

# Fall 2021 Bristol Heights Neighborhood Association Newsletter

## President's Report

Warm greetings to all members and residents of the Bristol Heights village. We certainly hope that everyone found something for which to be appreciative over the Thanksgiving holiday. As the year-end holiday season approaches, we wish that you find opportunity to reflect on the past and look forward to a bright future. Actor and eternal optimist Michael J. Fox may have captured our collective sentiment: We are all tired of making lemonade! We simply need to keep affirming that this will all get better. We're all doing our best and should be confident that we'll get where we need to be. So then, on behalf of the Bristol Heights board and supporting cast, we wish you the most peaceful and joyous holidays to conclude 2021.

I have been writing these reports and, with a lot of help from a few friends, pushing out communications to the community since early 2018. Serving this community over the years has been a satisfying endeavor insofar as we have largely fulfilled the mission and at times exceeded expectations. For me personally, although I have not yet found the best timing-opportunity, it is my goal to contribute to mentoring a new team and step down from the office and board in 2022.

We held our most recent annual meeting at our own Tapestry park on September 1, 2021. Many Bristol Heights members and neighbors attended for the routine business and a good exchange of information. Ted Dawson has served as a Director and your Vice President since the annual meeting in November, 2018. Debra Bliss has served since November, 2019 as Director and Secretary. Both chose to not serve another consecutive term. Formally elected at this last 2021 Annual Meeting were Nick Davis and Rahmi Alameddine. Both had previously served as advisory Directors appointed by the elected Board. Joining the board this year as advisory Directors are Gabrielle Tollner and Anthony Castro. I was also reelected and asked by the board of directors to serve another year as your President.

We are very grateful to Ted and Debra for their dedicated service, leadership, deliberations, decision-making skills

and the many hours of time they have volunteered to the community. The new team is performing as well as the prior and we all owe a debt of gratitude to Nick, Rahmi, Gabrielle and Anthony for stepping up to the calling of running our community.

Chuck Degenhardt continues as our Community Manager with Sentry Community Management. There is little doubt that the manager has the most difficult and often thankless job. Our volunteer team, your board of directors, cannot operate or function as a corporation without the professional assistance of a management firm. We are thankful for Team Sentry and their dedicated service.

### *What have we accomplished recently?*

We have made good progress in the maintenance and repairs of physical features within our community. Elmsprings park has a brand-new playground. The irrigation pump facility received a lot of attention with the replacement of another motor and pump as well as media-blasting and repainting all of the pipes and steel work. Numerous components of the system were serviced and a final list of tune-up items will be completed before the waterflow begins in 2022. We doubled the dog waste stations to six. On the administrative side, the complex tax filing for FY-2019 and 2020 were completed with our diligent and expert CPA. We began work on an update to our reserves study and completed a challenging budget review and approval project for FY-2022. We also restructured and improved the architectural control review process. We held twelve board meetings, conducted four landscape walkthroughs with Pro Care and held three "walk and talk" informal property inspections as a board. Elsewhere in this newsletter we discuss progress on the Chinden roadway expansion, our entry monument project and our urban forest project. Most importantly, we have recruited new participants to serve on the board and also have some exceptional people volunteering for committee efforts. Gabrielle Tollner is redeveloping our community activities and the 2022 program looks like a lot of fun and excitement.

### *What is the vision for the future?*

Bristol Heights Neighborhood Association is a busy not-for-profit corporation that serves a large community of

544 homes and residents. It takes a village to keep it running smoothly. The revision of the governing documents has been on hiatus as we focus on priorities v. available resources. This is a halfway complete project that will be completed. We intend to engage the community in 'reasonable' plans to enhance the Tapestry Park as well as the eventual replacement of the fifth and final original playground that has served beyond expectations. Improvements to our landscaped areas is a perpetual program. We expect to step up the enforcement of the appearance of fences that are the responsibility of homeowners. And most importantly, we look forward to welcoming the volunteer efforts of interested members of the community to add contributions for the benefit of all.

My sincere best wishes to all for the coming new year!

*Joe LaGue*  
*BHNAprez@gmail.com*

#### **Our New Approach to Holiday Lighting at Eagle and Chinden Entrances:**

##### ***Start Over!***

Nick Davis deserves all the credit for evaluating options for the board. In the end, we have purchased an entirely new set of holiday lights and intend to reuse them each year. Last year we simply rented everything. Holiday lighting is expensive at the commercial level. But the reviews to date indicate the community likes the new decorations at Bristol Heights. *Nice job, Nick!*

#### **The "Road" to Completion of the ITD Project and Chinden Frontage**

The expansion project of Chinden, Hwy 20/26, continues. While it may appear complete, there remains 'punchlist' activity to be completed by the general contractor and subs. Overall, Bristol Heights is benefiting from the diligent efforts of a few Bristol Heights residents who dedicated remarkable energy and time working with ITD and other parties to achieve the results and appearance along our property perimeter. Not every community along Chinden will have a professionally designed landscape appearance. In fact, some will have none—not even routine weed mitigation. Bristol Heights pursued what has been installed and we will maintain it in perpetuity.

