
GRANDE HILLS ESTATES

Volume 13, Issue 2

August 2010



MEMBERSHIP MEETING

This is to formally notify all members that the second membership meeting of 2010 will be held on **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2010 at 12:00 NOON**. The meeting location will be at the Bush Fire Station on Hwy. 21.

The Association's books will be available for inspection at 10:00 a.m. until meeting time and after the membership meeting, if necessary.

Our guest speakers will be as follows:

Mr. Mark Salvetti of the Crawfishman Triathlon

Captain Joe Jarrell, 4th District Commander of the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office will give a presentation on ways to protect our community.

LAWSUITS CONTINUE

The lawsuits continue from the homeowners' opposition group. The current case we are fighting involves a lawsuit filed by Eric Lowe, Craig Guidry, Betty Shackelford, Mary-Lee Oliphant and Tom Vermillion. This case was initially filed claiming fraud against Mrs. Judy Coker and Mr. Ron Trupp as well as the Board in general. As this portion has progressed, the court gave 15 days for the above

plaintiffs to amend their petition to remove language involving the term "fraudulent" and to expressly allege the prohibited actions against the defendants individually or the claims will be stricken from the petition. Those filing the lawsuit then moved away from the fraud charges and changed the wording to state that Mr. Ron Trupp and Mrs. Judy Coker have engaged in a gross abuse of authority or discretion with reference to the Corporation. Subsequently, there have been motions back and forth, all costing you and the Homeowners Association more money. We have chosen to address some of those issues while some quite honestly do not have enough of an impact to be worth spending your funds. The case has moved to the point where the Judge has said that while our initial establishment and documents were in good standing, that he would like to review all matters on the changes since then. This will naturally require a trial on the merits.

The biggest problem is with the cost of this lawsuit. We have already spent more in legal fees this year than the entire budget that was passed last year. This is of course part of the opposition group's plan, as members of that group have told Board Members that one way for the opposition to win is to break the Association financially with legal costs. The current situation is helping to advance that cause. With the continuing cost of lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit, funds are being depleted. This puts the current Board in a difficult position, as there are only two ways to address this issue. One is to significantly increase the dues for next year and the other is to have a special assessment for the legal fees. The Board fully understands that neither of those options are popular with our members and that, of course, is part of the plan by the opposition group – to put this Board in a position with legal

expenses to where we have to raise dues, then the general membership who so highly and in a majority supports the Board will become upset with us for taking such action and turn against us accordingly. Therefore, each of you can easily see the difficult situation we are put in. We would welcome any thoughts you may have in this regard.

ASSESSMENTS

A reminder to all that your Association, by a majority vote, established April 30th as the due date for the annual assessments on our properties. We greatly appreciate all who complied with this due date and got their assessments in on time; however, it was necessary to send out 13 delinquent notices which bring temporarily an added cost to the Association. At this time, 4 of the 13 members have complied leaving 9 to take further steps in collecting their assessments. The assessment submitted to each landowner has been declared legal by court action, and in fairness to the vast majority who submit theirs on time, it should be noted by all, that every necessary step to collect these assessments will be taken, which will include but not limited to legal interest and small claims court costs. Nobody has any desire to take this beyond the submission of the original assessment notice, but in fairness to all the members of this Association, we will abide by the documents that govern this Association.

AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS

The GHEHA By-Laws were amended based on the results of the membership's approval/vote regarding the change of due date for annual assessments from December 31st to April 30th. This amendment, dated June 12, 2010, is on the Association's

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website, grandehills.org, under the "Legal" icon.

