



HILLCREST

AT SAFFOLD WAY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

February 13, 2024 | 8:00pm | via Google Meet

Minutes

Members Attending: Amir, Harvey, Rick, Fritz, Alexandra and John

Residents Attending: None

- Meeting called to order at 8:01 pm
- Minutes of 13 January 2024 Board of Director's meeting reviewed and approved
- Resident Comments/Concerns: None received.

OLD BUSINESS

- Alexandra updated status of new contract with American Trash for trash and recycling pickup. We do have a new signed contract with American for 3 more years. They are charging us at the price proposed for that contract, i.e. \$19.65 per house per month. Alexandra will provide Harvey a copy of the new contract to be posted on the Google Workspace so all board members have access.
- Alexandra reported on her discussion with American about a communal trash can at the basketball court. American no longer provides such a receptacle nor do they do picking up such a trash can. So, to have one would require someone have responsibility for putting it to the curb for pickup each week. The board agreed to drop the idea of a communal trash can.
- Amir reported that the Stormwater Remediation Plan continues to be reviewed and updates pursued by Amir and Rick.
- Rick re-briefed his proposal to do the remediation work in Bryan Courts behind 11032-11046 and the board agreed with his recommendation that work be planned for and accomplished this year.
- Rick reported that he did not have a current budget/expenditure update because he had not received the information from Capitol Management (CM). Our representative at CM has been unavailable due to illness. HCA finished 2023 in good shape. The Long Term Reserve Fund has \$70,000 and the Operating Reserve Fund has \$33,000. A total of 4 homeowners made no payment of dues for 2023. Two of those homeowners have been referred to legal counsel to place a lien on the property. The other 2 were already referred to legal counsel for action. The bill for December snow plowing has been paid but not the bill for January snow plowing. Rick pointed out that it has been a long time since we discussed snow plowing with Blade Runners and we now have reconfigured the curbs where we put in handicapped access. We need to once more show BR the best places to push the snow to avoid blocking sidewalks and parking spaces.
- Rick proposed that the next round of home inspections for another neighborhood be done in late March or early April. Rick is still investigating how Google is getting paid for support of our Google Workspace. He is also continuing to investigate possible longer term investments to maximize use of our reserve funds.
- Harvey reported that he had provided a list of his current duties as Secretary to Fritz but that he and Fritz had not yet had a chance to discuss the list.

- Fritz had no new updates re: the new goal for the basketball court. Rick reminded all that he was ordering benches to replace those at the entrance from Ring Road. He asked Fritz to include the cost of installing those benches to the worklist for the contractor chosen to install the new basketball goal.

NEW BUSINESS

- Harvey walked through the recommended website changes proposed by Creative Liquid (copy attached). After discussion the board unanimously approved moving forward with implementation.
- Rick proposed that the Hillcrest Cluster Handbook be more readily available on the website. All members agreed. Rick also proposed that all dates on the website be darker and more obvious.
- Amir mentioned that the website should probably be ADA compliant, as all federal websites are required to be.
- Fritz asked if the all-paper process for doing the annual meeting could be incorporated into the website, including the voting for board candidates and counting the votes.
- Rick reminded all board members to keep him informed regarding whether they intend to ask for reimbursement.
- Amir reported that he had walked the cluster, examining the roads and sidewalks. He saw cracks in the roadway that he feels need resealing. Crack sealing was approved by the board last Fall so Amir is going to do further inspection and get quotes for the work. He will also examine the new curb cuts for possible early deterioration that has been reported.
- Alexandra suggested we look for more ways to foster community engagement. She suggested a Facebook Group Community page. Harvey remembered that in responses to the communication survey performed a year ago that a significant majority of the owners and residents did NOT want such a page, nor any Facebook communications in the cluster. Harvey reminded all that there is an existing Saffold Way Facebook private group with 14 members.
- Harvey reminded all that we need to schedule the date for Spring Cleanup. John volunteered to help with cluster cleanup.
- Adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 9:09 pm.
- Next Meeting:
 - Next meeting will be at 8:00pm, Tuesday 12 March 2024 via Google Meet.

SUMMARIZED ACTION ITEMS:

- **Ben —**
 - **Report on follow up with Blade Runners re: their payment in support of the picnic.**
 - **Update on homes with delinquent dues referred for legal action**
 - **Bring discussion of roles for board members at March meeting**
- **Amir —**
 - **Continue to work with Rick on the Stormwater Remediation Plan including proposed schedule.**
 - **Continue inspection of roadway and get quotes for crack sealing**
 - **Inspect reported early deterioration of new curb cuts**
- **Rick —**
 - **Follow up with Capitol Management re: payments to Google**
 - **Work with Ben and Blade Runners to get estimates on the 2024 priority items mentioned above.**
 - **Work on item 8 from the 2024 priorities list to identify safe, long term investment strategy for HCA reserve funds**

