

Subject: FEMA Updates, Special Assessment Deadline, and Bridge Construction News

Dear Riverside Lakeland Neighbors,

10/3/2024

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to provide an update on FEMA funding, bridge and road repairs, as well as a reminder about our POA dues and special assessment.

Recent Meeting Recap

At our last meeting, we heard from Commissioner Bill Daugette, who updated us on the Riverside Fire Department absorbing Thomas Lake VFD and ESD-1 purchasing land where an ambulance will soon be stationed, improving response times. Bill also discussed the low-water bridge and potential contractors. Going forward, we plan to invite more guest speakers, such as the Sheriff, Riverside Water, and others.

FEMA Funding Update

As of now, the POA has deposited \$109,647.80 from FEMA funds. On Tuesday, an additional \$77,120.60 was released to 10 neighbors, and we expect more soon. Three neighbors have already turned over their checks, which have been deposited into the POA account.

Classification	Amount	Neighbor Count
Received To Date	\$ 109,647.80	16
Incoming	\$ 73,372.90	9
Received + Incoming	\$ 183,020.70	
Holding Out	\$ 16,151.74	4
Received + Incoming + Holding Out	\$ 199,172.44	

We are still waiting for full payment from four neighbors. Two of them have already started making payments to the POA for the remainder of their FEMA funds, and we expect to receive the balance from them shortly. However, two neighbors are holding out entirely and have not made any effort to turn over their FEMA funds for the bridge repair. These two neighbors are withholding a total of \$13,950.87.

In response, we will be escalating the matter by working with FEMA, Congressman Pete Sessions' office, and involving the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) to investigate and address the situation. While we hope this can be resolved amicably, it's important that we take these steps to ensure that all funds intended for the bridge repair are collected and properly allocated.

POA Dues and Special Assessment Reminder

This past Tuesday was the deadline for the \$300 special assessment. If you haven't paid yet, it's crucial that you do so immediately, as these funds are vital for maintaining and improving our community. Late fees are now accruing, and to ensure fairness to all residents, liens will be placed on properties starting next week for unpaid POA dues and the special assessment. Timely payment helps us move forward with essential projects like the bridge and road repairs.

Bridge Construction and Road Repairs

I spoke with Commissioner Daugette, and I'm pleased to confirm that our bridge (Red Dot in Picture Below) is not in a flood zone, which simplifies the process significantly. The county is in agreement with us proceeding with the repair or replacement of the bridge.



FEMA Grants and Benefits

Several have asked if receiving FEMA funds affects taxes or benefits like Social Security. FEMA disaster grants are not taxable and do not impact Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, SNAP, or other federal assistance.

Lakeland Cleanup - Dumpsters

Dumpsters will arrive October 10-21st for our 3rd annual Lakeland Cleanup. The back boat ramp gate will be kept open during the day and closed in the evening. If you have any questions, give me a call.

Next Steps

The board will meet with 5-T Construction next week to obtain additional details regarding the bid with the hope of beginning construction before the rains. We are also working to secure funding for road, dam, and levee repairs, though progress may be slower due to Hurricane Helene.

Thank you for your patience and support. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Fraser Stanley-Jones
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