ITD's project is not quite done yet and we will see it to completion—hopefully by this coming spring.

#### **On Finances. . .**

You have likely received the Bristol Heights annual assessment billing and you're looking for further discussion on the financials. Let's get to it then:

#### ***Yes, the dues went up. Why the increase? How do we sit financially?***

1. Sound fiscal management is an imperative. Generally, we are doing well.
2. Economic conditions have, are currently, and will continue to affect us. Costs are rising in most aspects of our HOA operating expenses. Maintaining our common area grounds, trees, parks, irrigation water service, electrical and facilities has all been impacted by recent inflation. Nearly two thirds of our budget is dedicated to these ongoing expenses.
3. We have not increased our rate of assessment since 2011. Accordingly, our rate of dues increase has actually lagged the CPI (consumer price index) since the community was built. We have been very fortunate—for an extended period—but that is no longer sustainable.
4. Successful negotiations with ITD yielded a favorable settlement on the property we sold for the road expansion. And we needed it to add to our reserves fund. But it was not a panacea for our reserve funding obligations. It helped but did not, nor was it expected to, entirely satisfy our funding for long term obligations.
5. Reserve funding is carefully reviewed and adjusted, and despite proceeds from the sale of property to ITD, scheduled funding requirements should and will continue equitably and in perpetuity.
6. Within the community there are physical assets that have been patiently awaiting maintenance, restoration. or replacement: Playgrounds, irrigation systems, monuments, pumps and electrical equipment, concrete walks, clocks and controllers, trees and more—it's a long list. These areas have, are, and will be getting continued attention.

7. It is everyone's job to participate in ensuring our community's sound and robust financial future. For most of us, simply paying our assessments on time is all it takes. Others, particularly the treasurer and the board, ensure proper analysis, and then a program of scheduled revenue and expense is followed.
8. No two HOAs are exactly the same. Attempting to compare the rate of assessment to nearby communities based on how much other neighboring community members pay is seldom a worthwhile comparison. Each one has its own unique amenities, responsibilities and economies of scale.
9. Our goal is to keep Bristol Heights a well-maintained and enjoyable place to live, as well as an attractive community to prospective homebuyers.

**The Karnes Lateral – More Underground Irrigation Pipes of Concern** *by Nick Davis*

Another subterranean challenge has recently presented itself. As many of you are aware, the Treasure Valley benefits from a distributed irrigation network that began developing in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is common for sections of the canals and laterals to pass *under* what are now residential subdivisions. These subterranean pipelines are the maintenance responsibility of the property owners above them.

We have recently learned of a section of the Kearns Lateral that runs through the southern part of Bristol Heights that has demonstrated leaks and is being further investigated by the HOA. There is insufficient information at this stage. We will brief the community as we learn more.

**Build It and They Will Come: Our Entry Monuments** *by Rahmi Alameddine*

Homes in communities that are well-tended generally enjoy heightened appreciation by those living there, are more attractive to visitors, and are especially important to potential buyers. Monuments, being the first thing people see when they enter, fashion their first impressions, and if done properly, leave lasting positive appeal.

With this in mind, Bristol Heights established a committee of homeowners to spearhead monument construction at N Royal Park & N Bennington Way, as well as our aging Eagle entrance. While there's been some mostly COVID-related challenges with identifying contractors, costs & locating materials, we have made progress!

In October the Monument Committee met with Mr. Loring Montgomery, a local Landscape Architect with over 30 years' experience and long roots in the Treasure Valley. Mr. Montgomery expressed excitement about the project and proved to be well-informed about Bristol Heights, working on the Two Rivers Association design while Yorgason Capital Development was developing Bristol Heights in the 90's. He has also done work for big names in the valley such as Scentsy and Blue Shield on Eage Rd., among others; and is currently working on the Eagle Lakes development off State St.

With Mr. Montgomery's experience and the committees' vision, we are hopeful for robust monument progress in 2022. We look forward to bringing some exciting updates regarding our monuments in the near future!

**Evolution of our Architectural Control and Compliance Program**

A prime directive and purpose of a Homeowners Association is to preserve, protect, and enhance the asset value of its members' real estate, common areas, and amenities owned in common. Our mutual and individual responsibilities are defined in our Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs). In Bristol Heights, we do a respectable job overall in meeting that objective. Within this newsletter, our manager offers some routine reminders about frequent problems which, ultimately, detract from the appearance, curb appeal, and even desirability of our community. We often receive communications and inquiries from concerned homeowner-residents along the lines of the following issues:

*"What is the board or management doing about the \_\_\_\_\_ [apparent violation] at \_\_\_\_\_ [address]? When is the homeowner going to \_\_\_\_\_ [bring their property in compliance]?"*

Let's try and address this from a standpoint of that aforementioned *mutual responsibility*. Each property owner should be familiar with what is required to keep within the lines of compliance of our CC&Rs. For your board of directors and management to be frequently tasked with policing the violations within the community is a seemingly unnecessary and certainly a burdensome waste of resources. We all want that our leadership, volunteers, and management teams' time, skills and our collective funds be focused on the most important matters. Chasing compliance issues is neither desirable nor pleasant for anyone involved. If you do receive a management notice to address or correct a matter on your property, please do what's necessary and be an exemplary neighbor. We all agreed to do so when we took title to our property at close of escrow. Thank you. It is greatly appreciated!

