



SVLA BOARD DIRECTOR

LEWIS PONCE

First, I want to say it has been a privilege and an honor to serve on the SVL HOA Board of Directors these past four years. My first two-year term started out with the normal schedule of once-a-month Executive and Open Meetings in which the Board dealt with the typical decisions that an HOA Board has to manage: Issues with Homeowners, contracts, employees, vendors, legal problems, the reserves, and the annual budget. However, when the opportunity/necessity to purchase the SVL Country Club “fell” into our lap (due the combined efforts of Board Member Brian Hurst and the well-known community member Joe Brady) the responsibility of the Board took on a much more serious role. Suffice it to say that the next 3 years were filled with way more Board activity than anyone could have imagined would be necessary. Ultimately, the SVL CC (now Bear Valley CC) was purchased by a company that agreed, in writing, to keep the golf course as a golf course in perpetuity; this was a better-than-expected outcome for our community.

At this point I would like to pay homage to the other Board of Directors that made being on the Board a valuable and gratifying adventure that responsibly protected the value of every Homeowner’s investment. By the way, I purposefully did not mention what impact the Covid-19 Pandemic had on how and when the Board could meet or the decisions that had to be made, taking into account the constraints

this virus imposed on our HOA. At this point, we are all glad to move on from that topic.

JoAnne Romero is a thoughtful, devoted Board member that always had insightful input to offer based on her long history of living in the SVL HOA community since before the streets were even paved and having witnessed, first-hand, the growth and maturation of our little piece of heaven. Her devotion was evident in her consistent attendance and volunteering for subcommittees as well as her service as a board liaison to the Architectural Committee.

Cheri Boyd brought a Human Resources perspective to the Board that was important in helping the entire board understand the nuances and pitfalls that running a business such as an HOA can have on a regular basis. She has also been an active participant in several subcommittees; and her ability to organize and summarize highlights her professionalism.

Bill Scott apparently doesn’t understand that being retired means one can slow down and enjoy life. Instead, he came on the Board and poured his energy, experience, and knowledge into numerous HOA projects, providing insights that have helped the rest of the Board understand the mechanical and engineering side of projects that were either already underway or in need of being addressed. His business experience helped him bring aspects to light that were important to helping the Board make more knowledgeable decisions.

Brian Hurst is the type of person that you feel lucky to have on your team. He is both serious and light-hearted, but always has valuable input. I have little doubt that The Man Above put him in the right place at the right time so that his passion for golf would coincide with being within earshot of a conversation—while out of town playing golf –that resulted, ultimately, in the sale of the SVL CC to the SVL HOA and immediate sale of that SVL CC to the current owners, thus preserving the golf course in our Jewel of the Desert.

Brad Letner is one of those natural leaders that isn’t afraid to quickly whittle down a problem to the specific issue, make a recommendation, and move on to the next item on the agenda. Or, if more information is necessary to make a recommendation, he doesn’t hesitate to recognize this fact and press for that information to be obtained. While this may have taken some getting used to for the rest of the Board it served a valuable and necessary purpose when the Board would get bogged down and not see for the forest for the trees. No one on the Board was quicker to make motions than Brad. My suggestion is that every Board should have such a Director to keep the momentum going forward.

Brian Bickhart has been the Board President since our previous Board President stepped down. I admire his willingness to serve in that role because it takes a HUGE commitment of time and energy, not to mention the ability to suffer through the many negative comments directed at the person serving this role. In addition, the Board President has a much larger role to play in keeping both Directors and others in line. Brian’s stature is matched by his patience but is also reflected in his ability to make hard

decisions when necessary for the good of the SVL HOA. It should be noted that Brian, as the Board President, had to attend even more meetings than the other Directors, a time commitment that few who haven’t served in that role can appreciate.

I would be remiss if I didn’t mention Al Logan, our General Manager. While not a Board member, he does embody all the traits one could wish for in a General Manager. He is humble, has a good rapport with the staff, he brings issues to the Board that warrant the Board’s attention, and he provides background information for the Board if (and when) the Board needs to be involved in making decisions that are larger than the day-to-day running of the HOA. Al is also wise enough to constantly educate himself on the ever-evolving practice of running an HOA by attending seminars and developing a network of contacts with other HOA General Managers; this provides him with a resource base different from what a consultant might offer and has been used to the advantage of the SVL HOA on multiple occasions.

I wish I had several more pages to mention the many others that contribute to the success of the SVL HOA; here are a few that each and every Homeowner should be aware of that work diligently day after day to keep our HOA running: Jeaneen Beam, Director Administration & Human Resources; Nick Gonzalez, Director of Operations; Lisa Falcetti, Director of Public Safety; Dee Dee Walker, Accounts Manager; Clint Summers, Code Enforcement & Architecture Manager.

With Respect,
Lewis Ponce
Board Director, 2019-2020,
2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023