
GRANDE HILLS ESTATES

Volume 15, Issue 4

P. O. Box 395, Bush, LA 70431

www.grandehills.org

December 2012



2013 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

For those homeowners and members who may not have attended a General Membership meeting lately, please join us and you will see that the “days of old” have changed!!! Our meetings are run calmly, efficiently, and in a business-like manner within Roberts Rules of Order. At this upcoming meeting we plan on discussing having more open meetings as well as discussing the potential pros and cons of a Select Committee to review any disagreements in the community. We all pay assessments, and we all have a right to be heard. The Board always welcomes all and is always trying to make sure all are fairly represented. Please join us and see for yourself.

This is to formally notify all members that the Annual Meeting of the membership for electing the Board of Managers and approval of the 2013 Annual Budget will be held on **SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 2013 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.

Personalized ballots will be mailed in early January.

As in past years, counting of the ballots will begin at 10:00 a.m. by the Election Committee.

2013 PROPOSED BUDGET

Enclosed in this mailing is the 2013 Proposed Annual Budget for your review.

This year's Annual Budget that you are being asked to vote on is a slight increase from last year's budget, about 4% in total which, as we all know, is very much in line with inflation. The Board, as always, goes line by line and checks for potential increases and adjusts to the bare minimum of what is believed to be enough to “get by”. Again this year, the Legal/Litigation line will consume nearly 2/3's (Two-Thirds) of the Budget. While the Board is working to end the current litigation filed by Eric Lowe, Craig Guidry, Tom Vermillion, Mary Lee Oliphant-Wood and Betty Shackelford, and had hoped to reduce this line, that hope was dashed at the last homeowners meeting. After the Board made its presentation outlining the changes/updates to the legal documents, Mr. Eric Lowe asked for time to address those present. Mr. Lowe was afforded the time, and as part of his speech, he noted that the opposition group would be changing the lawsuit to add Board Members Steve Roberts and Bonnie Hebert to the lawsuit. While we believe this is not allowable to add new allegations once a lawsuit is filed, it only leaves us with the belief that there will be more litigation to come from Mr. Lowe, Dr. Guidry and the opposition group.

Additionally, on the Budget this year is a second and separate voting option. This voting option involves the lake

and the ongoing care for the grass overgrowth. This item is separated as this is a ONE-TIME vote for this year. Thus, the vote for the Budget is the vote for the budget, and then the vote for the lake is the vote for the lake. (Please see separate article “Save the Lake”). What this vote basically does is make a one-time assessment for just this coming year to purchase enough carp fish to consume enough grass to correct the problem. From this point, it would be the intention of the Board to use the triathlon donations as well as other donations to buy a lesser amount of carp in an ongoing fashion to keep the grass growth problem under control. Please feel free to call a Board Member, and we will be glad to discuss the matter with you or direct you to the fine fellow members who dedicated time to do this research project and its solution. Lastly, the Board would like to thank our members for their continued support and payment of assessments on behalf of the Association.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

In preparation for the election of the Board of Managers, we are providing to you herein, a nomination form in the event you wish to name up to five candidates. **IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU VERIFY YOUR CANDIDATES ARE WILLING TO SERVE IF ELECTED.** Your completed nomination form must be mailed to GHEHA, P. O. Box 395, Bush, LA 70431 and received by **DECEMBER 28, 2012.**

ELECTION COMMITTEE

If you would like to serve on the Election Committee, please check of the “Yes” box on the Nomination Form and mail to GHEHA.

AGENDA ITEMS

Any items for discussion you wish to have on the agenda for the annual

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meeting may be included on the back of the nomination form or sent as a separate attachment.

SAVE THE LAKE

As most of you know in 2008 the Association took action to attempt to eliminate the plant growth in the lake, which was only partially successful. The action taken was first to hire a company that dealt with this sort of problem (Southern Pond Management) to assess the problem and provide us with a plan of action to eliminate or at least control the problem. Their suggested plan of action was for us to purchase sterile carp to place in the lake. This fish is a plant feeder and does not strike fisherman's bait nor eat other fish. We did follow their recommendation and purchased as many carp as we had available resources for, which was below their suggested amount. Now four years later, we once again are experiencing a water plant growth. Thanks to Robbie Roundtree for his hard work in 2008 and again to him as well as Dion McKinley and Art Price for spearheading this attempt to once again get a handle on this problem. Southern Pond Management was once again contacted and without any charge to the Association, it was once again suggested that we purchase more carp and do so on a periodic basis. The reasoning behind repurchasing carp is that when these fish get to full grown capacity they tend to eat the plant growth only to maintain, and not for their own growth. We can equate this to our human pattern of not eating as much as we age. After contacting the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Department and discussions with at least two fish

hatcheries, it was affirmed that this is the most effective way to handle the problem. At this time, we are discussing options to raise the money necessary to purchase additional carp, including but not limited to, receiving donations from the membership. We now have a clearer understanding of what it will take to keep the lake free of the unwanted plant growth and hope that the Association will support this effort. We welcome any suggestions in regard to this matter.

