

**Property Owners Association of The Villages
General Membership Meeting
June 18, 2024**

Called to order: by Cliff Wiener, President, at 7:05 pm.

- Board members present: All, except: Steve Lapp (resigned), Ken Knodel and Mike Gross, excused.
- Members present: Approximately 30.
- Organizations present: Realty Executives, One Trust, Sun Kool, SECO, A-1 Lightning and Seniors vs Crime.
- Membership meeting minutes from April and May read by Reb Benson and unanimously approved.
- Treasurer Report. Cliff mentioned he did not have the financial numbers, but added we received over \$10,000 in recent membership renewals and ad revenue is higher.
- Membership Report: Cliff said there was an additional 65 to 70 people that renewed their membership in just the last week or so...thanking all for continuing as members of the POA.
- Raffle: Three winners of \$30 each were announced, with one (Gary Search) donating their winnings to Project Support Our Soldiers (SOS). At the end of the meeting there were two winners of One Trust gift baskets and one winner (Dan Warren) of a lightning system install by A-1 Lightning. Gary Kadow explained that Project SOS helps homeless veterans and provides college scholarships for children of veterans. Cliff added about \$3,400 was collected for Project SOS during the POA shredding event in April and that the POA will continue to support this important program.

Announcements:

- Cliff introduced the various representatives in the room: Gary Kadow, Mark Hayes, Jerry Ferlisi and himself, District Supervisors; Dan Warren, North Sumter County Utility Dependent District; and, Reb Benson and Jim Vacarro, Amenity Authority Committee members.
- Candidates. Cliff mentioned it looks like the same antics regarding Sumter County Commissioner primary elections (in 2020) is happening again; write in names (i.e., folks not really planning on running) added to the ballot as Democrats or Independents to keep all from voting (which would be permitted if all candidates only from one party – which is the case again in 2024). He added that folks can switch party affiliation so they can vote, along with registered Republicans, on the candidates (6 folks running for 3 seats). Three of the candidates have received large donations from the developer – we need to ensure the right candidate, not heavily financially by particular donor(s), and with a pro-resident agenda is the representative coming out of the primary.
- Member Meetings at Laurel Manor. Cliff mentioned Bradley Arnold, Sumter County Administrator, and Craig Estep, Commissioner, on the County budget in July; and, Candidate Night – District Supervisors (5 contested seats) - in August (August 29th).
- Member Meetings at Everglades. Cliff mentioned Candidate Night – Sumter County Commissioners (5 of the 6 agreed to attend) - in July (July 18th).

Questions: None.

Speaker: Len Hathaway, John Reformato and Scott Jones discussed tips on lightning protection (based on two authoritative books)...to inform, combat myths and detail experiences. Len mentioned they started this group in 2007 when two homes burned down in the Cane Garden area that resulted in a Class Action lawsuit related to the gas line piping; and, that this was the 12th time presenting to the POA.

- General Knowledge (Len):
 - Florida is the lightning capital of the US, with Indonesia and Africa having the highest days per year of lightning strikes in the world. Our area has about 108 days per year with Lake County 7th and Sumter County 14th in the nation. May thru September is the busiest in Florida.
 - More men than women have been struck by lightning with leisure activity (water related) the main environment.
 - Regarding fatalities...6,000 to 24,000 per year worldwide. Top three US states (last 17 years): 88 in Florida, 39 in Texas and 24 in Colorado; in the US: 19 (5 in Florida) in 2022 and 18 (4 in

- Florida) in 2023; plus 11 golf-related lightning fatalities since 2016 (pro golfers Retief Goosen and Lee Trevino have been struck). A 12-year-old was struck at the Polo Fields in September 2017 and survived due to the quick CPR action. Of note, it was not raining and lightning was 2 miles north...proving the randomness of lightning.
- When thunder roars go indoors! Stay away from windows and running water, current can carry thru plumbing, electrical and phone cords. Wait 30 minutes before resuming outdoor events.
 - Lightning Strikes (John on Indirect and Len on Direct)
 - Indirect Strikes: Flag pole, tree, etc. More frequent but less severe affects.
 - Need primary (Type 1) surge protection (such as a SECO unit) and/or circuit breaker panel protector (both recommended); and, secondary (surge protection cords and plugs) to protect the rest of your electronics you do plug in. Secondary protectors help protect the small surges you get over time (when air conditioner comes on, etc.) and possibly a large surge such as a lightning strike.
 - Direct Strikes: House, etc. Less frequent but more severe affects. A Lightning Protection System (LPS) provides a path of least resistance, hence minimizes the damage potential.
 - LPS: Highly effective, but buyer beware since no installer certification required. Uses Air Terminal (lightning rods), Routing (cable - copper preferred) and Ground Terminal (spikes).
 - Use only a qualified installer that complies with the Lightning Protection Institute, Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and National Electrical Code (NFPA 70).
 - If high tolerance for risk...do nothing; if low tolerance...then get an LPS for peace of mind.
 - Lightning strikes on homes in The Villages (since 2004): 23 (18 stucco, 5 vinyl) without LPS and all had damage, last one in March 2024; 15 with LPS and none had damage.
 - Gas Lines and Myths (Len):
 - Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing (CSST), mainly north of CR-466. Recommend installing an LPS or change to steel piping, or both. Seven homes have had fires with CSST leaks from lightning strikes. Also know where to turn off your gas line.
 - Some myths:
 - Rubber shoes or rubber tires on a car will protect you and if not raining you're safe.
 - Lightning never strikes the same place twice and always strikes the tallest object.
 - Sandy soil or a tower or a tree will provide protection.
 - LPS attracts lightning; If LPS on home next door my home won't get hit; LPS doesn't work.
 - Questions, some pertinent ones:
 - Need both a meter surge and electrical box surge protector and how much for electrical box? **Ans:** Yes, recommend both...meter protects utility surges and electric box protects surges that make it thru or bypass the meter. Use an electrician (about \$450) for electrical box protector.
 - Is there a reason for more stucco than vinyl home fires? **Ans:** No, just a luck of the draw.
 - Do insurance companies give a break if an LPS is installed? **Ans:** Some provide a discount, but not enough to offset amortized install costs. And if you have one installed recommend having it checked every 3 to 5 years and after a roof shingle install.
 - How do I get CSST lines replaced? **Ans:** Use a plumber with a gas license – like Tori Plumbing.
 - Is horizontal lightning a concern? **Ans:** Lightning off the top of a cloud can travel 25 miles or so before striking the ground.

There was a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17pm that was seconded and unanimously approved.
Submitted by: Reb Benson, Secretary