

# RLE CROWN REVIEW

Royal Lakes Estates, Richmond, TX

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Dear Royal Lakes Neighbors,

It's Annual Meeting time! This year we have 3 board positions up for election. Along with the Board positions, we also have 4 Ballot Initiatives to vote on. If you attended the Town Hall Meeting or have reviewed the follow up emails and video recap, you know the financial situation the HOA is currently in. Our community is nearly 24-years-old, and our infrastructure is in dire need of attention.

You as a homeowner, have the opportunity to decide what YOU feel is most important for our community. This will be a one time fee for FY2023. Here are the items that the HOA Board would like your vote on:

### **Ballot Item Number 1. Critical Infrastructure**

Funding items like drainage, additional fire hydrants, and the new entrance. \$2100 per lot. (This can be paid in full in January or can be paid over the next 3 years at \$700/year, due January 1 of each year).

### **Ballot Item Number 2. Barn/Equestrian Center**

We currently have 4 horses boarded at the barn. Funding is needed for repairs to the fencing, and the grounds. The Board has been informed by the horse owners on multiple occasions that the pasture is unsafe for their horses. \$865 per lot.

### **Ballot Item Number 3. Non-Critical Infrastructure**

Fixing and planting the berm, adding new site furniture, and replacing the baseball backstop. \$625 per lot.

### **Ballot Item Number 4. Change Governing Documents**

Removing the HOA's responsibility for the Barn/Equestrian Center. We have heard from many neighbors on both sides of this issue. (Note: If you vote "no" on Item 4, you must vote "yes" for the \$865 special assessment on Item Number 2 above.)

**Note: Our annual dues cover General Maintenance of the HOA, however, we critically need the above assessments to be able to fund the major repairs and upgrades currently needed.**

Message from the President  
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## Why Is Infrastructure So Critical To Our Community

Royal Lakes Estates subdivision is now over 20 years old and in need of many repairs and improvements. The Board has tackled issues in the past relating to the barn, fire hydrants, drainage and other critical infrastructure. When I moved to the subdivision in 2003, HOA dues were \$865 per year and now are reaching \$1200.00. The law allows us to raise dues by 10% on a yearly basis. Unfortunately, we did not and should have had increases throughout the years. We always looked at our reserve account as our "rainy-day" fund, but this money will now be taxed for needed repairs in the coming years.

The infrastructure is critical to our safety and our property values. Case in point, the May rain we had several years ago which almost flooded several homes on Royal Crest. We later found that the inlet and outlet culvert on that street needed maintenance. Maintenance was completed at a cost of several thousand dollars, but a more permanent solution is still needed. We are still needing more fire hydrants to bring each home within a 500-foot radius. Due to rising cost and many other factors, we will soon exhaust our reserves.

Drainage and hydrants are the most critical, and we will also need to have funds for the new entrance in the coming year. Some of the infrastructure most cannot see from the road, but are items that also need to be maintained. We are at a point where some of the assets we had were removed due to cost associated with replacement. Case in point, the front entrance fencing which was going to be a tremendous cost to repair. Now we are facing the same issue on the pasture fence and gazebo. The sad thing about the situation we are currently approaching is that added items, such as walking trails, additional fountains for the lakes, and items that enhance the community, have had to be put on hold.

The special assessments that the Board is needing your vote on is a starting point for our subdivision to provide a healthy environment and preserve property values. The Board will select the issues to tackle that will provide the most or the greater good of its residents.

*article submitted by George Prat,  
HOA Vice President*

## Message from the President . . . . . continued

This question was asked at the last HOA meeting, How did we get here?

Below is how we got here . . . . .

Dues in 2003 were \$865 and they have only been raised a couple of times since then. Prices have increased and no savings plan was put in place.

When I joined the Board last year, I requested a Reserve Study to find out what all of the long term financial needs of the community were.

