

Westwood Hills HOA Annual Meeting Summary

Overview

This was the annual meeting of the Westwood Hills Homeowners Association (HOA), focused on board elections, project updates, financial planning, capital improvements, and open homeowner discussion. Key topics included infrastructure repairs, a new neighborhood development, dues increases, capital reserve planning, and homeowner engagement. The meeting highlighted both accomplishments and ongoing debates over spending priorities, transparency, and the impact of rising costs on residents.

Meeting Type

Annual HOA Meeting: Project updates, elections, budget discussion, and homeowner Q&A.

Key Sections

1. Opening Remarks & Acknowledgments

- Residents were reminded to vote in local elections.
- Thanks were given to the Six Mile staff for hosting and supporting the event.
- Board members introduced: Ellen Willis (President), Brian Kingsley, Andrew Colmeyer, Kiley Patterson, Bill Schulteis, Shannon Kimball, and (absent) Joe Myers.
- Confirmation of quorum: 111 attendees/proxies.

2. Addressing Community Concerns & Transparency

- Response to a letter distributed earlier in the year that contained inaccuracies about HOA operations.
- Emphasis on open meetings, accessible agendas, regular financial reporting, and electronic communication to reduce costs.
- Homeowners are encouraged to update contact info and volunteer for committees.

3. Board Elections

- Two open positions filled by election of members present:
 - **Alan Hoggatt:** Resident since 2007, retired banker.
 - **Joe Myers:** Incumbent, retired from sheriff's office, treasurer, and committee representative.
- Outgoing member Bill Schulteis recognized for his service, especially on pond projects.

4. Project Updates (Since Last Annual Meeting)

- **Landscaping & Irrigation:**
 - Major damage from Wakarusa resurfacing required \$37,000 in repairs.
 - Expansion and modernization of irrigation: increased from 18 to 33 zones, new wireless controller, rain sensor, improved coverage and scheduling.
 - Example: Early morning watering to avoid inconvenience to walkers.

- **Streetlights:**
 - \$100,000 budgeted, with \$51,000 spent on poles/fixtures; installation planned for next spring.
 - New lights to address safety concerns, especially in underlit areas.
- **Pond & Rock Wall Repairs:**
 - HOA is 21 years old; original pool and ponds require maintenance.
 - Rock wall at Pond 1 deteriorating; comprehensive repair bid at \$150,000 (down from \$200k)
 - Plans for dredging and erosion control between ponds.
- **City Street Resurfacing:**
 - City project to repair/replace curbs and resurface streets.
 - Residents advised about curb replacement criteria and possible disruptions; timeline pushed to spring due to contractor delays.

5. New Neighborhood Development (Lusso)

- **Location:** Undeveloped land near pool, to be developed by an out-of-state company (Metronix).
- **Project Details:**
 - "Apartminiums" (luxury apartments), 130 units with garages and amenities for 55+ residents.
 - Two access points: Queens Road and Eisenhower/Parker.
 - HOA has no control over land but works with developer/city to influence landscaping, traffic, and screening (berms instead of walls).
 - Rent ranges: \$1,300 (studio) to \$2,900 (three-bedroom).
 - Concerns raised about stormwater runoff; city study requested after recent heavy rains.
 - Residents encouraged to attend city planning meeting on Nov 17.
 - Development not connected to HOA amenities (e.g., pool).

6. Social & Community Activities

- **Events:** Memorial Day coffee, July 4th pool party, wine/whiskey socials, book club, holiday lights parade.
- **Weather Impact:** Some events affected by rain or heat.
- **Communication:** New Facebook group for quick social updates (not for HOA business).

