

POALH Board of Governors
Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2023

The virtual and in person meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Laurie Dworak at 15 Lookout Drive, East Haddam, CT and with Google Meet.

Board Members Present in Person: Lynn Crisci, Laurie Dworak, Dave Edgington, Evelyn Passan, Chris Popolizio, Kathy Sabo, Phil Sabo, Julia Schiavi & Lisa Sobestanovich

Association Members in attendance in person: Lisa Hober - Treasurer, Nancy Kavanaugh

Association Members in attendance virtually: Gary Cohen, Criag Montanari, Keith Marvin were in attendance at the start of the meeting.

Motion: *Julia Schiavi made a motion to move the executive session after new business. Chris Popolizio seconded. Kathy Sabo suggested that we move the executive session to the top of the agenda because it is important. Julia Schiavi wanted to move it in consideration of the public so the public could be present for the whole meeting. A vote was held. All board members present agreed (9).*

Motion: *Kathy Sabo made a motion to move voting to the top of the agenda after acceptance of minutes. Dave Edgington seconded. Chris Popolizio mentioned that he would like to hear from both candidates why they feel they are the best candidate and have some time for each candidate to talk. Julia Schiavi concurred and noted that perhaps this has been the only time there has been a runoff for president. Kathy Sabo indicated that it would be fine to have the candidates speak about themselves at any time. Evelyn Passan suggested that perhaps the candidates would like some time to get their thoughts together. Laurie Dworak thought that was a good idea. Lisa Sobestanovich would prefer that the candidates speak before voting happens. Lynn Crisci talked a little about the role of the president indicating the president is the president of the board not the association. Laurie Dworak indicated moving the voting negates what Chris and Julia have asked for by watching a meeting. Dave Edgington stated that the reason the voting is always first on the agenda is because the September meeting is run by the new president. Dave continued to note that the board used to get together after the annual meeting to vote in officers. Laurie Dworak indicated that is a change from when she came on the board. Chris Popolizio indicated that Robert's Rules says we can postpone the vote. Board members reflected it needs to be done today. Chris Popolizio asked what the public comment section was about? Laurie Dworak indicated that public comment was about anyone that was present that has an opinion or a discussion on anything that is happening in the community. The board does not communicate or integrate or have any interaction with public comment. They can bring up any topics that they wish. Chris Popolizio indicated that there is a concern that there is a petition that is going around about the presidency and whether or not two people from the same household can vote. Lynn Crisci indicated that the association had a ballot that was put together and everyone went through nominating which was correct. There were no rules broken. Lisa Hober and the committee did everything by the book. Kathy's name would never have gone on the ballot if it wasn't correct. Julia Schiavi is hearing from the membership that they have concerns and this is the second time they have said it over representation from the same household/family. Phil Sabo indicated that could be changed. Julia Schiavi indicated that this petition is their voice trying to be heard. Chris Popolizio wants to discuss this topic moving forward. He indicated that several people at the board meeting did hear about the petition going around. He indicated we need unity on the board. Dave Edgington noted we will listen to what the public has to say when we get to that point. Lisa Sobestanovich indicated that this vote is important to have the right person at the helm. Lisa asked what the harm was to wait until the end of the meeting. Dave Edgington replied there is no harm really but we can have meaningful conversation with both people at the beginning or at the end. He feels that this new meeting should be run by the new president so that should be done first. Laurie Dworak made a motion to amend Kathy's motion. Kathy Sabo responded that she would not like to amend her motion. Lisa Sobestanovich stated that there were several folks here for public comment so wouldn't it make sense to wait for public comment and then vote. Kathy Sabo didn't see the difference because the public doesn't vote for president the board does. Several board members noted that the officers of the board and board members report to the association members. The president's role was discussed as well as the cohesiveness of a board. A vote was held. There were 5 board members in agreement Kathy Sabo, Evelyn Passan, Lynn Crisci, Phil Sabo & Dave Edgington.. There were 4 opposed - Laurie Dworak, Chris Popolizio, Julia Schiavi & Lisa Sobestanovich.. The motion carries.*

After the vote Laurie Dworak told Phil Sabo that he was in conflict of interest because Kathy is running for president. Laurie Dworak asked Phil Sabo to recuse himself. Phil Sabo noted that there is nothing in our rules that require that.

Minutes: *Dave Edgington & Lynn Crisci made a motion to waive the reading and accept the minutes of the July 17, 2023 board meeting. Phil Sabo seconded. A vote was held. All board members present agreed (9). Evelyn Passan made a motion to accept the minutes of the August 7, 2023 board meeting. Dave Edgington seconded. A vote was held. All board members present agreed (9).*

Meeting was adjourned at 7:46 to take a break.

