



Bennett Valley Homeowners Association (www.bvhhoa.com)

Fall 2024 Newsletter

Hello homeowners new and old (is that the proper way to say it?); I mean those that have been homeowners for a while in our great community. The HOA board members have appreciated the input of several members in the community who have provided some “historic insight” about BHVHOA to provide support and help put necessary board activities and goals in current perspective. It is interesting how some things haven’t changed much over the years, yet others, such as legal requirements and fire safety, certainly have.

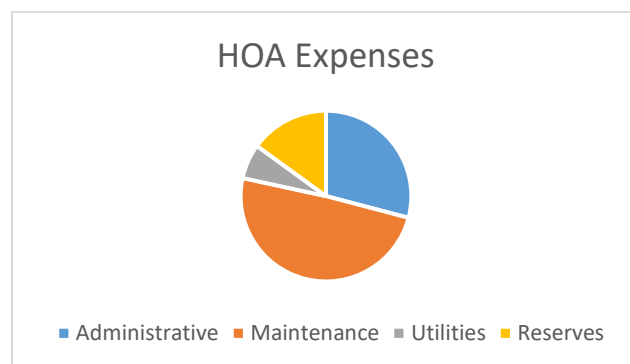
Annual HOA Meeting

As of publication of this newsletter, the Annual meeting was scheduled to take place at Strawberry School on Oct 10. However, there was an insufficient number of votes received by GPS for a quorum, so the meeting was delayed to November 7. Two Board member positions come up for election. We have encouraged all members of the community to show their interest in the oversight of important business activities for the HOA by running for the board, voting for the board, or assisting the board through participation in various committees.

Our bylaws state that we must have 5 directors in place along with our Grapevine management team. These positions are staggered so that we are only replacing a few of the Directors each election year. All the Directors are volunteers, pitching in to make sure that we can operate successfully. If we did not have our HOA community volunteering, we would be required by the CA Corporations Code to hire a team to manage the organization.

Financial Updates

An increase in dues will be necessary this year, primarily to keep up with increasing costs of maintenance and weed abatement/defensible space obligations. This year’s weed abatement costs exceeded budget by over 25%. An increase in reserves will also be necessary to keep up with the rising costs Annual budget overview-



Landscape maintenance has historically represented approximately 50% of the annual budget expenses. Administrative costs, representing approximately 29% of the budget, have also increased, but not nearly to the same extent. The management company fee has remained relatively equivalent to prior years at 16%.

Landscape-

Summerfield Fence- The Summerfield fence staining project has been completed and it looks great. One of the Board's goals is to try to extend the life of that largest BVHHOA asset. Note that only the side visible from the street was stained. Maintenance of the side facing the homeowner's property is the obligation of the homeowner and the color used is at their discretion. We did note some significant vegetation growth against the fence at certain properties, affecting fence integrity. The HOA encourages those homeowners to keep vegetation maintained and away from the fence. Some fence repair work is scheduled for the spring and is in the budget. Not surprisingly, the cost to stain the fence was approximately 125% greater than when last completed.

Common Area maintenance- There will be some significant trimming of brush and overgrowth in various visible common areas this winter and into the spring. The intent is to create easier to maintain sections that will get more routine treatment. That will include more frequent leaf blowing and cleanup. You may have noticed the wooden valve cover boxes have been removed and replaced with standard insulation bags. The boxes were deteriorating and after repeated attempts at repair to address vandalism damage the board decided to replace them altogether.

City of Santa Rosa Hazardous Vegetation and Fuels Management Ordinance Notice- Most of received the notice regarding the City's new ordinance requiring property owners in the Wildland Urban Interface Area to take certain steps to manage vegetation on their property. This is not new, current state law requires owners of property in rural interface areas to maintain their properties to reduce potential for fire spreading around structures. The specific requirements have been codified and follow Cal Fire requirements for distance from structures and control of fuel ladder potential within the defensible space.

As some of you may remember, the BVHHOA Board recognized this requirement 4 years ago and took steps to bring the HOA into compliance with our defensible space initiative. We all own 1/115 of the roughly 40 acres of open space in the development and as such are required to provide maintenance by law in those areas, whether they directly abut our properties or not.

It is not the board's responsibility to pursue clarification of the ordinance as it affects individual property owners. However, we are obviously interested as homeowners in how this ordinance will be enforced and will communicate anything we learn through communication channels.

Communications- On the subject of communication channels, everyone should provide an email address to Grapevine Property Management. Per the last newsletter, other than required mailings, all Association communications will be provided through electronic means. This includes annual dues notices. E-communications are much more efficient and timelier and allow for action plan tracking between the association and the business manager. There are several ways to communicate with the association and the business manager, and we encourage you to provide an email address of some kind for future communications if you haven't already done so.

To enhance this effort, GPS will be sending out letters to all homeowners, as required, to obtain an updated means of e-communication.