

**VAIL'S GROVE COOPERATIVE, INC**  
**.BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**

**March 19, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Ryan called the meeting to order at 8:08 pm and asked all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Mr. Cassidy took attendance:

Present: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Duffy, Mr. Janecek, Mr. McGuinness, Ms. McHale, Ms. Myers, Ms. Natiello, Ms. Rubini, Mr. Ryan and Ms. Waltzer. Absent: Mr. Norcross and Mr. O'Toole.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:**

Ms. Waltzer made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 2015 meeting. Mr. Cassidy seconded. Ms. Rubini and Ms. Waltzer abstained. All others in favor. Motion approved.

**COMMENTS & CONCERNS OF STOCKHOLDERS:**

Mr. Ryan introduced Warren Lucas and Tony Hay, supervisors of the Towns of North Salem and Southeast. Mr. Ryan stated that they would make a presentation regarding the problems with the odor from the sewer treatment plant and how they propose to resolve it. After the presentation, we will be open for questions from those attending. Each person will have 2 minutes to speak.

Mr. Ryan reminded all that Vails Grove does not control the sewer district. We are simply facilitating communication between the District and the concerned stockholders. Mr. Ryan asked for no questions to be asked while Mr. Lucas speaks. Mr. Ryan also stated that if any of our Board members speak, they are speaking as a shareholder and not a Board member. Mr. Lucas will take this question/answer period into the large room after a period here in the meeting.

The following is an e-mail from Mr. Lucas explaining why there is such a foul odor from the plant:  
"To a great extent the smell is from Hydrogen Sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) which is created when there is minimal oxygen in the line. The line from Bloomerside and Hotel Property goes to a pump station at the 121 Deli areas and BIOXIDE is put into the line there. BIOXIDE provides biologically active Oxygen to the bacteria in the sewage to stop the format of Hydrogen Sulfide and eliminates most if not all of the smell. Once Biocide is put into the line a high pressure line goes directly to the plant and the sewage from Hotel and Bloomerside is pumped their rapidly. We can alter the levels of Biocide in that line to reduce the amount of H<sub>2</sub>S created. Sometimes the amount of Biocide can change because of a pumping issue and you will notice a smell at the plant.

A recent concern of mine is the low pressure line from Pietsch's through Vails. That line does not have Biocide treatment and was not expected to need any. The concern I have is that the low sewage volume allows the sewage to stay in the line longer and it goes anoxic and we end up with H<sub>2</sub>S. We may need

to check this to see if this is a problem and if we need to add additional oxygen on this line. Besides Biocide there are other means of doing this such as using ozone generators. This will probably require a structure on the surface, probably in Vails/Putsch's area.

The smell regardless of where the H<sub>2</sub>S is created comes from four possible areas;

1. The headwork's building where the sewage first comes into the plant especially if they leave the power vents on when they are not in the headwork's building. This vents the building to the outside air. This smell is further amplified by an overflow of the dumpsters over a weekend (below).
2. Overflow of the dumpster in the headwork's building. We are fixing this with some better water jets to keep the fine screens that separate the solids clean. We told VRI to do that in our last meeting, on Thursday I think.
3. The initial area where the water enters the tanks, this is open to the air and we have discussed and are looking into putting in a negative pressure system on this to stop odors from being emitted. The negative pressure system would pull the air through a carbon filter.
4. The air relief valves in the roadway. There are 23 or so manholes that have air relief valves in them, all of which we replaced in 2014 as the original ones were not operating correctly and letting liquid and not just gas escape. The new ones are properly sized. We have told VRI, the company who operates the plant to purchase and install carbon filters for all 23 to eliminate smell from these possible sources."

In addition, Mr. Lucas showed slides of the sewer treatment plant and how certain parts of it are set up. The sewer comes into the headworks building through two main lines. One is from Pietsches and Vails and the other is from NWCC and Bloomerside. It gets oxygenated there. Solids get separated at that point. The biorem unit is there to lessen the odor but that is turned off right now. The smell is because when it sits in the line too long it goes septic. The plant was designed too large and is not being used to capacity, which brings the odor. The solids go into a small dumpster and are being picked up once a week. There are exhaust fans that must be on when you turn on the lights in the building. The fans then push the odor out of the building. New covers are being put in place to keep the smell from coming out of the units. Caps will be put on so the dumpsters are not open. The goal is to reduce the odor, reduce the water going into dumpsters and the building is properly power vented. We need to fix the inside of the building. The fans will only be on when they go into building.

Some pipes have failed and broken. Pipes have frozen – a new building will be going up to protect the pipes from freezing. Mr. Lucas is letting the school hook up so we have more going through the system. Mr. Lucas asks that everyone flushes toilets more.

