

Rustic Ridge Association

Board Meeting

Saturday, July 6, 2019, 9:47 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

4 West Lane, Northfield

Attendance – Margie Conner, Lucy and Phil Livingston, Bill Young, Doug Denice, Martha Schoonover. Barbara Walker, Lillian Young, Doug Southard by phone.

Minutes – Minutes of the January 2019 Board meeting by teleconference were approved without amendment.

Budget - Doug reviewed the state of the Ridge Finances, pointing out that dues income is slightly behind budget but that contributions were slightly ahead. We have not received invoices for several key items and activities, so expenses are also below budget. Additional invoices should come in shortly, particularly for road work and Lucy, as Roads Co-Chair said she expects the entire \$6,000 road budget to be utilized and possibly slightly more. Margie cautioned that we might also have higher costs for Ridge Sunday this year, but the social budget will probably cover all or most of this. Cash on hand is healthy and should be able to handle slight overages. There was general agreement that Associate members who have not paid this year's dues should be kept on the rolls until we are sure they don't want to rejoin.

Doug's spreadsheet is attached.

Nominating Committee – Martha Schoonover listed a number of people she was screening for possible Board positions next year. She will follow up with the individuals and with Charlotte Martin.

Road Committee – Steve Wiggin has handed responsibility for the Ridge business to his son, Seth, and he has been very responsive to our requests for estimates and quick action. A summary of completed, planned and proposed work is attached on the Road Committee Report. Lucy and Phil will have an estimate for 2019-2020 work to the treasurer shortly.

East Northfield Water Company (ENWC) – A summary of the ENWC financial crisis was presented by Margie Conner and discussed broadly within the group. (Copy attached). It was agreed that the crisis would be discussed at the Annual meeting but that we would not invite ENWC personnel to present. The Board agreed we are unlikely to significantly influence the outcome of the crisis, but we could encourage members to communicate with government officials if they are inclined. Margie will provide a list of resources for folks to write to with their appeals- government, etc. and distribute that with the report. We will ask Town Representative Heather Tower to keep us apprised of developments, particularly of Town-based efforts that the Ridge might be able to cooperate with. Fortunately, we are not in danger to losing access to potable water from

this crisis. ENWC is subject to Public Utility requirements to maintain service even though it is a private company, owned and controlled by NMH.

Diversity Statement – The proposed Diversity Statement was discussed and unanimously approved with one minor change. The statement reads:

“The Rustic Ridge Association strives to be a community open to all people. We recognize that our future strength rests on our commitment to value, respect and embrace the richness of a diverse and inclusive neighborhood.”

The Statement will be presented at the Annual meeting for affirmation by the Ridge Association members after which it will be added to the Ridge Website.

Annual Meeting – The Board discussed the use of fire pits within the Ridge and Margie reported that the Fire Department knows of no town or state laws against the use of fire pits. It was agreed that we would invite the Fire Department official to address the Annual meeting about fire safety and fire pits in particular. We ask members to be sensitive to the extreme volatility of cottages and the intrusive impact of smoke when so many of us keep windows open 24 hours a day.

Adjourn – A motion to adjourn was seconded and unanimously approved at approximately 11:30.

Attachment 1

East Northfield Water Co. Update July 6, 2019

The following is a brief summary of the most recent East Northfield Water Company (ENWC) meeting held on June 25th at Town Hall. Approximately 50 people were in attendance. Six Ridge members were there: Carolee Ziegenhagen, Charlotte Martin, Warren and Mary Snyder and Doug and Margie Conner.

First, there are documents pertaining to the ENWC's financial status available on the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) website. Doug Denise has sent around some other useful documents. In order to break even and remain solvent for a "couple of years", the ENWC is applying through the DPU for a 70% rate hike in 2020 and a 40% rate hike on top of that in 2021. This will not ameliorate their \$900,000 debt which has accumulated over the years since NMH left the Northfield campus and they were awaiting a buyer who would restore the number of users. The Moody Center and Thomas Aquinas will not replace those numbers. Currently there are about 300 users.

Important: The Ridge pays a higher seasonal rate than the year-round residents as the ENWC needs to turn on and off the two meters through which our water comes to us, drain the pipes in the fall, and make any repairs to the pipes.

