



*Your
Community Resource*

The Woodlands Word

October 2024

From the President Larry Dobias



As Rivendell moves into September, the Board and Committees begin to prepare the budget for the coming year. Once the costs from the contractors are updated and estimates for projects from the Maintenance Committee are added into the mix, a budget workshop will be scheduled to provide a proposed budget at the October Board meeting. This is a challenging time as prices continue to escalate for the services that we commonly use. As a result, the Board will be reviewing all the costs in detail from insurance, numerous projects and the cost of auditing. The objective is to minimize the impact on the assessments needed to maintain the community as expected.

Pine View School continues to make changes in an effort to improve the safety of the students. That effort resulted in the shutdown of the access gate at the rear of the campus and sent the children down Rivendell Blvd to navigate the hazards of Old Venice Road. The school did cut a path through the

pine woods across from the Cottages as a solution which has resulted in additional concerns but provided an option to avoid the main entrance. This subject is a work in progress to open the back gate. If in fact the gate is open, the Board will have to work more closely with the Sheriff's dept to mitigate traffic or parking concerns in the community resulting from more traffic from parents of Pine View.

On another safety subject, parents have raised a concern about the crosswalks in the community. The crosswalks are located in areas that are the apex of a curve minimizing the line of sight for oncoming traffic. The suggestion is to ask the County to install button operated flashing lights that can be activated by a student or walker before crossing the boulevard. This idea has to be supported by the Board in addition to petitions in order for any chance of approval. The proposal will be discussed by the Board to establish agreement and a path forward.

-Larry Dobias



Protect Our Neighborhood Pipes!

We all know air conditioning in the summer is very important. Similarly important is keeping our neighborhood water flowing, both incoming potable water and the wastewater from our homes. Because our part of Florida is so very flat, sewer systems must use lift stations to move waste from neighborhoods (Rivendell too!) to treatment plants. Protecting our neighborhood pipes and lift stations is as simple as learning what not to flush down our drains.

When we use our toilets, showers, washing machines, garbage disposals or dishwashers, wastewater leaves our homes through pipes that connect to a neighborhood lift station and then Sarasota County sewer treatment plants. Lift stations are a key element and when they get plugged, nothing goes out and flow from our homes stops! Putting the wrong things down drains can damage lift stations and we can all help keep our sewer system running smoothly by being mindful of what we flush and pour down drains.

Trash and Wipes

There are many products that people flush down a toilet that doesn't dissolve. These products can clog pipes and lift stations and cause disruptions (meaning stoppages!) that are expensive and create large inconveniences to homeowners. Some of these include:

- Face masks
- "Flushable Wipes" including disinfecting and baby wipes
- Paper towels and rags

- Feminine hygiene products
- Q-tips, cotton balls, cotton pads
- Animal litter and waste
- Bandages
- Dental floss
- Food products and wrappers
- Old unused medications
- Cigarettes

Also, many household cleaning products are labeled as "disposable" but do not break down in a sewer treatment system and should never be flushed down a toilet.

Fats, Oils and Grease

Grease sticks to household pipes as well as lift stations and sewer pipes. Over time, grease buildup can block an entire pipe resulting in sewerage backups and overflows.

Running hot water down a sink simultaneously with oils and grease does not keep them from solidifying downstream. Pipes are essentially "cold" and hot water does no good. Pour grease and oils into cans or bottles with lids and put them in your trash.

Use garbage disposals sparingly as food waste can collect in home sewer pipes as well lift stations. Food waste should be placed in garbage for proper disposal.

Protecting the pipes in your home and our neighborhood is simple and easy. Let's keep our pipes running well!

-Terry Siemsen



Social Committee Events for October 2024



- Thursday, October 3rd, in the morning at the Rivendell Pool. **Ladies Walk 'n Talk.** Contact Lesley Glick at Lesleymg8@gmail.com or (973) 219-5839 for more information and to request to be added to the Facebook page for weekly updates. As temperatures heat up or decline, times for walking will get earlier or later, so you will need to contact Lesley or the Facebook page to learn the exact time.
- Thursday, October 10th, in the morning at Rivendell Pool. **Ladies Walk 'n Talk.** See details for Tuesday, October 3rd.
- Thursday, October 10th, 1 pm. **Bridge Club.** To join, contact Barb Loe at (651) 398-2256.
- Monday; October 14th, 7:30 pm. **Rivendell Book Group.** The group will be discussing Our Missing Heart by Celeste Ng. For more information, contact Lesley Glick at Lesleymg8@gmail.com.
- Thursday, October 17th in the morning at Rivendell Pool. **Ladies Walk 'n Talk.** See details for October 3rd.
- Wednesday, October 23rd at 12:30 pm at Bodrum Restaurant in Venice. **Rivendell Ladies Luncheon.** Reserve by contacting Mirinda Roy at miriroy@aol.com.
- Thursday, October 24th in the morning at Rivendell Pool. **Ladies Walk 'n Talk.** See details for October 3rd.
- Thursday, October 24th 1 pm. **Bridge Club.** To join, contact Barb Loe at (651) 398-2256.
- Thursday, October 31st in the morning at Rivendell Pool. **Ladies Walk 'n Talk.** See details for October 3rd.



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(solution on page 18) Puzzle from <https://www.printable-puzzles.com/>



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Join Rivendell's Kayaking Events

In the last couple of years, our Rivendell paddlers have been enjoying a series of fun activities, all organized by Jane Stevens. The events are open to adults and children, whether they own or rent their kayaks. One way to join the paddlers is to download the app "Team Reach" on a digital device, use Osprey as the group code, then select "Rivendell Kayak" to join the kayak group. Team Reach will show (past and) upcoming events and provide communication for the group about who is attending. But if you are not comfortable using the app, you can still participate by reaching out to Jane Stevens at janie0041@gmail.com. Events typically occur monthly in season and are announced in the Woodland Word.

