

Minutes  
Board of Directors  
GHI Regular Open Session  
September 19, 2019

Board Members Present: Brodd, Hess, Holland, James, Jones, Ready, Skolnik and Socrates

Excused Absences: Watkins

Others in Attendance

Eldon Ralph, General Manager

Joe Wiehagen, Director of Homes Improvement Program

Bruce Mangum, Contract Processing

Carol Griffith, Audit Committee Member

Henry Haslinger

Barbara Dobyns

William Gutwein

Sabrina Baron

Ken Shields

Micheal Zelegy

Jenny Moser Jurling

Tamara James, Recording Secretary

President Skolnik called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda

**Motion: The Board of Directors does approve the agenda.**

Moved: Hess

Seconded: Jones

Carried: 8-0

2. Announcement of Executive Session Meetings:

2a. Announcement of Executive Session Meeting Held on September 5, 2019

GHI's Board of Directors held an Executive Session on September 5, 2019 in the Board Room of the Administration Building. Board members Stefan Brodd, Stephen Holland, Ed James, Bill Jones, Sue Ready, Anna Socrates, Steve Skolnik, Chuck Hess, Tami Watkins and Audit Committee members Joyce Campbell, Carol Griffith and Lindsay McAndrew attended the meeting.

The following motion to call this meeting was made during a prior open meeting earlier that evening and approved by Board members Stefan Brodd, Stephen Holland, Ed James, Bill Jones, Sue Ready, Anna Socrates and Steve Skolnik.

**Motion: I move that the Board of Directors adjourn this open meeting for the purpose of conducting a closed meeting to discuss the following agenda items, as authorized by the pertinent sub-paragraphs of the Maryland Cooperative Housing Act § 5-6B-19 (e)(1).**

Agenda item	Sub-paragraph of § 5-6B-19 (e)(1)
<b>a. Approve Minutes of Executive Session Meeting Held on July 25, 2019</b>	(vii)
<b>b. Approve Minutes of Formal Complaint Hearing Held on July 31, 2019</b>	(vii)
<b>c. Member Financial Matters</b>	(viii)
<b>d. Request by a Potential Member for an Exception to GHI’s Membership Selection Criteria Policy</b>	(iv)
<b>e. Member Request for a Rental Permit</b>	(iv)
<b>f. Consider approval of the following contracts:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contract for Underground Storm Drain Repairs at 13A-H Ridge Road - first reading</b></li> <li>• <b>2020-2022 Custodial Cleaning Contract for the Administration Building – first reading</b></li> <li>• <b>2020-2022 Tree Maintenance Contract</b></li> <li>• <b>2020-2022 Pest Control Contract– first reading</b></li> </ul>	(vi)
<b>g. Member Complaint Matters</b>	(iv)

During the meeting, the Board of Directors accepted a proposal from Brightview Landscapes, to provide tree maintenance services to GHI covering the period January 1 to December 31, 2020, with options of renewal for the years 2021 and 2022. The Board voted to recommend to the membership that it approve the multi-year contract with Brightview Landscapes, during a special membership meeting to be scheduled.

The meeting commenced at 7:00 pm and adjourned at 11:07 pm.

*Authority for the above closed meeting was derived from the Maryland Cooperative Housing Corporation Act, § 5-6B-19 (e)(1)(iv).*

2b. Announcement of Executive Session Meeting Held on September 19, 2019

GHI’s Board of Directors held an Executive Session on September 19, 2019 in the Board Room of the Administration Building. Board members Stefan Brodd, Chuck Hess, Stephen Holland, Ed James, Bill Jones, Sue Ready, Anna Socrates, Steve Skolnik and Audit Committee member Carol Griffith attended the meeting.

