



Board of Directors
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Tom Hoose, Director

Property Management
Steve Palmer, Community Association Manager
Melissa Graves, Assistant Property Manager
603-889-1378
Owners' Hours at Clubhouse
MON-FRI: 9:00 pm – 3:00pm



2022

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

"This month the President's column is a special edition focused on how the board is seeking to control expenses and provide insight into recent decisions, such as adjusting the Phase cycle to accomplish that goal.

Due to its length you will find it at the end of the newsletter.

Weather permitting we will have our first in-person Owners Meeting on the lower tennis court Wednesday the 20th at 6PM."



IMPORTANT

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Rot repair and painting is making good progress when the weather cooperates. Thank you to all the residents on Rosemary Ct for their cooperation while they work through this area. The weather for the upcoming few weeks looks promising with warmer temperatures and sunny skies.

For mid-rise residents, just a reminder to let the management office know of any planned moving in/out or deliveries and give the office a minimum of 3 days advanced notice so that we have time install the elevator pads. Also, all moves must be made through the garage and never through the front or other exit doors. Also, storage of items in the garage is limited to only the approved items listed in section 9.6 of the Rules and Regulations.

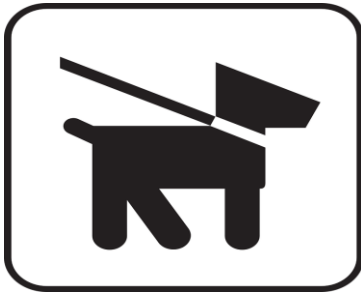
Repairs to building 12 are progressing nicely. The last of the needed materials are close to being shipped for installation. In the meantime, garage access is still limited to foot traffic only. Please avoid accessing the garage while work is in progress for you and the contractor's safety. When no work is being done, foot traffic is allowed. Thanks to all residents for their attention and patience while we work through these repairs.

Continued on Page 2....

As I have been walking the property, I have noticed an abundance of spring wildlife. (A bunny gave me a good scare as he sprinted out from under a deck when I approached). Please be aware of all wildlife as smaller ones may attract bigger ones. Please never feed any wild animals so they don't get used to humans as a food source.

We are currently in the process of collecting the final information needed to proceed with the tennis court repairs and Pickle Ball court installation approved by the board last year.

Just a reminder that the new HOA fee is \$477.00 per month due on the 1st of each month.



PETS

Dogs are to be leashed at ALL times at Ledgewood Hills. It has been reported that some residents are not following this rule. Pursuant to Rules & Regulations 15.1, Pets shall not be permitted outside units, unless they are leashed, accompanied and controlled by a responsible person. Outside tethering is prohibited. Thank you for your cooperation!

PARKING

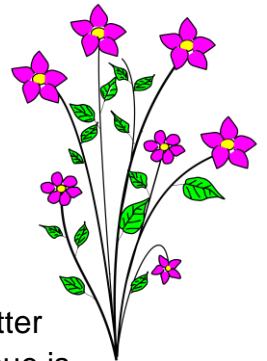
Several households have been using the “guest” parking spaces on a regular basis, and unfortunately guests are forced to park further away. If you have additional vehicles in your household, you must park in the overflow parking and not in the “guest” spaces.

Also, owners are reminded not to park on the curbs or the grass, as there are irrigation heads hidden in the grass and can be damaged, as well as the grass and the curbing. Please let your guests and any contractors doing work at your home know not to park with their tires up on the curb or grass.



Curbside Trash Barrels

Owners are reminded to bring in their trash barrels on Tuesday night. If you missed the pickup, you can either bring in your barrels and wait until the following Tuesday, or take them to the dump.



Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for newsletter submission for May's issue is May 3rd. Send content to mgraves@foxfirenh.com



LANDSCAPE UPDATE:

We will be getting mulch this year! That's exciting news! Also, any landscaping concerns you may have, please reach out to Property Management and they will contact the landscaping committee who will assess each concern.



Reminder-No Yard Sales

Per the rules and regulations article section 9.9:

No yard sales, flea markets, tag sales, or similar activities shall be allowed.

As you all know, living in a condominium, means you have people living close to you. Please remember this when you are doing anything that may affect the enjoyment of your neighbors and their unit. Heavy smoking in the midrises has been a health concern as well as a nuisance to some unit owners. If you smoke inside your unit, please just try and be courteous to your neighbors, put a towel under your door, open a window, and/or use a fan. These simple small steps may make your neighbors much more comfortable in their homes. Thank you!

Finance Committee Meeting

Monday, April 18th, 6:00 pm
At the clubhouse

Monthly Owners' Meeting

Wednesday, April 20th, 6:00 pm
At the lower tennis court.

