

# SOMERSET ESTATES HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Maximizing Home Values, Quality of Life, Positioning as Premier Community

## What's Up #33: October 29, 2019

### 2020 Budget Approval Approaching

The board plans to review and adopt the proposed 2020 Budget at its upcoming November 12th meeting at 6:30 pm at the Mountain View Fire Station in Niwot. A budget meeting packet, including the board-proposed budget, will be mailed to homeowners shortly thereafter.

There will be a subsequent homeowner meeting to ratify the budget on Thursday, December 5th at Niwot High School at 7 pm. All homeowners are encouraged to attend these meetings to learn about the budget and other community matters.

A summary of the draft proposed budget (as of the October 22 board meeting) and how it compares to the 2019 budget follows:

	2019 BUDGET	Proposed 2020 BUDGET	Change 2019 to 2020
<b>INCOME and EXPENSE SUMMARY</b>			
<b>INCOME</b>			
Assessments plus other income	\$ 223,500	\$ 241,300	\$ 17,800
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Administrative	\$ 37,215	\$ 34,675	\$ 2,540
Property/Water/Asset Resolution and Long-Range Planning	\$ 77,000	\$ 65,000	\$ 12,000
Landscape Maintenance	\$ 76,350	\$ 79,300	\$ (2,950)
Infrastructure Maintenance (Fences, Ponds, Lights, etc.)	\$ 17,150	\$ 48,825	\$ (31,675)
Utilities (Electricity & Water)	\$ 15,900	\$ 15,500	\$ 400
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$ 223,615	\$ 243,300	\$ (19,685)
Interest Income on Reserve Account	\$ 115	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,885
<b>NET OPERATING INCOME</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

This budget is based on our first full year of actual expenses and an analysis of our going forward priorities. **The 2020 budget incorporates a modest dues increase to \$675 per quarter (from \$625).** As the dues increase is less than 10%, the budget will be ratified at the December 5 meeting unless a majority of all

homeowners vote to reject the budget.

While we welcome all homeowner input, input received prior to or at the November 12th board meeting is most helpful. **You may send questions or comments to [info@somersetstates-hoa.com](mailto:info@somersetstates-hoa.com) and/or attend this board meeting.** The draft detailed line item budget is available upon request.

What's Up #31 included an explanation of the board's Financial Planning Process ([link here](#)). This process includes three financial planning exercises: Annual Operating Plan, Deferred Maintenance Catch-up, and Long-Range Planning for maintenance and improvement of our major assets. **The proposed 2020 budget includes these approximate allocations by category:**

- Annual Operating Plan = \$130,000
- Deferred Maintenance Catch-up = \$48,000
- Asset Resolution and Long-Range Planning = \$65,000

**Our expenses in 2019 have included working through a long list of deferred maintenance items**, such as: repair of dead grass areas, refurbishment of flower gardens, refurbishment of the waterfall, structural tree pruning and removal of pest trees, repair of broken concrete, repainting of faded signs and bollards, replacement of dumpster enclosure, etc. with more projects scheduled to be completed this year. Additional projects are planned for next year, including refurbishing the fences along Somerset Drive and Longview Drive, removal of overgrown and pest vegetation from ponds/waterfalls, continued work on common area trees and garden areas, etc.

Chronic underfunding prior to 2018 left us with no reserves for these types of projects, and the 2020 Budget does not yet earmark a contribution toward accumulating a reserve fund. At this point, the board is prioritizing working through the known list of deferred maintenance items over parking funds in a reserves account. **Once the deferred maintenance is completed, future funds can be shifted to reserves for future needs.**

**Property/Water/Asset Resolution and Long-range Planning ...** As explained in the Financial Planning document, the board is engaging experts to help us develop prudent long-range, multi-year plans regarding our irrigation infrastructure, fences, and trees. Having a thoughtful maintenance and restoration plan to address our common areas will allow us to establish a reserve plan that accommodates our estimated long-term needs.