The following motion to call this meeting was made during a prior open meeting earlier that evening and approved by Board members Stefan Brodd, Chuck Hess, Stephen Holland, Ed James, Sue Ready, Anna Socrates and Steve Skolnik

**Motion: I move that the Board of Directors adjourn this open meeting for the purpose of conducting a closed meeting to discuss the following agenda items, as authorized by the pertinent sub-paragraphs of the Maryland Cooperative Housing Act § 5-6B-19 (e)(1).**

Agenda item	Sub-paragraph of § 5-6B-19 (e)(1)
<b>a. Approve Minutes of Executive Session Meeting Held on August 15, 2019</b>	<b>(vii)</b>
<b>b. Member Financial Matters</b>	<b>(viii)</b>
<b>c. Request by a Potential Member for an Exception to GHI's Membership Selection Criteria Policy</b>	<b>(iv)</b>
<b>d. Consider approval of the following contracts:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contract for Underground Storm Drain Repairs at 13A-H Ridge Road - second reading</b></li> <li>• <b>2020-2022 Custodial Cleaning Contract for the Administration Building – second reading</b></li> <li>• <b>2020-2022 Pest Control Contract– second reading</b></li> </ul>	<b>(vi)</b>
<b>e. Member Complaint Matter</b>	<b>(iv)</b>
<b>f. A Potential Legal Matter</b>	<b>(iv)</b>

During the meeting, the Board of Directors approved /accepted the following contracts:

1. Approved a contract with B&P Utilities to repair the underground storm main line adjacent to 13A-H Ridge Rd for the following costs:
  - a. “Initial Repair Work” in the vicinity of 13-E Ridge Rd at the contractor’s bid price of \$16,800 plus 10% for contingencies for a total amount not exceeding \$18,480.
  - b. “Balance of Repair Work I” between 13A-E Ridge Rd if necessary, either at the contractor’s unit bid prices shown in d. below for partial pipe replacement, or a bid price of \$ 24,800 for complete pipe replacement plus 10% for contingencies for a total not exceeding \$27,280.

- c. "Balance of Repair Work II" between 13E-H Ridge Rd if necessary, either at the contractor's unit bid prices shown in d. below for partial pipe replacement, or a bid price of \$ 25,800 for complete pipe replacement plus 10% for contingencies for a total not exceeding \$28,380.
- d. Unit Costs for Partial Replacement of Pipes in Balance of Work Phases I and II

Depth of Piping			Yd Drain
6'-8'	8'-11'	11-15'	
\$125.00	\$175.00	\$195.00	\$800.00

2. Approved a 3-year contract with Altro Janitorial & Maintenance Services to provide cleaning services for the GHI administration Building at the following costs:

First year (January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020)	At the company's bid of \$22,880.00 plus 5% for contingencies, for a total not to exceed \$24,024.00
Second year (January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021)	At the company's bid of \$23,795.20 plus 5% for contingencies, for a total not to exceed \$24,984.96
Third year (January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022)	At the company's bid of \$24,509.06 plus 5% for contingencies, for a total not to exceed \$25,734.51

3. Approved a 3-year contract with Atek Pest Management Company to provide pest control services to GHI during January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2022, in accordance with the following price schedule:

Cost of treatment/week for up to 15 units, exclusive of specialty pests	\$220.00
Cost of treatment/week for each building unit over 15 units	\$15.00
Cost per residential unit for resale termite inspection	\$45.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of termites	\$225.00
Cost per garage unit for treatment of termites	\$225.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of carpenter ants	\$125.00
Cost per garage unit for treatment of carpenter ants	\$95.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of carpenter bees	\$75.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of bed bugs per treatment	\$165.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of fleas/ticks	\$55.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of flies	\$55.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of bees/wasps/hornets	\$45.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of lice	\$55.00
Cost per residential unit for treatment of external rodent per bait station	\$4.50

The meeting commenced at 7:01 and adjourned at 7:35 pm.

*Authority for the above closed meeting was derived from the Maryland Cooperative Housing Corporation Act, § 5-6B-19 (e)(1)(iv).*

3. Visitors and Members (Comment Period)

None.

