

SUMMER 2022

The Princeton News

Princeton Homeowners' Association

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Budget Planning

The budget for 2023 is in process. Planning must start months before the new year without knowing what should or needs to be reviewed. Input is helpful. Have you seen or know of items the Association needs to consider? This year the Association had an unbudgeted need. There was no provision in the 2022 budget for the big-ticket item. Therefore, a special vote was needed. Luckily, with this issue time was on our side. This may not always be the case.

The 2023 budget will have a line to include repainting, repairing, or replacing of the entrance signage. The goal is to keep the signage and refurbish if the condition will allow. The scope of this work has been priced, (see [Big Ticket Item](#) article). Are there other items to be addressed to keep our community safe, clean, and desirable?

There are some items the Association can not address such as the roads and sidewalks. These are County owned. However, if there is an issue with any portion, please let us know. The Association can contact the County to ask for needed repairs. They have worked well with us in the past. The street lights are the property of JEMC. The Association is limited as to what can be done. But again, JEMC has always been helpful.

Will the extra projects raise the annual assessment? The answer is **no**. The Association saved over the years for these big ticket items and strives to keep a reserve for these special improvement.



Tree Removal Report



The Association is happy to report the two unsafe large trees have been safely cut. The low bidder was Jones Tree Service. The job was completed on April 11 for the price of \$1,200.00.

Big Ticket Item

As mentioned in the [Budget Planning](#) section, the time has come to renew the entrance signs. These signs have served well over the years.

The main Princeton Subdivision sign, on the right entrance side, was installed in 2008 and has been repainted once. The Covenant Protected sign was installed in 2011. The No Solicitation sign was installed in 2012 and will need to be replaced due to peeling.



On the left entrance side, the column sign with the "P" on top and the word Princeton vertically on the rock column was placed by the developers before 2008.

The by-laws require three bids for any project over \$1,000. This project has six (6) pieces. When the voting for approval time comes, the board would like to ask the membership to vote to waive this requirement of three (3) bids and allow the work to be completed by the original installer who knows the specifics of the sign.

An estimate of the pricing for each can be found on page 2.

Covenant Protected Community

It is no surprise to anyone that Princeton is a covenant protected community. As this community was established, the developers wrote the covenants along with the bylaws. A few years later the developers agreed to turn the Association over to the members. Our community is lucky in the fact our covenants are not nearly as restrictive as many protected communities.

The vast majority of the properties have no violations. However, there seem to be a few that need a little extra nudge to give attention to their property and bring it up to the covenants requirements. The big mistake that people in a covenant protected community make is not being fully aware of the Association rules. Become familiar with the restrictions to know what is expected and follow the listed rules.

Property owners are expected to abide by the covenants. Each family purchases into the area with the expectations of the properties being maintained as the covenants are in place to protect their expensive investment. No one wants to live next to the house with the overgrown, weedy yard filled with debris, the house that needs to be pressured washed, or the boats and equipment, rvs, travel trailer, or trailers parked in sight. Homeownership comes with responsibilities.

One of the unfortunate duties of the Association is the requirement to address the covenant concerns reported by the membership and the obvious covenant issues. This is both difficult and uncomfortable for all.

Please review your property for issues and correct. This will avoid the necessity of the Association officers enforcement of the covenants. Your cooperation and efforts are appreciated. Thank you to all.

These are estimates. Prices are not guaranteed for 2023.

Signs on Right as one enters

Princeton sign	paint refresh	\$2,095
Protected sign	paint refresh	\$560
No solicitation sign	replacement	\$177

Signs on left is one enters

"P" on top of column	paint refresh	\$110
Vertical Princeton (1)	replace	\$391
Vertical Princeton (2)	replace	\$391
Installation of all six		\$875
Sales tax on all six		\$83.72

Total for all six (6) signs, installation and tax \$4,682.72

This will be presented on the 2023 annual budget for approval. Please email any questions to the Association at princetonsubdivision@gmail.com.