This upcoming season, a special kayak event has been planned, so SAVE THE DATE for this occasion: Saturday, February 22nd, a walking and kayaking tour lasting 3 to 3 1/2 hours in Punta Gorda. This is a kayak rental trip only and there will be a fee for this event.

Preview of a Special Boat Tour in March 2025

On Saturday, March 22nd, the Social Committee has planned an Eco-boat tour and Sarasota Bay cruise from the Mote Marine aquarium. This is a 2-hour guided boat tour where the Mote team will show you flora and fauna living in Sarasota Bay. This is an event suitable for families as well as adults! More information about this event will follow.



A Call for Volunteers

The Social Committee is busily planning activities for the 2024-25 season and needs your help. Many of our recent new activities, such as the Doggie Walk and the Golf Outing last year, were planned by newcomers to our committee, and we both welcome and need new ideas. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact Maria Ilioff, chair of the Social Committee at 607-427-4192 or milioff85@gmail.com.

Potluck Dinners Continue - Save the Date!

Kristin and Ray Ellison will host a potluck dinner on Saturday, November 16th at 6 pm at 655 Rivendell Boulevard. If you would like to join the group at the Ellison's, consider what you might like to bring: a salad, a main dish, a dessert, for example, and reach out to Kristin in advance so that she can coordinate the offerings. This was an extremely popular event last year, especially with families and newcomers to the community, and we are fortunate to have the Ellisons volunteer their home for the occasion. Please contact Kristin at kristinellison1@gmail.com for more information.

HEAT EXHAUSTION		HEAT STROKE	
ACT QUICKLY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move to a cooler area Loosen clothing Sip cool water Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve 	SYMPTOMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dizziness Thirst Heavy sweating Nausea Weakness 	SYMPTOMS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dizziness Confusion Hot & dry skin with no sweat Rapid, strong pulse Become unconscious 	ACT QUICKLY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CALL 911 Move person to a cooler area Loosen clothing & remove extra layers Cool with water or ice
<p>Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke</p>		<p>Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment isn't given</p>	



What does the Ponds and Preserves Committee do?

The Rivendell Ponds and Preserves Committee was started by Rivendell residents Larry Dobias and Frank Frankstone. The Committee helps the Rivendell Community Association Board manage the community's stormwater detention ponds and preserve areas by advising the Board about best practices and monitoring the activities of our pond and preserve management company, currently Beautiful Ponds, Inc. The committee is composed of volunteer residents who are interested in protecting our ponds and preserves and ensuring that the ponds and preserves are maintained in accordance with Florida law and best practices endorsed by experts. Following best practices not only helps our community avoid expensive pond and preserve remediation expenses but also, and more importantly, helps protect our homes (and community) from

natural disasters. This was aptly demonstrated when Hurricane Debby dumped an enormous amount of water onto our community. Rivendell participates in the Healthy Ponds initiative, a local effort to ensure optimal performance from stormwater detention ponds. Residents can help the Ponds and Preserves Committee do its work by keeping debris and chemicals out of the ponds and roadside stormwater drains, respecting the low maintenance zones (LMZs) around the ponds, and generally supporting the work of our community to maintain healthy ponds and preserves. For more information about the committee, please visit the Rivendell website and click on the Ponds and Preserves link.

-Bob Frank



Bob Frank and Allie Sandow and their dog Cato



Allie Sandow and Kevin Boggess

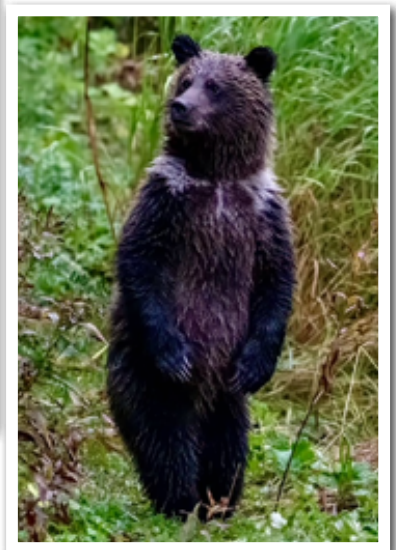


Photo of a bear viewed during the Alaska visit, not a Rivendell resident.

What are the chances of running into a Rivendell neighbor in Hyder, Alaska? Pretty high if you have shared interest like the members of the Ponds and Preserves Committee do.

Rivendell Ladies Luncheons Have Resumed

In September, the ladies luncheon group went to Deep Lagoon, and on Wednesday, October 25th at 12:30 pm. the group will go to Bodrum, a charming Turkish restaurant in Venice on Miami Avenue. This group has lunch together once each month, and you may join the group by contacting Mirinda Roy at miriroy@aol.com. Please give Mirinda a week's notice if you would like to join for lunch as she needs to be sure that the restaurant can accommodate the group comfortably. The group eats together on the fourth Wednesday of each month, but will skip November and December due to the holiday season.

Rivendell Residents CPR/First Aid Training

We have dates for the upcoming CPR/First Aid training and scheduling will begin soon after October 1. Please keep these dates in mind as only 20 people will be scheduled for each class as the Cottages Clubhouse is rather small.

The first two classes will be held the afternoon of November 13. The third and fourth classes will be held the morning of December 11. Each class will be about one hour in length. Individuals that responded to our survey of interest in these classes will be given first priority regarding date and time. If openings remain, we will accommodate added residents.

The Community Emergency Management Team will be coordinating this effort. Expect an email from Terry Siemsen or Mike Nash as we do our best to accommodate everyone's schedule and preference of date/time.



Maintenance Committee Report - September 10, 2024

Mark Giordano, Chair

Committee Members: Chuck Pertile (Board Liaison), Dave Cook, Larry Dobias, Kevin Humbert, Carole Myles, Greg Volack, Cathy Bishop (Horticulture Consultant). Helpers: Peter Diagnault, Jonas Meyer, Jeff Young

There was no meeting in August. The Facilities Management Plan (FMP) format is used: The **FMP** continues to be updated.

