



Mesquite Ranch News & Views
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December 2014

President's Report

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Mike Cherry
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Shirley Francoeur
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Social

The end of the year is the time when the board of directors reviews the expenses for the upcoming year and approves a budget to pay for those expenses. Assessment increases are a concern for everyone and naturally generate questions. I hope to answer some of your questions and provide you with an explanation for why assessments are going up for 2015.

The association has many vendors that provide services to our community, from pool technicians to landscapers and many more in between. It costs over \$200,000 a year to run the association, providing all the community common areas and keeping them maintained. The primary driver for the assessment increase this year is the landscape contract, but significant increases in utilities were also a factor. The board reviews each and every contract at least annually to ensure that the services still meet our needs and are being performed as requested. Unfortunately our previous landscaping contractor was not performing as expected so we made a change. Although there is a cost increase moving to the new company, we believe that in the end we will have fewer problems with our landscaping and maintenance. A more detailed list of all the increases and decreases in the budget relative to last year is provided on the next page of the newsletter.

Another reason to increase the quarterly assessments is to avoid a special assessment. Special assessments are a situation where an association has expenses they can no longer pay for and they must immediately assess those costs to the homeowners. This is a situation we will do everything possible to avoid! In order to maintain the financial health of the association we must be diligent in our stewardship of the association's funds and attempt to anticipate both planned and unplanned expenses. This is why it is critical to maintain a reserve fund; this fund is where we draw from when we need to make extensive or costly repairs. This critical fund is why we need to increase the assessments, without a well-funded reserve account we place ourselves at risk of not being able to pay expenses and having to pass those expenses on to the homeowners. Current dues would support a \$4,344 surplus (reserve contribution) as compared to 2014 of \$17,979 and 2013 of \$16,262. With the quarterly increase, the association will remain well positioned to maintain its assets and keep the neighborhood looking great.

Sincerely,

Dennis Davila
Mesquite Ranch HOA President

2015 HOA Budget Narrative

Submitted by the HOA Board President

Below are a few highlights of changes for the 2015 Mesquite Ranch HOA budget. All amounts are relative to the current expenses for 2014.

Increases:

- Postage, \$360/yr
- Printing, \$120/yr
- Water, \$620/yr
- Electric, \$180/yr
- Gas, \$120/yr
- Water Irrigation, \$2700/yr
- Landscape contract, \$7608/yr
- Backflow, \$720/yr
- Janitorial Supplies, \$300/yr
- Janitorial service calls, \$300/yr
- Grounds Maintenance, \$300/yr

Decreases:

- Admin cost – meetings, \$440/yr
- Website, \$1288/yr
- Landscape Repairs, \$600/yr
- Irrigation R&M, \$300, based on trend
- Meeting Room Compensation, \$150

Holiday Lighting Contest

We will again be supporting an annual Holiday Lighting Contest. In the past the HOA Board of Directors, led by Larry Smith (our Social Committee Liaison), have selected the winners. The winners for the last two years were as follows:

- 1st Place: 10679 E Ravenswood St (2013), 6186 S Wheaton Dr (2012)
- 2nd Place: 10567 E Oakbrook St (2013), 10685 E Ravenswood St (2012)
- 3rd Place: 6186 S Wheaton Dr (2013), 10476 E Haymarket St (2012)

This year we would like to have more input from community members. A voting form has been posted on the website at <http://mesquiteranch.org/holidaylights> but there is a link to it on the home page (<http://mesquiteranch.org/>) as well. We will compile the results and announce the winners on the landing page of our website and in the next newsletter. The 1st place winner will receive \$150, 2nd will receive \$100, and 3rd will receive \$50. Please vote only **once** per household. Responses will be compiled on January 1st, so please have your responses in by the end of year.

Welcome to our New Board Member

This summer at our annual meeting we held elections for open positions on the board. Our newest board member is Nancy Olney. She has lived in Tucson since 1959 and in Mesquite Ranch since her house was built in 2004. She has decades of experience in irrigation and landscaping and has kindly

agreed to be our liaison for the Landscaping Committee. Please check out her full bio on our website on the Board Members tab (<http://mesquiteranch.org/board-members/>).

Neighborhood Reminders

- **Pool Considerations**

This summer we found glass in one of the pools. Thankfully nobody was hurt, but it did cost 6 days of pool downtime, \$400 labor to drain and clean the pool, and the water cost to refill the pool. If anyone that lives near the pools sees any destructive activities, please contact the HOA immediately with any details available.

Due to feedback received during this past year we have decided to redo the pool policy. First, we will now be calling pool reservations by their more-appropriate name: pool group use permits. The policy has always been that reservation holders do not have exclusive access to a pool, but the word reservation appears to have sent the wrong message. Many of us in the community would still rather not be in the pool area when someone has gone to the trouble of getting a group use permit, so we are putting a maximum time limit of 4 hours on the permits. We will also only approve one use permit at a time so that there is always one pool with no group use. Any parties of 6 or more non-Mesquite Ranch residents need to request a pool group use permit.

