

Windermere Lakes

H O M E O W N E R S

A S S O C I A T I O N



January 2010

www.windermere.com

Volume 4, Issue 1

President's Message

RECAP of Presentation at Annual HOA Meeting November 3, 2009

The Windermere Lakes HOA board greatly appreciates your attendance at tonight's annual meeting. In this meeting we hope to provide you an update on three major topics of interest. These are the year to date summary of the board's activities, the guiding principles of the board over the past year, and 2010's outlook.

Year to Date Summary

In January of this year, the Board considered the current state of affairs of the economy, real estate market and financial status of the Association. Concerns the board had at the time included increases in expenses seen in 2008 due to high energy costs, the potential instability of banking institutions, reductions in real estate values resulting in higher default rates and resulting foreclosures, and expected 2009 expenses. Finally, the effects of Hurricane Ike remained fresh in the Board's mind along with continued need to repair the neighborhoods border fence and complete landscaping repairs and damaged tree removal, disposal and replacement.

The decision was made at that time by the Board to maintain strict alignment with the approved budget, and reduce costs in as many areas as possible to address the potential for slow payment of annual assessments.

The Board is pleased with the positive results taken to address costs. Vendors which had implemented "energy costs" as a justification for increased fees or surcharges were addressed directly noting energy costs had fallen, and surcharges would not be accepted. Vendors accepted these demands, and savings as a result were captured. All contracts for repairs were competitively bid with new vendors included in the process, as opposed to utilization of vendors with existing history being let contracts because of prior positive experiences. This required close attention to activities and work monitoring by board members. In an effort to reduce repairs on a "once it's broken" basis, and implement a more preventive facilities maintenance method, the board requested SCS add a CAMI module to the package of services they provide the Association. This third party inspection of common area facilities puts "cold eyes" on the property each month, and actions needed to repair minor issues are competitively bid. While the module adds a minor cost to the SCS contract, the savings incurred through constant preventive maintenance has provided savings over reactive repairs requiring immediate action with limited bidding opportunity.

Unfortunately, these actions taken to reduce costs have been more than offset by increases in costs in one specific area. The North Harris County Regional Water Authority is a quasi-governmental agency implemented in the late nineties charged with significantly reducing groundwater usage in our area of Harris County. I challenge each resident to review their own personal water bill to see the effects of this agencies taxation authority. The amount charged for water has steadily increased since agency implementation; however in 2008 and 2009, the fees charged per 1000 gallons of water used has increased dramatically. This

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Info From The Board

Our Annual Homeowner Association meeting was held on November 3, 2009 at 7:00pm - Windermere Lakes Clubhouse.

Below are highlights of the meeting; should you have any questions, you can contact us at www.windermere.com for further details.

- Guest Speaker, Katherine Cabaniss, joined us from Crime Stoppers to discuss their program.
- Guest Speakers: Nick Foty & Corporal JD Evans, Harris County Constables with Precinct 4. Effective 11/1/09 Windermere Lakes contracted with them to patrol our neighborhood. This type of patrol security has been requested by most all residents for quite some time now and we are pleased to advise it has been accomplished.
- They will be spending approximately 50 hours per month in/around our community and will be available should there be any problems. The Non-Emergency # is 713-221-6000 and if there is an Emergency, please dial 911.
- This is a budget item for 2010 in the amount of \$25,000.
- Discussion was held regarding the fire damaged, unrepaired property in our neighborhood.

(Continued on Page 5)

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Emergency	911
Sheriff's Dept.....	713-221-6000
Center Point Energy - Customer Service (Gas).....	713-659-2111
Cy-Fair Fire Dept	911
Cy-Fair Hospital.....	281-890-4285
Animal Control.....	281-999-3191
Center Point (Street lights)	713-207-2222
Library	281-890-2665
NW Harris County MUD #29	713-983-3602
Aquasource.....	713-983-3604
Post Office.....	713-937-6827
Reliant Energy - Residential Electirc.....	713-207-7777
SCS Management Services, Inc.	281-463-1777
Comcast Cable/Communications.....	800-266-2278
Waste Management/Trash Pick Up.....	713-686-6666

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Clubhouse/Recreational Facilities	Dianne Wentzell
Communication.....	Gerri Rougeau-Eubank
Landscape	Sreehari Gorantla
Finance	Sreehari Gorantla
Architectural Control/Deed Restrictions	TBA

*All Board members and Committees
can be contacted at www.windmerelakes.net*

* We are establishing our Committees for 2009 and need resident volunteers! If you are interested in participating with us, please contact us at www.windmerelakes.net for more details. This is a great way to meet your fellow neighbors and to help make our Windermere Lakes community a better place to live.

