



HICKORY RIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Village Board Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2023, 7:30 pm via Zoom meeting

Meeting Recording: <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/C8yuBFJOaPU2o6s8v9l-1DB84pU40EckhLRHmbjpw1RdySDUwhoTxeHOngIEhZlY.uxYTu4-oFfQPZxOc?startTime=1683588685000>

Members Present: Kristine Amari, Jared Ball, Jeremy Dommu, Mariah Robertson and Skye Anderson. Chris Smith was out of town.

Staff Present: Laura Mayton and Emily Rieger

Guests: Approximately 45 guests attended.

Call to Order: 7:30 pm

1. **Board Introductions-Kristine Amari, Jared Ball, Jeremy Dommu, Mariah Robertson, Chris Smith and Skye Anderson:** Board members introduced themselves. Ms. Anderson introduced herself. Mr. Smith was out of town.
2. **Election of New Board Officers:**
 - a. **Election of Village Board Chair:** Dr. Robertson nominated Mr. Dommu and Dr. Ball nominated Ms. Amari for Board Chair. Dr. Robertson and Mr. Dommu voted for Mr. Dommu as Chair. Ms. Amari and Dr. Ball voted for Ms. Amari as Chair. Mr. Dommu and Ms. Amari both stated why they would be an effective Chair. Dr. Robertson and Mr. Dommu voted for Mr. Dommu as Chair. Ms. Amari and Dr. Ball voted for Ms. Amari as Chair. After much discussion amongst the Board members, another vote was taken. Ms. Amari was elected Board Chair with a vote of 4-0.
 - b. **Election of the Village Board Vice Chair:** Dr. Robertson nominated Mr. Dommu for Village Board Vice Chair. Mr. Dommu was elected Vice Chair with a vote of 4-0.
3. **Approval of Agenda:** Mr. Dommu made a motion to approve the agenda and Dr. Robertson seconded. Ms. Anderson requested 11. A., Property Annexation be moved to 10. C since the topic had not been discussed. Mr. Dommu requested to add Board Procedures to 10.D. Ms. Anderson made a motion to approve the amendments and Mr. Dommu seconded. The amendments passed unanimously. The agenda, as amended, was approved unanimously.
4. **Approval of the April 24, 2023, Meeting Minutes:** Mr. Dommu made a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Ball seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
5. **Board Update:** Ms. Anderson discussed a hearing by the Department of Natural Resources on the Patuxent Commons development at the corner of Cedar Lane and Freetown Road. She also discussed proposed funding from the County budget for the project.
6. **Village Voices:** Mr. Schwartz stated his concerns regarding the conduct of the election and the disqualification of Mr. Inglis due to submitting Winning Candidate documents after the deadline. Ms. Hammon stated that the Contribution and Expense forms have inconsistencies that could disqualify candidates. She explained that candidates are directed to receive no contribution greater than \$50,

but they are permitted to spend up to \$250 on their campaign; if the \$50 contribution limit applies to their own money, every candidate would be disqualified. Ms. Mars welcomed the new Board members and wished them a wonderful year and much success in whatever they do. Mr. Inglis stated that when issues fall in grey areas, it is up to the Village Board to assess the situation, and the Board of Directors should not deny the results of the election. Ms. Schwartz stated that the Special Election subcommittee randomly picked a 48-hour time frame, but the time frame was not critical, and compassion and an extension could be entertained with extenuating circumstances. Ms. Schwartz also stated that she believes all contributions were not reported by all candidates, which is another extenuating circumstance. Ms. Glazer stated that Mr. Inglis was the second-highest vote getter, the community has spoken and there is a need to respect that. Ms. Grier stated that great harm in the election was created by the situation and great harm was created in the community by the situation; the candidates were aware in advance that all winning candidate documents were due within 48 hours of notification of their win; she would like to step forward with a positive direction. Mr. Blackwood questioned the certification of the election and stated that the Board was being led by staff; direction should come from the Board. Mr. DesRoches referred to his challenge of the election results and stated the wishes of the community are being disregarded. Ms. Hannan reminded the Board that the Board's attorney on community association issues is DARS Law, not Macy Nelson, and she does not interpret the documents in the way others have stated. Ms. Hickman stated that she feels it would be a conflict of interest for the Board to make decisions about their election; allow the Election Committee to lead the process. Mr. Hurewitz, Harper's Choice resident, stated that the judge upheld the Howard County Zoning Board's decision to deny Kimco's petition to redevelop the Hickory Ridge Village Center.