- **Develop proposed schedule for next neighborhood/home inspections in April and May**
 - **Order new benches for bus stop at entry to Saffold Way.**
- **Harvey —**
 - **Meet with Fritz re: duties of cluster secretary**
 - **Notify Creative Liquid of approval to begin revising the website.**
 - **Advise Creative Liquid of additional website proposals and ask for estimates.**
- **Alexandra —**
 - **Provide Harvey a copy of the new signed contract with American for posting**
 - **Continue to identify ways to foster community communication and involvement**
- **Fritz —**
 - **Continue work on getting new basketball goal in place.**
 - **When identifying contractor for new basketball goal, include work item to install new benches that Rick is ordering**

Hillcrest Cluster
hillcrest-cluster.com
Website review and recommendations.
Date: 02/05/2024
Prepared by:
Trevor Johnson
Chief Technology Officer
Creative Liquid Productions

Introduction

Creative Liquid is a full service media and marketing company located in Alexandria, VA, just outside Washington D.C. Our team has more than a decade of experience working with websites large (500,000 monthly visitors) and small (less than 1,000 monthly visitors) and everything in between. Our focus is on easy to use, standard compliant, modern and accessible websites. Our end goal is to help organizations meet their web and media needs, regardless of their technical skill.

Overview

The Hillcrest Cluster Association has contracted Creative Liquid to provide assistance with content maintenance, technical and website design support for <https://hillcrest-cluster.com>, a Wordpress website developed prior to this arrangement. In January of 2024, Hillcrest Cluster requested a review of the website specifically to review and recommend improvements to the organization, navigation and design of the website.

Site Overview

There are currently 14 pages on the website, and included in the navigation. All pages are included and accessible from the main menu.

Findings & Recommendations

1. Site Layout

After a review of the site, we have identified several areas where we believe some modifications would improve the ease of use of the website, and allow for better presentation of important information.

1.1. Site Header

The logo of the site is very large, which causes the top of the website to have a large amount of unused space. We recommend reducing the size of the logo, which will tighten up the top portion of the website. This will allow the navigation to wrap around the logo.

Before: After:

1.2. Site Colors

The current color scheme lacks sufficient contrast in many situations. The minimum recommended ratio is 3:

This is primarily an issue for links on the site, and for the banners on the homepage. To address this issue, we are recommending we re-evaluate the colors in use on the

website, and incorporate some darker versions of the colors in use to provide better contrast, and accent the primary branding.

The site currently only makes use of the primary colors (#1 & #2). We are recommending adding in an additional color from the logo (#3) and two darker variations (#4 & #5) to help provide contrast. We are happy to work with you to tweak the proposed colors if needed.

Examples:

Current Menu:

Updated Menu:

Current Links: Updated Links:

1.3. Typography

Similar to the color contrast issues outlined above, the site's body text can be hard to read. We recommend darkening the text color to provide better contrast, and increasing the size slightly from 16px to 18px (~10% increase).

Current Text:

Updated Text:

1.4. Site Sidebar

There is a sidebar in use on the inner pages of the site. The elements that make up this sidebar are the Site Search, Font Size Preference, Recent Posts, Categories and Tags widgets. The utility of these widgets is likely very low, and they end up taking space from more valuable content on the site. We recommend disabling the sidebar, removing the less valuable elements and repositioning the important elements.

Site Search (move): The site search can be relocated to the header of the website, making it more accessible to users.

Font Size Preference (remove): This functionality provides minimal value as the sizes are very similar. Since all browsers now include this functionality by default users who would benefit from larger font sizes, likely have a preferred approach to doing so.

Recent Posts (move or remove): The recent posts to the newsroom can be highlighted on the homepage, moved into the site footer, or removed entirely.

Categories (move or remove): The categories on the site are of limited value. We recommend removing it for now, and if they become more valuable in the future, incorporating them into the page layout as buttons, or menu links.

Tags (remove): The tag cloud does not provide a significant benefit to users.

1.5. Site Footer

Similar to the header, we recommend streamlining the footer of the website to remove excess space, and to include more relevant information to visitors.

Current:

We recommend adjusting the language to tighten up the content, and to standardize the nomenclature for the association. In addition, adding links to the most frequently used resources (to be determined in coordination with the board). A draft proof of concept is included here for reference.

Potential wireframe:

2. Site Functionality

2.1. Site search

The site search is only displayed to visitors on internal pages in the sidebar. In addition, the search results provide very little information on the result page. We are recommending installing some search improvements which will provide more detailed search results, keyword highlighting, and the ability to search for documents on the site.

3. Content

3.1. Graphics Standardization

In keeping with the color updates, we recommend reviewing the banners on the homepage, and recoloring them to ensure there is enough contrast between the text and the images.

3.2. Link Standardization

We recommend revisiting all links on the site, and ensuring that links to external websites or resources, or file downloads open in new tabs to provide a better user experience.

Next Steps

If, after review, the Hillcrest Cluster board would like to implement some, or all, of these changes the next steps would be for Creative Liquid to make a staging copy of the <https://hillcrest-cluster.com> website. The desired changes would be applied to the staging version of the website and provided for stakeholder review. After approval the changes would be implemented on the primary website.

The scope of the changes outlined here would all fit within current support agreement, and would not require additional funding. If there are other modifications or alterations desired, let us know and we would be happy to evaluate and provide an estimate if the scope of work would exceed the available hours