7. Committee Reports & Volunteer Needs

- **Architectural Committee:**
 - Three opening: meets twice monthly.
 - Homeowners must submit forms for all exterior modifications, even for like-for-like replacements (streamlined forms in development).
 - Seven-day appeal period for committee decisions.
- **Landscape & Pond Maintenance:**
 - Removal of noxious weeds and trees in drainage easements; plan to plant prairie grasses and flowers for erosion control.
 - Pond 1 rock replacement with higher-density material for longevity.
- **City Pump Station:** Removal of unsightly lift station at North Dole; \$500 easement payment to HOA.

8. Operations: Snow Removal & Mowing

- Updated maps for snow removal and mowing areas; information available online.

9. Financial & Budget Review

- **Treasurer's Report:** Q3 financials shared; current balances noted.
- **Budgeting Approach:**
 - Budget spreadsheet tracks actual and projected expenses, with inflation factors.
 - Emphasis on maintaining a \$100,000 year-end cash reserve.
 - Capital projects (streetlights, pond repairs) balanced against reserves to avoid special assessments.
 - Discussion of reserve fund adequacy; historical context of minimal reserves and rare special assessments.
- **Dues Increases:**
 - Last year: \$35/month increase for safety and infrastructure.
 - Proposed: \$40/month increase (down from initial \$60), to fund future pool enhancements and capital projects.
 - CPI/inflation-based increases to be considered annually.

10. Capital Improvement Planning & Survey Results

- **Survey Participation:** 47.8% (113 homeowners); priorities weighted and tallied.
- **Top Priorities:**
 - Pool enhancements (highest priority).
 - Sunset track recreation area.
 - Monument signs at neighborhood entrances.
- **Sidewalks:** Low priority; removed from plans.
- **Process:**
 - Future polls to seek input on specific project designs and costs.
 - Board aims for inclusive, not just vocal, feedback.
 - Reserve funds earmarked to allow timely action once projects are approved.

11. Open Forum: Resident Questions & Concerns

- **Main Themes:**
 - Many voiced concerns about the scale and necessity of dues increases, especially for retirees and those on fixed incomes.
 - Debate over wants vs. needs: pool expansion, monument signs, and landscaping seen as "wants" by some.
 - Calls for clearer polling tying dues increases directly to specific projects.
 - Concerns about property values, affordability, and possible displacement due to rising costs.
 - Support for maintaining infrastructure and the pool, but skepticism about luxury improvements.
 - Specific issues raised: pool noise/impact on adjacent homes, need for adult/quiet hours, impact of new development, and fairness of assessments.
 - Some residents praised the HOA for transparency, communication, and neighborhood improvements.

12. Action Items & Next Steps

- Board to continue transparent communication and polling, especially regarding dues and capital projects.
- Future surveys to explicitly link dues increases to specific improvements (e.g., pool, monument signs).
- Committees (e.g., pool, landscape, architectural) seeking volunteers.
- Next board meeting scheduled for January 27 at BG Consultants; residents encouraged to attend.

Notable Examples & Details

- **Irrigation Modernization:** Increased zones from 18 to 33, wireless control, rain sensor, early morning watering to avoid inconvenience.
- **Streetlight Rollout:** Homeowners at installation sites contacted; half of \$100,000 budget spent on pre-ordered poles.
- **Pond Work:** Negotiated \$150,000 bid (down from \$200k) for comprehensive repairs.
- **Survey Data:** 113 out of 247 homeowners participated; 71% of respondents prioritized pool enhancements, but this equates to about 34% of all homeowners.
- **Resident Voices:** Teachers and retirees expressed hardship with dues increases; pool-adjacent homeowners raised concerns about noise and property impact; some residents cited the pool as a key amenity when purchasing their home.
- **Financial Planning:** Board aims to avoid special assessments through proactive budgeting; only one minor past assessment (\$10/month) to build a reserve.

Conclusion

The meeting highlighted both progress and tension within the HOA. While infrastructure and transparency have improved, rising costs and ambitious projects have sparked concern among some residents about affordability and priorities. The board committed to continued engagement, clearer polling, and responsible budgeting, while encouraging greater participation from all homeowners in future decisions.