ASSESSMENTS

We would like to thank the membership for their effort of paying their yearly assessments considering the state of the economy today. As you know, your Association needs your help financially and we thank you very much for your continued support.

STATUS OF LAWSUIT

We thank you for your surprisingly overwhelming support of our request to sign the Ratification we are pursuing to end the lawsuit. We will give a brief overview at the annual meeting in January.

MAINTENANCE/CLEARING BY LAKE/DAM AREA

On behalf of the La. Dept. of Transportation and Development Dam Safety & Water Resources Section, ECM Consultants, Inc. has submitted a yearly report to GHEHA regarding repairs needed to the dam by the lake. This year recommendations were made to clear the brush/trees around the dam overflow area and culverts. GHEHA contacted Councilman Tanner and presented the report to the Parish for repairs. As many of you have noticed, the Parish maintenance crew

has been working in the area clearing all the trees and brush across from the lake and bringing in truck loads of dirt to make a shoulder on the side of the road. In addition, it was requested that some sort of reflectors be placed on the end of the road for safety when driving at night. GHEHA will continue to monitor the project.

DAM OVERFLOW PIPE

Several members raised an issue at the 9/8/2012 general membership meeting concerning the overflow pipe that regulates the level of the lake. Ron Trupp called ECM Consultants on 9/10/12 and spoke with the engineer consultant that handles inspection of our dam at the end of the lake adjoining Churchill Downs Dr. When asked if we could raise the level of the overflow pipe (12" pipe) so that we could raise the level of the lake, he replied that the level of the lake is maintained by the five 48" culverts and not that overflow pipe. He further stated that the overflow pipe is just an emergency overflow in the event that all five of the culverts were to be plugged up. He further stated when asked, that maintaining the overflow pipe is the responsibility of the Homeowners Association and that in several cases he has seen, when the pipe wore out or became unserviceable that decisions had been made to cap the overflow pipe, thus eliminating the use of such pipe all together. Based upon the recommendation of ECM, it is the Board's recommendation that nothing will be done to the overflow pipe, and that we will continue to work with the Parish in regards to keeping the

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culverts clear of debris and overgrown vegetation.

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP DAY

We would like to thank all the volunteers who came out for the subdivision community clean-up day. The entire neighborhood was canvassed for trash and it looked great once we were finished.

Thank you Hank Scavo for organizing this event.

COMMITTEES

As the year comes to a conclusion the Board would like to thank the many volunteers who give their time, talent and energy to make our community look great. In particular, we would like to thank all the chairpersons of the many committees of the Association. You are a major piece to the puzzle.

In addition, we thank you, all of our members, who are always there to give the Association support by attending our meetings and helping in various ways throughout our community. The Board always looks forward to a full house at the membership meetings!!

GHEHA ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

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 Travis and Jessica St. Pierre, Chairpersons, at (985) 886-6038.

ALERT

It was brought to the Association's attention by a member that a coyote attacked a small dog at dusk in Whippoorwill Subdivision. Coyotes have been spotted in and around the area between Grande Hills and Whippoorwill. So please be aware and careful with small animals being left outside unattended.

ROAD RESURFACING

Pimlico from Hwy. 1083 to Churchill Downs and Ruffian Ct. are on the overlay packet list for resurfacing. A contract has been awarded to Huey Stockstill. Once the contract is signed by the Parish President and filed in the Clerk of Court's Office the work will begin. It is expected to commence sometime in early 2013, possibly January.

CRAWFISHMAN TRIATHLON

The Crawfishman Triathlon donated \$750.00 to the Association. Unfortunately, because this amount is considered income GHEHA had to pay federal income tax in the amount of \$223.38.

Hopefully, the remaining amount of this donation can be used to help defray the costs to reduce the growth of the grass in our lake.

BOARD OF MANAGER MEETINGS

If any member has a matter that needs to be brought before the Board, please call one of your Board of Managers for the date of the next board meeting so you may attend.

With family commitments, school activities and full-time jobs, it is very difficult to schedule ahead of time monthly board meetings for the year. For this reason, the Board requests that you give us a phone call and we

will gladly let you know when the next board meeting is scheduled.

REMINDERS **Change of Address?**

Please help the Association keep track of new ownership, changes of address, and telephone number changes. Any changes 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
A.J. Ostarly, 504-258-7626

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

