

The POA BULLETIN

The Property Owners' Association of The Villages

Champions of Residents' Rights Since 1975
November, 2002

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Developer of the Villages and the VCCDD Defended With Faulty and Conflicted Logic

In the previous two issues of this Bulletin, the POA has: (1) Called for a moratorium on further sales of facilities by the developer to the VCCDD, and (2) Explained the monthly fee and the portion of it that was being used to pay for these facility purchases.

In the Moratorium commentary, the Bulletin made the points that: (1) Village residents are not allowed to approve the facilities purchases or the assumption of debt by our government to pay for the purchases, and (2) The prices are considerably inflated by the use of the "income approach" appraisal technique. The commentary concluded with the call for a moratorium on further purchases by the VCCDD of facilities from the

developer at this time.

In the Monthly Fee commentary, the Bulletin made the points that: (1) Roughly \$35.00 of the monthly fee was being used for purposes other than maintenance, that is, for the purpose of paying off the purchase of facilities, and (2) This goes beyond the general understanding of many residents about what the monthly fee could be used for and what was included in their house price at the time of purchase.

In both cases, Villages officials responded to the POA articles with comments in either the VHA newsletter or the Daily Sun. A summary of their comments and the POA response are given below:

On the moratorium issue, Vernon Gwynne, supervisor of CDD # 1, commented in the VHA newsletter in October, 2002, about sales by the developer of facilities to the VCCDD.

Mr. Gwynne questioned whether the VCCDD has the “right and the authority” to purchase property – and concluded that it does.

However, this is not the important point.

The issues are:

(1) Does the VCCDD have a potential conflict of interests in making these purchases from the developer when its five supervisors are either business associates or employees of the developer?

(2) Do residents have the ability to elect these supervisors or are they appointed indefinitely by the developer?

(3) Are the prices paid documented as fair and reasonable through a process of market appraisals of comparable properties, or are the prices paid based on an “income approach” appraisal technique that inflates the values?

The POA thinks that residents should have the opportunity to vote for VCCDD supervisors, the price paid should be appraised as fair and reasonable, and supervisors should not have potential conflicts-of-interests.

If Mr. Gwynne would think about these points in greater depth, he might see the inequity of the current situation.

For the second Bulletin story on the use of the monthly fee, Mr. Pete Wahl, District Supervisor, responded in his Pete’s Place column on October 10. Mr. Wahl started with a derogatory comment about the “tabloid that is thrown on your driveway” rather than referring to the POA Bulletin by name. Cheap shots like this aren’t appropriate.

He went on to use an analogy about buying a \$20,000 car for \$5,000 in a mischaracterization of the POA position.

To set the record straight and overcome Mr. Wahl’s faulty and self-serving logic, the analogy should have been this:

Consider if you bought a car for \$20,000 and then learned that the price of the engine was not included. Then the seller tells you that you can buy the engine for another \$5,000 paid in installments over the next 20 years.

Then the seller tells you that you are obligated to pay off his original startup expense bond at the rate of \$1,500 per year.

Then the seller tells you that you are obligated to pay off his extra operating expenses at an assessment rate of \$35.00 per month.

Then you learn that the government in which this dealership resides wants you to pay off the bonds issues to pay for the roads and utilities that were put in to service this dealership.

Mr. Wahl also questioned who wrote the article. He should know better. The article was written by the growing voice of the POA -- Villages residents who are dissatisfied with a developer that they feel is unresponsive and by a district government that they feel often ignores Residents' Rights while it is indifferent to the needs and interests of residents.

Another important issue here is why are Mr. Gwynne and Mr. Wahl are defending the developer.

Shouldn't the developer speak for himself?

Shouldn't Mr. Gwynne as a CDD supervisor speak for residents rather than defend the developer's hand-picked VCCDD supervisors?

Why does Mr. Wahl as the district supervisor take the developer's position rather than that of the residents?

The POA believes there are serious conflict-of-interests issues involved here.

Supervisors and the district administrator should represent residents and support issues important to residents.

Supervisors and the district administrator should be guardians of Residents' Rights and be responsive to the needs and interests of residents.

Supervisors and the district administrator should not be apologists for the developer.

The effort of both of these men to defend the developer, at the expense of the residents, makes one seriously question their objectivity and loyalties.



BULLETIN ARTICLES ARE NOW LISTED ON INTERNET WEB SITE

POA Bulletin articles are now posted on a selected basis on the internet web site of the Cyber Citizens For Justice, Inc.

Just type <http://ccfj.net> into your internet site's goto line. When the CCFJ web site comes up, cursor down the left side of the first screen and click on the "Newsletters" box. Then, on the Newsletters page, cursor down a short distance and click on the POA Bulletin logo.

