

Somerset Estates Homeowners Association

What's Up #104: March 14, 2025

How Does the Annual Meeting Proxy Form Work?

The Board has received questions indicating that there is confusion about the proxy form that was mailed with the Annual Meeting notice. We became aware that some homeowners received an email from one of the candidates for the board that lives on Snowberry Ln that says that homeowners should expect to receive in the Annual Meeting packet a ballot or a proxy form that allows you to mark which three of the six board candidates you want to vote for. **THIS IS INCORRECT.** The election of new directors will be by secret ballot (meaning no identifying marks on the paper ballots) at the Annual Meeting. Homeowners attending the meeting will **receive one ballot per lot at the meeting**. If your property has more than one owner, only one needs to attend in person.

Although the meeting will be available on Zoom (Meeting ID 972 7353 6363 and Passcode 113066), the SEHOA Bylaws do not allow for electronic attendance. **Homeowners unable to attend in person may appoint a proxy representative by mailing the proxy form, [\\$ available by clicking here \\$](#), in the provided envelope, emailing a scan or photo to info@somersetestates-hoa.com, or by giving it to the person you choose as your proxy representative.** Only one owner needs to sign the proxy form.

You can choose any proxy representative you like as long as they can verify their identity. It doesn't have to be another homeowner. However, **please note that in assigning someone as your proxy representative, you are giving that person the full authority to act on your behalf as they see fit.** This means that the representative will be given a ballot to vote "for you". Although you can certainly tell him or her how you'd like for them to vote, they are actually free to vote anyway they want to. A PROXY IS NOT A BALLOT! Any indications on proxy forms of candidate choices will be ignored in the voting process. **The only way to be certain that your vote is as you want it to be is to attend the meeting.** If you have any questions about this, send them to info@somersetestates-hoa.com. (As a side note, SEHOA is prohibited by law from giving out email addresses or phone numbers. If you received an email from another homeowner, presumably you gave them your email address, or they got it from someone else that knew it.)

Important Message from the Executive Board

Homeowners are receiving by mail a second packet of information - local addresses should have it today or tomorrow (March 15). This packet has information on the current board's perspective and reports and letters from outside experts regarding the subdivision water infrastructure and ponds, as this has been an important topic since the 2024 Annual Meeting and will be discussed at the 2025 Annual Meeting. **The current board gathered the information, but it will be up to the three new board members and two remaining board members to lead a path forward.**

The Aspen Reserve Specialties reserve analysis can be found by [\\$ clicking here \\$](#). **It shows that SEHOA is currently underfunded by about \$2 million with the current set of common assets (approximately \$22,000 per home).** Proper funding will require one or more special assessments, dues increases, and/or lower cost asset alternatives. In addition, **water law risks could add another approximately \$3,000 per home.**

The packet also includes a letter ([\\$ click here \\$](#)) from the Boulder County Engineer about the subdivision drainage system: "Ponds 2-11 are not considered integral to the final drainage plan for Blocks 2-5 and could be removed a part of an application process to CP&P and subject to maintaining conveyance of local runoff in their place (i.e., implementation of grass lined channels or swales)." Also included in the mailed packet are letters from SEHOA's general counsel and water law counsel (not posted electronically). **If you are out of town and not able to get the mailed packet in time for the meeting, please send a message to info@somersetestates-hoa.com to request the attorney letters.**

We strongly urge you to read the entire packet. We also urge you to attend the Annual Meeting to ask the six candidates for the three positions on the board questions as the new board will be leading a significant decision-making process on the future of Somerset Estates. Please see candidate statements below. If you have already submitted a proxy form and

anything in the board packet causes you to rethink your submission, you can revoke your proxy by attending the meeting or by submitting a new proxy form.

Annual Meeting on March 27: Sign-in starts at 6:30 PM

We will be gathering at the **Niwot Inn for a social and sign-in time at 6:30 pm, followed by the Budget Meeting at 7 pm.** After ratification of the 2025 budget, we will convene the Annual Meeting with a report to homeowners and election of directors. The proposed budget sets the quarterly assessment at \$900/qtr starting April 1, 2025. If ratified, this will go into effect for the payment that is due shortly after the meeting. **Please revise any automatic payments accordingly.** The letter mailed to homeowners, including the proposed budget, is [\\$ available by clicking here\\$](#).

