



Minutes of the Annual Meeting
Sands McCormick Townhomes Association
February 25, 2024

Board

Doug Eggleston, President
Jim Mercier, Vice President-Maintenance
Dave Clouse, Treasurer
Diana Nashban, Director-Landscape
David Lattanzio, Secretary

President: Doug called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 pm. He introduced the board members in attendance and stated how much he has enjoyed the past two years serving on the Sands McCormick Board. This Board has made many improvements to the community and there are more to come.

THE SMTA BOARD'S INSPIRATION FOR CHANGE: *"The condition of each of our community's assets reflects the value of the community and, therefore, the value of our homes."*

With this understanding, the Board identified five assets within the Sands and began discussing how to improve each of them within our budget

Pool/Community Center and Parking Lot (including the storage rooms, bathrooms, kitchen, etc.)

Tennis Court (fencing, net, benches, surface, water fountain)

The RV and Vehicle Storage Area

Main Entry Island as well as all common landscape areas inside the Sands

Exterior Landscape (Via Linda landscape)

We are determined to make lasting Improvements within our budget, which we know requires creative thinking and lots of "free labor" donated by each Board member. Our highlighted improvements have been: new paint colors giving Sands McCormick a fresh look: adding Travertine as an option for homeowners' walkways; new garage door approved; new entry island landscaping and enhanced lighting (plus we will soon have our new sign mounted on the freshly painted monument wall); the RV lot entry as well as resurfacing /cleaning of the inside of the lot; assigning spaces and streamlining the registration process so we have full compliance. In addition, there have been many changes and upgrades to the community center/pool area and tennis courts, and we are working on a plan for a Via Linda landscaping project.

To make life easier for our homeowners, I streamlined the process to make architectural and landscaping improvements.

The Sands McCormick Board's primary duty is *to act in the best interest of the homeowners while taking a neighborly approach to ensure compliance with its*

governing documents, and to maintain and improve the common assets of the Association while implementing a safe and fiduciary approach to managing its financial business.

Treasurer: The Financial State of Your Association is Very Strong

We are very blessed in a number of ways at SMTA. The challenges we will continually face are modernizing, maintaining, and improving a 40+ year-old complex.

We wanted a financial report that would give you a lot of information clearly so you could compare both income and expenses to prior years.

The duties of Treasurer and other positions on the Board will continue to become more complex; such is the nature of what we do when demands are made by MRPOA, vendors, regulating authorities, the city, and others.

SMTA Managed Finances and Costs Last Year

Many savings occurred in the past year. Jim and the painting bids and line-stripping, Diana with lawn and tree care, Doug with CC cleaning, new lighting, and tennis court fencing. We've requested multiple insurance quotes from our agent.

Your board members have saved over \$8,000, volunteering their time and tools around our complex in the last year.

We request multiple bids for all larger purchases.

Our Cash Management System

As we looked at our accumulating cash on hand a couple of years ago, we knew we were looking at rising interest rates. As a Board, we determined we should take advantage of this rising rate environment and use our cash on hand to make our money work for us. We are pleased to be able to show you that we have earned almost \$7,000 interest in the last year and have budgeted \$9,000 in earned interest for this current year. **In these three years, Sands McCormick has earned over \$18,000 in interest before taxes.** Cash has increased from \$52,000 in 2020 to \$204,000 in 2023.

We currently have four interest-earning CDs at two banks with various maturity dates, and all of these include FDIC insurance to protect our SMTA homeowners.

For instance, this earned interest will pay all of our APS bills for the year, or all of our pool and CC cleaning expenses.

Now, I have a challenge for some of you. Fiscal management and bookkeeping take time. About two-thirds of the homeowners currently pay with Zelle already. I am asking the rest of the homeowners to please look into it. A huge thank you to the homeowners who use Zelle already.

Paying electronically allows for so many things for us as we age. We might need children or trusted advisors to be able to stay on top of this as we get older, and a number of homeowners are doing this. Personal checks cannot do this.

One more thing, SMTA needs an alternate phone number as an emergency contact on every home here. Things happen and the Board needs to be able to contact someone if there is a real emergency. Talk to me to arrange this.

A big thank you to our homeowners for prompt payments.

QB Software and Why We Use It

QB gives the Board so many tools to manage the invoices from vendors and gives us immediate fiscal information in any particular income or expense account. Remember that every vendor invoice is immediately available now to compare past and present costs. QB downloads bank information daily giving us accurate bank records.

At meetings and other times, Board members want to know what this or that costs in prior years, and QB gives us this information instantly.

Bank Balances

It isn't our goal to grow a larger and larger pot of money, but to serve this community and take care of and replace our aging infrastructure.

Inflation and How We are Having to Adjust to It.

We are dealing with inflation every day with our vendors, APS, tree services, lawn care, and everything costs more. The very healthy balances we show may need to be used in the future for some everyday expenses.

I Am Against Assessment Increases As is This Board

Sands McCormick has by far the best bang for our buck on assessments for the amenities we offer. I will try to use earned interest, cost containment, and active fiscal management and hope we can go for a while without raising our annual assessments.

We have aggressively modernized and updated our assets and have done that while costs were less. A big thank you to Dave Lattanzio for trying to make an accountant out of a bookkeeper.

Last but certainly not least, I live right across the street from the CC. The books can be looked at by any homeowner at any time. Please let me know if you have concerns or a question about anything.