NEWSLETTER INFO

Editor.....	newsletter@windmerelakes.net
Publisher	
Peel, Inc.	www.PEELinc.com , 888-687-6444
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President's Message - (Continued from Cover Page)

taxation is applied to not only potable water, but pool water and water pumped from the well owned and operated by Windermere Lakes to maintain our lake levels when rain does not provide sufficient water. In the later budget discussion you will see the amount paid to this agency has become a tax which nearly equals the community's largest expenses, electricity, lake maintenance and pool maintenance. This taxing entity's fees and future limits of the quantity of water which we are allowed to pump from our own well will continue to be a challenge to the Association.

Instability in the banking industry concerned the Association as the amount of money collected at the beginning of the year in support of the annual expenses is greater than the amount protected by the FDIC. As a result, the Association took measures to insure our deposits were adequately protected in case of bank failure. It is with pleasure to report the Association's funds are on deposit in safe investment vehicles below levels which would be unprotected in case of bank failure. While these investment options limit return on the funds deposited, safety of the funds was paramount to return.

Like all homeowners in the neighborhood, the Board members have also seen the values of their homes reduced by the current softness in the real estate market. Concerns on loan defaults and foreclosure of homes resulted in the Board more closely monitoring

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Gerri Rougeau, Windermere Lakes Resident

Rachael's



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President's Message - (Continued from Page 2)

homes failing to maintain regular maintenance and paying close attention to "rumors" of vacated homes. Because the State of Texas dictates how many days must pass prior to the HOA being able to begin yard maintenance or securing of a vacated home, once verification of a vacated home was completed, immediate legal means were implemented to insure as little time passed as possible prior to the Association moving to being yard maintenance and securing of the home. There were a limited number of homes requiring this action, thankfully, and costs incurred to maintain the home are levied against the owner, be it an individual or bank. Liens are implemented as soon as costs are incurred in an attempt to collect these outlays once a buy is in process. While it is against Board policy to discuss specific addresses, the board will specifically note the home burned in April of 2009 is being addressed legally; however time statutes dictated by Texas law make Association action a slow process.

Hurricane Ike resulted in damage to many of the weeping willow trees around the lakes. These trees are fast growing; however they have a weak wood structure. Their location near or next to the bulkheads of the lake posed a risk of damage to the bulkhead, and a Board decision was made to remove them completely. Replacement has been postponed until a more suitable and budget effective

replacement can be determined. Repair of the perimeter fence was much delayed, to the dismay of the board. Competitive bidding immediately following the storm showed ridiculous costs due to the tremendous amount of work available to contractors at the time. The delay in repair resulted in securing a much lower total repair cost.

Guiding Principles of 2009

The Board made an active decision to reduce costs in all places possible, fully maintain the existing facilities and pay close attention to trends which would guide 2010's budget needs. The board has maintained this principle, and despite high costs in lake related items, utilities and Ike cleanup costs, the board reports a limited deficit between the budget and actual expenditures. This will be discussed further in the financial report.

2010

To further insure cost containment, the Board has competitively bid the Lake Maintenance service contract, and selected a lower cost vendor. This vendor will be reducing the number of visits to the lakes compared to the current vendor, but assures the Board they provide superior methods of maintenance. These methods have been presented as being able to maintain the current level of satisfaction at a lower cost. I ask and encourage residents to contact

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Windermere Lakes

President's Message - (Continued from Page 3)

SCS if lake maintenance is not maintained at an acceptable level. The Board has also cancelled its longstanding contract with the "handyman" employed to perform minor repairs, perform streetlight inspections and provide regular general inspections of the clubhouse. This will require increased diligence by residents to report seen problems to be bid out for correction.

Windermere Lakes is a statistically "safe" neighborhood, but residents have long requested enhanced security and monitoring by law enforcement. The Board has considered contracting with the Harris County Sheriff's office, but found the cost of a contract at over \$40,000 per year to be prohibitive. Through contacts with our current SCS manager, a contract with the Harris County Constable's office has been agreed upon. The service being provided has been discussed earlier, and we look forward to feedback from the residents. In the budget report later, the effect of the costs of this contract service will be discussed.

The Board will continue to monitor costs, maintain alignment with the proposed budget, be cognizant of real estate market conditions, security concerns and resident concerns and comments.

It has been a true pleasure coupled with unique challenges to be your HOA President over the last 4 years, and a Board member for more than 6 years. As I say goodbye to the office of President and membership on the Board, I appreciate the support and opinions given by you all, and look forward to supporting the future board as I become "just a resident."

Thank you for your time, and thank you for your support.