**The anticipated long-range plan for our irrigation infrastructure is linked to our on-going work to sort out certain historic ambiguities about water**

**rights and common property title.** While certain aspects of these issues has been with the community for many years, the May 2017 court decision invalidating the assumed merger with Somerset Place/Heights elevated the importance of resolving these issues to establish a firm legal foundation for our community.

We are extremely grateful to the volunteer Water Committee, comprised of John Ryan and Bob Uhler, who are bringing their considerable experience and expertise to help us navigate these challenging objectives. As part of their efforts, SEHOA engaged a water law firm and water engineering firm to help us chart a path forward. **The 2020 Budget includes an allocation of \$65,000 for legal and professional costs related primarily to our long-term strategy for water, as well as other assets.** This effort is ongoing and the total cost to ultimately implement an effective water and other asset strategy remains a significant unknown.

## Keeping Dogs Outdoors: Risks and Responsibilities

A key objective of our association is to maximize our Quality of Life in Somerset Estates. Many of us own dogs and consider them to be members of our families. Without doubt, our pets contribute to our Quality of Life here. **With the rewards of dog ownership, however, the choice to keep dogs outside brings exposure to risk and a responsibility to our neighbors.**

As you undoubtedly know, there is a significant population of coyotes living in the open space around Somerset Estates. These animals easily jump over perimeter fences and regularly patrol the area in search of prey. **Our domesticated dogs are vulnerable and coyotes have taken several dogs over the years.** Smaller dogs are also appealing targets of raptors and even the occasional mountain lion. Please be aware of these risks and exercise care when placing your dogs outside, especially when unsupervised.

In addition to the risk of attack by wildlife, **dog owners who leave their dogs outside are also responsible for adhering to two relevant provisions of our community declaration** (adopted in August, 2018). The full declaration can be found on the SEHOA website under "Governing Documents". Excerpts of these two provisions include the following provisions:

Section 6.2.2: No Owner or Guest shall make or permit any unreasonably disturbing noises ... that will unreasonably interfere with the rights, comforts or

convenience of other Owners or Guests. **Habitually barking, howling or yelping dogs shall be deemed a nuisance.**

Section 6.2.8 ... residents may keep not more than four (4) customary household pets (such as dogs and cats) ... as long as no more than two (2) dogs spend time outside unattended on the Lot, and such pets ... do not make objectionable noises or otherwise constitute a nuisance or inconvenience to the residents of other properties ... **Following Notice and Hearing, if an animal causes or creates a nuisance or unreasonable disturbance or noise, the Executive Board may levy reasonable fines, refer the matter to Boulder County Animal Control, or take any other reasonable measure to address the nuisance or unreasonable disturbance or noise.**

Please be considerate of your neighbors. A dog that barks intermittently is not unusual. However, **leaving a dog outside that barks incessantly is not reasonable and severely harms the peace and tranquility of our neighborhood.** We encourage neighbor-to-neighbor communication to address concerns in this area. We expect our growing Culture of Cooperation to yield reasonable outcomes. If, however, further escalation is required, homeowners may submit a complaint to the board.

## **New Dumpster Enclosure**

One small example of our progress in whittling away the lengthy list of deferred maintenance items includes construction of a new dumpster enclosure. Replacement of the previous dilapidated enclosure was on the "To Do" list for many years. While it's unlikely anyone will be impressed by its fresh appearance, leaving areas in disrepair contributes to an overall shabby appearance. **Bit by bit, we're making progress!**



## Legal Opinion Regarding Continuity of Governance

A Somerset Estates homeowner recently raised the question of whether there was continuity of governance in our community. More specifically... **Were Somerset Estates homeowners legally bound by covenants after the court decision (May 2017) and before formation of the new HOA (March 2018) and/or adoption of the amended declaration (August 2018)?**

The board turned to our outside counsel for a legal opinion on this technical question. **Our counsel provided strong assurance that covenants related to our properties remained continuously enforceable.** The full opinion letter is now posted to the SEHOA website and you are invited to download it by clicking [here](#).