Landscape Management:

1. Truscapes cut the Viburnum hedge adjacent to Rivendell Park. The community arborist recommended we fill the empty spaces with 18- 15gallon viburnums and trim the alley side as well. The estimate is \$4,700. Getting another estimate.
2. Received estimate from Truscapes to remove grindings, install topsoil and 5 pallets of sod behind 586 and 584 Meadow Sweet Circle. \$6,120. Obtaining other estimates
3. Receiving estimates on Stump Removal and Viburnum replacement on Rivendell Blvd from Entrance to Meadow Sweet Circle.
5. The MC received estimates on sod placement in various areas throughout the community and will be differed to the fall.
6. A proposal by 2 residents of the cottages for improvements at the area around the Banyan Tree to the cottages is being considered and various estimates are being received. In addition, the Cottage's Board is submitting their own proposal. Still waiting for this.
7. Treescapes' continued weekly mowing. Turf and Ornamental fertilization, Lawn, and Ornamental trim and weeding are scheduled for this month as well. Completed Ornamental Trim and Fertilization.
8. Rogelio Alvarado Landscaping performed the monthly maintenance and trimmed plants at the entrance, bridge, Rainbow Point and Placid Like Drive islands, Eagle Isle Court and the Park Trace entrance.

Tree Trimming:

1. Receiving quotes on trimming Oak Trees, 9 on Anna Hope La and 3 at end of Eagle Lake land bridge.
2. Green Topps cut various dead or dying trees on the edge of the preserves. \$4,400. Completed

Irrigation System:

1. New irrigation on Stillwater and Osprey Pond is on hold till money is available.
2. Truescapes' completed repairs in July and conducted the August and September inspections.
3. The need for additional irrigation at Pine Pond and Crane Pond was discussed and the MC will obtain estimates for the future.

Community Pool and Clock Tower:

1. The solar pump remains shut off for the summer.
2. The bike rack at the pool needs replacing. Obtaining Quotes.

Community Pool Pump Room:

1. A \$ 2,245.00 quote to replace the rusted HW heater in the pool pump room. Tabled for now.

2. Modifications to the suction line and strainer system are being fabricated for installation later this month, to prevent leaves and debris from entering the pump.

Roadways:

1. The balance of the roadways throughout are not scheduled to be resurfaced this summer, but in 2026 by the county. They will use Reclamite, instead of conventional asphalt.

Sidewalks:

1. The list of sidewalk slabs that need replacing by the county was completed and submitted to the county for repair. They started marking various locations for remediation and have begun replacement.
2. Cleaning of Common Area sidewalks is being evaluated. Put it on hold.
3. A new concrete sidewalk and possible relocation is needed from Rivendell Blvd to the Banyan Tree. Estimates were obtained for the future project.
4. The concrete curb project is on hold till funds become available.

Street Light Poles:

1. Nostalgic Lamppost completed numbering light posts and were directed to replace broken lenses in various locations. Completed
2. The MC identified several light poles that were either loose or rusted out.
3. Rogelio Alvarado performed the quarterly cleaning of the light poles on Rivendell Blvd and Rainbow Point Way, Mallard Marsh, Pool and Crescent Park.

Playground, Gazebo and Benches:

1. Discussed the need for more benches throughout the community. MC will identify areas and make recommendations to the board. The MC identified several existing benches that need repair.
2. The MC reviewing a proposal by Austin Gardner to add benches at the bus stop as part of his Boy Scout Eagle Project.
3. Caution, bats are inhabiting the gazebo again. No inclusions from April 15-August15. Needs new roof and screening to eliminate a roosting place. The MC is evaluating repairs or complete Gazebo replacement and the addition of Bat Houses throughout the community.

Bridge Landscaping:

1. Edging on the east side needs replacing either with metal or concrete curbing.
2. Other areas of the community are being looked at for possible curbing to hold in mulch from spilling onto the sidewalk or grass areas. 677 ft was identified and estimates of \$9.00 per foot were received from 2 vendors. This will be a fall project.

Pine View Path:

1. MC to investigate property line identification and planting along the property line to screen new school buildings and existing grounds.
2. MC installed stationing and property line offsets on the walkway surface and mapped them.

(Continued on Pg.9)

(Maintenance Committee continued)

Drainage System:

1. Notified county of the need to replace flowthrough drainage frame and grate at Golden Pond. The county and Rivendell are in dispute as to ownership.

The next Maintenance Committee meeting will be held at 7PM on September 17th in the Cottages Clubhouse.

The Maintenance Committee is always looking to expand its membership to assist in overseeing the numerous amenities that require attention. The goal is to keep Rivendell the beautiful community that it is. The committee meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Cottages. Prospective members could familiarize themselves with the MC duties by reviewing the Facilities Management Plan (FMP) published on the website. Anyone with questions and/or wishing to join the committee, please contact Mark Giordano at (845) 656-6411 or email mjg283@gmail.com.



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Karen handles the reminder calls to our clients and finds it amusing when they answer and say, "I don't hear well, can you speak up?" It turns out they usually aren't wearing their hearing aids when they take the call, which is why they struggle to hear.

When she asks why they aren't wearing their hearing aids, the most common response is, "I'm in a quiet house." Karen understands their logic is I don't need to hear as much since the house is quiet.

However, hearing isn't just about the volume of sound, it is also about what sounds your brain notices.

If you've ever gotten a new fridge it seems to have the noisiest ice maker ever created. It isn't too loud, your brain is showing off by highlighting a new sound you weren't aware of. Over time you will stop hearing your ice maker. Your brain will learn to ignore it. The volume of the ice maker hasn't changed, your attention to that sound has diminished.

Similarly, when wearing your hearing aids consistently your brain will alert you to sounds that aren't common for you or to sounds you want to hear.

Hearing speech in noisy environments relies heavily on your ability to focus your attention. High-quality hearing aids that enhance speech in noise can give you an edge in crowded or noisy settings, such as restaurants. By consistently wearing your hearing aids, even in quiet situations, you train your brain to prioritize important sounds, like speech, and filter out background noise.