Most Sincerely,
Kevin Swicegood

The Windermere Lakes Stork Report

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Info from the Board - (Continued from Cover Page)

It was determined that residents should contact the Harris County Health Dept. to file a complaint. In addition, your HOA is pursuing the matter as required by specific Texas legal requirements.

- Discussion was held regarding Stop Signs or Speed Bumps desired in the neighborhood. It was determined that residents should contact Jerry Eversole, County Commissioners Office to request assistance.
- To report any Street Lights out, residents can contact Centerpoint direct by telephone or online; also report to SCS Management.
- Discussion was held regarding the increasing number of vehicles that are parking in such a way that the sidewalks are blocked. This causes children and residents to have to walk in the street to get around the vehicles.
- Discussion on Fishing Tags that were recently distributed to all homeowners. These tags should be available while fishing on the lakes. We will use this as an assist to monitor those trespassing on our properties.
- Committee Reports were presented. We are extremely anxious to obtain members for all our committees; in order to accomplish the things we need for our neighborhood, we need volunteers!

PLEASE contact us and volunteer to help.

- Elections were held and Sreehari Gorantla was re-elected to the Board. Raj Amin was also elected as a new member of the Board. Kevin Swicegood, our current President, declined re-election due to family commitments and we can assure you that Kevin will be greatly missed. On behalf of everyone in Windermere Lakes, we thank you Kevin for your tenure and generous service to all the residents of Windermere Lakes.
- Finally, it was determined that the Assessment for 2010 would be increased by \$50.00 annually; the total Assessment for 2010 will be billed at \$1100.00 instead of the previous \$1050.00. This increase is necessary to remain financially responsible and to assist in funding the security service that has been frequently requested.

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Windermere Lakes

LANDSCAPE FOCUS *Windermere Yard of the Month*

Congratulations!

The winner for December Lights is 12059 Miramar Shores Dr.

The winner's lights and holiday decorations were great and impressed members of our committee as the selection for Windermere's 'Yard of the Month'.

The homeowners receive a \$25 Gift Card from Home Depot, bragging rights to the honor AND our WL Yard of the Month sign remains in their yard during the month. Our thanks go out to those that care about their homes and keep their lawns maintained.

Our neighborhood was even more decorated this year than last... perhaps next year we can all get holiday lights up and make the neighborhood even more beautiful and fun. We might just have a real contest next year to see who has the most holiday spirit... don't forget our lake views also! Some of those views are really great to see when all lighted at night.

We appreciate the time and participation by our judging volunteers during this selection process!

Sreehari Gorantla

Landscape Committee



Article Submissions

If you would like to submit an article or any information for the Windermere Lakes Newsletter, you may do so by sending the information to newsletter@windemerelakes.net. This information should include your name. All information should be received no later than the 9th of the month and is subject to editorial approval as well as space limitations.



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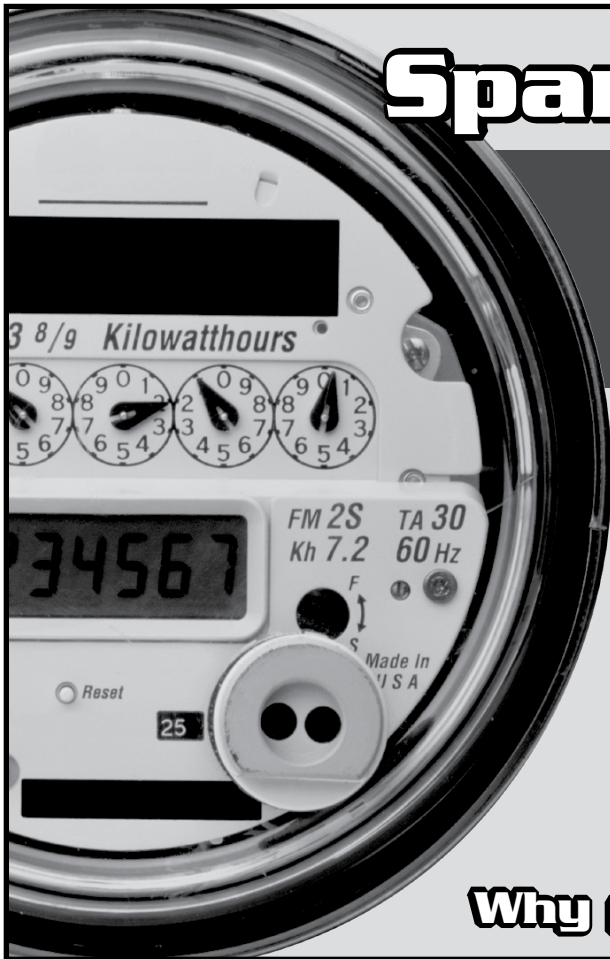
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