

Bear Creek Estates Homeowners Association

Annual Meeting Minutes

Date: July 24, 2025

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: Quiet Night Hall, Auburn, Indiana

Board Members Present

- Todd Bonecutter – President
- Greg Houk – Treasurer
- Tiana Caldwell – Board Member (Playground & Social Committee)
- Courtney Souder – Vice President

1. Call to Order

President Todd Bonecutter called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. He shared a few meeting guidelines, asking for kindness, respect, and maintaining order during the discussion.

2. Guest Speaker

Audra Wilcoxson, representing the Jackson Township Trustee, was scheduled but could not attend. She will instead hold a separate township meeting at the Jackson Fire Department to discuss the end of the agreement with Auburn Fire to service Bear Creek Estates.

Key points from the update:

- The end of the agreement with Auburn Fire raises big concerns for our community being serviced in case of emergency.
- Township is working to staff Jackson Fire with volunteers.
- 12 volunteers are currently in training.
- New equipment is expected.
- When Contract Expires (12/31/2025), Auburn fire will not respond until after 6 minutes without response.
- Neighbors are HIGHLY encouraged to attend the upcoming township meeting (date TBD).
- The HOA Board will share information as it becomes available.

3. Financial Review

Treasurer Greg Houk presented the financial overview. A detailed budget document will be attached to these minutes.

Funds established:

- Walking Path Fund
- Playground Fund
- Emergency Fund – \$20,000

New sub-accounts created for:

- Playground
- Street lights
- Mailboxes and other items

Dues history and use were explained, accompanied by an illustrative slide prepared by Todd Bonecutter, showing how dues are allocated. (Attached)

Trash Service:

- Original increase from \$17.80 to \$19.58 per lot.
- Board negotiated rate, now locked at \$18.40 per lot for the next 2 years.

Dues will not increase this year, though selling more lots will help sustain this. The Board continues to obtain multiple bids before selecting vendors to ensure fiscal responsibility.

4. New Business-

Hired Above & Beyond Community Management (Community Manager: Sandra Musi)

Visit our new webpage held through the management company, herein referred to as "ABC":
<https://www.abcmanagement.org/communities/bear-creek>

- Todd Bonecutter addresses the need for assistance; HOA Board Members are volunteers with full-time jobs. Bear Creek Estates has grown a lot and that means the community as more needs, complaints, paperwork, etc. The Board looked into management companies as a way to help alleviate the workload and stress.
- The Board talked with 2-3 companies for questions and quotes before deciding to go with ABC.
- Todd explained that ABC will be doing the "busywork" for the board to simplify the process, and that the Board still has final say on all decisions. Our representative Sandra will not act on behalf of the Board without approval.
- Sandra Musi, our community representative, shares they have 25 years of experience with 85+ Associations.
- ABC Management has Monday-Friday office hours, and residents can call or visit the office directly.
Email: sandra@abcmanagement.org
Phone: 260-402-0306
Address:
507 Airport North Office Park
Fort Wayne, IN 46825
- Emails from ABC have already been sent to residents, if you have not received any please contact Sandra with your information to be added to her list.

- Bill Moyer asks about the monthly “drive-thru” referenced in the email he received—Are we being policed?
 - Sandra: The drive-thru 1x/month is looking for covenant violations, they are recorded and sent to the Board for direction, only with permission from the Board will a letter be sent out to the neighbor in violation.
 - Chris Lamm asked if the current rules and bylaws include any fines. The answer: No, there are no fines currently in place, and as such, Above and Beyond Community Management cannot issue fines, just a letter requesting the situation be addressed.
- Tricia Martin raised a concern about preferential treatment if two neighbors had the same infraction.
 - Sandra replied that there would be no preferential treatment, and if the board ever instructed ABC to act on one and not the other, they would push back and handle it fairly.
- Scott Ackerman inquired about the length and cost of the contract with ABC. The contract is one year long and costs \$6,000 per year, or \$23 per lot per year. (Included in your dues.)
- Jackie Natecki asked whether all nine sections of Bear Creek Estates have different covenants and restrictions. The answer: Yes, and they cannot be unified until all lots are sold. With 80 more lots coming, unification will take time.
 - Chris Lamm shared that the new lots were originally proposed as a separate neighborhood called Bear Creek South, but the plan was changed to extend Bear Creek Estates instead. Now, all 11 sections must be sold before covenants can be unified.
- Randy Cook asked if ABC’s community drive-thrus are based on personal opinion of appearance. Todd clarified: as long as properties meet the written covenants and restrictions, they are in compliance. Aesthetic preference is not a factor.
- Brandon Caldwell asked if ABC gets out of the car during drive-thrus. No, they stay in the vehicle.
- Jonathan asked if it is a marked vehicle. No, but it will be a black SUV driven by a blonde woman. Todd added that the board can send out notifications before drive-thrus occur, to avoid concern about slow-moving vehicles.
- Joelle Long and Hannah Lee both spoke up in support of the management company, ABC. Hannah, a realtor, mentioned that working with ABC has made her transactions smooth and quick.