Meeting reconvened at 8:02 pm

Voting in New Officers: Candidates spoke about themselves and answered questions from various board members.

- **Motion:** *Dave Edgington made a motion to vote by secret ballot. Lisa Sobestanovich seconded the motion. A vote was held. All board members present agreed (9).*

Julia Schiavi noted to Phil Sabo that his marriage to Kathy is a conflict of interest so she will be asking for a motion for Phil to recuse himself. Julia noted our bylaws do not speak to this issue but the membership has been very vocal about it. Julia does know of a petition that is out there. She believes over 60 people have signed the petition. Phil Sabo inquired where the petition was and that it should be present tonight. Laurie Dworak indicated that had the public had a chance to speak we would know. Julia Schiavi feels this issue has been building over time. Phil Sabo feels that Kathy has been on the board for four years and he has been on the board for two and this is the first we are hearing of it. Julia noted that people are organizing and we are getting petitions. Dave Edgington was not aware of the petition and feels unless the petition is presented to somebody it does not mean anything. Kathy Sabo indicated that other board members (not herself) are aware that they are presenting a petition tonight and that is what is being brought forward. Julia Schiavi wanted the public to be heard. Kathy Sabo is upset that she is being accused of making a strategic move to make the voting to be before public comment. Laurie Dworak indicated that the voting was made before public comment so the membership did not have a means to present if they wanted to. Evelyn Passan noted that if there are 60 signatures on the petition it is not a majority of the association.

- **Motion:** *Julia Schiavi made a motion to have Phil Sabo recuse himself from the vote for presidential election as a conflict of interest. Lisa Sobestanovich seconded. Phil Sabo does not feel that is warranted. Julia Schiavi noted that Phil Sabo is property manager, is paid and it is a significant amount of money. She has never seen a property manager on a board. She indicates that is a conflict of interest too. If Kathy is president and he is property manager and has a large chunk of the budget there is some concern. Phil Sabo brought up the amount of petitioners again in relation to the amount of homes. Julia Schiavi indicated she believes there are over 420 homes but knows there are only 355 registered voters. That is 20% of the registered voters which she feels is a lot. Lisa Sobestanovich feels that this an important vote because it is for president. Phil Sabo noted in the instances of the President of the United States or Mayor their wives typically vote for them. Lisa Sobestanovich thinks it is the ethical thing to do. A vote was held. There were seven board members in agreement - Kathy Sabo, Lynn Crisci, Laurie Dworak, Chris Popolizio, Julia Schiavi, Lisa Sobestanovich & Dave Edgington. There were two board members opposed - Phil Sabo & Evelyn Passan. The motion carries.*

Presidential Vote

Secret Ballot for president - 1st Round: Laurie Dworak - 4 votes; Kathy Sabo - 4 votes

Secret Ballot for president - 2nd Round: Laurie Dworak - 5 votes; Kathy Sabo - 3 votes

Laurie Dworak is voted in as president of the POALH Board of Governors.

Vice Presidential Vote

Lynn Crisci came forward to be considered for Vice President. Laurie Dworak was concerned that Lynn Crisci is the tax collector and taking on the role of vice president. She indicated the attorney thought it would be a terrible idea. Laurie Dworak asked if all board members were ok with it and there were none verbally opposed.

Vote for Lynn Crisci for Vice President - There were seven board members in favor of Lynn Crisci as Vice President - Kathy Sabo, Lynn Crisci, Julia Schiavi, Lisa Sobestanovich, Phil Sabo, Evelyn Passan. & Dave Edgington. There were two board members who abstained from voting - Laurie Dworak, Chris Popolizio,

Lynn Crisci is voted in as vice-president of the POALH Board of Governors.

Secretary Vote

Lisa Sobestanovich asked some clarifying questions regarding the position. She inquired about the length of time it takes to complete the minutes. Kathy Sabo felt that when she first came on as secretary there was no recording of the board meeting being posted online and that is why she kept very detailed minutes. She wanted the association members to know what was being said at board meetings. She also noted that there was no technology to allow people to listen in on board meetings. Now if people want to come and see what takes place at a board meeting they can attend online or listen to the recording online. The minutes moving forward do not have to be as detailed as they have been, but that would be a board decision taking into consideration the feelings of the new secretary. Basic minutes can just record the motions and what is being done - not what is being said. A short discussion was held about board meeting recordings and whether to post them. Laurie Dworak indicated that duties can be moved around as necessary. Kathy Sabo also indicated that she has been trying to get volunteers to take over some of her duties like overseeing the pavilion reservations. There was no one else interested in the secretary position. Kathy Sabo agreed to transition with Lisa Sobestanovich.

