**BALLOT**

**Question 1 –** Should the Cotswolds HOA raise annual dues from $305 to $350?

**Background** – The Cotswolds HOA board held a budget meeting on Wednesday, December 11 to discuss the 2020 HOA budget. Quorum was established and by a vote of 3-1, and in accordance with Paragraph 8.04 of the Cotswolds Covenants, the HOA Board has established 2020 annual dues at $305. Previously, dues for the HOA were $300 annually. When the HOA built the Banbury Pool, the neighborhood agreed to raise the dues to $375 until the loan was paid off. The loan was paid off in 2019 and annual dues were scheduled to return to $300. After reviewing the budget, the HOA board has decided that more funds were needed in order to maintain two pools and cover rising landscaping and utilities costs. There was further discussion between board members regarding funding for future large-scale maintenance projects as well as capital improvement projects. The majority of the HOA board believes that dues at $305 are not sufficient to maintain and improve the neighborhood over the long term. If we look at all the possible expenditures for the HOA, they can roughly be broken down into four categories: operating costs (landscaping, pool cleaning, utilities, etc.), reactive maintenance, proactive maintenance, and amenity improvement. With the present budget, we are able to adequately cover both operating costs and reactive maintenance with a very small amount left over for proactive maintenance. Raising the dues boils down to how the neighborhood pays for long term maintenance and possible improvement of our neighborhood. Do we pay in advance and invest in our neighborhood or do we react with large, one-time assessments to cover expenses as they occur? The current budget only allows us to react and does not give the neighborhood the funds required to make any significant steps towards proactive maintenance or neighborhood improvement.

**BALLOT FOR QUESTION #1**

**Question 1 –** Should the Cotswolds HOA raise annual dues from $305 to $350?

A vote for “YES” is a vote to raise the annual dues on a permanent basis from $305 to $350 per year. A vote for “NO” is a vote to have the dues remain at $305 per year.

**YES**

**NO**

**Requirements for Quorum (Question 1 only)**:

Per paragraph 8.04(c) of the Covenants of the Cotswolds HOA, this vote is subject to quorum requirements. For this vote to become binding, 146 of the 291 lots currently within the association must cast a vote. If quorum is met on the first ballot, the votes will be tallied and the majority will be binding on the entire association. If quorum is not met on the first vote, the HOA board will determine if the association will pursue a second vote. In the event a second vote is sought, the results of the first vote will not be published, only the number of votes cast. For the second vote to become binding, 97 of the 291 lots currently within the association must cast a vote. If quorum is not met on the second vote, the measure is considered to fail.

**Question 2** – Please vote for **four** members to be appointed to a position on the Cotswolds Home Owners’ Association Board (HOA) and **four** members to be appointed to a position on the Architectural Review Committee (ARC). The term of this position will be from the conclusion of this vote until the annual HOA Meeting in 2023. Please note that some candidates are running for ARC Board only.

**Background –** The terms of multiple members of both the HOA and ARC have expired. After the HOA Board advertised the position through several emails to all HOA members, eight neighbors have expressed interest in serving on the board. The candidates are presented below in alphabetical order by last name.

**Bill Combs**

I moved in to the Oaks in February, 2017. We moved here from the Tampa, Fl. area when I retired as a utilities manager at MacDill Air Force Base. I am currently serving on the HOA board and am seeking another term. We lived in the same community in Tampa for 30 years and watched the neighborhood decline through the years. This drove my interest in serving on the association board here. I now work as a handyman and have done a lot of the repairs and maintenance on the pools, sprinklers and entrances. I also encourage and participate in the neighborhood work days.

I opposed the annual dues increase approved by the board and also oppose the proposed increase to be voted on. There are options to decrease utility costs, which are a large budget expense. The majority of our neighbors comply with the rules outlined in our covenants. Those who violate the covenants should be educated and warned as a first step and if violations continue fines should be assessed. My wife and I like this neighborhood and I would appreciate your vote for my service on the board

**Brian Hall**

My name is Brian Hall and my wife Deb and our two youngest sons (currently 7th and 8th grade) moved into the Cotswold in June of 2019.  We moved here from Illinois for work – I have been in the utility business for nearly 31 years.  I worked at Nicor Gas in Illinois which became part of the Southern Company family in 2015.  I accepted a position with Alabama Power in February of 2019 and our journey South was underway.  We came down in March to look for homes and our home on Salford was the last home we looked at before heading back North.  We fell in love with the house and the neighborhood and everything fell into place for the sale during our 800 mile drive back to Illinois.

College Football was not a “thing” up north so that has been a unique experience and we have been very happy with our selection of Auburn to call home as well as The Cotswold’s neighborhood.  I have been in management with the utility companies for 26 of the 31 years and have a lot of experience with project management, community relations, budgets and communications.  In addition to the utility experience I was a partner in a handyman/remodeling business prior to moving to Auburn so have some experience with home improvement work / material cost / job estimating and good old fashioned getting your hands dirty to get the job done.

The reason I expressed an interest in joining the HOA and ARC boards mainly ties to a longstanding philosophy of mine – that if you want to voice an opinion then you need to be willing to work to make it the best it can be.  I have managed volunteer teams in the past and often the best way to gather volunteers was to listen to people who wanted to give their opinion on how it should be done or what was done wrong last time and then simply say, “Sounds like you want to help?”  In that line of thinking – if I want to reside I a nice neighborhood, a neighborhood that takes pride in its’ presence and a neighborhood where you know your neighbors – then I need to volunteer.