4. Approval of Membership Applications

**Motion: I move that the Board of Directors approve the following persons into the cooperative and membership be afforded them at the time of settlement:**

- **Megan A. Jamiolkowski, Sole Owner;**
- **Leslie R. Strauss, Sole Owner;**
- **LaSalle A. Leak, Sole Owner;**
- **Stacey D. Vitiello, Sole Owner;**
- **Roger F. Clapp, Leslee E. Clapp, Tenants by the Entirety;**
- **Kenneth Haase, Margaret Benefiel, Tenants by the Entirety.**

Moved: James

Seconded: Hess

Carried: 8-0

5. Committee and Homes Improvement Program Reports

**Homes Improvement Program** – Wiehagen reported that:

- Electric 99% completed
- Windows 88% completed
- Attic work 85% completed
- Mini split systems 70% completed
- Siding 76% completed
- Entry doors 58% completed
- Storm Doors 53% completed
- Crawl space cleared for air clearance 100% completed
- Improvements of insulation and fans 44% completed
- Electrification of exhaust fans and lights 54% completed

**Woodlands Committee:** James reported that a public request was made for a caretaker to offer to maintain the “Mystery Garden” at Westway.

**Investment Committee:** Hess reported that the Investment Committee is working on their charter revision to submit to the board.

**Finance Committee:** Hess reported that the Finance Committee went over the various fees and will submit the recommendations for the budget.

**Companion Animal Committee:** Skolnik reported that the Companion Animal Committee is extremely busy.

**Bicycle Committee:** Skolnik read a report submitted by the Bicycle Committee. (Attached to minutes)

**Long Range Planning Committee:** Hess reported that the Long Range Planning Committee met with staff for their input and recommendations.

6. For Action or Discussion

6a. Approve Minutes of Special Open Session Meeting Held on August 15, 2019

**Motion:** I move that the Board of Directors approve the minutes of the Special Open Session Meeting that was held on August 15, 2019 as presented.

Moved: James

Seconded: Jones

Carried: 6-0-2

Abstained: Hess, Skolnik

6b. Approve Minutes of Regular Open Session Meeting Held on August 15, 2019

**Motion:** I move that the Board of Directors approve the minutes of the Regular Open Session Meeting that was held on August 15, 2019 as presented.

Moved: James

Seconded: Jones

Carried: 6-0-2

Abstained: Hess, Skolnik

6c. Companion Animal Committee Report for the Period January to July 2019

Attachment #5 is a semi-annual report from the Companion Animal Committee, regarding its activities during the period January to July 2019.

**Motion:** I move that the Board of Directors accept the report from the Companion Animal Committee, regarding its activities during the period January to July 2019.

Moved: Hess

Seconded: Socrates

Carried: 8-0

6d. Request that GHI Allow Remote Settlements and Unit Rentals Immediately after Settlement of a Unit Re-sale

Attachment #6 is an email from Mr. Fritz Gutwein, the member of 4-H Laurel Hill Rd, who is in the process of selling the membership interest in his unit. Mr. Gutwein is requesting the board to consider the following:

- 1) Change the policy that a GHI unit be vacant at settlement, to allow a seller to be able to negotiate with a buyer to stay a few days past settlement.
- 2) Establish a policy that would enable remote settlements.

GHI's sublease policy does not currently permit rentals of a unit by a new member to a seller for a few days after settlement. Even though the rental may be for a few days, the Board should consider what requirements should apply. For example, under our rental policy, a lessor is required to obtain a City rental license, HO6 insurance, permission from the share loan provider (a requirement of the recognition agreement with the bank) etc. and to sign a lease agreement with the lessee etc.

According to Maryland State law, the buyer selects the settlement attorney. If the seller's attorney does not perform remote settlements, a live person will be required at settlement. Pat McAndrew is the settlement attorney for the sale of the membership interest in 4-H Laurel Hill Rd. Staff spoke to Mr. McAndrew who stated he is not willing to perform remote settlements because of the challenges he has experienced in the past. Below are points Mr. McAndrew expressed which have led him to take this position.

