

The Lakes HOA

May 2024

Office Hours: Mon-Thur 9am-3pm / (954)480-2928 / office@thelakeshoa.net

HOMEOWNER COMPLAINTS

We were disheartened to come across recent social media posts expressing discontent regarding the increase in maintenance fees and the implementation of a special assessment. We understand that these adjustments can be concerning, and we want to address your concerns directly.

We encourage all homeowners to attend board meetings where such matters are discussed in detail. By participating in these meetings, you will gain a better understanding of the decisions made and the reasons behind them. Your input and engagement are valuable in shaping the future of our community.

Should you have any further questions or require clarification on any issue, please do not hesitate to reach out to us directly or attend our upcoming Town Hall Meeting to explain the matters we are facing..

TOWN HALL MEETING

The board is calling for a Town Hall meeting at the clubhouse, where our attorney will be speaking on the importance and necessity of passing the amendments and why. This is a good opportunity for you to ask questions and get a better understanding of why we need to increase the monthly maintenance to cover our expenses. The meeting will be via Zoom also. So if you don't plan on attending in person, you will be able to join via Zoom, The meeting will start at 7:00pm. Zoom instructions will be sent prior to meeting.

THE NEW BUDGET

How is the budget calculated? The anticipated expenses are calculated first and the total of these expenses will be the amount of income that is needed and is divided among owners to be paid to the association. If the association needs more money than budgeted, the board is obligated to get the money from the owners. All expenses must be covered. If you would like a copy of the 2024-25 budget, contact the office for a copy.

VOLUNTEERS

We could still use extra help doing odd jobs like painting yellow the traffic bumps in the road, touch-up painting the outside of homes, pressure cleaning the mildew off walls of homes and/or sidewalks, scraping loose paint off street sign posts and repainting, etc. If you would like to help, please call Richard at the office.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

If you have a question you think everyone would like to know the answer to, or not, please email them to office and reference in subject line Q&As. We will either put in the Newsletter, or webpage if this becomes popular.

ADS IN THE NEWSLETTER

To the homeowners who have their own business, we are offering the opportunity for you to advertise to your fellow homeowners your business skills. We will post the ad sizes and prices on the webpage soon. NOTE: Of course, the association is not guaranteeing their work or giving personal recommendations but encourage you to do your own vetting of the business as you would normally do. **Beginning with this issue, we will also be publishing the newsletter monthly.**

THE SIX AMENDMENTS EXPLAINED TWO AT A TIME

The most important amendment is removing the 5% cap that increases our monthly maintenance each year. Our current cap is a 5% increase over the last monthly payment. We notified you that the maintenance payment would increase to \$296 beginning July 1st. With that 5% increase we cannot meet all of our expenses, therefore, we had to special assess again this year but a lesser amount than last year. You have already received notice of this increase and the explanation of the need to do this. Rest assured, the board is only going to increase next year to cover expenses.

Our goal is to get enough extra income, beyond what homeowners pay, to cover the gap between what we take in and what we have to pay out. With the income we are receiving from monthly maintenance, which is not meeting our needs, we are only able to do repairs which keep mounting as our community ages. Until we can start to get outside income other than from the homeowners, we cannot start improvement projects.

The second important amendment is the Capital Investment Fee to be paid by new homeowners to the community and does not affect those already living here. Those who are buying 2 bedroom villas will be asked to pay \$1,000 and those buying 3 bedroom villas will be asked to pay \$1500. If this Fee had been in place this year, we would have added approximately \$12,500 to our income from the 10 sales. We are looking for ways to increase our income through higher interest rate bank accounts, CDs, and CDARS/ICS accounts. These will be explained more completely in the next newsletter. If you have any suggestions on how we can get extra income, please email us and we'll look into it. More on the other four amendments in our next issue.

CARS RANSACKED

FYI - In the last couple weeks, two cars have been ransacked because doors weren't locked.

WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE BOARD

The board members have an obligation to protect the property and its value, maintain the common property, and enforce the covenants. Board members do not serve a constituency; they serve the governing documents and statutes. The laws and documents require that the board maintain the property and all the amenities just as the developer turned them over to you. That means the board must spend "whatever it takes" to protect the value of the property, amenities, and enforce the covenant restrictions. If the board needs more money than budgeted, they can amend the budget and change the regular assessment payment or special assess the owners. When purchasers buying a unit and sign closing documents, they have pre-agreed to pay "whatever it takes" to meet the annual and future expenses of the association. Monthly maintenance assessments should go up every year as much as the inflation rate increases. Because of the massive amount of fraud to insurance companies, and hurricane losses in Florida, most associations have been faced with extremely high premiums which the homeowners have to cover.

WHY DOES THE BOARD RESTRICT QUESTIONS TO A 3X5 CARD

Board meetings are the business meetings of the board members as opposed to informational meetings for owners and is not a Q&A session but a time to get business done. So by using the cards for questions at the end of the business meeting, we can better control the time spent on each item brought up.

POLYBUTYLENE PIPES

We have encouraged homeowners in the past to update their pipes from the polybutylene pipes due to their age as the community is approaching 40 years old. Owners have been experiencing pipes breaking for the past few years. These pictures show what happened while the owners were away. They had sold their unit with the closing scheduled the week after the rupture. The owner has given us permission to show these pictures as a warning of what could happen to you. This is what the owner said, "I was penny wise and pound foolish. I could have spent \$11,000 to replace my pipes, now I paid \$60,000+ to repair everything the water damaged." BTW - The sale did go through!