By wearing your hearing aids even in a quiet house, you can tell your brain what to ignore. Like all things, listening takes practice. In this case, just wearing your hearing aids in all environments gets you to hear your best. Also, when Karen calls with your appointment reminder you will hear her clearly.





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Rivendell's Ladies Walk 'n Talk to Resume

When the weather is too hot, the ladies who walk on Thursdays in Rivendell take a break, according to Lesley Glick, organizer of the group. They will resume their weekly exercise as the temperatures moderate in September and October. The group has a Facebook page that updates the time and status of the walks: they always start from the Rivendell Pool on Thursday mornings. If you would like to join this group contact Lesley Glick at Lesleymg8@gmail.com or on (973) 219-5839 for more information and to request to be added to the Facebook page. Shown below is a photo of the walkers from last spring.



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Board of Director's Meeting - UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

If you were unable to attend the **SEPTEMBER 18, 2024 Board of Directors' Meeting**, below are my **UNOFFICIAL MINUTES**. Please keep in mind that these minutes are my recall or interpretations of what I thought I heard. There could be errors. They are not the official minutes of the Board. You should always consult the website for the official version or speak with a Board member if you have a question or concern.

All Directors were present for the meeting.

The Official Minutes for the June meeting were adopted after an addendum was added. The addendum dealt with the foreclosure discussion on various properties that had been negligent in paying their assessments. Once the discussion was finished, a vote was taken. Later, the Board learned that a foreclosure vote is only to be taken in a closed door session; therefore, they had to meet again **in private** via a conference call with their attorney to consider whether to foreclose on a particular property or not.

It was announced that all properties except one had paid their past assessments and that the one that had not paid had recently been sold and those late assessments will soon be settled as well.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Larry Dobias)

Larry stated that after all was said and done, the 2023 audit turned out OK. The reason why there were questions about "missing money" turned out that the auditor did not have all the information presented to her. Once she was given all the information, everything checked out and the Board signed off on the results. Larry also added that Miller (the auditing firm) presented a bill for the next year's audit that was to be \$9000 and because it was so high, he immediately sought out other bids. Miller told him that was a mistake. It should only be \$5500 for the upcoming year but that had already caused Larry to seek out other bids. He is awaiting those other bids to determine whether Rivendell will seek out a change.

On another issue, Pine View had notified the parents that the gate coming off the Pine View Nature Trail would be locked in the 2024-25 school year and that all students would enter through the main entrance of the school. This was being done to make the kids safer. The parents who live in Rivendell, however, did not agree that this would make their kids safer. This led to several meetings between some Board members, Pine View parents, the Superintendent, and Larry since the parents were not happy with their kids having to be out on Rivendell Blvd or on Old Venice walking or biking to school and dealing with all the increased traffic that is there and the accidents that sometimes happen. The intent of the meetings was to come up with a solution that was acceptable to parents/school/Rivendell and also OK with the new state requirements that dealt with increased safety. Lesley Sachs, a Rivendell parent, researched the law and spoke with the parents and with Larry and then made a presentation to the Superintendent and some Board members as to what they could do. The school agreed to try what Lesley suggested and once more reopen the gate on the Pine Vine Nature Trail. Larry is to be monitoring the traffic situation within Rivendell and if any issues were to develop, the Board would have an option of hiring an off-duty police officer who would have the ability to ticket those who speed on our streets or who do not abide by the county traffic ordinances.

Another topic which Larry mentioned is that there is a new way that people are selling/buying homes. If they can't afford or if they don't want to buy an entire home, they just buy 1/8 of a home. Once there are 8 people interested in a home, that home is sold to the 8 buyers and they become the joint owners of that property. This is not time-sharing. It's just a new concept in ownership. One company that is doing this kind of selling/buying is **PACASO** and for HOA's, this is something that generally is not wanted within the community. For that reason, Larry contacted the attorney to find out how to prevent this from happening in Rivendell. He said there is nothing in the current document to prevent it. We would need to amend the document if we wanted to prevent shared ownership from occurring within Rivendell. Whether this Board or a future Board decides to go this route is something that has not been decided. There was a home on Mallard Marsh that appeared on the Pacaso website but it was removed so it's no longer being offered for shared ownership. Could it happen again? Who knows? That's a decision that the Board or future Boards and owners will need to decide.

Finally Larry mentioned that data is being collected relevant to the 2025 budget. There is a budget workshop that is being planned for the week of October 7. No exact date has been set. All are welcome to attend this workshop.

MANAGER'S REPORT (Fred Marks)

Fred reminded the Board that the July 1 legislative changes meant that all Board members have to take continuing ed courses to stay on the Board and to get their Board certificate. They must complete a 4 hour instructional course EVERY YEAR. June 2025 is the deadline for those serving on the 2024-25 Board.

Fred also said that because transparency is the buzzword this session, all information must be posted to the website for owners to review. The website should have the insurance policies, the certificates for each Board member, the listing of all bids brought to the Board, and the contracts signed.

There was some concern as to why was this being done and who was actually going to even look at this and wasn't this just extra busy work that the state was giving to the various committee chairs or to the Board? Mark indicated that currently he has 25 projects right now that he's working on for the MC and that these involve 75-80 proposals. Is it really practical to have all these bids posted to the website and who has the time to do this? Another person was concerned about this giving exposure to vendors whose bid might be shopped around. He didn't think this would be fair. It was suggested this all could be password protected for residents only. It also was suggested that only the accepted bid would be posted and this is the one in the Board minutes anyway. Someone else said that bids are always being tweaked as the project is being implemented so it's never a done deal until it's finished so what's the point of having all these bids posted when they're not really finalized anyway?

TREASURER'S REPORT (Chuck Pertile)

Chuck reported that Rivendell was in a good financial position. We were \$22,000 under budget for the year and \$13,000 under for operating expenses or roughly \$35,000 under budget. He mentioned that we have some vendors who are slow in producing invoices for their services but that

(Continued on Pg,13)

(Board of Directors continued from Pg.12)

Larry has been contacting them to ensure that all bills have been received to date. Chuck thinks the records are pretty accurate.