#### **Property Maintenance and Street Usage:**

Each homeowner is responsible for maintaining all landscaping, lawns, and exterior of their home. Please be mindful of your neighbors and the common area when maintaining your property. The sidewalks in front of your home should be kept free of vegetation growth at all times.

As a reminder, the streets in our community are controlled by ADA County Highway District and the Boise City Code enforcement division of the Boise Police Dept. Long term parking exceeding 72 hours is prohibited. Loading and unloading of recreation vehicles is permitted for up to 24 hours. All recreation vehicles are to be stored inside of the home's garage or at an offsite facility.

#### **Architectural Control Committee Approval – Things Every Homeowner Should Know**

Please be aware that all improvements to the exterior of your home and upon your property require ACC review and approval before you begin your project. Please submit your plans for changes to Management via [CDegenhardt@sentrymgmt.com](mailto:CDegenhardt@sentrymgmt.com) and remember that the Bristol Heights website [www.bristolheights.org](http://www.bristolheights.org) has a section on Architectural Control, including the submission form, for your use. Fencing, re-roofing, exterior painting, installing a new patio or cover, utility sheds, room

additions, and essentially any and all exterior structures or additions or major landscape improvements to your property require ACC review and approval.

#### **Fencing, Upkeep & Maintenance**

We have dedicated another section of the website to the maintenance requirements and owner responsibilities of fences at <https://www.bristolheights.org/fences>

If your fencing needs repair or paint, please be proactive and make plans to resolve the issue at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Your board and management would rather not need to resort to enforcement measures over such minor homeowner responsibilities. A big THANK YOU to all owners who have meticulously maintained their fencing. It makes a difference and is appreciated!

#### **Continuation of Major Tree Work in the Common Areas this Winter**

Craig Campbell, an HOA member who is serving as chair of our Urban Forest Committee, has recently completed building an extensive GIS database of all of the common area trees in our community. He has captured an extraordinary dataset that allows us to make critical decisions and prioritize care for our 796 existing trees. Pro Care has also had a significant role in developing a care plan. We expect to continue work on internal common areas over the winter. In some cases, this will also involve some trees being entirely removed.

**Important Note:** The contractor's arborists may also need to work on some branches of common area trees via access to and through your property. You may be asked to support that effort as it will likely improve the tree canopy near your home.

#### **Member Surveys are Coming**

It has long been the goal of the board to develop a methodology for surveying the community on items of general interest. We simply need to improve our two-way communications to pursue the most desired initiatives and enhancements to our community. While Facebook and Nextdoor may be informally useful at some level, such media does not achieve BHNA's communications objectives. Although we held our annual meeting at a

convenient location, it remains that less than 8% of membership was present for the meeting in person. We realize that time is valuable, we are often over-committed, and participation in group settings has fallen out of favor. But the voice of the community, presently, is 'too quiet' for our road ahead. You can expect the online survey effort to begin, hopefully, during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2022.

### **2021 Finale and 2022 Community Events**

*by Gabrielle Tollner*

The events committee has a fun year planned! In what remains of 2021, we'll be putting on a Holiday Decorating contest in December, as well as the return of the "Walk the Lights" luminary event featuring Double Decker Espresso on December 17th.

2022 promises even more activities and opportunities to come on out and meet your neighbors! Events will include an Easter Egg Hunt, 4th of July Bike Parade, as well as our twice annual community yard sales. Events are announced and promoted on Facebook and Nextdoor, so log on to stay informed about upcoming activities and celebrations, as well as opportunities to volunteer! If you're interested in joining the Activities Committee to help these events come to life, email [bristolheightsevents@gmail.com](mailto:bristolheightsevents@gmail.com)

### **2022 Bristol Heights Community Events**

***Easter Egg Hunt***

Saturday, April 16th

***Garden Crawl/Yard Tour***

Saturday, May 12th

***Community Yard Sale***

Saturday, June 4th

***Independence Day Bike Parade***

Monday, July 4th

***Community Yard Sale***

Saturday, Sept 17th

***Halloween/Harvest Decor Contest***

All of October

***Lend-A-Hand Leaf Cleanup***

November (exact date is climate dependent)

***Holiday Decor Contest***

All of December

***Holiday Light Walk***

Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup> (2022)

*\*Dates are subject to change based on volunteer or community vendor availability. Notice will be made at [bristolheights.org](http://bristolheights.org) as well as Facebook and Nextdoor.*