Vote for Lisa Sobestanovich for secretary - There were eight board members in favor of Lisa Sobestanovich as secretary - Kathy Sabo, Lynn Crisci, Julia Schiavi, Phil Sabo, Evelyn Passan, Laurie Dworak, Chris Popolizio, & Dave Edgington. There was one board member who abstained from voting - Lisa Sobestanovich,

Lisa Sobestanovich is voted in as secretary of the POALH Board of Governors.

Public Comment: Lisa Hober came forward to present a petition signed by 55 people in six days which says: A call for Phil Sabo to recuse himself from voting on the board members officers in the September 11, 2023 board of governors meeting. Lisa Hober indicated that it is not anything personal, just a matter of ethics. The hope was that Phil Sabo volunteered to recuse himself and that it did not have to go to a vote of the board. The petition was given to Lisa Sobestanovich. Nancy Kavanaugh indicated that she has listened to every board meeting for more than two years and it is very hard to understand what people are saying. She encourages people to come to board

meetings. She questions the level of professionalism. She feels Laurie Dworak gives transparency, consistency and gets the answers. Nancy also asks that when a community brings something to the board that it needs to be addressed. She is here to help out, just ask. Keith Marvin agrees with Kathy Sabo that minutes should just be a summary of the meeting of what actually happened. Gary Cohen commented he enjoyed working with the board this year and hopes to continue next year.

President's Report: Laurie Dworak reported that the special meeting went very well. Thanks goes out to everyone that helped.

Motion: *Dave Edgington made a motion to bypass the committee reports tonight.. Phil Sabo seconded. A vote was held. All board members present agreed (9).*

Financial Reports:

- **Tax Collector:** Lynn Crisci reported that for tax year 2022 we are closed and have collected 100% what was due. For the 2022 grand list for 2023 we still have 21 accounts outstanding with a total tax still due of \$8,080.57. One taxpayer should be paying it shortly. The others are known people who have owed before. They will be getting a letter in early October indicating how much it will cost them if they do not pay up. Then it is turned over to the attorney for collections in December.
- **Treasurer:** Lisa Hober reported that the reports are on the drive. The latest report does not match what Lynn Crisci just said because of deposits Lisa just received. Lake Hayward days pulled revenue.

Committee Reports:

- No reports given

Old Business

- **Insurance:** Laurie Dworak read letters from our insurance carrier regarding our rating basis and our classification as a Homeowners Association vs a Municipal Tax District. Lynn Crisci has asked for a committee to look into the insurance. Phil Sabo noted that we did not go out to bid for the current insurance policy. Laurie Dworak reported that the board agreed on the insurance bill and will go out and get a new bid.
- **Lake Hayward Days:** Dave Edgington reported that there was great success this year changing the date. He noted that the bylaws state Lake Hayward Days have to be the third week of August. He would like to propose changing the carnival to the first weekend in August to make sure all the kids are still here. This may involve a bylaws change.

New Business

- **Anonymous Letter:** Evelyn Passan indicated that an anonymous letter was sent to Laurie Dworak, Kathy Sabo and herself regarding that there was no vote for the board members to go out to dinner. Laurie Dworak feels the letter holds no substance because it was not signed. Evelyn Passan feels that Hema DeSilva should get a gift as an outgoing board member as has been done in the past. Laurie Dworak indicated a gift for Hema can come out of hospitality. If there was no motion from the floor for the board to go out to dinner then we cannot do it. We can do it if we want to pay for ourselves. Evelyn Passan would like to get a gift for Hema. Chris Popolizio feels this is something that should be voted on to create consistency. Laurie Dworak asked Chris Popolizio to create a matrix for the board and present it at the next board meeting.

Dave Edgington made a motion to go into executive session.. Chris Popolizio seconded. A vote was held. All board members present agreed (9).

The POALH Board of Governors went into Executive Session at 9:50 pm.

Executive Session

- Discussion of Property Dispute
- Discussion of Special Meeting held on 9/10/23

Dave Edgington made a motion to come out of executive session.. Chris Popolizio seconded. A vote was held. All board members present agreed (9).

The POALH Board of Governors came out of Executive Session at 10:42 pm.

Chris Popolizio made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dave Edgington seconded. A vote was held. All board members present agreed (9).

The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 pm

Next board meeting will be a hybrid meeting on Monday, October 16, 2023, at 7:00 pm at 141 Wildwood Dr., East Haddam, CT and via a Google Meet.