I guess that’s my story in a nutshell – we attend Church of the Highlands and War Eagle!  Who knows that may sway some votes either way I suppose…

**Jan Newton**

Jan, along with her husband Jim and their daughter Nox, has lived in The Cotswolds Subdivision since 2013. Jan has a master's degree from the Ohio State University and a Bachelor's degree from Texas Christian University.  She has served on numerous committees at her church and other organizations, including a current board position with the Alabama Wildflower Society. She consults and gives presentations on the benefits of using native plants in the landscape to attract and feed birds, butterflies, hummingbirds and other wildlife and is a member of Alabama Water Watch for which she is a certified water quality monitor and tests water quality at several sites in the Saugahatchee watershed. Jan cares about the aesthetic values of our community and wants to help ensure that our wonderful neighborhood maintains its cohesive and appealing presence. She would be honored to serve on the Architectural Review Committee.

**Scott Robinson**

<No information submitted>

**Lindsey Smith**

I'm Lindsey Smith and I moved from Prattville to Auburn and into the Oaks in April of 2019 with my husband two boys who are 6 and 2 years old.  Even though I'm newer to the neighborhood, I've attended as many public board meetings as possible, asking questions and understanding the issues that being discussed.  I'm a Commercial Construction Project Manager by occupation, which I believe allows me to understand and evaluate construction, maintenance needs, development and budgets well.  Even though I'm newer to the Auburn area, I have a lot of contacts for companies that could help with maintenance/repair of the pools, grounds, and with projects such as our sign replacements.  I'm passionate about maintaining the value and integrity of the community.  I'd love to see our residents come together more for holiday decorating and social events.  Residents that know each other take care of eachother, so I think these opportunities are important.

**Sarah Webster Smith**

Sarah has served on the HOA Board for the past three years, most recently as the ARC Board liaison.

**Yvonne Williams**

My name is Yvonne Williams. We have lived in the Cotswolds since Labor Day weekend of 2007, the first

residents of the neighborhood except for the deer, armadillos, bobcats, turkeys, and other assorted wildlife.

I am a retired high school teacher of English and French from our days in Decatur, Alabama. I have worked as an ESL instructor/tutor at Auburn University. I continue to work on campus part time as a Standardized Patient for the School of Pharmacy. I also assist at VCOM, the AU medical school. My "work from home" job is editing articles for publication, dissertations, and Master's theses.

I'd love to see our neighborhood continue to develop connections with each other. I love the facebook page where we can share concerns, items for sale, notices of fun events, etc. As a senior citizen, I'm not able to help much with work days but am glad that many do.

My major concerns regarding the HOA are that excessive dues will become a hindrance to reaching new residents or keeping current ones, that too strict an adherence to some of the covenants may be a hardship on some residents,  and that we work to avoid misunderstandings at every opportunity. We have seen the covenants be changed after

the first developer went bankrupt. We weren't happy about some of the changes but understood the necessity of doing so.

**Juming Zhong**

Dr. Zhong received his DVM from a Chinese university. He moved to the USA in 1990, and earned his PhD from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1995. He then worked as postdoctoral fellow/ Assistant Professor at University of Nevada-Reno medical school before joining Auburn University in 2001. Currently he is a full Professor and teaches basic biomedical science at Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine.  
  
Dr. Zhong moved to 684 Sudeley Ct with his wife and two children in 2012. He and family observed the growth of the neighborhood and enjoy the peaceful life here. As a homeowner at the Cotswolds, he would be happy to serve on the HOA, hoping to devote his effort with other board members and all the homeowners to maintain and improve the integrity and value of the neighborhood, and to promote our neighborhood one of the best in the area.

**BALLOT for Question 2**

Please vote for up to eight candidates, four for the HOA Board and four for the ARC Board. Please mark the appropriate box next to each candidate for the board you believe they are best fit to serve on. You may also abstain from voting on any candidates. Ballots with four or fewer votes for either board will be counted. Ballots with multiple votes for the same candidate and ballots with five or more votes for either board will be rejected.

**Name HOA ARC Abstain**

**Bill Combs**

**Brian Hall**

**Jan Newton**

**Scott Robinson**

**Lindsey Smith**

**Sarah Webster Smith**

**Yvonne Williams**

**Juming Zhong**

**Requirements for Quorum (Question 2 Only)**:

The Cotswolds HOA Board has determined that this vote is not subject to quorum. The candidate that receives the most votes will serve on the board, regardless of the total number of votes cast.

**Requirements for Voting on either Question:**

-Must be a member in good standing with the Cotswolds HOA. 2020 dues must be paid in order to be in good standing.

-Votes are limited to once per lot on each question.

-Votes must be sent from an email address registered with the Cotswolds HOA. Any questions on registered email addresses should be sent to [info@cotswoldshoa.org](mailto:info@cotswoldshoa.org).

-Voting will be open from the time this notice is sent until it **closes at 11:59pm Central Time on Sunday, February 28**. Votes must be received before this cutoff to be counted.