

**STATE OF HOWARD MESA PROPERTY OWNERS
ASSOCIATION
AUGUST 17, 2024**

GREETINGS

The state of the Association continues to be a strong and stable one both financially and as a community of concerned and responsive citizens. The past year we've welcomed several new owners and residents, many with a desire to help our rural community by keeping it rural. We've seen new homes sprouting up and building plans filed. There's also been a huge jump in valuations as people nationwide notice our peaceful and friendly way of life here and the natural beauty and are attracted to buy into Howard Mesa. We're not like other big city or suburban HOAs. This is a rural community on a working cattle ranch. Most people moved here to get away from city and suburban life to enjoy the rural atmosphere. We ask only that you abide by our simple CC&Rs and county codes. Respect your neighbor's privacy and take ownership of our community. We run this place without any outside management and your board members are owners and volunteers who live here. There are no part time or full time employees. Our budget is primarily for roads maintenance with a small portion for administering the operation to keep everything legal and transparent.

There are an increasing number of people either living permanently or traveling by RV and finding the campgrounds and parks are overcrowded or charging exorbitant fees for stays. These people have elected to instead pull off the road, find a secluded spot and stay a week or more. A nice convenient pretty place is Howard Mesa. We're close to the canyon and quiet. We've called the sheriff on trespassers and have now mounted cameras at both entrances, and put up new signs alerting that the area is under video surveillance. We're not Big Brother but we don't want trespassers on our absent friends' property either. As an owner you can invite people to stay on your property but they must have your written permission and their stay must be limited to less than 30 days.

Citizens of our community have helped notify the sheriff and the board of illegal activity such as rubbish or graffiti or suspicious vehicles. The association itself cannot pursue or apprehend anyone nor enter anyone's property to warn of violations, however we can send warning letters and uncorrected violations can result in fines to the owners. We have discussed this in several meetings before about the necessity of fines with majority approval. We now believe it's time to

act. Violators will be warned with attention paid to those with hardships or other situations. We are NOT a typical Home Owners Association and most of us just want to live peaceably without interference however if there is a serious health or safety risk to the residents or community we do need to act and that first step after warning is to the county. To levy fines we must change our CC&Rs. It's a complicated process but we've done it before. We will need a committee to do this and it's open to any owner to help with one or more board members to oversee it.

ROADS

The major concern we've faced this year is increased traffic on our common roads with 4Hills. We've addressed that issue with 4Hills and have allocated an additional \$25,000 (our contribution is \$10,000) to work at building up those roads after years of insufficient budgets for repair and maintenance. This is a one time increase to cover adding more cinders and ditching for runoff. We've just been through a mild winter. That was sorely needed after the winter of 2022/2023. We were able to catch up on some necessary major projects. One project is to repair and realign north Lariat at a dangerous curve. The project was estimated at about \$25,000. We were able to negotiate it to paying 50% after work is done and approved and the balance 50% the first quarter of 2025. This allowed us to continue uninterrupted road maintenance and repairs and to allocate the additional \$10,000 for the common roads as discussed. We've spent well below our budget this year and whether it's just standard maintenance, repairs, extensive flood damage, snow removal or other our road crews have been able to respond quickly within 48 hours of emergencies or meet a schedule of maintenance every quarter. One thing we have all discussed over the years is to charge a road fee of \$2500 for new builds. This fee will be charged along with the building permits by the county to cover the cost of adding better roads or repairing damage to roads caused by contractors and heavy trucks and equipment. Unfortunately, we must again change the CC&Rs. The good thing is we can do the fine levies and building/road charges at the same time. Our annual dues went up 15% this year, which has allowed us to keep up with the increased costs of road maintenance. Since most of our budget goes to roads (80% to 90%) this 15% has helped us significantly. We've spent less than half of our budget on roads this year and so far a light monsoon has kept our drainage and flooding to a minimum. Yes there will be puddles after a rain but that's natural. That also indicates where the low spots are and where we need to put more cinders. We hold off on cinders and culverts until sometime in September, after the rain and before the snow starts up again. We'll be laying more cinders on those common roads sometime in September. We've already

covered some areas with ditching and cutting run-offs to drain the water into the fields.