- The absence of a live person is a huge challenge. Real estate transactions involve many pieces; especially transactions involving GHI. Even with significant preparation, last minute changes often occur. If no live representative for the seller is present at settlement, those changes cannot be immediately addressed. Settlement cannot take place and the buyer cannot move in.
- The buyer's lender may require executed documents by the seller (release of perpetual interest). If those documents are not executed according to the lender's requirements, they will not fund the loan for the purchase. Settlement cannot take place and the buyer cannot move in.
- The seller is responsible for executing required documents properly and completely. There was a remote settlement which took place in the past and the local title company (in California) executed settlement documents according to their California state law rather than Maryland state law. The settlement was significantly delayed, and the settlement attorney incurred additional costs chasing down parties to get documents properly executed.
- Items listed as seller's responsibility not completed satisfactorily prior to settlement date may require escrow of funds. Open items may be disputed between the seller and GHI. GHI may be pressured to assume responsibility so the settlement can take place. The GHI membership would ultimately pay the cost of the dispute in this scenario.

Staff informed Mr. Gutwein that he may appoint a Power of Attorney to act on his behalf during the settlement and participate by telephone during the settlement by giving instructions to the power of attorney as necessary. Mr. Gutwein stated that he could not accept this alternative.

- By Consensus:** *1. Eldon to inform task force of this task after the task force is established.  
2. Eldon to draft memo.  
3. Eldon to obtain attorney's opinion.  
4. Eldon to contact City Manager on this topic.*

6e. Buildings Committee Proposed Revisions of Section X of the GHI Member Handbook

The Board directed the Buildings Committee to recommend changes to the Section X Rules to resolve inconsistencies in the definition of additions and align the AMP requirements with the revised definitions. The Buildings Committee reviewed all subsections and has provided edits for Board review and disposition (refer to attachment #7). Footnotes indicate areas where policy issues arise and should be more properly considered by the Board.

**By Consensus:** *To hold a work session with the Buildings Committee beginning at 6:00 pm on October 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss this topic.*

6f. Buildings Committee Recommendation of a Heat Pump Hot Water Heater Pilot Program

A heat pump water heater (HPWH) operates by utilizing heat in the ambient air to heat water utilizing heat pump technology and can cut water heating costs by half or more. Most major water heater manufacturers carry a heat pump water heater model.

The technology has developed sufficiently that its reliability is commensurate with standard electric water heaters and now qualifies for rebate funds under the Home Performance with Energy Star program (the same program under which HIP rebates are secured). A rebate program is being developed for GHI to help standardize the process of obtaining this rebate. The cost of a HPHW is about 3 times the cost of a standard electric water heater. The rebate amount is up to 75% of the installed costs. Qualified homes however must have had the attic work completed (except for the block homes) and rebates already assigned in conjunction with the HPWH rebate cannot exceed \$7,500.

A HPWH has not, as far as is known, been installed in any GHI unit. The Buildings Committee recommends a pilot program of up to 12 units, to investigate the installation and performance as well as identify costs and rebate amounts. Since the technology does use room air for water heating, the pilot program will only include HPWHs installed in the boiler rooms of masonry homes.

**Motion:** **I move that the Board of Directors direct the Building Committee and staff to develop and implement a heat pump water heater pilot program of up to 12 units and report the results no later than June 2020.**

Moved: Hess

Seconded: James

Carried: 7-1

Opposed: Holland



6g. Deadline for Return of Forms Indicating Selections of HIP Optional Improvements During 2020

The Board of Directors has stipulated that those members who participated in years 1 to 4 of the Homes Improvement Program may select any of the available HIP options during 2020. The available selections are outlined on the GHI website. In order to avoid contractor conflicts with the 2020 cohort, a December 6, 2019 deadline for return of the forms from members who participated in years 1 to 4 of the HIP is requested.

**Motion: I move that the Board of Directors establish December 6, 2019 as the deadline for members whose units were in years 1 to 4 of the Homes Improvement Program, to return forms to staff, with their selections of optional improvements.**

Moved: Hess

Seconded: James

Carried: 8-0

6h. Recommendation that the Communications Committee Disseminate Information re: HIP Optional Improvements

HIP staff and the Buildings Committee are preparing a modified form that members who participated in the HIP during years 1 to 4 would complete to indicate HIP optional improvements they wish to have installed in their units during 2020. This form will be available to members online and in a hard copy format by request. The Buildings Committee is requesting that the Board ask the Communications Committee to develop and implement a plan for disseminating information regarding this expanded HIP offer.