2022 Line Item Financial Report

June 30, 2022	Budget	Spent	Remaining
landscaping	\$7,600.00	\$3,338.06	\$4,261.94
supplies/misc.	\$1,500.00	\$381.37	\$1,118.63
incorporation fee	\$50.00	\$30.00	\$20.00
tax return (cpa)	\$175.00	\$175.00	\$0.00
web site*	\$275.00	\$383.76	(\$108.76) ¹
p o box rent*	\$140.00	\$156.00	(\$16.00) ¹
insurance (hoa)	\$1,300.00	\$1,231.00	\$69.00
taxes, (hall co)	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$50.00
meeting space	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$50.00
legal fee	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
stonework	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
contingency	\$1,000.00	\$198.36 ¹	\$801.64
tree removal**	\$1,710.00	\$1,200.00	\$510.00
	2022 budget	Funds spent	Remaining
BUDGET TOTALS	\$16,350.00	\$6,895.19	\$9,454.81

Budget comments:

(1) Contingency includes the shortfall under web site & box rental along with an overpayment refund of an annual assessment.

*The web site account is paid through March 2024, two-year agreement. The P.O. Box rental exceeded the budgeted amount. A member overpaid their annual assessment by \$73.60. Amount refunded and included in contingency.

**The tree removal approval of \$1,710 has been added to the 2022 budget.



Septic Tank Tips

Being thoughtful of what is happening inside your home will keep the septic system healthy. It isn't difficult or costly to take care of the septic system. But if it is not maintained, corrections could cost thousands.

Are you unsure if you even have a septic tank? You do. Most of rural Hall County is not on a public septic system. We all have septic tanks in this subdivision. All the wastewater from the house; bathroom, kitchen, and laundry feed into the septic. Improper care can harm the system. Here are a few tips: credit- (familyhandyman.com)

PUMP ROUTINELY

Have the septic pumped every 3 to 5 years depending on the size of the tank and the number of people in the household. The recommended pumping frequency can be estimated by a professional septic service.

Locate a certified professional septic service **before** there is an issue..

SPREAD WASHING MACHINE/DISHWATER USAGE THROUGHOUT WEEK

Do not overload the septic system by doing all the laundry on one day. It puts stress on the system.

Practice water conservation to avoid overloading the sewage system. Repair dripping faucets and running toilets.

DON'T TREAT TOILET LIKE A TRASH CAN

Do not treat the septic system like a trash can by flushing inappropriate items.

Just because it reads "flushable" does not mean it should be flushed.

THINK ABOUT WHAT GOES INTO THE KITCHEN DRAIN

Do not pour grease, oil, chemical products down the drain.

Do not pour dairy products or food items in the drain.

Use commercial cleaners and anti-bacterial soaps in moderation. The tanks depend on natural bacteria.

PROTECT THE TANK AND DRAINFIELD

Do not direct water from the gutter downspouts into the septic tank area.

Do not plant trees or shrubs on top of or near the tank or drain field.

Landscape the site to allow water to drain off the drain field.

Do not park on or drive over the septic tank or drain field.

A properly designed tank system will have a tank with sufficient volume to accumulate solids for several years. But, solids will accumulate. If not pumped periodically, suspended solid particles could flow into the drain field. This will eventually clog and a new drain field may be needed. Newer tanks have an effluent filter on the outlet of the tank to protect the field lines. However, if the tank is not pumped timely, this can become clogged and may cause wastewater to back up into the house.

The size of the tank is based on the number of bedrooms in the home. According to Georgia Department of Public Health Environmental Health Section article dated March 12, 2002, the standard 3-to-4-bedroom house has a 1000-gallon tank. If you are unsure of the size tank on your property, a call can be made to the Hall County Environmental Health Department for information on how to locate your septic information. Adding additional bedrooms (occupancy) without increasing the tank size is not advised.



The Wildlife

Our community is fortunate to have a large natural greenspace with running water and dense trees. The wildlife loves it! This area seems to be our own little animal sanctuary. It is a treat when the deer visit, or a group of wild turkeys walk down the sidewalk. The occasional turtle wanders across the road, while the herons look for frogs and fish, and the hawks and owls search for rabbits, squirrels, and other eatables.

