



## WELCOME TO THE HOA NEWSLETTER!

I hope you enjoy this latest version of the Newsletter. Send comments to the Board at: [Board@cabinbranchforest.com](mailto:Board@cabinbranchforest.com)



Welcome to 2026 and our wonderful white world here in Cabin Branch Forest

### In This Issue:

- 2026 welcoming in the 250th Anniversary of the USA
- The Annual Assessment - where the money goes
- Reserves and planning for the Tot Lot
- Snow cleanup
- Upcoming events - none

We hope everyone had a fun but restful holiday season and the Board welcomes in the new year 2026, a very special year as this is the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of the United States of America.

The Board will be thinking about how we can celebrate in Cabin Branch Forest and are eager to hear any ideas you have. I don't know how many of us were around for the 200<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1976 but I was in the UK celebrating at a USA base Chicksands, never imagining I would be in the USA for the 250<sup>th</sup>. Each of us have our stories to share and in an area as diverse as Northern Virginia our life journeys are often surprising even to us, feel free to share via the Facebook page or send a response to the Board and I will include in a future edition of the Newsletter.

Now to CBF business, we mentioned last quarter that the Tot Lot was going to require more investment than the Annual HOA Assessment could cover and I am sure some of you are surprised and also noticed the increase in the Annual Assessment so let's dig a little deeper into this, but first let me say that on behalf of the Board we take our fiscal responsibilities very seriously and understand that money can be tight with inflation and other costs.

# Cabin Branch Forest HOA - Budget and Reserves

We hope you all had time to read the Annual Assessment 2025 Budget and review the allocation and spend categories for the year. As the statement details the Trash is the substantial line item resulting in over 50% of the Dues, followed by Landscaping/Ground Maintenance, and we should all be aware that costs have increased and although we can wish costs to be cheaper they are not. Our personal landscaping service is close to 25% of the CBF maintenance costs for example. The Board is going to request alternative bids for Trash and Landscaping to ensure we keep the costs as fair as possible for the service we receive, our trash, for example, trash is a two collections per week and reducing to one would probably reduce costs but is that what we want?

At the end of the 2025 Budget sheet you can see there is a surplus of \$7,743 however the HOA is required to include Reserves for the maintenance of Cabin Branch Forest, which covers items that are not part of the annual budget expenditures, e.g. Fences, Gazebos, paths and Tot Lots funded through the Reserves. As we can all see a surplus of less than \$8,000 for 2025, for the entire development, is not a large sum of money as any of us know who have had to replace home items.

The Board will be meeting in the first quarter to discuss the Reserves allocation and the realities of costs and replacement needs. We are sure that owners care to maintain the development and to ensure safety for all our residents, however we know the Reserves currently held will not be enough for the needs, even including the 2025 \$7743.00 with the residuals from previous years. In the previous Newsletter we identified that the Tot Lot investment cannot be funded out of the Reserves alone, we understand that cost concerns some owners and as we said no decision will be made without full owner input. The Board had done an initial evaluation and we illustrated one example of the Tot Lot update in the Newsletter to engage and obtain feedback. We also have alternative ideas from a previous Board member which is great and all are being considered. Due to unforeseen personal challenges the Board did not meet in December as we had planned but meetings are underway now.

## To the snow

We had quite a storm last week particularly as the sleet and ice layer became a challenge. I think we can all say a thank you to the county for the clean up and also a big thank you to our neighbors who went above and beyond to help others by clearing driveways and sidewalks.



## Upcoming Events

None on the schedule

TBD

### HOA Board Meeting

The Board HOA meeting are held quarterly and an email is sent via gmail to notify of the date.

If you have questions or ideas for future events  
Contact us at [board@cabinbranchforest.com](mailto:board@cabinbranchforest.com)