- Courtney Souder noted that using ABC will reduce certain expenses, and that neighbors will be able to pay dues online with a credit card.
 - Jonathan C. referenced an email from ABC asking for resident contact info. Sandra explained it's for emergency communications, dues reminders, etc.
 - Jackie Natecki asked about needing authorization for direct payments. Sandra confirmed authorization is not required, and that usually applies only to people with multiple properties, which is not relevant here. The email requesting contact info was sent July 22nd.
 - A neighbor asked about security of personal data. Sandra confirmed that no personal information is stored on their public website; it is kept on a separate, secure server.
 - A neighbor asked what would happen if the board had issues with ABC. The board would address concerns directly with the company. Since it's a one-year contract, the board can choose not to renew if serious problems arise.
 - Julie Odom asked how to get contact information for Sandra. Sandra had business cards available in the back of the room. If you did not receive the welcome email from ABC, reach out to a board member to get connected. (See above contact information for Sandra)
 - Julie also asked if residents get to vote on keeping ABC for another year. The answer: No, the general membership does not vote directly on this. Instead, the elected board makes the decision based on resident feedback. This process is governed by Section 4.20 of the bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.
 - Cole Dulin asked if ABC might help the HOA retain a board president for more than two years. Todd responded that this is definitely the hope.
- Neighbor Discussion (continued):
 - Chris Lamm praised the board for implementing bylaws that took years and multiple boards to complete, noting they are not overly restrictive and were enacted as promised at last year's meeting.
 - Shane Fisher asked about the legality of golf carts and ATV 4-wheelers in the community.
 - Todd replied that we are governed by the county and these are permitted.
 - Sean Miller added that while golf carts are not technically allowed on county roads, county officials generally do not enforce this within the addition.

- Online question submission: When will the overpass be done on 427?
 - Speculation 2029-2032 for project work and completion

5. Committee Reports

- Playground Committee (Tianna Caldwell)
 - \$2.719 Raised by the community with a goal of \$30K.
 - 2024 Cornhole Tournament had a very low turnout.
 - Children held lemonade stands and put profits towards the playground.
 - Highs BBQ Chicken Fundraiser was successful.
 - Tianna has been talking with the developer to see if he will help support us financially with the intended upgrade. As the neighborhood expands the playground should support more children.
 - Lakewood park as been approached about their old equipment potentially being an option for us.
 - Tianna notes that when we are able to move forward we will need to level the land the playground is on to help prevent injury.
 - Mercy Sherron is working with a contractor to replace the flooding area of the walking path near the park, free of charge as a Scouts project. Work starts 7/25/2025 and will last ~2 weeks. (40 feet of path)
- Social Committee (Tianna Caldwell)
 - We had a very well attended and successful Easter Egg hunt, estimating over 100 children attended.
 - Be on the lookout for future upcoming events and contact a board member if you would like to join a committee.
 - Joelle Long suggested a Bowling Fundraiser Night
 - Shawn Cunningham asked if we only fundraise to neighbors or all of Auburn?
 - We include all of Auburn via Social Media pages.
 - Shawn suggests an Auction with in-kind donations and potentially a radio DJ.

6. Final Remarks

- Todd opens voting, QR code displayed on the screen for convenience.

- Tricia Martin gives her statement for running as Treasurer, this was also sent out via e-mail before the meeting.
- Ashley Rickman confirms she will run for Director at Large since Joelle Long is ineligible due to not being a resident of 2+ years.
- Todd notes that if a position goes unfilled tonight the elected board will appoint neighbors to fill the empty positions.

7. Meeting Adjourned- 9:00 PM

Non-voting Secretary: Tina Connors