Foxfire Management Contact information

Clubhouse Office 603 -889-1378
Steve Palmer, Community Association
Manager: spalmer@foxfirenh.com
Melissa Graves, Asst. Property Manager
mgraves@foxfirenh.com

24-Hour Emergency Maintenance Service

For all emergencies, please call the clubhouse office. After hours, phone calls to this number are automatically forwarded to Foxfire Property Management

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN APRIL 2022

There have been some questions as to recent board decisions with respect to the efforts to control expenses, such as extending the Wood Repair/Painting cycle from 6 years to 8 years. The board spends quite a lot of time discussing the ways to try to keep the Association's expenses under control while maintaining the quality of our community. There has been continued upward pressure on both our Operating Expenses and Replacement Reserves set asides. This will be a very long column where I will try to give you all a better understanding of the thinking that has occurred and the decisions that have been made.

Most of our budget dollars are expended in the areas Landscaping/Plowing, Property Management, Wood Repair/Painting, Water Usage, and Capital Reserve Replacements.

A majority of this spending is conducted under negotiated contracts and thus are predictable for budgeting year to year. The Landscaping/Plowing and Property Management contracts have been cohelped that we were well acquainted with their strengths and weaknesses. So, these two major spending areas are contracted with future costs known.

We set aside quite a bit of our monthly fee for asset replacement our Reserves budget. Capital Reserves have predictability as formal reviews are conducted annually by the Reserves Committee, confirming the useful life of assets, such as our pools, and gathering quotes to project anticipated replacement costs. This information is used to calculate the amount in our monthly fee. About every 5 years, the board has hired a qualified engineering firm, to conduct a formal Reserves Study to provide outside advice as to the replacement cost and life expectancy the Association uses to set Reserve funding. As it's been 5 years since the last study, the board is hiring a firm to conduct a new Reserve Study this mpetitively bid over many years and have predictable annual costs as they are multi-year contracts. The Landscape/Plowing was competitively bid several years ago and Morins was the only bidder. We had no others. For the Property Management contract out of roughly 6 solicited there were two bidders. Foxfire was chosen over the other bidder, Evergreen Management, as Foxfire had the best price for the total package of services we required. It also summer. The data will help with the amount we set aside for future replacements. Over the years boards try to strike a balance between predicted useful life with predicted replacement costs.

Even with Capital Reserves there is an effort to save money where possible. The recent Roof Project replaced our shingles at their end of life, 25 years. The new shingles have a 50-year life expectancy; essentially doubling the time until the next roof replacement would be required. This reduces the money needed to be set aside as part of our Reserves monthly fee contribution for the that future project. Unfortunately, there are fewer other opportunities to reduce Reserve set asides, especially given the now considerable impact of inflation of building materials prices during the pandemic and now even higher currently. It is likely that the Roof Project would have cost several million dollars more if we were doing it today.

There are two other areas that are major line items in our spending: Water Usage and Exterior Wood Repair/Painting, where are attempting to reduce the upward pressure on our expenses.

Let's examine Water usage first. We have seen substantial increases in water rates, especially since the town acquired the Pennichuckwater utility company. For at least 15 years, LWH homeowners have been urged to conserve water usage within their homes where possible, to reduce our bills. You might remember on multiple occasions the late Arnie Canner focused on leaking toilet fixtures as a means to reduce community water use. More recently, we tried in-ground moisture sensors for irrigation, with marginal success. Last year we extended landscape irrigation times to save on water usage. There are some who believe we should water on the old schedule but to help with our spending we will continue with last year's more extended schedule and adjust if needed. Some new ideas how we might vary the manner by which we water to keep usage down and still maintain the quality of the landscape will be explored this year.

There has been some controversy regarding the extension of the Exterior Wood Repair / Painting Phase cycles from 6 to 8 years.

The complex's building are divided into groups which are rotated from year to year for what is called the Phase cycle. Each Phase cycle has three cost components. Wood Repair deals with wood rot and wood siding cracking & cupping. Painting protects the wood siding from the sun's UV radiation and rain, while restoring the good look we expect our homes to present. With each of these phases comes Landscape Rehab, which addresses plant issues not normally covered in routine landscape work. Landscape Rehab is quoted separately from the normal contracted Landscape budget.

There has been increasing need to address wood repair due to the design of the buildings and their age of course. We have experienced budget growth due to material cost growth as well as scope of the needed repairs. Painting has been pretty straightforward; it's based on the total square footage painted and has been impacted by increased labor costs. These all combine to put pressure our monthly fees that were growing faster than we wished to occur.