Mr. Lucas and Mr. Hay meet weekly to go through all issues at the plant. Mr. Lucas stated that he is willing to have a community board of homeowners. Mr. Lucas will open up to questions.

New York City will pay 42% if they choose to put a roof on top of the plant. Mr. Hay stated that he does not understand how the plant was designed and that pipes froze. He also said it does not make sense that the sewerage goes into open dumpsters. Mr. Hays apologized on his behalf. Mr. Lucas said that Putnam County insisted on building the plant for 177,000 gallons and not enough is going into the plant.

Mr. Hugh Andrews stated that he toured another treatment plant that is working at 25% of its capacity and he did not smell any odor from this plant. He said that our plant has the odor since it's been working. He said pipes froze three years ago, not just this winter. He asked if we need a new engineer or new

management. It will hurt the values of people's homes. He feels that Stearns & Wheeler should be held accountable for the design of this plant.

Mr. Lucas said that some plants can run on less input. He said we have lost pipes two years in a row, even with heat tape on them.

Mr. David Janecek then spoke. He asked if there were any plans to connect the new housing development on June Road to the sewer plant. Mr. Lucas responded that, "no, they built their own plant". He asked if the sewer plant was using any Vails Grove supplied drinking water in the treatment of waste water. If so, how many gallons per month? Mr. Lucas replied that they do not use water supplied by Vail's Grove in the treatment process. Mr. Janecek stated that this odor affects about 75-100 homes impacted by this and this will kill the real estate values and perhaps the town should adjust the rates. Mr. Lucas said the people on Robin Lane had their homes re-assessed. Mr. Janecek asked when the repairs would be done. Mr. Lucas stated it would be by this summer. Most of the problems will be resolved by then.

Mr. Chris Dress asked if the quarterly fees will go up. Mr. Lucas said no, that would not happen. The district pays the bills. Mr. Lucas said that VRI has come down on their yearly fee for the plant. Mr. Dress also said that his water meter was installed incorrectly. His meter was to be put inside and they did it outside. They used sheet metal. Mr. Ryan said we will address in our Board meeting.

Mr. Joe DiMauro spoke. He said that the smell is so bad outside and inside and that the residents were promised that there would be no smell. He said that the odor tonight is awful. This is a quality of life issue. He feels that the value of his house has gone down. He said it was promised that this would be the state of the art plant. The smell has gotten worse over the past year.

Ms. Claudia McGuinness spoke. She attended many meetings. She thanks Mr. Lucas and Mr. Hay for coming. She said that Stearns & Wheeler promised that there would be no odor. This is a disappointment and she hopes these things are stopped by summer as Mr. Lucas stated.

Ms. Denise Andrews spoke. She said that residents from Robin Lane stated that they are planning on suing the sewer district and wants to know if we would pay for it. Mr. Lucas said that there is insurance for that and that he doesn't think there has been a successful lawsuit against a sewer plant.

Mr. Kurt Guldan stated that Maple Lane has way more traffic than was promised. Mr. Guldan asked if these were the same issues from the start of the plant. Mr. Lucas said many of the issues are the same but many have been resolved. Mr. Guldan asked if the smell will be less due to the lesser manpower. Mr. Hay said the plant is computerized. The man hours will not be affected. Mr. Lucas said they are planning on covering all the dumpsters that the sewerage goes into. Mr. Duffy asked what is the worst area giving of the worst smell. Mr. Lucas said it is the headwork's building. Mr. Duffy asked if they could put a carbon filter on that. Mr. Lucas said the biorem unit will do that. Mr. Duffy asks if they need to bring an engineer in. Mr. Lucas said they will seal it so the air goes in but smell does not come out. Mr. Duffy asked about outside filter. Mr. Lucas said they might have to insulate the building. Mr. Duffy asked if they could put something over the dumpsters to hold the smell in.

At this point Mr. Ryan asked Mr. Lucas and anyone interested to please go into the large room to continue so we can continue with our Board meeting.

**COMMUNICATIONS NOT INCLUDED IN REPORTS BELOW:**

There are some e-mails with regard to sewer treatment plant. We will hold them but are being addressed.

Mr. Ryan stated that we have a shareholder concern about the sand/salt pile that we have near the garage. We have informed the shareholder that this is a temporary and we will discuss to find a different solution for next year.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**CHAIRPERSON:**

No Report

**VICE-CHAIRPERSON:**

No Report

**VICE-PRESIDENT:**

No report

**TREASURER:**

No Report

**ETHICS:**

No report

**FINANCE:**

No Report

**SECRETARY:**

**February Report:**

The office will be closed March 2-6. Audit is complete, corporate taxes are filed and financials are on the website. Vails Grove bought a table at the North Salem Ambulance Corp Annual Fundraiser Dinner. It was on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> at Salem Golf Club. Attendees: Frank and Meghan Cassidy, Tom and Marie Duffy, Sue Enos, Millie Martin, Hugh and Denise Andrews, Jyostna Gorti, Cindy Battreall, Linda and Peter VanScoy. Also attending were Mary and Massimo Rubini and Melissa and Ron Sarno. It was a lovely evening. More people should consider attending these functions in the future as this is the Ambulance that comes to Vail's Grove when there is a problem. Vails Grove represented over 10% of the attendees at this event. Kudos to Kurt Guldan and his volunteers. The Brewster Rotary will be holding their Wine Tasting event in the Vails Grove Pavilion on Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>. Watch for more info.