Chuck also stated that we had received \$5500 on capital contributions as of Aug and there'd probably be another \$1500 coming by the end of the year. This is the money received when a new owner buys into Rivendell. Chuck and Larry would like this money to appear in a "stand-alone" non-funded reserve account so it's more apparent how much money is available for unfunded capital projects. They don't want it hidden in some line item where it might be missed. They also like the idea of having an account specifically set up for those unfunded special projects that can happen in any given year. In the past, when something came up, the Treasurer would have to tweak the monies to see where the money could be obtained to pay for whatever needed to be done. Having a "stand-alone" account makes it easier to see how much you have and how much can be spent. It was predicted that within a year, there might be \$30,000 in this capital improvement fund since this would also be including interest on the earned contributions.

Audience members asked for examples of unfunded projects for which this money might be used. Examples given were improving the hedgerow along the alley of Rivendell Park, or considering the request to turn the banyan tree area by the Cottages into more of park-like section where attractive landscaping and lighting could be added, or doing forestry mowing and the removal of cattails in the Mallard Lake area of Rivendell could be other such projects not covered in the current budget.

Here the discussion diverted into why the cattails were appearing when they had never been there before. A Mallard Lake owner believed that all the dead fish that appeared on the lake and then sunk to the bottom provided the nutrients for future cattails to grow. She wanted more to be done to stop the cattails from growing. She felt they were invasive and should be removed before they become more of a problem. This involves what had been done on the lower Scherer and whether Mallard Lake has a significant problem involving cattails was an unknown. Larry was to inspect later.

Another owner asked Chuck whatever happened to all the owners who were delinquent in paying their assessments. Apparently people gradually pay. They just don't pay on time. Some don't pay the complete amount and are content to let the small amount carry over month after month after month. For those doing the books, it's annoying to deal with these \$8.69 short pays and why owners choose to do this is anyone's guess. Eventually it'll catch up to them when a home is sold. Extra fees were added on to what was originally owed. Owners now had to pay for all the notices that were sent. Owners were charged for the attorney fees. Owners were charged interest fees. Why anyone would want to pay all of the extra fees puzzled many. One person said that some people just throw all their mail into a pile and then they forget about it. Consequently if any of the mail involved a bill that needed to be paid, it just didn't get paid. Someone suggested we should have a higher penalty for those who are not paying on time. Another wanted to know whether Casey informed owners that they could do automatic bill paying and then they wouldn't have to worry whether they were sending the right amount or whether they were sending the amount in a timely

manner. No one could recall whether it was included in the mailing which Casey sent out when the invoice was sent. Terry Siemsen volunteered to write an article for the newsletter informing owners of how to do automatic bill-paying of their assessments.

Then the discussion was diverted to the height of the LMZ. The owner on Mallard Marsh said it was 20-24 inches high and that she has watched the TruScape worker walk around the pond with his weed-wacker and then go wander off into the woods without having bothered with the LMZ. Larry said that it's been an ongoing problem how the workers are handling the LMZ. They'll do a nice job on the ones along the roads but those behind the homes are often being forgotten or neglected. Larry will call up TruScape and TruScape will say it's been done and they'll go back and forth on it until someone actually comes down to see that it has not been done and then they will do it. Their workers will claim they have done it and there's no oversight at the time the job is being performed to sign off on the work being performed. This is something that the MC will be addressing when meetings are held with TruScape.

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Mary Angell)

Mary is still actively investigating insurance policies to ascertain whether there are any savings that can be obtained by switching companies. She has been talking with a person named Chrissy and she cannot determine how the policies obtained came up with their numbers. Larry said that when you have one policy with 245 pages and another one with 45 pages, it makes you wonder what endorsements and exclusions you have and are giving up, and which ones do you really need and which are a waste. When they're not all the same, it's difficult to make a comparison. It's not like a buffet where you can pick what you want and then compare prices. Mary also added that we need the actual quote and not a word document if we want to do a comparison. She will still be working with Shepherd's Insurance Services of Sarasota to figure out what is best for Rivendell.

They're still debating whether to have all the policies expire at the same time rather than to have them come due at different times. Chuck said it's confusing to see how the money for insurance is deducted out of the budget for insurance. We pre-pay insurance. In other words, the total is taken from the budget and sent to the company and through the course of the year, this number on the budget sheet gets smaller and smaller as the policy period is being paid for. The problem is that budgets are for the year and the policy doesn't expire at the end of the year. It may go into the next year. Chuck will see a fund 0'ed out but yet he knows it's been pre-paid and there's more time left on that policy but the way it's being done, it doesn't appear that way unless you understand how this system works. He and Larry both agree that if they continue to have policies expiring at different times, it would make more sense to have each policy have its own account number in the budget so that the money could be more easily tracked and monitored. The Board agreed that this would make sense if they stayed with policies all having different due dates.

Mary is to continue researching and will bring back more info at the next meeting.

(Continued on Pg,14)

(Board of Directors continued from Pg. 13)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. ARC (Michelle Meyer)

Michelle said that there were 16 requests in June and 16 in July and all were approved. The next meeting is Sept 24 at the Cottages at 4:30 PM.

Later in the meeting an owner wanted to know whether their request to replace a tile roof with a metal roof that looks like tile was approved but it turned out it was too early to know whether that was approved. This request will be decided at the upcoming meeting held on Sept 24th. She was also told that she could attend the meeting if she wanted. Once the meeting is held, owners are immediately told of the results of their requests.

2. COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE (Kay Mruz)

There have been 34 violations cited since the last Board meeting. 15 were resolved and 19 were unresolved. All properties had been given proper notice. Several letters were written letting them know of the problem and they were given ample time to have corrected the problem. Issues involved dead grass, weedy grass, untrimmed trees or shrubs, an improperly painted home, roof issues, etc. Some owners had several violations against them while others might just have 1. The Board has the right to fine up to \$100 for each violation and each can accumulate up to \$1000; however, if the Board would fine a member to this degree it would become punitive and would not look good if it would be disputed. When fines are considered by the Board, the attorney advised the Board to be fair and reasonable. The Board was advised not to be ridiculous in how much the Board is charging for the various violations or they would never hold up in court if challenged. This is why the Board looks at each violation in a subjective manner and considers the severity and then determines a value to the violation. For example, if someone's light bulb burned out, the Board is not going to fine them \$100 a day up to 10 days or \$1000 for that light bulb. That would be ridiculous. Instead, they figure out an amount to just get the owner's attention, to let them know the owner needs to correct an issue. It can be challenging dealing with these violations since what one person considers "getting attention" is not what the next person thinks. Also what one person thinks is a dead lawn is not necessarily another person's idea of a dead lawn. Does one dead spot make a dead lawn, two dead spots, five? What does "maintain" mean when it refers to "maintaining" one's landscaping? One person wants pristine, another one wants something that is good enough that the dog is not embarrassed!

For that reason it can be quite a challenge figuring out what the fines should be. One thing to keep in mind is that all owners were notified and all had ample time to correct the violation. Another thing to consider is that after the Board decides to fine, the Fining Committee will meet and decide whether the fine is valid. They will either rule YES or NO on the fine. They cannot change the amount of the fine. If they uphold the fine, the fine must be paid within 5 days.

Below are the homes which the Board decided to fine:

1. A home on Rivendell had several violations that would be obvious to any who drove or walked by and this home was fined \$100 a day for 10 days resulting in a fine of \$1000 if left uncorrected in this time period.

2. A home on Scherer had a tree that it failed to trim. The fine was \$100.

3. A home on Mallard Marsh had a few issues that needed corrected. The owners were fined \$25 a day for 10 days resulting in a fine of \$250 if left uncorrected in that period of time.

4. A home had a lot of grass issues but it also was having a roof replaced. The Board decided it would not be fair to deal with grass issue when they were in the middle of a construction project that impacted their yard. No fine.

5. A home on Placid Lake had bushes and trees that needed trimmed. They were fined \$25 a day for 10 days resulting in a fine of \$250.

There were a few homes that had dead spots on their grass that caused a debate as to whether they were worthy of a fine. Chuck hadn't gotten the list in time to have inspected the properties. He wanted to know whether these people had wells but some felt it was irrelevant whether people had wells or not. They had to deal with their irrigation needs however they chose to do it--city water or well.

Others in the audience felt no one should have weedy lawns that are accepted as "lawns." These owners wanted closer inspection to ensure there is grass and not weeds on these lawns. Larry said he was unwilling to go home to home to do a visual inspection of every home in Rivendell to see that they were using St Augustine and that they had no weeds on their lawns. He felt that if you drove by a home and if it jumped out at you as being a problem lawn, then it should be fined, but if you had to get out and inspect a lawn up close to see what was going on with the lawn, then it was overreach and this is why the Florida legislature is doing what it's doing in making an HOA Bill of Rights. People need to be reasonable in their application of the rules. There should be a "ball-park" inspection of lawns--not an up-close-and-personal-inspection of them seemed to be where Larry was coming from.

This then led to the discussion as to what is meant by "maintain." Who determines what "maintain" means? What criteria will be used? Shouldn't there be a standard to which we all are held seemed to be the position of those arguing for NO WEEDS MEANS NO WEEDS. Larry wanted to know who is going to go around to each property in Rivendell and determine the number of weeds on each one of those properties? Isn't that a bit much?

Then, this led to an owner wanting to know why a Villas owner was not being fined for having a NO CORTAR sign on shrubs that the owner did not wish to be trimmed by the landscaper. Larry said the Villas President told owners to mark the shrubs that they wished not to be trimmed. The problem was that this sign has been up for several months. The owner failed to remove it once the trimming was complete. However, the Villas are ready to do another trimming and now the sign would be needed once more. To tell the owner to remove the sign wouldn't work since trimming starts on Monday. If anything should have happened with that sign, it should have happened after the last trim was completed. The owner felt no signs should be allowed since our documents clearly state no signs anywhere on our lots. Villa owners should not be marking their shrubs if they are following the documents. NO SIGNS MEANS NO SIGNS.

MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE (Mark Giordano)

Mark said that a more complete detailed listing of the MC projects can be found in the *Woodlands Word*. He, however, did have some spending resolutions that he did wish the Board

(Continued on Pg. 15)

(Board of Directors continued from Pg. 14)

to consider and adopt. All were adopted.

1. The MC wants to replace the bike rack at the pool with the same type that is already there. They will install it. Cost is \$500 through Belson Outdoors.

2. Green Topps will be trimming more oak trees within Rivendell. There are 9 on the parkway of Anna Hope, 3 on Eagle Lake land bridge plus they will be grinding the stumps at the Cottage right-of-way adjacent to Rivendell Blvd. Cost \$6160.

3. TruScapes will be doing an annual trim of 70 palms. Cost \$2100.

4. Rogelio Alvarado and crew were hired to remediate the hedge bordering the alley of Rivendell Park. Earlier the viburnums had been pruned and the dead/dying ones were removed. Trees and vines were also removed from this hedgerow. After the dead vegetation was removed, there were many bare spots that needed to be filled in with more plants. About 18 new plants 3-5 feet tall will be installed. The crew won't know how many are needed until the planting is underway. GreenTopps will provide the plants. Cost of this project is not to exceed \$3000.

5. There was a leak discovered at Butterfly Park that resulted in some water flowing onto the road even when the pump was not running. To stop the water leak, the breaker had to be turned off. To fix the problem, TruScapes will need to replace the Irrigation Controller at a cost of \$800.

PONDS AND PRESERVES (Larry Dobias)

The mowing or lack of mowing on the LMZ continues to be a challenge on various ponds. Ongoing discussions are happening to deal with this issue.