The board spent several years studying how to we might reduce the escalation of Phase costs. Some in the community suggested only focusing on making bigger repairs and letting the minor ones go. It was concluded that the minor ones would become expensive major ones next time around, thus no savings there. So, we decided that if we slightly reduced the number of dwellings in each phase that, each year, we would be able to reduce the cash required for each phase. Fewer buildings means less labor, less wood, less paint, and not as much landscaping rehab required. We also moved to using composite plastic trim where trim needed to be replaced.

As part of the board study, expert input was sought. During the roof project Andre Cantlin, a construction specialist brought on by the roof engineering firm, served as the LWH QC manager. He did an outstanding job. During the Roof project we had him independently evaluate the condition of our buildings and rank them in terms of which structures needed attention sooner and which later. He opined that our Phases could be extended without compromising the quality and look of our units provided the repair work was thorough and with no scrimping on materials. This input was fed into the mix of when each structure had been completed in previous Phases.

We also had real data to guide us. Due to the postponing of the Phase work to stay out of the way of the roof project, we had a Phase that had gone 7 years rather than 6. It was felt they could have gone another year, provided the paint would not fade as much, especially on south facing sides. Going to a ten-year rotation was considered, but discarded as although quite typical for private homes, that would be too long for LWH. Given the findings eight years was chosen as the new Phase cycle. A great deal of work went into how to fairly order the schedule to create the 8 year Phase rotation.

When the numbers were run, we projected a 20% savings per Phase due to the impact of the extension. As said before, fewer buildings mean less labor, less materials, fewer square feet to paint, less landscaping to rehab. That is how we got to the projected savings.

We also put the Phase work out to bid did as we do most every year. Frankly speaking we were not fully satisfied by Prime Touch's performance last year. The bidding boiled down to Prime Touch and VanMolle. SPS our roofing contractor chose not to bid.

During the summer we did "test drive" VanMolle. They were given several projects around the mid-rise buildings, new exit stairs, and repairing damage where it was found there. They did excellent work, on time, and on budget. Their bid was a bit more competitive than Prime Touch and we did a thorough reference check. Given our concerns with Prime Touch's performance last year, we went with VanMolle this year. They fully understand the opportunity before them.

As part of the process, we outlined our need for the paint to last 8 years rather than 6. VanMolle suggested we change to Benjamin Moore paints to give the life expectancy we are seeking. Their paint references were reviewed. VanMolle is on the property now, on Rosemary, doing exterior wood repairs. So, we will see how the new contractor and new paint delivers.

Given the annual expenses of our wood siding, the board also began exploring if vinyl siding would be a viable alternative to wood siding. As an experiment in look and longevity, two years ago, when we repaired the back of the upper pool cabana, we used vinyl siding. Also at that time, we asked SPS to give us a rough idea of what a community wide vinyl siding replacement project might cost. The rough estimate was around \$12-\$14 million. They also pointed out that every window in every unit, would need to be removed, so as to properly replace the house wrap, and then reinstalled. The cost and impact on every unit's interior was going to be considerable and was not part of the rough estimate. And this estimate was done before the great inflation cost run up of building materials. So, vinyl replacement is an extraordinary project in terms of impact and cost requiring a great deal of planning, creative financing, and community wide commitment. We are considering forming a committee, as we did 5 years before our Roof project, to better understand what doing a siding project would entail.

There have been some owners, getting feedback from friends in Florida, who cannot fathom how we could even consider extending our cycle to 8 years. They would never do that. Given the powerful year-round Florida sunshine, unrelenting humidity, daily rains, and impact from the ocean, that makes total sense. However, building weathering in the near tropics has little correlation to building weathering here in New Hampshire. On the other hand, they don't have to worry about ice and roadway cracks and potholes the way we do.

It's also been said "the board needs to think outside the box more". This is what we are trying to do. Be assured if we see that the extended Phase schedule does not work it will be modified. We don't want to see our buildings go downhill. And no one want monthly fees to increase far faster without trying to impact the rate of spending. Unfortunately, there are not many alternatives in our budget line items for significant expense control impact available to us.

Lastly, please remember every board member is an owner. The LWH board is not a corporate board that seeks to cut corners or make decisions to add to, or drive corporate profits. We live here and are as concerned as you as to how maintain our property's quality and to do so at affordable costs. We are all on the same side. That said, I do have substantial concern with the rate of inflation that is now occurring. This degree of general price increases hasn't been experienced since the very early 1980s. We are all concerned that we are potentially facing an enormous challenge to account for this rapid increase in costs in future budgets.

Be assured that this board, and future boards, will work very hard to deal with the challenges of maintaining the quality of our community while controlling expenses.



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