March 2015:

The deadline for submissions for the Vails Voice is March 25<sup>th</sup>. Please have info to Carol Harting by then as she needs time to prepare, so the Voice can go in the mail with the April bills. The 2013/2014 Financials are completed and on the website. If anyone would like to be added to the Robo-call or e-mail list, please contact the office.

## **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS:**

Mr. Moore read the reports from February and March:

February 2015

The heater in the pump house failed last month. New heater was replaced by Shock Electric. Storm drain repair at 36 Vails Lake Shore Drive (news pipes and 2 junction boxes). Storm drain pipe was leaking onto Lakeshore Drive causing major icing. The work was completed by Butler Excavating. New tires were purchased for the dump truck. (Petes Tire Barn – Danbury, CT.) Dump truck passed NYS inspection. New programmable thermostats installed in the pavilion. Vails Grove ramp 2 was damaged during the last winter storm. Sign has been repaired. Please no parking on all coop roads especially during snow and ice events.

March 2015:

Lawn contracts are due into the office this week. Motion will be needed to approve the contract. We are assessing the road damage from a tough winter. Street sweeping and catch basin cleaning is being scheduled. Maintenance truck discussion underway in regards to replace/repair. All options are being considered.

Ms. Waltzer made a motion to approve Salem Landscaping as our Lawn mowing contractor for 2015. Mr. Andrews seconded. This includes leaf removal. All in favor. Motion approved.

There was an issue with a frozen water main. at 12 VLSD. The pipes were frozen. Mr. Moore said that when we replaced the water pipes, the contractor did not put in a separate curb valve. The stockholder had it repaired and submitted bills for reimbursement in the amount of \$594. Ms. Waltzer made a motion to reimburse. Ms. Myers seconded. All in favor. Motion approved. Mr. Moore said we still need to give him a service line.

Ms. Myers then stated that the welcome basket that the Grove gave to Henry and Tanja Myers was wonderful. Thanks to Ellen Ward for these great baskets.

The truck has seen its last day. We are looking into purchasing a used truck. We might look into leasing a dump truck. Mr. Ryan asked Mr. Moore to look at used truck websites to try to narrow it down.

Mr. Ryan said we should start looking into options for next year regarding snowplowing and the sand/salt issue.

## **INSURANCE:**

No Report

**SUNSHINE:**

February:

Good health thoughts are with Pat McGuinness, Cathy Morris, Adam Enos, Rob Norcross, Clem DeFelice and Fred Witte. Vail's Grove residents would like to extend sympathies to the following families:

Vito and Robyn Errico on the passing of Robyn's mother.

Patricia Treiling on the passing of her husband John.

And for some of us old timers, Lillian Lohrfink Toolans daughter, Gail Mooney, recently passed.

Thank you notes received from Pat McGuinness, Warren Lucas, Cathy Morris and Rob and Amanda Norcross

**.MEMBERSHIP:**

Mr. Andrews made a motion to approve the re-finance application from Michael Walsh. Ms. Myers seconded. Ms. Rubini abstained. All others in favor. Motion approved.

**BOATS RAMP/N**

No Report

**PAVILION RENTAL:**

No Report

**LONG RANGE PLANNING:**

No Report

**OMBUSDMAN:**

No report

**RULES AND REGULATIONS:**

No Report

**PLEC:**

No report

**LEGAL:**

No report

**AESTHETICS:**

No Report

**RECREATION:**

The St. Patrick's Day party was once again a wonderful celebration. A HUGE thank you to all our friends and neighbors who came out for the evening. The McLean Avenue Band once again kept everyone up on their toes. Ledley Catering provided a delicious dinner of corned beef and cabbage. The crowd thoroughly enjoyed the dancers from the O'Sullivan School of Irish Step Dance with the help of our former neighbor, Theresa O'Sullivan Randall. We already have the part on the calendar for next year, February 27<sup>th</sup>.

**PUBLIC HEALTH/PUMPHOUSE:**

No report

**BEACH:**

Mr. Cassidy reported the following:

Lifeguard applications can be found on the Vail's Grove website. We are looking at warmer days ahead.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.**