Board Candidates

We have six candidates for three positions on the Board. As this is a contested election, it will be held by secret paper ballot. We expect that most of the meeting will be giving homeowners a chance to ask these candidates questions.

Ron Budacz - My purpose in joining the SEHOA Board is to enhance the value of all 89 homes in Somerset Estates through community differentiation and asset optimization. Additionally, I aim to elevate the level of safety and security to address the rising trend of home invasions in metropolitan Denver that have reached our community. My background is: Founder and CEO of a multibillion-dollar global conglomerate in the hardware electronics supply chain; Former Inspector General in the US Army, responsible for investigating fraud, waste, and abuse; Founding member and chair of Partnership 2000, a consortium of business, academic, and civic leaders to revitalize an Upstate New York county of 250,000 residents; Past President of the Somerset HOA and other communities in foreign countries; Managing Partner of the recently completed community of Goldbranch, where property values have doubled, and where security was integrated in its design; Led charities to educate and protect underprivileged children in impoverished areas of Antigua and Mexico. My wife, Grace, and I have been Colorado taxpayers for more than 30 years and long term dedicated residents of Somerset Estates, and it serves as headquarters for our daughters' families, including four grandchildren. Hobbies and interests include faith, family, distance swimming, physical fitness, golf, and giving back.



Herb McPherson - I received a BS from the U of I and an MBA from Pepperdine. My wife, Shalia, and I wanted to raise our family in Colorado, so we built our 'forever home' in Somerset in 1996. Our three children all graduated from Niwot High School. I worked as an executive in the Fiduciary Services industry for 50 years, retiring in 2023. I've previously served on the Niwot High School Education Foundation board, as well as the SHOA, SS&TC and SEHOA board(s) – always as Treasurer. I'm intimately familiar with our historic and current financial condition, revenues, expenses, budgeting, bank and investment accounts. I know our Property Manager, Attorney and most of the Subcontractors we use. In addition, I understand our water rights and sources as well as the irrigation system design and operation. Finally, I am familiar with 'CCIOA', as well as all our governing documents (Declarations, Articles, By-Laws, etc). If elected, my priorities will be: Enhanced safety & security year-round; Ongoing repair & maintenance of critical infrastructure; Well maintained common area grass/landscaping, especially areas of high traffic/visibility; Prudent



Mike Stears – After receiving my BSME from Montana State University, I moved to the Boulder area in 1979 where Marie and I have remained. In 1995 we established our home with our two boys in Somerset. After retirement from high-tech, I have focused on “giving back” through several volunteer positions including President of Colorado Youth Lacrosse Association for 12 years. I served on the Montana State University College of Engineering Alumni Board for 8 years and was a recipient of the MSU Alumni Achievement Award. This community was built with a solid plan for sustainability and continuity. It was designed as a premier community that included well maintained common areas, beautiful landscaping and water features that set it apart from any other subdivision in Boulder County. Through the years, deferred maintenance has left the infrastructure in need of repairs, updates and improvements. If elected I would support enhanced security and safety for our community; continual upkeep, repair and improvement of our common areas and prudent budgeting to ensure our dues and reserve funds are being directed toward projects that will maintain Somerset as a premier community. As a board member, I would endeavor to seek out and include the view points and opinions of ALL homeowners in Somerset in an effort to encourage transparency and inclusivity to the decisions of the SEHOA Board. This will result in increased property values and allow all residents to feel safe and proud to live in Somerset.



Steve Flannery - I was born and educated in California where I entered my career as a High Tech Entrepreneurial building and leading several High Tech start-up companies along with growing a family. What I learned as a CEO is how to bring a real focus to the Customer. After 28 years in Somerset and a stint with the ACC, I am always motivated to giving-back to a community that has given our family a real home in Colorado. In this case, for the Board, I would enjoy bringing a new level of transparency among the Board and its customers, the Homeowners. To do this, I would like to work with Jon and others to implement clear two-way communication with our homeowners on their issues at hand, stay transparent on the basic facts that underlie the issues, and most importantly deliver a set of alternatives to solve any issue that the homeowners can then vote to set the direction, not the Board. Without this, issues like security and ponds will always be difficult to resolve.



