

Brian England, Hickory Ridge Representative to the Columbia Association Board of Directors

February 2023

At the last Hickory Ridge Board meeting, I was asked a lot of questions. For those who were unable to attend I'll address them here.

CA President

The main question was the decisions that led to President Lakey Boyd leaving. This was a complex issue because the board was dealing things related to employment and that couldn't be shared. It was very frustrating for the community and us because we couldn't respond to their concerns. On top of this we were addressing various ethics complaints in a whole series of closed meetings. This all distracted us from normal board operations. So what happened!

At Lakey's six months evaluation the board came together with a unanimous decision related to her successes and things that needed to be improved. A month later it was decided that in order to encourage Lakey to move forward in addressing our evaluation concerns that we develop a Personal Improvement Plan (PIP). After this was presented to Lakey she asked for an exit plan, I personally didn't understand this or her reasoning. Lakey's attorney and the board's attorney worked out exit agreement.

Next President

Next we had to decide on who would stand in while the Board worked out a pathway forward. The staff recommended Dennis Matthey and the board agreed. The final details will be worked out over the next few weeks.

Stormwater

The other hot topic is Stormwater Management in the Lake Elkhorn Stream valley. This is a very complex subject but is made clearer by listening to senior Chesapeake Bay Foundation scientist Doug Meyer presentation to the CA Board and to CEDS president Richard Klein's 20 minute YouTube video. <https://youtu.be/gmyN7ufGyyw>

This subject has come closer to home with the proposed project just off Bright Passage. The stormwater from a storm drain has eroded the supports of a bridge. If we followed the recommendations of Richard and Doug the storm water should be addressed where it falls or very close to the stormwater outfall into the MPEA. Unfortunately the County have decided to address the stormwater in the woods, they will cut down 20 trees and attempt to stabilize the erosion channel. This project will cost over \$200,000! Unfortunately going by past experience on Great Oak Way and New Country Lane it will not improve the environment and it will take decades for the forest to recover from the damage. Finally I agreed to be the new liaison for the board on the Watershed Advisory Committee.

Tot Lots and Play areas

At Thursday's residents speak out there was a report from the Oakland Mills Open Space committee on Tot Lots and Play Areas. They suggested innovative ways to be much more inclusive and innovative when designing play areas. After the presentation by staff on play areas the discussion included Oakland Mills recommendations and Dennis Matthey suggested a pilot with a village to include their ideas. Here are some of their ideas...

Enhance the land, Multi Generational, seating area, gardens, specialty play areas.

These ideas reminded me of some of those that our villagers shared when we were discussing Sixpence Circle Tot Lot.