

FOX TALES – December ‘23



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What's happening in Fox Hills

Special Assessment for the Pool

Households that have not paid yet, will start incurring late fee penalties in January. Please reach out to Financial Secretary – Todd Sonquist – foxhillsfinance@gmail.com – with any questions.

Thank you, Paul!

The Board sincerely thanks Paul Scheidemantel for his commitment and service to FHCA. As Facilities Coordinator, Paul's reliable and thoughtful problem-solving was a significant contribution to Fox Hills. Although Paul is leaving and Mark Hall is stepping back into the role, we want to express our genuine appreciation for Paul's efforts. You've made a difference, Paul, and will be missed.

Pool Project Key Updates

The pool designs submitted by Coastal have been approved by Bloomfield Township Design Review Board and the Zoning Review Board (ZBA). Coastal has submitted the design to EGLE, they came back with a large list of questions and requests for changes. The changes have been completed and resubmitted again. EGLE has come back with additional requests for changes, and Paul Bernstein is facilitating discussing regarding some changes required in the Pump Room equipment. At the last Board Meeting, the Board has informally voted that construction is to begin at the end of the 2024 swim season, rather than taking a risk potentially starting in January. This allows us to continue seeking EGLE approval, getting additional bids and getting the benefit of a lower loan required as more funds will have been collected by then. More details will be in the complete Board Meeting notes section.

FOX HILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

2024 FHCA Annual Dues:

The FHCA By-Laws allow for a dues adjustment aligned with the Consumer Price Index's uptick since the previous increment. For 2024, the Board has sanctioned a moderate increase of \$15 per household, well below the maximum permitted by the By-Laws. This brings the annual dues to \$660. Members will receive invoices in January, with dues payable by April 1, 2024.

Events in Fox Hills

Board Meetings: Board meetings always take place on 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the clubhouse. All residents are encouraged to attend in person or virtually via Zoom (<http://bit.ly/foxhillszoom2023>)

Monthly Bunco Games:

We play every 2nd Sunday of the month at the clubhouse - \$25 to participate. Show up at 6:30pm for social/meet and greet/snacks. The game starts at 7:15pm, usually takes about 2 hours to play, prizes and fun guaranteed!

Fox Hills – all rentals for clubhouse and pavilion – please use our online system!

Fox Hills, please be sure to book all your rentals via Skedda online. Doing so will allow you to see availability and reserve your time immediately, without having to wait for Pool & Tennis Officer (pavilion rental) or Clubhouse Officer (clubhouse rental) to respond to your inquiries. It saves everyone a lot of time and we encourage you to use this digital option.

Checking Rental Availability

<https://foxhills.skedda.com> should be used to check rental availability for the Clubhouse and the Pavilion. You can go on Skedda to check out availability and book all your events directly from the website.

In order to reserve a rental date online, you must sign up on Skedda via this link:

<https://bit.ly/foxhillsrentals>

By using the above link to sign-up, Skedda will identify you as a Fox Hills resident, and you will be able to reserve a spot. You MUST register on Skedda with an account in order to be able to book online. Without registration, you will only be able to see availability. Please contact Gary Givental at foxhillstechnology@gmail.com or foxhillssecretary@gmail.com if you have a problem booking a rental online or registering.

	Clubhouse	Pavilion (4 hours or less)	Pavilion (5 hours or more)
In-Season unlimited pool access for non-residents	\$320	\$195	\$270
In-Season (non-residents pay pool use fee)	\$200	\$75	\$150
Off-Season	\$150	n/a	n/a

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Letters from the Community

About "Letters from the Community"

Hey folks, how about we keep the community vibe going with "Letters to the Community" in our neighborhood newsletter? This is a great opportunity for you to share anything you think would be interesting or helpful to the rest of us. Want to organize an event? Got some "did you know" facts about the neighborhood? Celebrating someone's recent accomplishment? Have a call to action? We'd love to hear from you. Let's keep the lines of communication open and strengthen our community bonds. Get those pens moving! Please email foxhillssecretary@gmail.com with any information you'd like to share in the next Fox Tales!

On behalf of Kathy Kaye – help a neighbor day:

Hey there, neighbors! It's Kathy Kaye. As many of you know, I've been living in this community for years, and it's dear to my heart. I've seen us come together in times of need, and I believe it's time to do so again, especially to help out our elderly residents. I've been talking with the Fox Hills Board, and we think that with a little volunteer effort, we can make a big difference in our community. So, I'm sending out a call to action: let's organize some volunteer activities to improve the neighborhood and lend a helping hand where it's needed most.

Here are some ideas for volunteer activities:

1. **Yard Maintenance Day:** Help with lawn care and snow removal, focusing on those who can't do it themselves.
2. **Neighborhood Watch:** Create a volunteer patrol system for added safety during evening hours.
3. **Community Garden Project:** Develop a shared garden space for veggies and flowers.
4. **Tech Support Hours:** Set aside time to assist residents, especially the elderly, with their tech woes.
5. **Grocery Delivery Service:** A weekly run to help the elderly with their grocery needs.