Most of the critters stay out of view and away from people. But sometimes wildlife gets a little nearer than desirable.

June was such a month. Both a bear and a couple of coyotes were spotted. The bear was in the Warwick Drive area robbing bird feeders in the night and the coyotes hurried through the neighborhood late one afternoon on Old Princeton Ridge.

While we enjoy the surroundings, it doesn't hurt to remember the wildlife does, too. There is no need for alarm as they move within and through our community. Just be aware and practice safe habits.

Neighborhood Watch

In November 2012, when the Hall County Sheriff's Office presented the Neighborhood Watch program to the membership at the annual meeting. Over the past ten years, only the sign remains at the entrance of our community. As with much in life, it is time for a refresh and a reboot.

The premise of Neighborhood Watch is simple. It is neighbors knowing neighbors. It is communicating. It is observing and reporting.

Neighborhood Watch is not turning a community into a police force. That is not the plan nor is it the intent for citizens to place themselves in danger dealing with a potentially criminal situation. But rather the Watch is additional eyes & ears in a neighborhood. It is we, the people, who live within taking an active role to keep our community protected.

The program has progressed from having watch coordinators, secondary coordinator, block captains, and a phone tree for the communication network. With the Association's good working email system there is fast communications when needed. With our 120 properties with structures, we have 92 email addresses that have replied in the past two years. This leads the Association to believe these are current, valid addresses. Another 19 are questionable as there has been no interaction with the Association. And there are 9 properties with no shared e-mail at all. In a need to quickly get information to the community these addresses are the key.

We know our neighborhood and the residents. A patrol person can drive in the area but has no idea if that person or that auto belongs at that property. The patrol person does not know if that homeowner is out of town for an extended period and someone is helping themselves. The neighbors know!

A time may come when an incident or activity occurs that requires the attention of the Sheriff's Office. **Most important – IF THE SITUATION IS AN EMERGENCY, CALL 9-1-1!** When the situation is not an emergency but needs law enforcement involvement,

Information source; *Neighborhood Watch Citizen's Handbook*, Hall County Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Unit, Gainesville, GA.

such as a suspicious person or vehicle, a sheriff's Deputy can be requested by calling dispatch at **(770) 536-8812**. Put this number in your cell phone under Dispatch—Hall County Sheriff. The incident or suspicion can be reported to the Association and shared in an effort to keep everyone safe.

As Princeton is a “**no soliciting**” community, there should never be contact by door-to-door persons. It is not allowed and is suspicious. This activity can be reported to the nonemergency number. However, there are a few exemptions. The Neighborhood Watch Citizen's Handbook reads, “also be on the lookout for”: Unknown vehicles slowly cruising through the neighborhood. Someone sitting in a parked car for no apparent reason. A person being dropped off or picked up along the street, with no obvious destination. Someone on foot, looking into vehicles and homes. Abandoned or unattended vehicles. Deceptive activity. Unusual activity in isolated areas.

Reporting with as much detail is helpful. **Suspect description:** the person's sex, race, age, height, weight, hair color & length, clothing, and any distinctive characteristics like facial hair, eyeglasses, scars, tattoos, a distinct walk. **Vehicle description:** make, model, color, tag number, if possible, any distinctive characteristics like decals, body damage, aftermarket accessories. **Additional tips:** report the last known direction of travel. A safely made recording from cell phone or home security system could be helpful.

For Neighborhood Watch to work, know your neighbors and report all criminal or suspicious activity to the appropriate police jurisdiction.

Fire Safety

Stop, drop, and roll is the know phrase when it comes to a fire. It was taught in elementary when the fire people gave their talk. But, they didn't talk about the fire hydrant. As adults, we should stop, think, and see. These life saving hydrants must stand in the open, not blocked by plants or hidden behind shrubbery. In the unlikely event the hydrant is needed the fire personnel need fast and easy access. Please look on your property to see if there is a fire hydrant. If so, make sure it can be seen and accessed quickly.

