

Village at Alum Creek Vendor Selection  
For 2008 Lawn Care  
12/4/2007

**Background:**

Neil contacted Len and Ann to inquire on the timing for budget submission for the 2008 budget. Len suggested that we discuss it at the next Trustees meeting. Ann stated that all budget requests should be to the committee by 12/1/07.

At the 9/14/07 Trustee Meeting, the budget process was discussed, and Neil began the 2008 Lawn Care Bid Process.

Neil and Len met to discuss past years' bid process. Len provided Neil copies of last year's Green Shoes recommendation and a paper copy of the specifications. Len and Neil walked the common areas to acquaint Neil with the boundaries, so a map could be developed and submitted with the bid package.

On 9/13/07, Neil asked the Trustees for their recommendations for vendors to send the bid. Ann suggested we send a bid package to Abbruzzese Brothers. Neil added them to the list.

Neil researched via the web and yellow pages for Lawn Care Vendors that were in the local area. If he could find an address, they were added to the bid list. The following vendors were added to the bid list:

- Ohio Estate Lawn Care
- Green Shoes Lawn Care
- U.S. Lawns of Columbus
- Petersons Lawn Care and Landscape Maintenance
- Tarone's Lawn Care and Landscape
- D&S Lawn Management
- J E Stenger Lawn Service
- DeFrancisco & Sons, LLC
- Railside Lawn Svc Inc
- Spellacy's Turf-Lawn, Inc
- Mclain's Lawn Care Service
- Buckeye Landscape
- American Classic Lawn Care
- Flourish Lawn & Landscape
- Schmelmer Services
- The Lawn Salon
- Saksa Landscape
- Abbruzzese Brothers Inc.
- Rine Landscape

On 9/17/07, Neil met with the Orange Township Zoning (Tom) to discuss if the HOA needed to continue to mow the church property. Tom stated we had no obligation to mow the property. Later that day, Neil met with the pastor at the church to discuss mowing. Neil offered to continue to mow the frontage up to the fence, but the church would need to mow behind the fence and take care of the trees. The pastor agreed, and sent an email stating the agreement to the new mowing arrangement.

On 9/18/07, Neil sent the bid package to the Trustees for their approval, and later that day mailed the bid package (including a map of the common areas) to the list of vendors. The date for bid submission was stated as 10/31/07

Walkthroughs were scheduled with the eight vendors that asked for walkthroughs. There were multiple purposes for the walkthroughs. The primary reason was to make sure that the vendor understood what we wanted done, and to answer questions as they see the property. It also gave Neil the opportunity to talk with the vendor about their company, get a feel for their expertise, and see how they handle customers. The vendors that provided a

## **Vendor Selection Recommendation**

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bid with no walkthrough left questions about if they understood what needs to be done, how receptive they will be to customer input, and why they would not want to personally speak with the person making the recommendation.

On 11/1/07, Neil transposed the bid information to the summary sheet. References were contacted and the bids were reviewed with the Landscaping and Maintenance Committee on 11/11/07. On 12/13/07, the bids were reviewed with the Trustees and the Landscaping and Maintenance Committee recommended that the two front-runners (Buckeye Landscape and Ohio Estate Lawn Care) be called back for a final interview with the Committee. These interviews were held on 12/4/07. The committee members in attendance were Neil Wheeler, Marty Luxeder, Mark Miner, and Len Fisher.

After the interviews and a discussion, the Vendor Selection Recommendation was unanimously agreed to by the Landscape Committee.

### **Changes to the Specifications from 2007:**

The 2008 specifications are essentially the same as the 2007 specifications. There were some minor wording changes, and an emphasis on reporting from the vendor. There was also an emphasis and clarity of responsibility for tree and flowerbed care, as these are areas that need to be improved.

The mowing expectation was also slightly changed. As stated above, the amount of church property being mowed was reduced from approximately 55 feet in from the road to just to the fence-line.

Additionally, it was requested that the approximately 4 acres that abut the Morningside and Parklawn lots be included in the weekly mowing, instead of bush hogging 4 times a year. The amount of acreage to be bush hogged was reduced from approximately 8 acres to approximately 4 acres. The affected homeowners have expressed their desire to have this green space mowed weekly, just like the other green spaces in the subdivision. This seems to be a reasonable request, and it is not clear why it was never included in the mowing specifications (other than it was not a priority to M/I).

### **Vendor Selection:**

After carefully comparing dollars, contacting references, and discussing "soft" characteristics (first impressions, professionalism, follow-up, knowledge of horticulture, etc), the Landscaping and Maintenance Committee recommends that we proceed with Ohio Estate Lawn Care as our landscape provider for 2008.