Selected articles from recent and upcoming issues of the Bulletin will be posted. The first two articles are the recent stories on the POA call for a Moratorium on further sales of facilities by the developer to the VCCDD, and the analysis that the monthly fee of \$105.00 could be \$70.00 if only maintenance was charged.

In addition, the first part of the POA page shows the POA Mission Statement and the Residents' Bill of Rights.

The Cyber Citizens for Justice, Inc., organization is dedicated to improving the daily lives of Florida citizens through programs of advocacy, education, and legislative reform. The organization is pledged to making "We The People" instrumental in influencing government and improving the political, economic, and social aspects affecting the lives of Florida citizens. Home Owners' Associations are of high interest.

The CCFJ organization shares many of the goals and objectives of the POA. We are working with CCFJ officials on issues of common interest for our members.

POA members should log on to review the CCFJ site often — and, tell your friends and neighbors about this really worthwhile addition to the POA effort to make The Villages an even better place in which to live.

Also, spend some time and review the wealth of information on the CCFJ web site — the information provided is valuable and interesting.

THE VHA CORNER

This Bulletin column will monthly report on items of interest regarding the VHA. Articles will attempt to publicize VHA positions and activities that are inconsistent with its role as a homeowners' organization.

This month's column deals with a Daily Sun article written in early October by Sandy Mott, a director of the VHA, entitled "Voting is a Serious Responsibility." The article was published in the Daily Sun in a Villages News section rather than in an opinion section.

Ms. Mott made the points that citizens have a responsibility to study the issues and to vote in an informed way for the candidates.

Unfortunately, Ms. Mott ignores two big inconsistencies that are under her very nose right here in The Villages.

First, how is the VHA president elected? Can Villages residents vote for various candidates for the VHA presidency?

The answer is "no."

The VHA president is "confirmed" by the hand-picked VHA representatives in a meeting closed to residents. These representatives have to blindly support the VHA hierarchy or they are forced out of the organization.

Would Ms. Mott be willing to condemn this practice by an organization that does not allow its members to exercise this "Serious Responsibility" and elect their own choice of president?

Second, how are the supervisors in the VCCDD, who make all of the big decisions in The Villages, elected?

The answer is: they are not elected by residents – they are appointed by the developer. And, the five supervisors are either employees or business associates of the developer.

Is this a form of taxation without representation? Have Villages residents been disenfranchised? Is this a conflict-of-interests?

Would Ms. Mott be willing to condemn this practice by the developer in our local government that does not allow residents to exercise this "Serious Responsibility" and elect their own choices for supervisors?

So, Ms. Mott, why do you and the VHA condone two practices that totally disregard this "Serious Responsibility" while at the same time you lecture us on the need to practice this very same responsibility?

Why does Ms. Mott write one thing and condone something else?

"Confused" is a word that comes to mind to answer this question.

The question for residents is: What kind of homeowners' organization do you want to belong to? If you want an organization that supports limitation on voter's rights, then join the VHA. If you want an organization that champions Residents' Rights, join the POA.

And, if you are concerned about our community, you should demand the right to vote for the candidates of your choice in open and fair elections.

POA Elections Are Scheduled for the November Meeting

Annual elections for POA officers and directors will be held at the November general membership meeting on Wednesday, November 20, 2002, starting at 7:00 p.m. in the main auditorium of the Paradise Center.

All paid-up members of the POA can vote in the election or run for any office or director's position. Bring your 2002 membership card to the meeting in case we need to check credentials.

Members running for various positions are:

President	Joe Gorman
VP	Paul Heim
Treasurer	Betty Cunningham
Secretary	Mary Paulsboe
Director	Pete Cacioppo
Director	Dorothy Cheshire
Director	Bill Snyder

Only three Director positions are up for election at this time. Directors may be added during the year as qualified candidates are identified.

The slate of seven individuals are all currently in the same positions and are seeking re-election.

Three other Directors, Tom Poss, Ted Morris, and Frank Renner, are not seeking re-election at this time. Each has served for the maximum allowed years as defined in POA By-Laws.

POA members interested in serving as either an officer or director are asked to discuss their interest with Joe Gorman or any POA official before the November meeting. It is important to have a good understanding of the time and work requirements that are needed for serving in these positions.

April Fools Day Revisited

(Don't Believe Any of This)

Sink holes have gobbled up all the "lakes" , or "run off areas" or whatever they are called, on the Nancy Lopez golf course. The VCCDD said residents should feel good about this because we are doing our part to recharge the underground aquifer.

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