael commented that they are doing what they can but need more volunteers to help keep up with the fences.
3. When will the post-hurricane tree moratorium end? President Michael said that it had ended. The tree-removal application is simple and there is no cost. He recommends that anyone seeking to have trees removed should contact the HOA before they contact the Tree Service. Jeff Fisher, owner of the golf course, reminded attendees that if service people need to drive on the golf course to access their property, they need to call him first. Both courses are private property and he has buried sprinkle system that could be damaged if driven over. (As has happened in the past.)
4. Finish clearing Hurricane Matthew debris from the boulevard. This will have to be something that is discussed in the next board meeting.
5. One attendee wanted to share a fire department phone number with the group. She has a friend in the community whose husband is in a wheel chair and would on occasion fall out of the chair. The fire department came out and helped lift the patient back into his chair. It is classified as a non-emergency but they are glad to help. The HOA member wanted to share this information with the community.
6. Will there be more fencing added to the boulevard? Yes, the board has approved spending up to \$600.00 to add additional fencing.
7. There are two lots on Wade Hampton where building was started but then stopped. The builder left debris and a porta-potty. President Michael commented that they have tried to contact the builder, John Sanford, without success. Mr. Sanford was sent certified letters to multiple addresses but they came back. President Michael finally contacted the builder's brother, US Representative, Mark Sanford in Washington, DC. The Congressman graciously agreed to look into the matter and it was subsequently addressed. Bob Kiessling commented that when you apply for a building permit with the HOA it is only good for one year. These lots are beyond a year and the builder will need to reapply for an HOA permit. He will be informed that he will be under more scrutiny if he starts to build and conditions will be attached.
8. Concerns about Hurricane Matthew debris. President Michael commented that FEMA is through picking up in Royal Pines. There were problems with people putting out fresh debris that had nothing to do with the hurricane. Everything that is now left is the homeowner's responsibility. There will be a notice put in the Newsletter.
9. What about the vacant house on Royal Pines Boulevard? The HOA will have to look into this. It may end up that the HOA has to pay for debris removal. (Update: The debris was removed by the renters several days after the annual meeting.)

There were no more questions from the floor. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully,  
Trisha Vanderspiegel