

8 June 2021

Gardens of the Rio Grande Homeowners Association Board Meeting

Board Members Attending: Kim Fusselman, Marilyn Showalter, Jerry Simon, Chris Bigge

Residents Attending: Juan Camacho, Steve Fusselman, Dave Herstedt

Tentatively, the Annual Gardens HOA meeting will be scheduled in August 2021. Gardens members are encouraged to cite issues for discussion at the Annual meeting. Also, three HOA Board positions (KF, MS, JS) will be voted on. Consider placing your name in nomination for a Board Seat. The community will be strengthened with your participation.

Garden's Governance: The Garden's HOA Board has five members elected by the membership of the Community. Each serves a two year term; three are elected in odd years and two are elected in even years. All Board Members, committee members (Landscape, Security etc.), and Gatekeeper serve as volunteers without compensation. The question of a professional management group managing the Garden's business is intermittently asked. The simple answer is that the expenses of the Gardens would likely be much more than double.

The South Commons Entrance Project (SCEP, see below) should be presented at the Annual HOA Members meeting to obtain Community agreement.

Kim Fusselman will update the CCR's to include a few clauses that have been modified with appropriate community approval (2/3 vote) over the course of time (discussion below).

Letters will be sent to members whose landscaping is in dire need of attention.

Landscape Report: Dave Herstedt

Dave presented a large schematic drawing of the plans to enhance the beauty and safety to the South Common. The roadway was widened, gravel added to reduce dust and increase durability, a safety railing was added, railway ties and an attractive border wall were added to reinforce the access road.

The South Commons Entrance Project (SCEP) is nearing conclusion. The SCEP was a cooperative project between the Gardens and 2800 Aloysia Ln. There is some controversy about consequences that may derive as the project is completed. The SCEP should be presented at the Annual HOA Members meeting to obtain Community agreement.

The primary concerns are:

- the attractive entrance traffic below the safety railing was not intended to be a pedestrian pathway. The railroad ties and bricks supporting access road improvement are on Gardens property. The entrance (and pathway) is likely Gardens property.

- plans for additional shrubs/trees to be planted as part of the beautification (several were recently planted); irrigation is provided by 2800 Aloysia.
- the plan calls for railing to be extended leading into the South Common that could have consequences for member access

MAY 2021: All landscape duties were performed as required. Emphasis remained on hand pulling weeds at many locations: the ditch banks, Manhattan and MTN gate areas, SCA, NCA, Postal areas, LSL & fence line along MTN Road. Much organic debris removal and deposited at the Albuquerque organic recycling center.

A natural weed killer provided by Janice Parker will be evaluated and effectiveness communicated. The weed killer contains Salt, Vinegar and Dawn dishwashing soap.

Significant items for May include:

- May 7, 14, 20, 28 – Cut Grass & trim all edging in NCA & SCA.
- May 7 - One additional day added to watering time for sprinklers and bubblers. NCA & SCA sprinklers and bubblers monitored and adjusted.
- May 13 - 7 plants/bushes and 6 bags (50 lb.) of Helena 16-8-8 fertilizer were purchased. The 7 plants/bushes were installed at the SCA and LSL.
- The damaged post at the LSL USPS mail box drive thru was repaired & reinstalled.
- May 14 - All grass areas and numerous plants were fertilized.
- May 21 - Spot sprayed all grass areas with Spurge power weed killer. Repaired sprinkler in NCA east of Linda & Gwen's home.
- May 27 - New plants/bushes (7) installed in SCA; All new plants/bushes fed with Miracle Grow plant fertilizer and 16-8-8 N.P.X to established plants in SCA only.

J & E Tree Service will be contacted to provide a bid for tree trimming. They will evaluate the status of one tree near the entrance of the South Common to determine if it is diseased (currently seeping). If the tree is deemed to be diseased, replacement trees will be considered.

The road at the corner of Aloysia Ln and Manhattan will be fixed as before with Seal Master (Amado and John).

Mountain Gate: The keypad was replaced (some numbers required significant pressure). The Battery backup failed; a new battery did not activate the backup system. The battery backup unit must be replaced at the Mountain Gate.

The call box needs a new board and chips. It will not support 10-digit dialing which becomes mandatory in October. Software needs to be upgraded and installed on a personal laptop (J. Hanson). (The Gardens gatekeeper laptop is still running Windows 95, barely functions and the battery no longer holds a charge.)

Jeff Hanson received a quote from Triwest Fence LLC (previously Gate-It) for a Battery Backup unit (\$1,467) and a New 1835 Control Board (\$3,250) for the Mountain Gate. the board which will allow us to use newer software and will support the 10-digit dialing when it becomes mandatory this fall.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Simon

Accounts as of June 6, 2021

• Checking	\$25,833.92	
• Landscape Checking	3,321.75	
• Undeposited Funds	2,988.33	
Operating Fund		\$32,144.00
• Savings (Road Reserve)	\$56,872.59	
Road Reserve		\$56,872.59
Total All Accounts		\$89,016.59

History

Original CCR's described the community as Unit I (36 lots) and III (23 lots). Maintenance assessments were 75.79% and 24.21%, respectively. In 2004 the issue was raised to have all 59 lots assessed at the same rate. Some objections and concerns were raised as Unit III houses and lots are smaller and do not interface with common areas (SCA/NCA) or open spaces.

A special meeting was held November 13, 2004 where the issue was discussed and voted on. The community by > 2/3 vote decided that the Gardens are one community and all residences would have equal quarterly maintenance fees from then forward.

The CCR's detail that annual increases of maintenance fees >10% require >2/3 vote by the community. As an historical perspective dues were as follows: 4th Quarter 2004 - \$90; 3rd Quarter 2005 - \$150; 2nd Quarter 2009 - \$210; 1st Quarter 2012 - \$225; 1st Quarter 2018 - \$246; 1st Quarter 2021 - \$250.

Concern is sometimes expressed about the increase in Landscape Maintenance within the Gardens. The Landscape budget was \$4,000 in 2004 and the current 2021 budget is \$36,700. Subtracting the supply budget of \$3500, the cost of labor is \$33,200 per year.

The Gardens has four common areas that require irrigation, mowing, trimming trees and bushes, debris removal, desert landscape tending, etc. The maturity and complexity of the Common Areas has increased the work and expenses required for maintenance.

Amado and John work for the community Thursdays and Fridays each week (ca. 32 hours/week x 52 weeks = 1,664 hours. The wages paid per hour to Amado and John is approximately \$19.95/hour. This is not a high wage. The benefits the community receives in extra service and tasks they perform are innumerable. It would be exorbitantly expensive to have these contracted out. Increases in compensation to Amado and John ensure that these effective contractors are retained within the Gardens Community.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christopher Bigge

505 Cilantro Ln NW