7. **Report of Election Committee on Review of Election Challenges:** Mr. Loesch stated that the Election Committee acted in good faith based on its Charter and the Procedures and Guidelines given to the Committee by the Village Board. Mr. Dommu made a motion to accept and uphold the Election Committee's findings on the challenges to the election. Dr. Robertson seconded. The motion passed 2 – 0 – 2, Mr. Dommu and Dr. Robertson in favor, Ms. Amari and Dr. Ball abstained. Dr. Ball made a motion to expand the Board by one member, Mr. Inglis. Dr. Robertson seconded. Dr. Robertson made an amendment to the motion to appoint two people to the Board to include Mr. Inglis and Mr. Hannan, for the FY24 Board term. Dr. Ball seconded. The amendment to the motion passed, 3 – 0 – 1, Dr. Ball, Mr. Dommu and Dr. Robertson in favor, Ms. Amari abstained. The amended motion passed, 3 – 0 – 1, Dr. Ball, Mr. Dommu and Dr. Robertson in favor, Ms. Amari abstained.
8. **Board Organizational Tasks:**
 - a. **Appointment of the Village Manager (Laura Mayton):** Mr. Dommu made a motion to reappoint Ms. Mayton as the Village Manager. Dr. Robertson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
 - b. **Appointment of Board Designees (Laura Mayton and Tania Tavares):** Dr. Robertson made a motion to reappoint Ms. Mayton and Ms. Tavares as Board Designees. Mr. Dommu seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
 - c. **Designation of Check Signers:** Dr. Ball, Mr. Dommu and Dr. Robertson volunteered for this additional role.
 - d. **Acknowledgement of Fiduciary Responsibility:** Ms. Mayton reminded the Board members to submit their documents as soon as possible.
9. **CA Board of Directors Report-Skye Anderson:** Ms. Anderson shared that the CA Board will meet on Thursday, May 11th and encouraged residents interested in participating in the speak out portion of the meeting to sign up by Wednesday, May 10th.

10. New Business:

- a. Appointment to the CA Watershed Advisory Committee (Deborah Wessner):** Mr. Dommu made a motion to appoint Ms. Wessner to represent Hickory Ridge. Dr. Robertson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. Appointment to the Aging Well in Columbia Advisory Committee (Celindah Grier):** Dr. Robertson made a motion to appoint Ms. Grier to represent Hickory Ridge. Dr. Ball seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- c. Property Annexation:** This issue was tabled for the next meeting.
- d. Board Procedures:** Mr. Dommu suggested ideas on how to make Board meetings more effective and how to increase community engagement. Ms. Amari asked Board members to send ideas to Ms. Mayton that will then be discussed at the next Board meeting. Mr. Dommu made a motion to cancel the Board meetings scheduled for September 25 (Yom Kippur), March 25 (Spring Break), August 28 (Hawthorn Center closed). Mr. Inglis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Manager's Report: Ms. Mayton reminded residents that the new traffic signal at Hickory Ridge Road and Campus Drive should be operational in mid-May.

12. Board Comments: Ms. Anderson asked Ms. Mayton to invite a representative from the Howard County Library System to speak at a future meeting regarding the proposed Lakefront Library.

13. Feedback Session: No comments were made.

14. Action Items:

- a. Mr. Inglis will provide additional information about the Property Annexation topic by Friday, May 12th.
- b. Ms. Mayton will contact Howard County Library regarding a presentation on the proposed Lakefront library.
- c. Ms. Mayton will contact Mr. Inglis regarding the fiduciary document for Board members.
- d. Ms. Mayton will contact Mr. Hannon regarding the winning candidate documents and the fiduciary document for Board members.
- e. Ms. Mayton will get a legal opinion from the community association attorney, Ellen Throop at DARS, regarding the election as the annual meeting.

15. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:30pm.