John Alden, the president of the ENWC, had very few answers to the many questions raised. He asked us to contact any government agencies or representatives who might help with the debt and the increases but provided us with no specific officials or agencies to address. Attendees were very disappointed, and some are starting their own local action groups. Also, there is a widespread disdain for NMH for having left the water company in this condition. Apparently, there are no prospective buyers at this point, including the Northfield Water Company and there are many other local water companies that are in the same boat,

The Good News

If ENWC goes bankrupt, the water will still keep running because it is considered a public utility. Here are some things we can do: repair any leaky pipes, dripping faucets and running toilets. Among our five family cottages on West Lane, we each experienced one or more of these issues as we opened up this year. If you water your lawn/garden, reduce your usage. Conserve water in general. Keep an eye out for leaking pipes around your cottage and report them to either Lucy/Phil Livingston or me. Remember: the volume of water used by the entire Ridge is split among all of us.

Note: The majority of the board said we should not invite an ENWC representative to the annual meeting because we could easily get sidetracked. After listening to the reps last Tuesday, I agree.

I think we are best served by handing out a list of important numbers/email addresses at the annual meeting so members can register their opposition to these rate increases. I will be glad to start working on that and perhaps others could join me. This problem is not going to be solved by the Ridge, but perhaps we can add our voices. We will discuss this further at our meeting on Saturday.

Attachment 2

**July 6, 2019
Road Committee Report
Lucy and Phil Livingston**

**2018-2019 Road Budget \$6,000
2018-2019 Trimming and cleaning \$700**

1. Completed Road work

- a) Culverts cleaned in the fall 2018
- b) \$850 Blacktop swale on Wood Way by Hanrahan and open blocked culvert
- c) \$350 Spring Lane swale/ditch deepened and cleared at North Lane junction
- d) \$1300 Willows replace broken culvert (done) and repave (pending).

2. Planned this summer

- \$1700 West Lane macadam repair to cover root heaves
- \$1200 Pine Road add macadam to prevent water flow into Sherburne's lot

3.. Expenditures to date \$5400

2018-2019 Trimming and cleaning budget \$700

- Completed May 2019 spring road sweep -no estimate
- Brush cut sides of Willows- planned, no estimate

Proposed for 2019-2020

Roads

- Culvert cleaning, bi-annual \$1200
- Repair top of Willows with macadam
- Fill potholes on Oak Terrace, Wood Way and other

Trimming/Cleaning

- Spring cleaning
- Brush cut sides of roads

Attachment 3

dtd: 7/2/19

**Rustic Ridge Association
2018-19 Budget**

2018 - 2019

Date 07/02/2019

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2018-2019
	Final	Actual to date	Budget
Starting Cash Balance -August 1	\$18,463	\$21,582	\$21,582
Revenues	\$12,491	\$12,221	\$12,606
Dues - Members	\$9,150	\$8,700	\$9,000
Dues - Associates	\$1,400	\$1,240	\$1,600
Interest	\$6	\$6	\$6
Donations - 5 Acre		\$0	
Donations	\$1,935	\$2,275	\$2,000
Expenses	\$9,372	\$3,498	\$12,648
Brush Removal (annual)	\$0	\$0	\$400
Community Contribution	\$900	\$900	\$900
Five Acre Property	\$1,038	\$73	\$400
Flower Garden	\$0	\$55	\$250
Insurance	\$943	\$943	\$943
Meetings	\$0	\$125	\$200
Misc - memorium Books	\$0	\$65	\$100
Postage and Printing	\$0	\$0	\$35
Road (Maintenance)	\$4,140	\$0	\$6,000
Road(Trimming and Cleaning)	\$90	\$0	\$700
Security	\$200	\$0	\$200
Signs	\$0	\$0	\$50
Social Events	\$361	\$122	\$450
State Corporation Tax	\$0	\$15	\$20
Trash	\$1,600	\$1,200	\$1,600
Town Ridge/Laison	\$100	\$0	\$100
Youth Activities	\$0	\$0	\$200
Web Site	\$0	\$0	\$100
Ending Cash	\$21,582	\$30,306	\$21,540