Fish kills have happened on Mallard Lake and also on Golden Pond. The Board has decided to opt for letting the fish sink to the bottom rather than to pay for their removal. Fish die when the level of dissolved oxygen in water becomes depleted. This can happen as water warms. It also happens after heavy rains when there's an overturning of water from the bottom and this rises to where the fish are. The nutrients in the water from the bottom eat up the available oxygen that had been in the water. Fish are dependent upon this available or dissolved oxygen. The bigger fish will be the first to be affected since they need more of the oxygen to survive. Fish generally float 7-10 days before they will sink to the bottom.

Cattails have been removed from the lower Scherer and 50% have been removed from the main part of the upper Scherer. The remaining stumps of the cattails have been sprayed with a herbicide to kill any that could possibly emerge. In the spring or late winter, an enzyme zone will be added to the littoral zone and then it'll be planted with the typical plants used in Rivendell: spike rush, pickerelweed, duck potato. He also added the Rivendell had spent \$28,000 on the removal of the cattails on these lakes but in another nearby community, they ended up spending \$65,000.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM or CERT (Terry Siemsen)

Terry announced that there are 2 dates for the CPR classes. There will be 2 afternoon sessions offered on Nov. 13 and 2 morning sessions offered on Dec. 11. Twenty people can be in each session. It'll be on a first come, first served basis. If those who originally signed up for the classes can't make these dates, others may sign up for any openings that may occur. If there are more interested after these classes are held, there is a possibility for a another class to be held in

February.

Terry also said that there are to be articles in the Woodlands Word which might interest you. One mentioned was "WHAT NOT TO FLUSH DOWN YOUR TOILET THAT COULD AFFECT YOUR LIFT STATION."

NEW BUSINESS

1. The Board took action to clean the slate of an owner who paid his assessments for the year but yet in the transition from Lighthouse to Casey, that record was lost. His name showed up as having paid on one sheet but failed to show up on the next sheet...clerical error. The Board removed his name.

2. Pine View parents requested that flashing signals be added to crosswalks in Rivendell. To do that, the Board first needs to say that it's OK with them. After the Board agreed with the flashing light signals, the PV parents will circulate petitions asking for the lights. The petitions will be presented to the Traffic Advisory Board who will then rule on it. If they agree, it gets passed to the Commissioners to consider and if they agree, they come up with the money in the county budget to fund the signals. It was thought that there are about 5 of these crosswalks in or at the front of Rivendell on Old Venice. The Board voted 4 to 1 to allow for the signal lights. The one opposing vote was concerned that there might be too many lights too close together and he would have liked to have seen where the crosswalks were located before this issue came before the Board.

OWNER COMMENTS

1. An owner thought the plants on the Rainbow Point traffic islands were gorgeous but that they presented a visibility issue to those who needed to turn left. She requested that they be trimmed a little shorter. Greg Volack said he had already talked with Rogelio about this and the height of the plants would be gradually decreased about a foot.

2. Another owner said that the parking of the TruScapes lawn truck off of Rainbow Point Way on Rivendell Blvd blocked visibility for those who wanted to turn onto Rivendell Blvd. A request was made that the vehicle move further ahead so more visibility could be had or else park by Rivendell Park before you get to Rainbow Point Way.

NEXT MEETING IS OCTOBER 16, 2024

* These minutes are not board sanctioned. They are for informational purposes only.

-Nancy Dobias



Meanwhile at the Cottages....

Peek into the MSC Clubhouse on any Tuesday or Thursday morning and you will see happy residents working hard at stretch and balance exercises with their devoted leader, fellow resident Diane McCourt. A couple years ago Diane volunteered to lead this class and she continues in that role today. Her kind and understanding approach makes exercising very enjoyable and rewarding. She is truly one of the class, making everyone feel comfortable. Whether we're "walking the line," balancing on one foot, or working on our "bat wings," we are having fun as we improve our physical health.

The benefits of this class are many, such as improved balance, reduced risk of injuries and improved posture. However, another important benefit is the social aspect of the opportunity to stay in shape with close friends. That could well be the most important one.

-Marylin May



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Healthy Mindfulness: Enjoying Museums & Culture!!!

By Coach Deb Holton-Smith RN BSN OCN - getslim@holton-smith.com

DID YOU KNOW???? That some banks actually offer FREE Museum & Garden visits???

For example: Bank Of America has a special program for it's customers called: Museums on Us®

For the past 25 years, Bank of America has offered their cardholders free general admission - during the first full weekend of every month - to more than 225 cultural institutions in cities across the United States. "Museums on Us" is available to Bank of America, Merrill or Bank of America Private Bank credit or debit cardholders. Go to your BOA account and search for "Museums on Us" to see what's near you. MARIE SELBY GARDENS participates. If not a BOA customer, check to see if your bank has such a program. OR...become a member of the many centers we have here within reach. We ask: Are museums good for mental health? Walking in nature, strolling through creative artistic art collections, learning about our Florida culture through the eyes of museums... all will support our mental stimulation and well being.

Visiting museums has been found to reduce anxiety in children and adults. Studies show that cortisol levels, which are hormones produced in response to stress, decrease after a single museum visit, and regular visits can lead to even better cortisol responses. **GO AND ENJOY!!**

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ARC Meeting - Tuesday, August 27, 2024

Time/Place: **4:30pm Conference Call 605-313-5721 code 655 3857**

Members Present: Jim Duncan, Joe Casale, Rebecca Rasmussen, Bill Borgelt

Others Present:

Please see the Notes at the end of this schedule which contain important information, not just "boilerplate"