*No Action taken.*

6i. Consider Whether to Allow Installations of Service-side Full-View Entry Doors during the HIP

The original formulation of the HIP program excluded full-view doors on the service-side of the home. When completing the HIP Member Survey, a few members in the 2016 cohort requested the full view door on the service side but were not given the opportunity to have them installed. In subsequent years, some members appealed the decision to the ARC and the GHI Board who, after reviews, granted all requests. It is noted that the Member Handbook allows full lite doors, which were not offered to members during the HIP selections process. A statistical reference: of the 2,089 doors installed, 145 (6.9%) were full view.

**Motion: I move that the Board of Directors allow members to select a full-view entry door on the service-side of the unit during the remainder of the Homes Improvement Program.**

Moved: Hess

Seconded: Jones

Carried: 7-1

Opposed: Brodd

6j. Review Recommendations of Recent Reports Submitted by the Communications Committee and Member Outreach Committee

During the September 5, 2019 Board meeting, the Board stated that it would further review three recommendations from the Communications Committee Report titled “A Comprehensive Communications Plan for GHI in 2019 and Beyond” in conjunction with the recommendations of the Membership Survey Results Report that the Member Outreach Committee prepared.

The Board reviewed the report titled “A Comprehensive Communications Plan for GHI in 2019 and Beyond” during a March 11, 2019 work session and the May 2, 2019 Board meeting. The Board reviewed the Membership Survey Results Report during a strategic planning work session on June 2, 2019 and the September 5, 2019 Board meeting.

The three recommendations of the report titled “A Comprehensive Communications Plan for GHI in 2019 and Beyond” as well as staff comments and suggested motions are as follows:

**Recommendation #1** : We recommend that GHI concentrate its social media efforts on Facebook; that postings include links to the eNews, as before, as well as to highlight activities going on within GHI so the page could be a vehicle for both marketing and member information; that in addition to a GHI staff member, a Committee member be allowed to act as an editor of the GHI page and would agree to adhere to GHI’s Media and Social Media Policy; and that Julie Winters be appointed to serve as an editor for the GHI Facebook page.

Staff Comments: The Board may wish to have a broader discussion about which social media platforms GHI should utilize and how they should be managed.

**Motion: To extend the meeting by 5 minutes:**

Moved: Hess

Fails for lack of second

**Motion: I move to extend the meeting by 15 minutes.**

Moved: James

Seconded: Holland

Carried: 8-0

**Motion: I move that we direct the President of the GHI Board of Directors appoint Julie Winters to act as an editor of the official GHI Facebook page.**

Moved: Socrates

Seconded: Hess

Carried: 7-1

Opposed: Brodd

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**Recommendation #2:** That in order to communicate effectively with members who do not have access to email or the website, we recommend printing and making available to those who request it, the current eNews and any linked material.

**Motion: I move that the Board of Directors direct staff to print the current eNews and any linked material and make them available in the reception area of the Administration Building for members who wish to obtain them.**

Moved: Hess

Fails for lack of second

**Motion: I move that the Board of Directors direct staff to print the current eNews and make them available in the reception area of the Administration Building for members who wish to obtain them.**

Moved: Jones

Seconded: Hess

Carried: 8-0

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**Recommendation #3: We recommend that the Committee be used to help prepare, edit, and design materials submitted to the membership and community for accuracy and clarity.**

**Motion: I move that the Board of Directors direct that the Communications Committee and staff work together to prepare, edit, and design materials submitted to the membership and community, for accuracy and clarity.**

Moved: Hess

Seconded: James

Carried: 6-2

Opposed: Holland, Ready

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**By Consensus: To postpone the remaining Items 6j.**

The recommendations of the Membership Survey Results report as well as staff comments and suggested motions are as follows:

**Recommendation #1 - Update the GHI website**

Since the website is one of the top places members (and prospective members) go to find information about GHI, it is critical that information be current, useful, and easy to navigate. Specific areas for improvement include enhancing searchability, ensuring information is current and accurate, and providing much greater detail and usefulness of Frequently Asked Questions. Other helpful features to incorporate would be best points of contact for various situations and other matters of process, policy, and opportunity. We believe it would be wise to consider that many members have minimal involvement or experience within GHI and may therefore be lacking the knowledge and understanding that other members who are highly involved or have been here more than a few years may take for granted.