This past May our contribution to the Common Roads budget increased by 15%. We also assumed control in 2023 of work done to the common roads for the next 3 years. This work is funded by the common roads budget. The Common Roads budget is administered by Weiss Accounting in Flagstaff. This is a court ordered process to establish a fair working relationship with 4Hills POA and Howard Mesa. Howard Mesa Phase 1 pays 40% of the budget while 4Hills pays 60%. In a meeting in May with 4Hills we agreed to work a plan to accomplish as much as we can to improve Jackrabbit and Latigo and replace much of the cinders lost through wear and weather. We will meet again in September to figure what's needed in cinders and culverts and schedule that work.

Schedules up here are subject to weather and road conditions. You can't grade if the ground is too dry because all you're doing is scraping off the good material. We need moisture to grade. We can't put cinders on dry roads either and they must be layed when the roads are damp so the cinders can plant. The ideal is for water to flow through the cinders and run out below not off the top. In roadwork weather is king and determines when things can happen

SECURITY

We continue to have a number of small incidents at Howard Mesa including person or persons dropping rubbish on our roads, unsafe and unpermitted vehicles and trailers and at least one incident of graffiti. We can't enter a person's property uninvited and must notify them of violations by mail or calling the sheriff. It was suggested to us by the sheriff's department that we should install trail cameras to monitor the entry and mailboxes. Cameras have been installed at both entrances and are monitored.

We still have plenty of window stickers for your vehicles. We must all be vigilant in watching out for our neighbors, whether living here or not, to watch for suspicious activity and to notify the sheriff. They are willing and able to respond.

FIRE HELP

We continue to support High Country Fire Rescue with annual dues which have increased to \$5000 per year. We selected and installed fire water tanks at 4 select locations in Howard Mesa. These tanks are approximately 1200 to 1500 gallons of non-potable water and labeled FIRE.

As I mentioned we are NOT a California style HOA but will not tolerate those who diminish the values we place on our community. We care about those who live in tents or run-down trailers, houses under 600sf, RVs and campers, etc. but it cannot be allowed or tolerated here. The outstanding violations are those that are determined by neighbors and other owners that these violations affect the health and safety of others. If you violate our rules you'll be notified to correct them.

LIENS

We started placing liens on delinquent accounts. The primary purpose of these liens are to ensure Howard Mesa is able to collect past due annual dues when properties change hands through sales or transfers. There are a number of corporate and bank owned properties who've never paid the dues and must be liable to pay those dues as part of closing costs. That doesn't mean if you're late getting in your dues payment we'll slap a lien on you. If you've missed a couple years we may call you to see if everything is ok or we need to work something out. Our dues are among the lowest in northern Arizona because we are self governing, we run this community our selves. Our dues are primarily to keep the roads as best we can and if you drive around to other HOA/POA communities you'll see our roads are among the best.

VOLUNTEERS

If you wish to volunteer you're invited to let the board know what services you can provide. Typically volunteers are just that and not paid contractors. The work they volunteer for are unpaid positions. Volunteering to help out a neighbor or other owner is between the volunteer and the owner on private property. Volunteers cannot work on Howard Mesa roads, etc., without a Release of Liability or Hold Harmless agreement and proof of insurance. If they provide a paid service they must provide the same documentation and the board will approve such estimated costs provided by them. Volunteers are free, contractors are paid. Both need releases.

PROPOSED ROAD FEES FOR NEW BUILDING

Howard Mesa has determined at the previous annual meeting to charge new builds a road fee of \$2500 upon filing for a building permit. This money will be used to repair roads that may be damaged by heavy construction equipment or to cut a new road or install culverts. To charge this fee Howard Mesa will require a change to the CC&Rs.

THE BOARD

Board members are elected to serve at least 3 years and the positions are voluntary. The current members are listed below and can be reelected unless they wish to withdraw. The board consists of 9 members. Alternate members don't have voting rights unless replacing an absent member. The meetings are held quarterly and may be open to owners. The executive committee may meet in private on legal matters but must share with the owners any decisions made.

The following owners are members of the current board.

Cliff Hall
Roger Inman
Ray Schuman
Brandon Huddleston
Brittany Anslow
Keith Lentz
Brian Marsh
Chris Young
Tommy Presley

Other alternate members without voting rights are:

Connie Hall
Erin Inman
Sue Schuman