If any of these ideas resonate with you or if you have additional suggestions, please get in touch with the Board or Events Committee. Let's roll up our sleeves and make this place even better than it already is!

Easiest is to contact one of the following:

- Kathy Kaye – Fox Hills resident - kmk1104@catholicexchange.com
- Natalie Givental – Fox Hills Events Committee volunteer @ natalie.givental@gmail.com
- Gary Givental – Fox Hills Secretary and Technology Officer @ ggivental@gmail.com or foxhillssecretary@gmail.com
- Max Sneyd – Fox Hills President @ foxhillspresident@gmail.com

FOX HILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Board Meeting Brief – December 14, 2023

Board Members (7 in-person, 1 virtual)	Resident Attendees (1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gary Givental• Todd Sonquist• Jane Lowell• Jen Pecic• Max Sneyd• Paul Scheidemantel• Russ Conner (absent) - proxy to Jane• Paul Bernstein (virtual) - proxy to Max• David Postwaite	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bryan Boos• Matt Lynch• Daren Lo Piccolo• Kathy Kaye

Board Meeting Discussion summary

POOL:

- Design changes required by EGLE are still underway as EGLE asked for additional changes. Pump Room equipment may need additional upgrades not in scope of the original design, in order to accommodate newer equipment.
- ZBA Township approval and Design Review Board approvals have been secured.
- Bank loan essential for the project remains unsecured; active efforts in loan acquisition are ongoing.
- Current Pool Special Assessment status shows \$178,600 collected.
- Concerns exist about timely pool opening; alternative arrangements with SURF discussed in case of delay.
- Legal and financial prudence emphasized in pool project discussions, with contract and loan acquisition prioritized before commencement.
- Straw vote favors delaying the pool season until end of Summer 2024, with a focus on securing proper contracts. Project deliberations highlighted the need for due diligence in obtaining additional comparable vendor bids based on EGLE approved design.

OTHER:

- Annual dues invoicing to switch to electronic format to save on costs, mailing only residents without an email address.
- Oakbrook road lighting requires rewiring, with a move to energy-efficient LEDs proposed, estimated at \$350.
- Summer Vendor contracts to be reviewed for better pricing and long-term service commitments.
- Winterization improvements completed in the Pump Room; clubhouse coordinator position secured by Mark Hall to serve starting in 2024.
- The FHCA Board considered a proposed \$30 per household dues increase to counteract inflation but ultimately decided against it. Instead, a more modest increase of \$15 per household was approved, which is below the rise in the Consumer Price Index. This adjustment is anticipated to generate an additional \$5,000 in revenue for the Community.
- The current financial state of Fox Hills is stable. Although repairs to the pool and unexpected costs for Grounds caused expenditures to be higher than the budgeted amounts, the budget was balanced due to higher-than-budget revenue from Clubhouse rentals and pool concessions.

Complete Board Meetings Notes are at the end of the newsletter, along with full Board Member Reports.

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December Meeting - Actions to Follow Up

General Tasks

- (not done) Create a list of day-to-day duties for David's position (and others to follow)
- (not done) Access to the Board to all financial transactions from QuickBooks
- (HOLD) Obtain reviewed financial statements for the HOA
- (Planned) Explore the lien process for houses with delinquent dues
- (Planned) Discussion for potential by-laws change to increase late-fee penalties
- (done) Pool pump room properly winterized

Pool Project

- (done) Township Zoning Review Board
- (done) Township Design Review Board
- (in progress) EGLE approval
- (in progress) Bank Loan secured
- (in progress) Status of bids from other vendors
- (in progress) Pool builder vendor selection
- (done) Status of mitigation strategy (if the whole season is lost) – talks w/ SURF swim club

Pool Project – Detailed Plan

Informal ("straw vote") by the Board concluded - **5 members opposed to allowing Coastal to "start as soon as approvals are obtained" due to**

- No contract prepared - we don't know what we're getting and under what terms or contingencies
- No financing secured – vendor selection and terms are still in progress
- No 3 bids that bid out EGLE approved design (previous bids aside from Coastal were informal, based off of sketches)

Additional Reason to start the build in 2024

- As the Pool Project Assessment money comes in, the bank loan amount required to be financed will be lower, therefore leaving us more room in the budget as a contingency

Updated Plan for 2024

1. Coastal to obtain EGLE approval
2. Notify Coastal that we are not comfortable starting this late in the season (Max + Paul B)
3. Bid out the approved design to additional contractors (Jane Lowell, Paul Rapier, others)
4. Pursue build quotes from other vendors based on EGLE approved design drawings
5. Board to vote on selecting the build vendor with a specific quote, secure the necessary funding
6. Builder Contract to be finalized
 - a. if vendor other than Coastal, we might have to negotiate terms with them
 - b. if Coastal, recommend to hire an external attorney
 - c. decide and agree on date to start, date to finish, and various ways to hold builder accountable
7. Discuss and decide if we need to hire a management company to run this complex project
8. Break Ground no earlier than July 31, 2024, to be completed by May 1st, 2025

FOX HILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



Right now is the time to get the most money for your house! We have many interested parties that want to live in Fox Hills!

