

Official 2025 GLA Board News

GLA Directors: President Doug Gill, VP Tim Brockett, Treasurer Claudette Dirkers, Joe Bezotsky, Debbie Newby, Tyson Wright, Steve Anderson, and Ryan Kinports.

~ 2025 President's Report and Farewell Address ~

When the 2025 Board got ramped up in January, we had a number of challenges. Our long-time GLA legal counsel resigned in January, requiring us to find and retain new representation. Mother Nature had her plans for us, too. Unprecedented snowfall led to record spending on snowplowing in the first half of the year. There were unrecoverable problems with the GLA website, necessitating a complete rebuild of the website by GLA VP Tim Brockett. We faced a large number of past-due assessment balances and a slow and inefficient collection process, demanding tremendous time and attention to detail from GLA Treasurer Claudette Dirkers to sort through. In the midst of all of these things, we had to work with a brand-new road contractor for snowplowing and maintenance, who just replaced someone after the sale of his decades-long business, and who had been handling year-round GLA road maintenance for many years.

I had several key objectives for 2025. I wanted to obtain the road liability opinion from legal counsel who was authorized by the 2024 Board. I believed then, and still believe, that road safety liability could be ruinous for the Association. I wanted to materially improve the documentation of the project review process. For too long, committee turnover and poor record-keeping made it all but impossible to manage and enforce the Master Plan and collect the proper amount of fees. I wanted to increase assessments and overhaul how the GLA determines its assessments and charges fees for project review. If we do not keep pace with inflation, we will fall behind in all areas and jeopardize road safety and quality, which in turn creates life safety and wildfire risks, and reduces property values. I wanted to forward a Bylaw change to close a dangerous voting loophole created by the 2024 Board. Lastly, I wanted to modernize the 2008 Road Policy. It had not been updated in 17 years and failed to reflect the increased traffic on feeder roads resulting from years of active development in Glastonbury.

How did we do? Well, as is often the case, it depends on whom you ask. When my wife and I were looking for property in the valley, we encountered several people who did everything from rolling their eyes to outright warning us about the GLA. I remember thinking to myself, "How bad could it be?" The first red flag was the amount of unpaid assessments on the balance sheet. The second was the lack of basic maintenance on roads. But the unparalleled views hooked me. Once I was a landowner, I started to attend committee and board meetings. Needless to say, my eyes were opened and I then knew what everyone warned me about. Rather than flee, I decided to volunteer, first on committees, then to run for the board. I thought I could make a positive difference, bringing my business and non-profit experience to the table.

What I did not fully appreciate then was just how entrenched the establishment was in GLA governance and the lengths to which they would go to protect their power. From the very beginning of last year, my first year on the board, it was clear the path ahead would be an arduous, uphill battle. The duplicity ran deep. But in a weird confluence of events, in November 2024, the landowners delivered a majority vote to those who wanted progress and positive change.

As this year began to unfold, it was very certain the clique would not go quietly into the night. They launched personal attacks, made legal threats, and engaged in character assassination. Sadly, rather than get involved, many landowners bought into malicious rumors.

The 2025 Board would not be deterred. Despite constant attacks on our motives and character, we moved forward to do the work of the Association. This unwavering commitment to delivering value for landowners drove me and other board members to ignore the barrage from this small, but organized and relentless group. We cut wasteful spending, implemented new treasury procedures increasing collections, completed work on dangerous road safety sites, reducing liability for all, ratified a new Road Policy, created a project management database, simplified and increased project review fees, which means more revenue without impacting assessments, and passed an important Bylaw change. There were also a lot of small victories as well, like getting meeting minutes published on time, something the 2024 Board could not manage. All in all, an exceptional year!

Knowing that you have likely heard all kinds of fanciful tales about conflicts of interest or the board not following the Bylaws, I want to make sure you know the facts. Not for vindication, but rather so you can make informed decisions in the future about who runs your Association and their motives.

False Claim One: The Board fired its legal counsel to find counsel to give it the sought-after opinion it desired regarding road safety. That malicious rumor was dispelled when I circulated the resignation email from Attorney Seth Cunningham to those spreading this untruth. No apology was forthcoming.

False Claim Two: Changing the Road Policy will bankrupt the GLA. That fearmongering was dispelled when no money was spent on feeder road maintenance in 2025.

False Claim Three: The board, at all times must have an equal number of representatives from North and South. A landowner hired a lawyer to assert this claim. So, we wasted valuable time and resources refuting this. Read Article VI of the Bylaws. The language is abundantly clear, so this issue went nowhere. Just another waste of time and energy not spent on solving real challenges.

False Claim Four: Landowner Gravert in High South sued the Association and filed a TRO to halt road work on Sagittarius Skyway, which he opposed, that was within the Association's legal easement. Read GLA Covenant 8.01. This cost landowners a mere \$10,000. The GLA prevailed and moved forward with the work after significant delays, which caused a domino effect on the entire fall gravel road grading schedule. Beyond the colossal waste of landowner money and board focus, this should serve as a stark warning to anyone who claims road safety is just "a special interest matter." I want that figure of \$10,000 to sink in. Imagine what it will cost all landowners if someone dies on a

dangerous road, or a propane truck crashes and bursts into flames, burning down homes. These are serious matters that require serious people to address them.

False Claim Five: The Board has mismanaged the 2025 Annual Election. For those of you who do not know, the accounting firm hired to count the votes had a misstep. It was material and required careful handling. What is more, there were a number of non-balloted candidates who, rather than being transparent and declaring their candidacies, ran an underground campaign. The board has the duty to ensure candidates' eligibility before, during, and after an election. It became known to the 2025 Board that a couple of these write-in candidates, who would have otherwise been elected, had violations of the Covenants. Ultimately, the Board determined that four candidates were disqualified from serving. One had an eyesore condition of their parcel, one employs more non-family members than the Master Plan allows for Light Manufacturing 1.7, one was delinquent financially, and one is a non-landowner resident in GAV, who was not counted. The Board followed the governing documents and fulfilled its fiduciary responsibility. It should be noted that in two cases, the Board gave the candidates an option to cure their violations.

The landowners should consider reforming the election Bylaws. Only when there are not enough declared ballot candidates to fill open board seats should a write-in candidate be considered. There should be full transparency for ALL landowners to know who is running for the board as THEIR duly elected representatives. It is ironic that a number of these same folks crying lack of transparency by the 2025 Board were involved in this election artifice.

Much work lies ahead. There are long-term issues facing the GLA. We are doing nothing to get ahead of road issues. Continuing to put a band-aid on an infected wound will not work much longer. The laws of economics cannot be suspended.

I was called "nefarious" and "slimy," among many other names, for the first time in my life. That is not the way volunteers should be treated. It is one thing to disagree with a decision or a philosophy; it is another thing to attack one's character. Rather than focus on the individual and what group they belong to, or don't belong to, the community would be better served by applying energy toward solutions and creative problem-solving. Serving this community should not be a bloodsport. Landowners have lost, and will continue to lose, the time, talents, and energy of some very fine people who want nothing but the best for Glastonbury. What a shame.

I urge each of you to pay close attention. Get involved. Attend meetings. Read minutes. Ask questions. Only when all landowners engage can we make sustainable progress.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you this year.

The best to you and your family for the holidays.

Douglas W. Gill
President, GLA Board