## Thanks to Autumn Ridge

Previous issues of What's Up have described successful results of neighbor-to-neighbor arrangements to trim or remove trees to restore mountain views. Three Somerset Estates homeowners recently approached a resident of Autumn Ridge to our north and successfully arranged to restore a view corridor. **This is a**

welcome development and we extend our thanks and gratitude to our neighboring subdivision for their cooperation.

## Upcoming Events at a Glance

There is a lot going on in and around SEHOA! Make a note of the following preliminary dates and join in. These are all subject to change, so be sure to monitor the SEHOA website for any last minute schedule changes.

### **Book Club Meeting - November 12**

The next meeting of the neighborhood book club is Tuesday, November 12, at 11 AM at the home of Gayle Becker, 8036 Bellflower Ct. **The book is Red Notice by Bill Browder.** Everyone is invited! Please RSVP to Gayle at [gayle@beckercapital.com](mailto:gayle@beckercapital.com).

### **Executive Board Meeting - November 12**

Attend the upcoming Executive Board meeting to learn about the proposed 2020 Budget at the **Mountain View Fire Station, November 12 at 6:30pm**

### **Homeowner Budget Meeting - December 5 at Niwot High School**

All owners are encouraged to attend the homeowner meeting to ratify the 2020 Budget on **Thursday, December 5, at 7 PM at Niwot High School.** Official meeting notices, including the proposed budget, will be mailed on November 13. The proxy form will allow you to be represented if you are unable to attend the meeting. In addition to the budget, the Board will provide an update of SEHOA matters at the meeting.

### **Book Club Meeting - January 14**

Diane Jensen will be hosting the next book club meeting (tentative date). Book to be announced, but put **January 14 on your calendar!**

## Contact SEHOA

Association Name and Address

Somerset Estates Homeowners Association  
P.O. Box 621

Niwot CO 80544

Website

SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Property Management

TrioProperty@comcast.net

Inquiries via email

Info@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Board Members

Marc Arnold, President

Marc@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

(Two Year Term Expiring March 2021)

Bill Harris, Vice President

BillH@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

(One Year Term Expiring March 2020)

Paula Hemenway, Secretary

Paula@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

(Two Year Term Expiring March 2021)

Herb McPherson, Treasurer

HerbM@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

(One Year Term Expiring March 2020)

Mark Jensen, At Large

MarkJ@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

(Two Year Term Expiring March 2021)

## **SEHOA Contacts**

Architectural Control Committee

Larry Becker, Chairman

LarryB@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Scott Abrahamson, Secretary  
ScottA@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Barbara Stager  
BarbS@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Bob Uhler  
BobU@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

(send ACC requests to LarryB@SomersetEstates-HOA.com)

#### Social Committee

Richelle Burnett  
richelleburnett@gmail.com

#### Welcome Committee

Anita Harris, coloradoanita@gmail.com  
Richelle Burnett  
Kamla Chopra  
Beth Ryan

#### Water Committee

John Ryan, Chairman  
JohnR@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Bob Uhler  
BobU@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Marc Arnold  
Marc@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Paula Hemenway  
Paula@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

#### Road Repaving Study Group

Andrew Cousin, Chair  
Doug D'Appuzzo  
Bill Harris  
Danny Lindau



# Community Contacts

Niwot Community Associations

We are fortunate to live in a warm and inviting area. Click here to explore our many neighborhood associations.

## Anonymous Survey

Go ahead... tell us what you really think!

[Click to send an anonymous message to the board](#)

## In Case You Missed the Last Issue

Click here to read the last newsletter which included the following topics:

Save the Date: Budget Homeowner Meeting December 5, 2019, 7:00pm

ACC Courtesy Notice Update

SEHOA Website/Newsletter Scores 90%

Fence Refurbishment Progress

©2019 Somerset Estates HOA | PO Box 621, Niwot CO 80544

[Web Version](#)

[Preferences](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by  
[GoDaddy Email Marketing](#)®