CALL US!

Jane Lowell is a long time Fox Hills resident, Community House Coordinator, and is always available to answer any questions you have about real estate!

THE PROPERTY STRATEGISTS

Dawna Kuhne, Jane Lowell (Fox Hills Resident)

248.631.4730 | propertystrategists@maxbroock.com

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- ◆ Estate Planning
- ◆ Special Needs Planning
- ◆ Asset Protection Planning
- ◆ Estate Tax Protection
- ◆ Trust Administration
- ◆ Guardian and Health Documents
- ◆ Blended Family Planning



David D. Das

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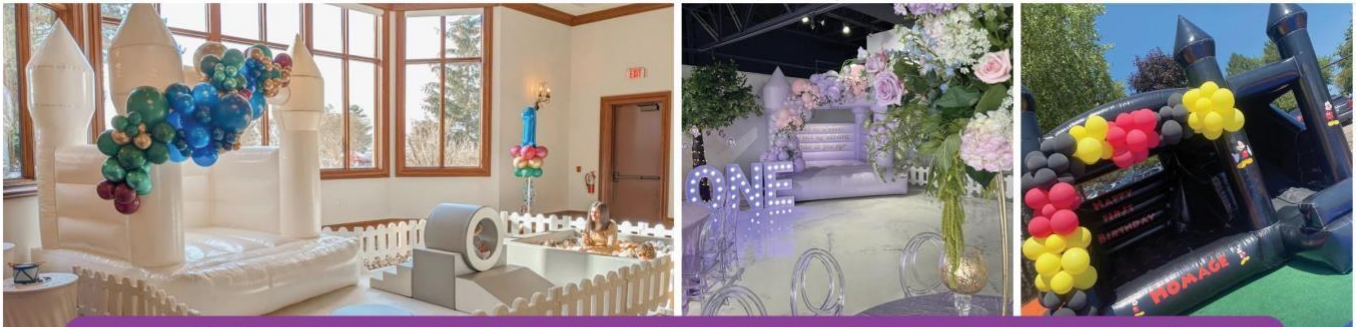
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ADVERTISING IN FOX TALES

ARTICLES AND ADS

The deadline for submissions to the *Fox Tales* is always the 2nd Friday of the applicable month. **All submissions must be sent in electronic format** (via email, preferably an image) to foxhillssecretary@gmail.com

For more information, please contact Gary Givental by email at foxhillssecretary@gmail.com

MONTHLY ADVERTISING RATES

	Full	Half	Quarter	Classified
Resident:	\$30	\$20	\$15	Free
Non-Resident:	\$50	\$40	\$30	\$15.00

A 50% discount will be given if you prepay for a full year of advertising in the *Fox Tales*. Invoices will be sent via **Square** to allow digital payment options. All checks for advertisement should be made payable to **"Fox Hills Community Association."** No second party ads will be accepted at the resident's rate

FOX HILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Fox Hills – 2023 YTD Housing Sales (courtesy of Jane Lowell and Dawna Kuhne)

THE PROPERTY STRATEGISTS

Dawna Kuhne, Jane Lowell (Fox Hills Resident)

248.631.4730 | propertystrategists@maxbroock.com

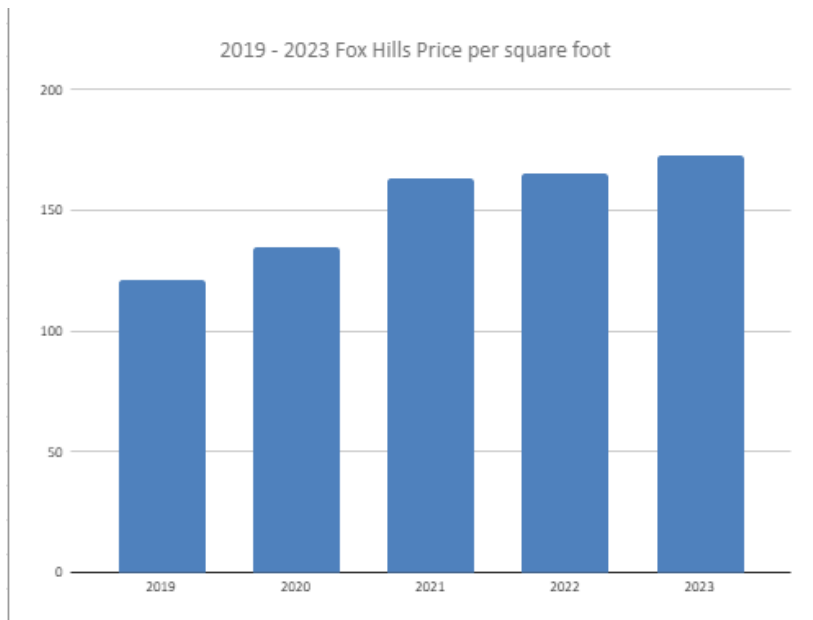
275 S. OLD WOODWARD AVE, BIRMINGHAM, MI 48009



