An Open Letter to the Board and Community of Heidelberg Beach:

Heidelberg Beach has been a part of our family for many generations; our great-grandfather Charles Frederick Brouse, Sr., was one of the original members of this community. We have been blessed to enjoy this community and hope that future generations of our family are able to do the same.

The problem with the infrastructure is a difficult one to solve, and the Board has the difficult task of finding a solution for our community that will work for everyone. Unfortunately, raising the assessments roughly $1,000 per cottage in 2017 and even more in 2018 is going to put a hardship on many residents. It would be horrible to lose members of our community because such large increases in assessments would put too much of a burden on them financially.

We also understand that the infrastructure has to be repaired. The Board has put in a lot of time and hard work to get us to this point, but this is a vital and important decision for our community and we should all do our part.

We are asking the Board to postpone voting on increasing assessments for several months, and let the community step up and see what other options we can find. We are a diverse community, with a wide network and many connections we can tap into. Let’s use them!

Over the last few days, our family has unearthed a few options that are worth pursuing:

1. Kathy and Mark Hayman spoke with Jeff Hoepf, Manager and Loan Officer at Ag Credit. He is researching a program thru Rural Development, USDA and Ag Credit that could help out with projects like this, either thru grants or low cost financing.
2. My sister and I are looking at potential options thru the Ohio EPA. They have a lot of grants available that we are seeing if we might be eligible to use. The Ohio EPA also has a Water Supply Revolving Loan Account/Drinking Water Assistance Fund. This provides below-market interest rate loans, awarded to eligible applicants for planning, design, and construction of water treatment facilities, storage facilities and distributions system improvements. There are no minimum loan amounts; the maximum amount is established each year (for 2015 it was $40 million). Approximately $150 million can be loaned out each year. Eligibility is: Community water systems, both privately and publicly owned and nonprofit non-community water systems.
3. A Go Fund Me account. You can read more how this works here: https://www.gofundme.com/questions/
4. Can someone research the possibility of religious grants?
5. Can someone research the possibility of historical site grants?
6. Jeff Hayman, who works in construction, presented some ideas to the board regarding possible ways to save money including running a line down the path instead of tearing up the road, and having the run-off go into the creek, potentially saving up to $250,000.

With our current board members, new board members and the fresh eyes of the community, we can all work together to come up with an outcome that works for both our community and its residents. Again, please postpone the vote on assessments for several months; this is a crucial decision for our community and we should take our time to exhaust all possibilities and come up with the best solution possible.

Thank you,

Brooke Benedict & Tiffany Benedict