With a Reserve Study now completed, and our financial picture clear, you as a homeowner have the opportunity to decide what is most important to you, and what you are willing to fund. Please carefully look at the Ballot Initiatives and the details of what each will fund included in the packet being mailed to you.

The Board understands this is YOUR hard earned money we're talking about now. We also understand that we HAVE to fix, maintain, and upgrade our infrastructure to protect YOUR property values. The Special Assessments will ensure we can make this happen.

The Board, over the next few years, will need to be hands on and work hard to fix, repair, and upgrade our neighborhood. I am very confident that we have the right people with the right talent in place to make this happen.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Annual Meeting on November 12.

Jacob Lee,  
HOA President

### ROYAL LAKES ESTATES HOA ANNUAL MEETING

**NOVEMBER 12, 2022**

**GREAT OAKS BAPTIST CHURCH  
7101 FM 2759**

**9:30 A.M. - CHECK IN  
MEETING BEGINS AT 10:00 A.M.**

**YOU WANT TO ATTEND THIS MEETING  
FOR YOUR VOICE TO BE HEARD**

## Drainage Engineering Survey

The HOA Board voted at the September meeting to go forward with obtaining a limited engineering survey of the 3 critical areas of concern for our drainage:

1. Pasture drainage threatening Majesty Lane
2. Lake 3 In and Outflows
3. Lake 5 Inflows

The cost for the limited engineering survey is \$46K. The engineering study is slated to begin in late November, early December.

To get a complete survey of our entire system, the cost is \$104,000. If the *"critical infrastructure special assessment"* is passed, we will be able to have the entire system done.

The engineering study is just the plan, the construction costs will be determined once we have a plan in place. The *"critical infrastructure special assessment"* has the estimated costs already included in it.

## Security Patrol

You may or may not know that the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Department is short 170 deputies.

You also may or may not know that our Constable is now based in Precinct 2 located in Missouri City, and 30 minutes away from our HOA.

Since January, we have not seen a Constable in our neighborhood. When we were in Precinct 1, we were visited by our constables several times a week. We are lucky now to see a sheriff drive by once a week.

The only way for the a HOA to have any regular police presence is for us to pay for an off duty sheriff to do patrols. We had them this year in late spring and early summer. We took a few months off, as our budget is extremely tight.

The Board has decided to hire officers again in November and December so that we can have a presence in the neighborhood during the holidays when many neighbors are away.

## Emergency Response/Disaster Preparedness

Dean Miller (RLE neighbor), Steve Bridges (HOA board member) and Jacob Lee (HOA board President) are working on an Emergency Response/ Disaster Preparedness Group. We are planning on getting this up and running in the new year.

The purpose of this group would be to have volunteers, and plans in place, in case of an emergency in our neighborhood, such as flooding, wind damage, freeze damage, or a medical emergency. We are approximately 20-30 minutes out for an ambulance to come out to our neighborhood. Fire Department is 15-20 minutes out. If a train is blocking the entrance . . . even longer.

We have numerous neighbors right here in RLE with many different talents such as medical, law enforcement, former military, fire, plumbing, roofing, ability to use a chainsaw, HAM radio operators, just to name a few.

If you're interested in helping fellow neighbors in an emergency, we would love to get you involved!! For more information with this program, contact Jacob Lee at [jacobglee@gmail.com](mailto:jacobglee@gmail.com).



A big thank you to Julie Bridges and Camille Prat for getting the National Night Out event restarted after a 2 year break, and a big thank you to all the neighbors who donated canned food. Your donations went to a school food pantry for kids and families who are in need.

Lastly a big thank you to all of the generous donations from neighbors for the wonderful raffle prizes. Dean Miller for all of the Rice Athletic tickets, Kristi DeNardo with Igloo for the coolers, Lee & Melodie Irvin, Keller Williams SW for golf umbrellas, toddler buggy and luggage bags, the Lee family for children's books, and local businesses HEB, Christian Brothers Automotive-New Territory, Tanks Paintball, MOD Pizza and Brickhouse Tavern.. Lastly a big thank you to all of the neighbors who turned out to make the evening a huge success.



