



February 2017

Communicator

GREENBELT HOMES, INC. | A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

WHAT IS GHI?

By Tom Jones, Nominations & Elections Comm. Chair

Do you have opinions about GHI? Maybe something about new windows, heat, plumbing, or monthly fees? Do you want to know who makes the decisions around here?

GHI is a shareholder corporation. This means that its ownership is divided into shares, and its #1 purpose is to benefit the people who own those shares. While most corporations have millions of shares, GHI has exactly 1,600—one share for each of the 1,600 GHI homes. Because shares are distributed throughout our community, your neighbors are also your business partners. The purpose of GHI is to make decisions that benefit the people who live here.

We could be a pure democracy—and have hundreds of us attend meetings to decide what to do about crawl spaces, or whether one new maintenance truck is better than two used trucks. But most of us have busy lives, and don't have

time to consider hundreds of decisions a week to run a \$25,000,000 corporation. So we meet once a year to select 17 of our neighbors to represent us the other 364 days, in 3 groups:

The **Board of Directors** is 9 members who manage our corporation those 364 days each year. The directors are our volunteer neighbors we've chosen to run our corporation. They serve



staggered terms, so we elect half of the board each calendar year.

The 3 members of the **Audit Committee** ensure the Board does its job correctly. They speak up during Board meetings and ensure an independent monitoring body reports directly to the membership.

The **Nominations & Elections Committee** (N&E) has 5 members whose job is to find qualified members to run for all 3 groups, and to conduct the elections.

Our elections start at the annual membership meeting, this year on Thursday, May 11. GHI needs 5 Board members, 3 Audit Committee members, and 5 N&E members to represent all of us.

If you have ideas that can help GHI, maybe you should run for office. Or perhaps you have a neighbor you'd vote for? You could suggest they run for office. The first step is to get a Candidate Packet from <http://ghi.coop/election> or the GHI lobby on Hamilton Place. The Candidate Packet has everything you need to know.

Whether you run or not, remember GHI is not some far-off corporation seeking profit for anonymous shareholders. GHI is you and 1,599 of your neighbors, working to make our homes the best we can to benefit all of us.

2016/2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS

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Greenbelt Homes



GHIimgmt

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GURGLING SOUNDS OR HIGHER BILLS MAY MEAN PIPE PROBLEMS

By Lauren Cummings

Many of us enjoy living in GHI because our homes are surrounded by trees. The many oak, maple, and beech trees provide shade and beauty to our cooperative. Unfortunately, they can also spell trouble for our water and sewage lines. GHI and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) are responsible for the care and maintenance of our water supply and sewage lines, but members also have a role to play.

If you notice that you have a higher water bill than usual, that could be a sign that a pipe is slowly leaking. One cause could be that tree roots have cracked a pipe underground. Notify the GHI maintenance department if you unexpectedly have higher bills. You would also want to ask GHI to check the seal on your toilet(s) flapper to ensure that it is tight and does not allow water to escape.

If you hear gurgling sounds from your toilet/drains or if you see dirt sediment in your toilet bowl or sink, these are signs that your pipes may be blocked. Pipes can also become blocked from a buildup of hair or products that should not be flushed. In recent years, people have begun using moist “flushable” wipes that are much thicker than toilet paper. These products clog drains and can cause serious damage to pipes; they should not be flushed. Blocked pipes will eventually lead to a water or sewage backup in your home. This can cause damage and a lot of headache for you during the cleanup.

Keep in mind that your pipes are connected to your neighbors' pipes. Talk to them if you are noticing anything out of the ordinary, and notify GHI at the first sign of problems.

Member Announcements

Communicator Deliverer Needed

The 30 to 48 Court Ridge Road Communicator route is in need of a new carrier. Earn a little extra cash each month and help keep co-op members informed! Contact Monica Johnson at (301) 474-4161 if you are interested.

Fee Increases for 2017

The Board of Directors has approved changes in some of the fees members pay for various services. To view the complete listing, visit <http://ghi.coop/content/fee-increases-2017>.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at the GHI Administration Offices on Hamilton Place, and are open to all GHI members. Dates are subject to change.

February

1	7:00 pm	Additional Maintenance Task Force
2	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
4	11:00 am	Pre Purchase Orientation
8	7:30 pm	Architectural Review Committee
9	6:30 pm	Investment Committee
9	7:30 pm	Finance Committee
10	--	OFFICE CLOSED
13	7:30 pm	Storm Water Task Force
14	7:30 pm	Legislative & Government Affairs
15	7:00 pm	Woodlands Committee
16	7:00 pm	Nominations & Elections Committee
16	7:30 pm	Board Meeting
20	--	OFFICE CLOSED (President's Day)
21	7:00 pm	Pre Purchase Orientation
21	7:30 pm	Companion Animal Committee
22	7:00 pm	Buildings Committee
24	--	OFFICE CLOSED
27	7:00 pm	Communications Committee
28	7:00 pm	Audit Committee

Call 301-474-6011 for emergency maintenance outside of normal hours or when GHI is closed.

Yard Solutions Survey

The GHI Task Force on Yard Solutions for a 21st Century Garden City wants to know about the needs and wants for **your yard** and for **common areas**—and to identify **possible solutions**—through a member survey. The survey is available online at <http://ghi.coop/content/21st-century-yard-solutions-input-needed> or on paper at the GHI office reception area. Please complete the survey by April 7, 2017.

Reminder: How Your Row Can Become Smoke-Free

In 2013 the membership approved a proposal that allows members of an entire row of units to unanimously agree to revise their Mutual Ownership Contracts (MOC's) to indicate that smoking inside their units is not allowed. Since that time, 6 number of rows have received this designation. If you would like your entire row of units to be designated as smoke-free, you and all members in your row must obtain and sign a smoke-free restriction addendum to your MOC. To learn more, visit <http://ghi.coop/content/how-your-row-units-can-become-smoke-free> and contact the Member Services office at 301-474-4161, ext.140.