The form will be updated to reflect these changes in the next few months and will be available online at <http://MesquiteRanch.org> on the Resources and Forms page. There is also a Pool Rules PDF that you should review. Use permits for groups between 6 and 25 people need to submit their request and \$100 refundable deposit 5 days prior to the event, and private parties with more than 25 guests should submit their request at least 45 days prior to the event in order to receive HOA Board approval. If you don't have access to the internet, just call Cathy Meek at (520) 624-1206 ext. 308 and she'll help you make your reservation. Pool group use permits are posted on the Events Calendar on the website for convenience in letting the community know what's coming up.

- **Barking Dogs**

The HOA is unable to issue violations for barking animals, but can and will send friendly reminders letting them know their dogs are annoying the neighbors. If necessary after a homeowner has received a letter, you will then need to work directly with Animal Control. Just a courtesy reminder to all of you homeowners who have dogs that bark, please be considerate of your neighbors – especially at night but not to forget about our many people who sleep during the day and work through the night.

- **Picking Up after Your Pets**

It is illegal to leave your dog's solid waste on public property or on someone else's private property (see [Sec. 4-102 of the Tucson City Code](#)). Because this offense is a violation of City Code and not the HOA CC&Rs, the HOA Board and property management cannot issue a citation and fine, but the city can. There appears to be just a few people that are causing this issue, so if it is you, please make it stop.

- **Parking Considerations**

Please keep in mind that parking cutouts are primarily reserved for visiting guests and not for homeowners' additional parking spaces (see CC&R – 5.2.30). Homeowners should park their first two vehicles in the garage and any additional vehicles in the driveway. We have so little

guest parking available for 619 homes that we really need to leave the cutouts open to guests. Also, please make sure not to block the sidewalk with your parked vehicles so that pedestrians don't have to go into the street to get past your driveway. Parking in sidewalk areas is not only a safety concern; it is also a city violation ([Tucson City Code 20-260](#)).

- **Travel Trailer and Campers**

If you are planning a trip and need to bring your camper to your home to get it ready, please email Cathy Meek at Adam LLC and let her know the camper will be parked outside your home (include date and time period). The association does allow a 24-hour period in which you may do this to prepare for your trip or unload and clean up after your trip. Otherwise, she does not know how long your camper has been parked on the street and a violation letter will be generated. Cathy can be reached at cathym@adamllc.com or (520) 624-1206 ext. 308.

Construction Update

Summarized from M.J. Dillard's Houghton Road Corridor project updates December email

The construction along Houghton near our neighborhood is complete and the contractor is in a one-year warranty period for any damage within the project area. The landscaping is also on a two-year establishment contract. The city continues to address any issues with this area and they should be contacted directly if there are any concerns. Regular maintenance concerns should be directed to the streets maintenance number, 791-3191. Issues that are currently being tracked and worked include the grasses and weeds along the landscaped areas, trees in front of Civano, streetlights at Poorman and lighting at Forest Glen.

Work along other sections of Houghton will continue for years to come. The intersection at Broadway is now complete as well, but the work from Broadway to 22nd is now scheduled to begin in January. The bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad as well as the road from there to the I-10 intersection is anticipated to begin construction mid-2015. The city is also working with the Arizona Department of Transportation as they own the actual I-10 intersection. Currently ADOT is planning to redesign the intersection in the next 5 years but does not have a current plan. The city is hoping that ADOT will accelerate their efforts to match their timeline. Additional funding has also been obtained to take on the section of Houghton from Valencia to Old Vail Rd/Mary Ann Cleveland. The tentative plan is to work on the design and right of way acquisition for the next 3 years and then do utilities relocation and construction for the next 2 years.

Mailbox Numbers

Some homes in our community do not currently have address number tiles on their homes or their mailboxes. This makes it difficult for management, mail services as well as emergency services to correctly identify a home. If you are missing house tile numbers and/or your mailbox numbering, please try to have these added ASAP. We realize one builder did not finish adding mailbox numbering when the subdivision was complete. The builder is not willing to correct this situation so this is the homeowner's responsibility.

Design Review Committee Submittals/Deadline

Submitted by the DRC

The Design Review Committee (DRC) consists of homeowner volunteers. Deadline for submitting requests is the 15th of every month. The committee will meet monthly and return a response to Cathy Meek at ADAM, LLC the 1st business day of each month. Should you miss the deadline, your submittal will be reviewed the following month when the committee meets again. Keep this in mind when waiting for a reply.

HOA Board Meetings

HOA Meetings are held bimonthly at 6:30 PM on the third Thursday of the month. The annual meeting is held around May. We had held our meetings at the National Self Storage on Houghton but with the recent change in management and elimination of postal services this will no longer be an option. We are tentatively planning to hold our meetings at the Mesquite Ranch east pool, but please check the website for up-to-date information as our plans develop. **All homeowners and residents are encouraged to attend!**

Upcoming board meetings: January 15, March 19
Annual meeting: May [TBD]

On behalf of the Mesquite Ranch HOA Board, all of the committee volunteers, and Adam LLC, we wish you all a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

ADAM, LLC

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