ANIMAL RESTRICTIONS

As mentioned in the October 2009 Newsletter, one of the survey items presented to the membership was whether a change was desired to allow for other animals within Grande Hills. The overwhelming support was to maintain the animal deed restrictions as they currently are. Therefore, this matter will not be placed on a ballot. We ask all to abide by the restrictions. If you have questions regarding the type of animals allowed please refer to the legal documents on the website. www.grandehills.org

COMPLAINTS

The proper procedure for filing a complaint is to send a letter to GHEHA, P.O. Box 395, Bush, LA 70431. Please do not submit anything through the GHEHA website or use the Board of Managers' personal email accounts. Any other correspondence of importance should also be sent in writing to the Association's address. Please note that the GHEHA website is to be used for informational purposes only.

INFORMATION ON SEPTIC TANKS

For homeowners in rural areas, septic tanks are the principal means of wastewater disposal. There is nothing complex about septic tanks. These tanks could be anywhere from 500 gallons or larger. A septic tank separates solid waste from liquid waste. Solid waste is stored and treated by natural bacteria. Liquid waste is dispersed through the soil or drained to an open site, a ditch or runoff. **Homeowners should use chlorine tablets to treat the liquid wastewater, after it exits the tank.**

It is recommended that a 1,000-gallon tank be pumped out and cleaned about every 5 years. **Items that should not be disposed of in a tank are grease, cat litter, coffee grinds, sanitary napkins, dental floss, paper towels and facial tissues such as Kleenex, Puffs, etc.**

Please remember that any untreated wastewater eventually flows into our beautiful lake.

THANKS TO RICK GERARDI

A big THANKS goes out to Rick Gerardi for his many years of volunteer service as head of the Maintenance Committee. He always kept us looking good! Thanks Rick!

MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR

The new chairperson of our Maintenance Committee is A.J. Ostarly. He is not a stranger to volunteering in the community. We will be in good hands with him on board. Members, please volunteer to give him some help. A.J. will have the keys to the boat landing. Give him a call at 504-258-7626.

USE OF LAKE

Please adhere to the Rules & Regulations pertaining to the lake/boat landing. Use of this area is limited to ownership in Grande Hills only. Anyone using the lake that does not own property in the subdivision is trespassing.

COMMUNITY CLEAN UP DAY

Mark your calendar for the date of **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.** for a community clean up day. Meeting place will be the boat landing. Our plans are to canvass the neighborhood for trash in ditches. Please bring plastic bags, gloves and golf carts, if available. Check GHEHA website for alternate date in case of

rain. For any questions, call A.J. Ostarly.

VANDALIZED MAILBOXES

We have had several mailboxes damaged in May. It is a federal offense to damage mailboxes. If you see or are aware of someone who has done this, please report it to the proper authority.

CERTIFICATES TO PROCEED

As stated in the Grande Hills Architectural Control Committee Rules and Regulations, all plans for building structures, additions, fences, pools, etc. are to be submitted to the Architectural Control Committee for review in order for a Certificate to Proceed to be issued. Please contact Jack Ussery, III 985-898-2889 or Jack Ussery, Jr., 985-871-7534.

OWNERSHIP/ADDRESS CHANGES

Please help the Association keep track of new ownership, changes of address and telephone number changes.

Any address or telephone change should be directed to Board Member Ron Trupp, (985) 809-1180.

Any questions should be directed to your Board of Managers:

Steve Roberts, 985-809-6279
Bonnie Hebert, 985-867-9137
Judy Coker, 985-893-0858
Ron Trupp, 985-809-1180
James Smith, 985-809-5209

Committee Chairpersons:

Jack Ussery, III, 985-898-2889,
Architectural Control Committee

A.J. Ostarly, Maintenance Committee,
504-258-7626

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Pat Trupp, Landscape Committee,
985-809-1180

Bonnie Hebert, Welcome Committee,
985-867-9137

Dion McKinley, Boat Launch and Lake
Committee, 504-237-3560

Larry Pippins, Election Committee,
985-809-9054

If anyone can find just a little extra
time to volunteer, please call one of
these chairpersons. Any time spent is
appreciated.

Association Address

P. O. Box 395, Bush, LA 70431
www.grandehills.org