

Chuck Hillier – Trustee/Treasurer

April 2009 Newsletter

I'd like to brief you on the change we are making concerning management companies. As I'm sure you've heard by now, as of June 1st we will no longer be managed by Barnett Management but instead by First Realty Property Management Ltd of Mayfield Village.

The day to day operations of the Association are administered by a management company as they assume the role of what a "City Manager" or "Mayor" would for a municipality. One of the primary responsibilities for any management company is enforcement of the covenants and deed restrictions just as a city manager would enforce ordinances and zoning regulations. Since we live in a township, the zoning codes are much less restrictive than what might be in existence for a municipality so a development such as ours has "covenants & deed restrictions" put into place designed to protect both us and our property values.

Although we may sometimes feel like the deed restrictions are too inhibitive, in my opinion they actually are helpful by preventing un-neighborly people from doing un-neighborly acts. Such things as placing their car up on blocks in the driveway, running a kennel out of their home and from engaging in countless other "acts" you surely see elsewhere. Obviously the management company has an unpopular job as quite often the only contact a resident has with them will be on two occasions; when they're sending an invoice (or late notice) for annual fees or when a violation of the deed restrictions occurs.

I make a point of stressing this because we (Trustees) are sensitive to the difficult job the management company has and to ensure that the process of interviewing other management companies remained completely unbiased. Having said this, on a personal level, I like working with Barry Barnett and know him to be very polite, friendly and accommodating to my requests as well as those that affect the development but regardless of how anyone felt personally, we pushed forward interviewing other companies with the belief we owed it to our membership to seek the best possible contract available, not necessarily the cheapest but the best.

We interviewed three companies, Lake Management Inc, First Realty Property Management Ltd, and Barnett Management and found all three to be very qualified and quite capable. An in depth analysis of the contracts revealed that the services provided versus the management fees were somewhat different between the companies. One contract for example would have us pay for secretarial work pertaining to deed enforcement while another considered that part of the fee. One company charged for calls to the emergency after hours phone line while another did not.

With each service provided, there is a related cost so we had to read each contract closely, ask a lot of questions during the interview process and at the end discuss the pros and cons for each potential bidder before ultimately making what we felt was the best decision for the people of Lake Erie Shores. Once we unanimously settled on "First Realty", we checked their references by contacting four different associations they

currently manage and in each case were provided with sound feedback concerning their professionalism and organizational integrity.

Although I enjoyed working with Barnett Management over the past three years I believe the decision we made to hire First Realty was the best decision based on their 45 years experience in the business, their large personnel staff diverse in expertise, and of course the fact they will cost us roughly \$5,000 less per year in management fees. The property manager assigned to our development is Bob Guarino and as well is very experienced in the business. More will follow on him in the coming months as First Realty introduces themselves to us.

In conclusion, I want to thank the Advisory Committee who along with John Guinan and myself, consisted of four committee chairmen; specifically Jon Adkins (Recreation Committee), Bruce Buffie (Covenants & Deeds Restrictions), Jen Segulin (Welcoming Committee) and Randy VanBuren (Finance Committee). They all worked very diligently and donated their time freely every Monday evening for the entire month of March. I know full well how difficult a decision this was, but it was reassuring to me to have such good people involved in the decision making process. They asked the right questions did their homework and came back with a solid recommendation that John, Michael DiSanto and I took for action.

Until next month, please be mindful of the little ones playing in our neighborhood.

At the end of your life, you will never regret not having passed one more test, not winning one more verdict, or not closing one more deal. You will regret time not spent with a husband, a friend, a child or a parent.

Barbara Bush ~