

Gem Lakes Recreation Association Annual Meeting
April 20, 2009
The Pavilion

President Gary Marozas opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. and welcomed the approximately 30 members present.

Approval of the Minutes from 2008 Meeting – Secretary Gary Bunker read the minutes from previous year’s Annual Meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was moved, seconded, and approved.

President’s Report – President Gary Marozas discussed upcoming events including the next Work Day (April 25), Memorial Day Picnic (May 23), and Oktoberfest (October 24). He noted that the recent Fishing Rodeo was a big success, with 125 participants instead of the estimated 50 assumed during planning. Buddy Brinkley was given credit for managing the bait shop and holding the prize drawing. Recent accomplishments over the last two years by the GLRA Board include the new Springwood Drive bridge, the Springwood steps improvements, new ceiling fans in the pavilion, the new BBQ pit, the acquisition of a professional popcorn machine, a public address system, three new frisbee golf holes, successful Memorial Day Picnics and Oktoberfests, and the Christmas gathering featuring both a hayride and the St. Mary’s School Choir. Marozas stressed how these programs and initiatives are both fun and enhance our property values.

Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer Karen Skiff reported on the financial health of the GLRA. With the end of the fiscal year approaching, the checking account balance is \$14,608 while the money market account stands at \$21,964. Over \$80K was raised revenue this year - \$68K from current year dues and \$12K from the recovery of prior year dues. 24 homeowners still owe back dues, and 2 owe over \$1,000 apiece. Liens will be placed on properties with significant back dues. Skiff, with help from the bookkeeper, consolidated the accounting programs. The net income for the year was approximately \$12K. Next year’s budget assumes \$76K in dues revenue due to the increase from \$134 to \$156 per year. This increase is per the by-laws and calculated on changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). (It was noted that dues can be paid on-line via credit card, and that the early payment discount is \$6.80.) The capital projects budget for next year is \$10K. A motion to approve the proposed 2009-2010 budget was moved, seconded, and approved.

Recreation Manager’s Report – Manager Johnny Spears discussed the continued high use of the recreation facilities. The next scheduled Work Day is on April 25 and will feature a Home Depot gift card drawing. Planned work scope includes picnic table scraping and painting, trimming the area around the dock, clearing brush on the small pond dam, installing three frisbee golf holes, replacing sprinkler heads, replacing beach sand, and repairing the bathrooms and showers. It was noted that the dam clearing is per SCDHEC regulations. One resident praised Spears for his continued good work for the association.

Security Manager’s Report – Bill Mathison reported a low amount of vandalism that consisted mainly of damage from air-soft guns and the overturning of some picnic tables.

Tennis courts have been inappropriately used for skate boarding. It was emphasized that dogs in the recreation area should be on leashes, which is consistent with both City of Aiken ordinances and GLRA rules.

Lake / Wildlife / Property Manager's Report – Buddy Brinkley stated that only the swimming lake was lowered this year by three to four feet. A good frost during the winter pushed the weeds back and they are now under control. John Kilgo reported no wildlife issues and said that a fish survey will be conducted later this year. Much of the discussion revolved around beaver issues, and Brinkley said that trappers may be called in once the problem crosses a certain threshold. One resident complained about damage to property on the upper lake, with three dens spotted. Brinkley replied that beavers are expensive to eradicate, and that the GLRA usually steps in only when association property is threatened. Property owners, on the other hand, must deal with their individual problems on their own. Spears noted that licensed trappers must follow SCDHEC regulations. Brinkley agreed that it might be time to bring in a trapper to evaluate the situation. One resident praised Brinkley for his efforts regarding beavers.

Webmaster Report – Susanna King reported on progress in updating the GLRA website (www.gemlakes.org). The site will soon have PayPal for annual dues collection. The GLRA e-mail list for periodic news alerts is under construction. The site receives about three hits per day. King also urged use of the resident business listings.

Elections of Directors - The membership unanimously re-elected Gary Marozas, Rick Samundsen, and Vickie Murray to the board, along with new board member Allen Taylor who is replacing outgoing secretary Gary Bunker.

New Business – (1) Buddy Brinkley discussed the weir on the fishing (lower) lake, which contains 15 to 20 5 ½ inch boards to control the lake level. The lower boards are wearing out and may bust in the next few years. (This has happened in the past.) The board is currently considering two options. The first will simply replace the existing boards for approximately \$2,000. These boards will last ten years before they themselves will require replacement. The second option involves replacing the boards with a system similar to the one installed on the swimming lake during the winter of 2006. (2) The board will lower this fishing (lower) lake this coming winter in order to control weeds. Next year, the board will consider options for the two upper lakes. (3) Residents were reminded of the upcoming Work Day to be held on April 25. Volunteers will need to bring their own gloves and hand tools. Lunch will be provided.

Questions and Answers – (1) Will there be another picnic area added on the association property? The board is considering this option. (2) What's going on with the old sewage system lagoon? Bill Busser is working with Regions Bank to acquire this acreage for the association. The City of Aiken, however, is reserving the right to use part of this property for storm water overflow per Larry Morris, City of Aiken Public Works Director. (3) What's the story regarding Gem Lakes expansion along Huron and Moultrie? Bob Mell discussed the agreement reached with developer Steven Kisner in which the GLRA will receive \$300 from the sale of each of the 34 lots under

development. In addition, the owners will become dues paying members of the GLRA. This will be worked into their covenants and an attorney is assisting the GLRA in this matter. (4) Will the expansion include apartments? Wording on a promotional sign prompted this concern. The board will look into this. (5) Concerns were raised about the shabby condition of the Gem Lakes signs near our entrances. Discussion centered on potential cooperation between the GLRA and GLOW to replace these signs. The issue of the proposed Silver Bluff Road widening was also raised. (6) Buddy Brinkley again requested volunteers for Work Day. (7) In addition, Gary Marozas reiterated that the GLRA remains a recreation association and not a homeowners association, so it can't take action on certain issues in the same manner of a true homeowners association.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Allen Taylor
Secretary, GLRA