

# Heatherstone Village Homeowners Association

P.O. Box 1321, Painesville, OH, 44077 [www.heatherstonevillage.com](http://www.heatherstonevillage.com)

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DATE: 15 May 2025

RE: Dues letter feedback

It has been brought to my attention that there has been some negative feedback regarding the letter that went out with every paper invoice that was mailed this week. Apparently, some owners felt that it was “rude” and “scolding” in tone. Since the letter was not seen by those owners that received their invoices by email, I will post a copy of it on the resources page, so that you can decide for yourself. I will be very clear that I wrote the text of the letter, and while I presented it to the other trustees for their review before sending it out, I am responsible for the language contained therein. Some posters of comments have even called for me to step down, if that is the tone that I am going to take. Well, I am not hiding. When you believe in your ideas, you have the confidence to stand up to debate and defend your positions. Every single person who is posting on the social media page, without exception, knows how to reach me. They know that they can always send an email to [trustees@heatherstonevillage.com](mailto:trustees@heatherstonevillage.com), to voice their concerns, and that I will see it and respond. So, I waited patiently for the questions to arrive in the inbox. How many have come in so far? Not one.

In a history class years ago, a professor was comparing the Greeks and the Romans, and what they accomplished. A line of his sticks with me to this day. He said that the Greeks were thinkers, and the Romans were doers. The Greeks debated, and their philosophy survives to this day. The Romans built roads to span an empire, aqueducts to bring water where it was needed, and much of that also survives to this day. In truth, we need both. I see a problem, and I set out to fix it, for the benefit of our community. I see a man that is struggling to keep up with the challenges that have been left to him to deal with, and I step up to help. I do not apologize for that. I believe that your team of trustees has made great progress toward making life better in Heatherstone. We have an accounting system, a website, an event info email blast list for getting information out to our members quickly, the ability to pay dues online, and we held our first owners meeting in 15 years. Like the Romans, we are doers.

I realize that my military background sometimes renders my decision-making and communications rather terse, and it can be viewed as brusque. I accept that as fair criticism, and as part of the price of getting things done. We have a lot to get done, and I don't always spend a lot of time worrying about people's feelings. But, I can state unequivocally that it is never my intention to offend anyone. Anyone that knows me, and anyone that attended the owners meeting, can affirm that I am professional and courteous in my dealings with people. I respect others' input and viewpoints, and I will accept help when it is offered. At the owners meeting, I asked if anyone would be willing to volunteer to serve as a new trustee. How many hands went up? Again, not one.

Everybody has a busy life. OK, I get that. It's left up to those few of us who did volunteer to get the work done. Fine. But, to hear through the grapevine (because I do not participate in the Facebook Group) that owners are angry with my tone, when I am trying to get as many folks switched over to email billing as possible? Folks, I (and the other trustees) am trying to make things better for all of us here. Some folks want to judge me by my tone, and complain about it on Facebook. The rest of us want to judge by our results. I am reminded of Jack Nicholson's character, Col. Nathan Jessup, in the film "A Few Good Men," who said "You sleep under the very blanket of freedom that I provide, and then question the manner in which I provide it." While I have not ordered any Code Red, nor crossed any other ethical lines, I can understand the frustration of being asked to do a tough job with limited resources, and then hearing about people complaining about the way things are being done.

So, to those who were offended by my tone, I apologize. To the person that posted that I should step down for being so rude, in my attempt to get things done, here is my offer to you: Step forward, publicly, and tell your fellow owners that you are willing to take on the job of President of the HOA. I will personally spend the required 50 hours of time with you, training you on all of the aspects of doing this job, and then you can have it. I will personally go with you, door to door, in this development, to gather the required votes to remove me and install you as our new HOA president, and I will thank you for relieving me. I do not need to do this. I still have two companies to run. Freeing up 20+ hours of my time each week would be a welcome change. But, we both know that you won't do that. In the military, we have a saying: "Lead, follow, or get out of the way!"

To all of the other owners, I will say this as clearly as I can: I will be brusque sometimes, and I will offend people sometimes, without meaning to. But, I will take care of the business of our community for the benefit of all, and I will not apologize for standing up for you and doing what needs to be done. To all of you that have expressed their gratitude for the efforts of the trustees, we offer a heartfelt thanks for your encouraging words of support. We truly appreciate it. Some of the posters on social media seem to feel that I am looking for a pat on the back, for volunteering to do this job. To quote my uncle, "I don't give a tinker's damn about that." My fellow vets will understand. You don't do the job for applause. You do the job because it's necessary, and only a few will step up to do it. As for me, I do this job because this is my home, and I want to help make it better. We raised three kids in this neighborhood, and have fond memories of those years, and I want to offer the same to the next generation. My wife and I watch you younger folks walking with your kids, and we are glad to help offer that same special neighborhood feeling to your families.

Some of our members will eagerly read this letter, looking for things that they can criticize and complain about to each other. Have at it. To everyone else, and I sincerely believe that you are the vast majority, thank you for your encouragement, your ideas, and your support.

Sincerely,

Russell Rancourt