*Trever Nehls, candidate for  
Ft. Bend County Judge*



*Dean Hrbacek, candidate  
for Ft. Bend County Court at  
Law 6*



*Steve Bridges, HOA Member at Large,  
Trever Nehls, George Prat HOA Vice  
President, Jacob Lee, HOA President*





## Considering a Home Improvement Project?

All EXTERIOR property modifications or improvements **REQUIRE REVIEW** and **APPROVAL** by the **ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE (ACC)** . . . . . before work is initiated. ACC request forms are found online by visiting the 'Documents' section of the HOA's Caliber portal and on the website listed on the first page of this newsletter. While the By-Laws provide for a period of up to 30 days for review, the ACC review process is often completed much sooner. However, to allow sufficient lead time to schedule work with your contractor, please factor the review period into your improvement project planning.

## Equestrian Center

Years ago, the Royal Lakes Estates HOA Board voted in favor of reducing the amount of horses at the barn to be no more than 4 horses. This was mostly due to the condition of the barn and the lack of cross fences.

Currently our neighbors, Chassidie Pommier has 3 horses in her rescue program, and Dave Synder was recently approved by the Board to have his horse brought into the barn Equestrian Center.

If the facility is repaired and proper fencing put in place, the barn could possibly board an additional 4 or 5 horses. For this to happen, a "special assessment" of \$865 "per lot owner" will need to pass by a vote of 75% of the HOA membership. Voting will take place at the Annual Meeting on November 12, 2022.

## Landscape Committee

The new fall planting has been completed and should start blooming soon with full fall color for the upcoming holiday season.

Christmas decorations should start going up by mid November. **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!**

## Real Estate News with Melodie



Happy Fall from The Irvin Team. What a welcome change it has been with our cooler nights!

Let's start with real estate news for Royal Lakes Estates. Just last Friday, the one gorgeous lot with 200-year-old Oak Trees sold after just 5 days on the market. There is one Waterfront home on Royal Crest Lane that is now one month on the active list, with a couple of big price improvements, reflecting the very motivated sellers. Since we look at transactions that have Closed or are Pending since the last newsletter, there is property Pending. There were six which Sold from July through September. The sale prices have continued to be quite similar to the prices earlier in the year, averaging around \$166 per square foot. Despite higher interest rates, houses sitting with more Days on the Market and Listings dropping their prices, the market in our zip code continues to remain in the Seller's zone. The median list price in 77469 is \$380,000 according to Alto Research.

Interesting tidbit from Inman: The "Stranger Things" home where Joyce Byers and her sons Will and Jonathan lived, is under contract for almost twice its asking price of \$300K. It will reportedly turn into a spooky vacation AirBnB rental. Year-round Halloween based on a very popular television series! What fun!

Regarding mortgage news, an article by Matt Carter for Inman, "requests for home loans fell to the lowest level this century as rates climbed to their highest level since 2006". Compared to one year ago, requests for home loans are down 37%. Refinance requests are down an understandably 86%. "The 30-year fixed rate hit 6.75-7% last week, more than doubled over the past year." "Rates for 30-year fixed Jumbo Loans (loans greater than \$647,200) averaged 6.14%, up from the week before."

On the National scene, New Home sales were up 28.8% in August, and the median price was down 6.3% from the previous month according to the National Association of Realtors. New home prices in Richmond have had price decreases on a consistent basis for the past several weeks. Buyer incentives are plentiful as well. Resale home listings have had price drops as well. I see them everyday in my inbox in home searches we have set up for buyers. One upside to consider is that longer days on market or needing to accept a lower offer than what was hoped for works to your advantage when purchasing another home after your home is sold. And if the interest rates are higher than you'd like, refinance as soon as they come down.





# ROYAL LAKES ESTATES

## Annual Monument Lighting Event



Come One, Come All  
to the Royal Lakes Estates  
Annual Monument Lighting Event

It's just a short get-together to celebrate the beginning of the holiday season with neighbors while listening to holiday music and enjoying hot chocolate and cookies.