It has been my pleasure to volunteer for all of you and this Board.

Maintenance: Jim explained the Board's philosophy of keeping replacement costs low (through competitive bidding) and, where possible, performing the work by our Board members. For example, the replacement of the pool heater was done at a significant savings by dealing with several vendors. The projects completed this past year include:

- Revitalization of the RV Lot
- Parking Lot at CC repaved.
- New security wireless cameras installed at the CC and RV Lot—installed by Doug, Dave, and Jim.
- New garage door with side windows approved by MRPOA.
- The city came out and smoothed several rough sidewalk areas in subdivision with a promise they will be doing sidewalk improvements at no cost to SMTA.
- Tennis court exterior screening installed to reduce debris blowing into the court—installed by Doug and Jim.
- Pickleball court relined once a quarter by Jim.
- The new paint scheme for 2024 was finally approved after numerous meetings with MRPOA by Doug and Jim. Painting of 23 homes in spring of 2024 approved by MRPOA. The advent of zoning and painting by ‘building’ approved.
- The entrance sign rebuilt after a drunk driver ran into it—the first of four accidents at our entrance.
- CC repainted in the newly approved colors.
- Speed rumble strips installed by the city after they met with Dave, Doug, and Jim regarding the number of accidents. We are requesting another set of them on the west side of 101 bridge.
- The Board members also:
 - Provided shower curtains in bathrooms along with hooks and shelves;
 - Cleaned storage areas and pool motor room;
 - Donated various kitchen items for users convenience;
 - Repaired pool water fountain;
 - Installed new lighting in pool area;
 - Installed drywall, ceiling fans and outlets;

Landscaping: Diana summarized the numerous trees which needed to be removed due to age and other factors. About 11 or 12 trees were removed this past year. Many of our trees are more than 40 years of age and will need to be monitored carefully. She noted two of the Ficus trees at our entrance will have to be removed due to disease. Replacement of trees throughout our complex will be discussed by the Board in the weeks to follow.

Diana complimented our vendors who have been with us for several years. We have been fortunate to maintain a consistent vendor list with flat or very small cost increases.

Diana then introduced the xeriscaping project being contemplated for Via Linda. She explained the Scottsdale rebate program with the water cost reduction and the concept of “unproductive grass.” Diana explained that our budget for next year does not include a provision for xeriscaping.

Secretary: David L. acknowledged the work of the other Board members. He explained the process of conducting Board meetings, agendas, distribution of the minutes, email blasts and the newsletter. He acknowledged the work of Maureen Kovacs who maintains our web site and coordinates the distribution of the aforementioned documents.

This concluded the formal presentation of the Board. The next section reflects presentations, questions and comments by the homeowners.

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The following is a presentation by Judy Clouse regarding safety and security.

We are starting to live in a different world than we once did.

We see traffic on San Rafael in the middle of the night, driving slowly, looking at our houses. More traffic is coming through during the day, both vehicles, and pedestrian traffic, as well as bikes.

There are more and more ambulances in our community as we are all getting older.

One of our neighbors had a water catastrophe while they were not home to deal with it.

We need to know our neighbors better and look out for one another more. Get to know your neighbors, especially those who live next door to you. If you have a neighbor who you know doesn't know anybody—knock on their door and introduce yourself. Make an effort to get to know those around you.

Make sure somebody in the neighborhood has a key to your house, knows how to get in or knows someone in the area that does. At the very least, make sure someone in our neighborhood has the contact information of someone local who can get into your house to help you in an emergency or to help if there is an emergency with your house.

The SMTA Board is getting new neighborhood watch-type signs. Our neighborhood motto should be: **See something—say something**. Alert a neighbor or a board member if something doesn't look right.

Keep your garage doors shut and your gates shut, especially at night. Lock your car doors. If you see someone's gate or garage door open at night, say something. It could be that they went in and forgot to put their garage door down. They will appreciate a friendly knock and a reminder.

Amazon packages—try to arrange to have them put over the gate or behind a pony wall. You can write it in the ordering instructions. You may need to take in a neighbor's package if it sits out too long so it's not a give-away that no one is home or that it's a "for free" sign.

All those little pizza, etc., coupons that get stuck in gates—take them in from neighbors that you know are gone. The same with newspapers, etc., that get thrown on driveways. These are dead giveaways that no one is home.

Leave porch or driveway lights on at night for added security around your home. This benefits us all.

Help each other and we will all live in a safer and friendlier community.

The SMTA Board has secured padlocks from APS for each homeowner to be able to secure their electrical panel against break-in.

Bill Kennedy then outlined the steps he has taken to purchase the new and approved garage door. He commented on the time frame from ordering to installation, size, and installation. Once installed, the new door will have to be painted. If a homeowner wishes to purchase a new door, approval will be necessary from MRPOA. The vendor used by Sands McCormick offers a significant discount compared to other suppliers.

There were numerous comments and questions regarding the paint schedule, colors, definition of a block and painting of garage doors. Jim stated that MRPOA views the Sands as one of the "gem" properties in McCormick Ranch and tended to be rather inflexible on this entire subject. But in the end, we're going to have a first-class community vision when completed.

There was a question on security; one on available cash should an unexpected expense arise, the process of xeriscaping including the size and color of rocks.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm. The Board thanked all who attended as well as those who brought refreshments.

The next Board meeting will be on March 20 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
David Lattanzio



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