

December 13, 2023

Wellington Homeowners,

As 2023 is coming to a close, the HOA Board of Directors has been diligently preparing budgetary numbers for the 2024 Fiscal Year. Per our bylaws, the HOA is primarily responsible for the expenses of the common areas. These areas consist of the open spaces, walking paths, stormwater retention ponds, landscaped berms and entrances to the development. These expenses account for over 95% of the HOA's operating budget. Included in that percentage is the maintenance of the common areas, such as mowing, landscaping and pond treatments, along with indirect costs such as liability insurance and property taxes.

As you have likely seen with your household expenses, our expenses continue to rise as well. Labor and materials costs are increasing across the board. While we try our best to prepare for incremental increases and project related costs, we are not exempt from the unexpected. Recent flooding caused the need for additional pond treatment and electrical repairs. An overgrowth of cattails needed to be removed to prevent overtaking crucial retention volume. Our liability insurance also increased nearly 35% over last year with no known cause. These items alone accounted for a roughly \$4000 or 8.5% hit to this year's budget.

Our development and common areas continue to age, bringing with it the need for additional maintenance and projects.

- Pond #1 (which has the deck) is slowly filling with accumulated silt and sediment which is decreasing its effectiveness along with its aesthetics over time. The HOA would be responsible for dredging or repairs mandated by town or county officials to restore functionality to acceptable levels.
- The deck on pond #1 has required additional maintenance in recent years with exposure to the elements. While repairs are made as needed, it may eventually need to be overhauled, replaced, or removed altogether.
- Certain parts of the walking paths are becoming worn and will need to be replaced to maintain a safe and enjoyable environment for our homeowners.
- Trees within the common areas are a continuing maintenance item, often made problematic after wind and weather-related events, but also due to disease or infestation. Safe removal is then needed for the protection of people, pets and/or structures in the surrounding areas.

While all these items are not necessarily needed within the next year, the Board's goal has been to build a reserve so that substantial increases or special assessments are not needed in the future.

Unfortunately, with the combination of increased and unexpected operating costs since the last dues increase in 2022, we have been unable to set money aside as we are just breaking even. With this in mind, the Board of Directors has unanimously approved an increase of the Annual Dues for the 2024 year. Dues will increase to \$260 per home for the annual assessment which will be collected beginning mid-February. This represents an increase of roughly 15%, or just under \$3 a month.

Our past annual balance sheets are available on the website [here](#). The report for 2023 will be posted and available in January.

The Board consists of volunteer homeowners and we welcome any suggestions to help manage these cost increases. Members meet on a monthly basis and cordially invite all homeowners to attend. If you would like to participate, or are willing to volunteer by serving on the Board or in any other capacity, please let us know. The Board welcomes you to [contact us](#) for any specific financial information you wish to review, or for any other general questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Wellington HOA Board