Astrid Kirschenbaum - Hello! I live on Daylilly Court with my husband Julian, four children, and Bernedoodle. I have been in the Boulder area for 11 years and plan to remain here until our little ones are grown. I am an artist and yogini who holds the pleasant town of Niwot, our friendly Somerset cul-de sac, and my comfortable home in high esteem. I deeply value Neighborhood and Community, which — along with my creativity and industriousness — are the assets I will bring to the HOA board. I am experienced in custom home building and real estate projects. Steeped in a real estate family, I have comprehensive insight into the requirements of homeowners, sellers, and buyers. I will bring an open-minded, streamlined approach to Somerset Estates. I also have over a decade of prior HOA experience in Colorado and have attended all annual Somerset Estates HOA annual meetings since my arrival. I am known for my impeccable attendance and punctuality, superb listening and note-taking skills, and strong organizational abilities. If I am elected to the board, I am willing to take on the position of Secretary.



Lisa Smith - My name is Lisa Smith, and my family and I have proudly called Somerset Estates home for the past four years. My husband Kelley and I have three children (ages 7, 5, and 3), and we also have two beloved dogs who keep our household lively. Originally from Northern California, I moved to Colorado in 2003 to attend CU Boulder, and I've fallen in love with the state and all it has to offer ever since. Professionally, I work in technology sales, where I leverage my experience in building relationships, problem-solving, and driving results. I believe my background in sales has provided me with a strong understanding of effective communication and collaboration—skills I'm eager to apply to help our HOA thrive. As a member of the board, I'm committed to working together with all my neighbors to ensure that our community continues to be a place where families can grow, feel safe, and enjoy all that this beautiful neighborhood has to offer. I will bring a fresh, unbiased perspective, and will be open-minded to all decisions our community has to make. Thank you for considering me for this opportunity. I look forward to contributing positively to Somerset Estates!



Security Update - Be Vigilant!

We've had new reports of packages stolen off porches and suspicious cars in Somerset Estates and Legend Ridge. The Sheriff's office is aware of this and checking our Flock cameras for license plates. They request that you **report any suspicious vehicles to the non-emergency dispatch number at 303-441-4444**. From Detective Trevor Soole: **"If you see something, say something. Our patrol Deputies are on heightened awareness in your neighborhood and you may see an increased police presence for a time."**

New ACC Online Submission Process!

We now have an online submission process for ACC requests. Please go to the [\\$ ACC page on the website \\$](#) and follow the instructions. Thank you for obtaining ACC approval before you begin your architectural or landscape work. Questions or to contact the ACC, please use **ACCGroup@somersetestates-hoa.com**. (Note: ACC@somersetestates-hoa.com is no longer an active email account.)

Note - March 18 Board Meeting is Cancelled

Upcoming Events at a Glance

Please monitor the SEHOA website for any schedule changes: somersetestates-hoa.com.

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 18 IS CANCELLED.

Budget and Annual Meeting - March 27. Social starts at 6:30 PM, Budget Meeting at 7 PM, Annual Meeting thereafter. Niwot Inn, 342 2nd Ave, Niwot.

Somerset Estates Book Club - The next meeting will be on April 30, hosted by Barb Stager. The book is *The Women* by Kristin Hannah. Please let Paula Hemenway know at p.hemenway@comcast.net if you want to be added to the Book Club distribution list.

Monday Mahjong- Mondays at 3 PM. Contact Paula Hemenway at p.hemenway@comcast.net for more information.

Contact SEHOA

Association General Information

Somerset Estates Homeowners Association P.O. Box 621 Niwot CO 80544

Website: SomersetEstates-HOA.com General Email Inquiries: Info@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Security Reports: Security@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Property Management

Allan Orendorff TrioProperty@comcast.net

Executive Board

Jon Gillespie-Brown, President JonGB@SomersetEstates-HOA.com

Architectural Control Committee

ACCGroup@SomersetEstates-HOA.com