At approximately 6:15 p.m. we will walk over the the monument to watch the magic happen as the entrance to our beautiful community will light up for the holidays!!!!

**HOPE TO SEE EVERYONE THERE!!!!**



### Hospitality/Community Events Committee

#### **WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS!!!**

This Committee will be responsible for identifying and welcoming new residents and for planning any association-sponsored social activities.

In welcoming new residents, it strives to introduce them to the feel, process, and items of interest and concern of our community. This might include:

- ✦ Personal welcome
- ✦ Provide information to set expectations, awareness of neighborhood practices
- ✦ Assessment information (amount, frequency, due date)
- ✦ HOA contact information
- ✦ CC&R Guidelines
- ✦ Architectural Control process
- ✦ Calendar of neighborhood events
- ✦ Website and NextDoor introduction and overview
- ✦ Invitation to become involved in events, HOA, etc.
- ✦ How to live with our native wildlife

Please contact Camille Prat at [camilletx1@aol.com](mailto:camilletx1@aol.com) if you are interested.



## Useful Royal Lakes Estates Information

### RLE Board Members

Jacob Lee - President  
[jacobglee@gmail.com](mailto:jacobglee@gmail.com)

George Prat - Vice President  
[gprat98@yahoo.com](mailto:gprat98@yahoo.com)

Jay Bodnar - Secretary  
[yayrandob@yahoo.com](mailto:yayrandob@yahoo.com)

Lee Ivey - Treasurer  
[docleerjr@gmail.com](mailto:docleerjr@gmail.com)

Steve Bridges - Member at Large  
[sbridges@compliancekings.com](mailto:sbridges@compliancekings.com)

### Management Company

Montage Community Services  
Sussan Summer, Owner  
7002 Riverbrook Dr., Suite 400  
Sugar Land, TX 77469  
281-232-7659  
[www.montagecs.com](http://www.montagecs.com)

### Contact Info for Nuisance Alligators

To report a nuisance alligator, contact your Ft. Bend County game wardens, Barry Eversole at 832.595.7940, or Emily Zaumbreecher at 832.840.0127 for alligators under 6 feet in length, and on private property such as swimming pools, or in roadways.

You may also contact Texas Alligator Information at 409.736.3625. Give them your information and ask for a complaint number. From there you can contact a wrangler, but they will need the complaint number from TX Alligator Info. Do Not call a wrangler before you have contacted Texas Alligator Information. Here is contact information for wranglers: Robert Laughton 281.960.9163 and Brian Rice 281.845.3878

### Architectural Control Committee

Karen Jansky - Admin/Member

Randall Brown - Member

David Danielson - Member

Dana Rathmell - Member

Debbie Zubia - Member

### Street Lights Out?

If you notice a street light out, note the number on the pole (it should be 6 digits) and contact CenterPoint Energy at 713.207.2222 or the website [www.centerpointenergy.com/outage](http://www.centerpointenergy.com/outage).

### Water Issues?

FloWatch, Inc.  
Utility Management Services

Office / Drop Box Location:  
17230 Huffmeister Rd., Suite A  
Cypress, TX 77429

Phone: 281-373-4401  
Fax: 281,373.1113

website:  
[www.flowatch.net](http://www.flowatch.net)

Email: [customerservice@flowatch.net](mailto:customerservice@flowatch.net)

If you want to pay your bill online, click on Flowatch below and it will go directly to the page:

Pay My Bill to FloWatch

### Links to Neighborhood Sites

Neighborhood Phone App:  
FrontSteps

Neighborhood website:  
[www.royallakesestateshoa.com](http://www.royallakesestateshoa.com)

RLE and Friends Book Club Group on Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/213224013247821/>

Royal Lakes Estates Facebook Group  
[www.facebook.com/groups/318290285978980/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/318290285978980/)