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**Recommendation #2: Update the weekly E-News**

Improve the reach and deepen the engagement of the Weekly E-News, while still providing quality printed communications to a membership with diverse preferences.

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**Recommendation #3: Improve the usability of the Member Handbook**

Make the Member Handbook available electronically as a searchable file.

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**Recommendation #4: Improve staff responsiveness and communication**

Work with staff to ensure responsive, reliable, respectful, and efficient communication with members. Members were particularly concerned with the responsiveness, process organization, and communication of the Maintenance Department.

Staff comments: Management has informed staff in the past that they should respond to all telephone calls, emails and letters from members within one-work day. If unable to provide a member with a full response, an employee should at least acknowledge the contact and let the member know that their issue will be addressed. The Manager will discuss the Member Survey report with the GHI staff and continue to stress the importance of responsive and efficient communication with members.

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**Recommendation #5: Praise GHI staff for a job well done**

Affirm GHI staff for the positive impact members reported on their contribution to our cooperative. Several staff were mentioned by name in member comments for their good work. They in particular should be recognized.

Staff comments: During the year, many members submit written compliments to employees for service they have provided. In every instance, those employees are made aware of the compliments received; some of which are displayed on the company’s bulletin board. During the discussion of the Member Survey report with employees, the Manager will recognize those employees who were named in the member comments for their good work.

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**Recommendation #5: Conduct future membership surveys**

We recommend that GHI conduct a membership survey every two years that covers rotating topics so that members are able to comment on a wide variety of topics, while also providing data to suggest trends observed over time in critical areas. In the future, we suggest adding questions to the maintenance section about scheduling, processing requests, etc. We also suggest adding a question about overall satisfaction with GHI, such as 'GHI is a great place to live' or 'I would recommend GHI to my family or friends.'

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**Recommendation #6: Continue offering incentives**

This year, 469 members entered their names along with their submitted survey for a chance to win one of three, one- time \$100 credits toward their member fees. Three names were selected randomly at a Member Outreach Committee meeting and were announced the next evening at the GHI Annual Meeting. We believe the incentive played a crucial role in the number of responses received.

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**Recommendation #7: Share survey results and resulting actions taken with the membership**

We believe that there is tremendous value in the Board of Directors passing along to the membership at least a portion of what the Board considered to be significant findings, interpretations, conclusions, and/or plans for further action.

This communication could underline that the Board took seriously the thoughts and participation of each member who submitted a survey, demonstrate that the survey had an impact on decision-making in GHI, and encourage members to continue to contribute their feedback on future surveys. Taking the results of this survey to heart, it would be best to share actions taken based on survey results with the membership through the weekly E-News, a printed medium, posted to the website, and potentially shared at a future membership meeting.

Staff comments: Staff has published the Membership Survey Results Report on the website and notified members about the report via the e-newsletter.

7. **Items of Information**

7a. **Upcoming Common Ownership Communities Conference**

Attachment #8 is a brochure regarding a Common Ownership Communities Conference that will be hosted by the Prince George’s County Office of Community Relations and County Executive Angela Alsobrooks on September 28, 2019.

7b. Volunteer Appreciation Ceremony

On Wednesday October 16, 2019 at 7:00 pm the Member Outreach Committee will be hosting the annual Volunteer Appreciation Recognition Ceremony.

7c. Board 12 Month Action Plan and Committee Task List

7d. Monthly GHI and City Calendars

7e. President's Items

7f. Board Members' Items

7g. Audit Committee's Items

7h. Manager's Items

**Motion: To adjourn.**

Moved: Hess

Seconded: James

Carried: 8-0

The meeting adjourned at 10: 12 p.m.

Ed James  
Secretary