



Mill Creek South Homeowners Association

P.O. Box 1283 | Charlottesville, VA 22902 | [www.millcreeksouth.org](http://www.millcreeksouth.org) | [board@millcreeksouth.org](mailto:board@millcreeksouth.org)

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## HOA BOARD ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES – 22 October 2025

**MEETING OPENING:** The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by Mike Stone. Those present: Mike Stone, Livi Stone, Laurie Axford, David Cooper, Kirk Jacobs, Carmen Trimble, and 14 homeowners. Minutes from the August 27, 2025 meeting were approved.

Mike Stone, the president, introduced the agenda and thanked our volunteers for keeping our front entrance looking good. Roberto Kamide planted Cosmos and Lantana and he and Livi Stone have kept our front entrance plants alive and thriving through the drought. Adele Wood, Del Erwin and her grandson Tucker helped to plant and maintain native plants to establish a habitat corridor. There have been 2 volunteer days to clean up invasive species plants led by Tom Saielli; Kathy and Kirk Jacobs donated a bench to our playground. A playground edge timber was replaced to keep it safe. Thanks to Adele Wood for providing us with a comprehensive Grounds Maintenance Plan.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT:**

Laurie presented the financial update, highlighting the operating account balance of \$8,545.93 as of August 22, and mentioned recent disbursements including dam dredging costs and Dominion Energy bills. The board approved the transfer of \$8,250 from the reserve account to the operating account for the dam dredging project.

The board reviewed the reserve account, which currently has \$19,895.43, with a goal of maintaining \$30,000. Mike explained that a recent dam dredging project cost \$8,700 and a reserve study cost \$2,500, leaving the account below the target. The board decided to contribute \$2,500 annually from the operational budget to rebuild the reserve fund over six years. They also discussed the possibility of seeking contributions from the Royal Oaks condominium association for dam maintenance due to runoff from their property.

The board discussed the possibility of levying a special assessment, with Carmen explaining that while the board has the power to do so, it should be used as a last resort. Laurie suggested that addressing financial needs, such as dam maintenance, might require homeowners to consider a small monthly fee increase or a larger assessment in the future. Adele highlighted the board's successful decisions in maintaining property value and preventing further tree loss, while Jay pointed out the need to engage younger or physically able homeowners to volunteer for tasks and potentially reduce future fee increases.

The HOA board discussed challenges with volunteer participation and the need for a quorum to make decisions, noting that without sufficient volunteers, they may need to hire an outside management company, which would increase fees substantially. Laurie and Mike explained that while current HOA fees are low at less than \$200 per year, they are limited to a 10% annual increase and may need to consider special assessments of up to \$500 over five years to address maintenance needs as the

neighborhood ages. The board discussed the need for higher participation in board elections, noting that only 36 out of 208 households voted, and explored the possibility of electronic voting in the future.

**GROUNDS REPORT:** The meeting focused on invasive tree species, particularly the Bradford pear and Tree of Heaven, which are problematic due to their rapid growth and impact on native vegetation. Adele and Deborah provided information on managing these trees, with Deborah suggesting that early removal is easier and recommending specific products for treating stumps. The group discussed the need for volunteers to assist with invasive species removal, as current efforts are costly and strain the budget. Mike emphasized the importance of volunteer support and encouraged residents to contact the board if interested in helping or joining the board. Grounds maintenance is continued with Finch Landscaping as they are reliable and responsive.

**ARC REPORT:** The meeting covered two main topics: road resurfacing plans for 2027 and the ARC report. Mike explained that VDOT is planning to resurface the roads and replace/repair existing damaged conduits, but not those under driveways. Kirk presented the ARC report, noting they received 5 tree removal requests, 3 roof/solar installations, and several paint/color change requests last year. The committee discussed color choices for garage doors and mailboxes, with Kirk noting that while there were no outright denials of guidelines, some modifications were made due to color inconsistencies. They specifically addressed a brighter red garage door on Stoney Creek, which Kirk and others determined was still within acceptable color ranges, and discussed the need for emphasizing the use of actual paint chips rather than contractor estimates for future updates. Mike mentioned that while mailbox requests had decreased compared to previous years, there were still some that needed replacing, and David shared his experience of ordering a replacement mailbox that matched the original color.

**SOCIAL REPORT:** The meeting covered upcoming neighborhood events, including a Halloween ice cream social on October 26th and a mailbox decoration contest with prizes, followed by a holiday house decoration judging on December 21st at 5 PM, and a spring egg hunt on April 4th. The group discussed issues with missing signs, with Laurie mentioning she has two signs ready to be reinstalled the following day. The conversation ended with thanks to volunteers Liz and Dell for their work on social events.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** The group discussed strategies to increase volunteer participation for maintaining the 65-acre property, which includes tasks like tree removal, playground maintenance, and spillway cleaning. Jay suggested rebranding tasks and marketing them as specific, concrete activities to make volunteering more appealing, while Kirk and Laurie emphasized the importance of breaking down tasks into manageable time commitments. Deborah offered to help by posting information on the Mill Creek South Facebook group, and the group considered creating a fundraising-style thermometer to track progress. The HOA board discussed legal

concerns regarding their Facebook group, with Carmen explaining that while individual homeowners can post, the board cannot officially use the platform to avoid liability issues. The board also addressed volunteer liability, with Carmen clarifying that while insurance covers volunteers for basic tasks, they should hire professionals for heavy machinery work.

The group discussed strategies for community engagement and communication, focusing on reaching younger demographics. They agreed to collect volunteer sign-ups at an upcoming ice cream social and consider an in-person meeting in May. Mike offered to prepare a sign-up list of tasks for volunteers.

The meeting focused on addressing a house on Whispering Oaks with an unregistered truck parked on the road. Mike explained that the homeowner states that the truck belongs to her friend who recently passed away. Despite efforts by Mike and local authorities to resolve the situation, they lack the means to tow the truck due to title issues. Susan suggested contacting NPR or a charity to remove the truck, as they handle title problems. Mike agreed to follow up with the homeowner explore the charity option.

**ADJOURNMENT AND FUTURE MEETING:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm. The next meeting date will be announced in the near future.

**WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN THE HOA BOARD!**

**HAPPY FALL!!**