No.	Address	Name	Description	Comments & Specific Conditions of Approval (See Notes below)	Approved as submitted (See General Conditions)	Approved with Specific Conditions	Denied (See Notes)
1	757 Placid Lake Dr	Mirinda J. Roy	Reroof existing barrel tile roof with flat tile of "close to same" color: Eagle Tile, "Bel Air" line, 4773 Walnut Creek Blend. Tile color change since 7/24 approval		X		
2	728 Anna Hope Lane (VILLAS)	Laurette Cote	Plant shrubs and flowers in planing beds already cleared.	Approved by the VILLAS neighborhood HOA	X		
3	664 Clear Creek Dr	Bohan Puzyk	Emergency replacement of existing barrel tile roof (leaking)with Navatik Metal Roof in shape and appearance of Barrel tile, color SAND. Made to mimic appearance of barrel tile, but made of steel coated with stone chips	Waiver of existing ARC Guideline requiring roofing "of same material" as other homes in the unit because the appearance mimics the tile of the other homes in the unit. After the installation is completed and the result evaluated, the ARC may recommend a change to the ARC Guidelines with respect to use of metal roofing that mimics the roofing of other homes in the unit.	X		
4	763 Shadow Bay Way	Lesley & Eitan Sachs	Landscape for side yard between 763 and 759 Shadow Bay Way		X		
5	746 Anna Hope Lane	Paul Connolly	Install two removable fabric hurricane screens on lanai inside pool cage; color brown and beige.		X		
6	922 Eagle Isle Ct	Paul Zak	Repaint: Body & Trim BM OC-30 Gray Mist; Front door, garage door and corbels: SW7020 Black Fox. Replace light fixtures and house number.	Light fixtures are to complement the house style and colors. Approval to proceed with body and trim color; hold off for time being with Black Fox		X	
7	916 Eagle Isle Ct	Barry Weckesser	Reroof existing barrel tile roof with flat tile Saxony 900 Slate - Buckskin		X		
8	1081 Mallard Marsh	Karen Morgan	Replace windows with storm resistant panes; grids in front windows; white frames.		X		
9	980 Scherer Way	Kenneth & Gabrielle Zawacki	Replace tile roof with Flat, Eagle tile Color Santa Paula (Tan, cream, browns)		X		

10	1072 Mallard Marsh Dr	Richard Jurik	Reroof with Eagle Flat Tile Concord Blend #4602 (tan & charcoal blend)		X		
11	575 Meadow Sweet Circle	Carole Myles	Replace windows with storm resistant panes; grids in front windows; white frames.		X		
12	1120 Millpond CT	Richard Wirick	Install one hurricane shutter to protect front door. Ivory color. Repaint front door same color.		X		
13	678 Clear Creek Dr	Julie Attar	Replace tile roof with Westlake Tile Saxony 900 Dark Charcoal Blend		X		
14	759 Anna Hope Lane	Anna & Doug Losey	Replace asphalt shingle roof with asphalt shingle roof by GAF Timberline HDZ series color: Shakewood		X		
15	730 Fordingbridge Way	Michael Ronzello	Proposal includes: a) replacing brown wood mulch with one of 3 river rock options; b) Removing dying Palm and replacing with Palm or grass; c) removing round bush in front and replacing with Triple Christmas Palm or similar.	All three river rock options are approved via waiver of existing ARC Guideline requiring wood mulch. The removal and replacement of landscaping approved as proposed.	X		
16	565 Meadow Sweet Circle	Rosemary Haley	Replace asphalt shingle roof with Asphalt shingle Owens Corning Oakridge "Estate Gray" which is very similar to existing roof color.	Approved by Cottages HOA	X		

Specific Conditions Applicable to Conditional Approvals only (as noted above)

1. If your project is marked "Approved with Specific Conditions", the specific conditions are described above.
2. If there is any ambiguity regarding the specific conditions of approval, it is your responsibility to seek clarification before starting work.
3. If you need further information in order to comply with them, please let the ARC know (ARCRivendell@gmail.com) and it will do its best to be helpful.

General Conditions (applicable to all approvals)

1. Please complete the project within one year from the date above and in accordance with the general and specific conditions that apply.
2. If you use contractors, they should be licensed and insured; you are responsible for damage caused to the property of others or to the common areas.
3. You are responsible for any permits required and that the work complies with local zoning and building regulations.
4. When pressure washing is part of the scope of work, please use non-chlorine cleaners.
5. When windows are being replaced, those in the front of your house must have "grids" (aka muttins or grills).
6. When trees and bushes are to be removed, the stumps must be ground down to a min of 3" below grade.
7. The roof color & material and/or paint colors you submitted (and the only ones the ARC approved) are noted in the Description above.
8. You have read the RCA's Standing Rules and ARC Guidelines and will make sure the work done conforms with them.

Denials

If the ARC denied your request, the reasons are set forth under Comments.

Reviews. Appeals. Mediation. Litigation

(ARC Meeting continued)

If your proposal has been denied or you are unwilling to comply with the General or Specific Conditions of Approval, you should not start work until the matter is resolved. You may ask the ARC to review its decision based on any new information you can make available. You may also appeal the ARC's decision to the Board of Governors and/or avail yourself of the opportunity to have an independent third party mediate the dispute and take such other legal action as is provided in Florida Statute 720.311. If you appeal the ARC's decision to the Board, a member of the ARC will attend your appeal and make sure the ARC's understanding of your proposal and the ARC's reasoning are clear to you and to the Board.

Covenant & Rules Enforcement: Fines

1. The ARC does not set, impose or waive fines.
2. If you failed to seek or obtain ARC approval before starting work, or proceeded with the work without complying with the conditions of approval, the ARC must recommend a fine to the Board once the failure comes to its attention, even if your project is subsequently approved and the work brought into compliance. The Board makes all decisions related to fines, subject to review and approval by the independent Fines Committee. You will be notified and have an opportunity to challenge the fine at a hearing with the Fines Committee at least 14 days before the fine is imposed.
3. If the work undertaken would not have been approved by the ARC or approved only with specific conditions, you may incur additional fines and be required to either restore the property or take other remedial action at your own expense to comply with the conditions. Aggrieved neighbors also can seek to have the covenants enforced against you if the RCA fails to do so on their behalf.
4. Please consult Florida Statutes 720.311 for the enforcement actions (and challenges to them) that are available.

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