November 2023

2023 Fox Hills Sales YTD							
Address	Bed/Bath	Square Footage	price per sq foot	List price	Sales price	Sold price per sq foot	Sold date
Active							
No Active listings							
Pending							
663 S Spinningwheel	3/2.1	2102	\$183.16	\$385,000			
SOLD							
466 Rolling Rock	5/2.2	2788	\$118.33	\$329,900	\$330,000	\$118.36	6/30/2023
645 Fox River	4/2.1	2005	\$216.96	\$435,000	\$388,000	\$193.52	7/21/2023
708 Weybridge	4/2.2	2849	\$131.59	\$374,900	\$400,000	\$140.40	3/8/2023
2090 E Spinningwheel	4/2.1	2200	\$186.36	\$409,999	\$405,000	\$184.09	4/3/2023
1884 Hunters Ridge	4/2.1	2048	\$209.72	\$429,500	\$429,500	\$209.72	8/9/2023
1891 Hunters Ridge	4/2.2	2531	\$181.35	\$459,000	\$457,500	\$180.76	3/22/2023
2036 Fox Glen Court	4/3.1	2703	\$184.61	\$499,000	\$465,000	\$172.03	2/3/2023
1963 Fox River Dr	5/2.1	2600	\$191.92	\$499,000	\$490,000	\$188.46	10/16/2023
1610 Hunters Ridge	5/2.2	2729	\$201.50	\$549,900	\$505,000	\$185.05	2/23/2023
651 Sedgefield Dr	5/3.1	2716	\$174.89	\$475,000	\$512,000	\$188.51	10/20/2023
Av. Price per Sq. Foot (SOLD)			\$179.72			\$176.09	

Fox Hills – Home price per sqft (historical)



2019	\$121.20
2020	\$134.76
2021	\$163.07
2022	\$165.57
2023	\$172.99

FOX HILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Addendum – Board Meeting Notes – December 14, 2023

POOL Discussion

Coastal's current status

- Their design changes were re-submitted December 14, 2023 to EGLE
- They've been in touch w/ EGLE to get them reviewed quickly
 - They're top of the pile for EGLE once they have a response
- If they start before end of December, they still feel very confident to get the job done before June 1st
- Justin gave him timeline of the build phases
- ZBA approval was received December 12th, 2023
- Mike Schuell called all the Coastal references
 - They were all positive
 - Some of them were done in the winter time
- Coastal is in regular contact

Financing

- Our bank loan is not yet been secured
- David provided information to Mike

Concerns and Mitigations

- What happens if the project starts, but does not finish in time for the summer season
 - Paul B talked to SURF swim club
 - They're open to working with us and allow our community to use their pools
- Construction Projects and Legalities
 - Paul S
 - We do not have a signed contract
 - We do not have a loan secured
 - We should not vote "yes" on such a project without a legal counsel
 - Max
 - Fair points
- Discussion occurred regarding what decisions the Board needs to make at this point in time
- There was a conversation around potentially starting the build as soon as EGLE approval was obtained, by Coastal, no matter how late in the season
 - Risk of waiting until next season: more current pool failures; higher prices; not being able to get the pool we want
 - Risk of starting as soon as possible: losing the summer season; loan not yet secured
- Discussion occurred related to the 3 bids normally obtained for any sizable project
 - The bids obtained in the past were based on rough sketches, not a detailed design.
 - There's no consensus on whether those bids are "good enough", or not
 - There was a point made that not very many companies even offered to bid due to lack of detail specified in the request

The Board agreed that the only decision needed to be made at this point in time, while we wait for EGLE approval on the design proposed by Coastal is whether we would approve the build to start as soon as possible, or wait until end of Summer 2024.

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Board did a "Straw Vote" (no formal vote needed as there's no actual approval needed from Coastal until the design is EGLE approved)

- 5 in favor of waiting until end of Summer 2024 pool season
- 4 in favor of starting as soon as possible

Reasons for not rushing the buildout:

- No contract prepared - we don't know what we're getting and under what terms or contingencies
- No financing secured – vendor selection and terms are still in progress
- No 3 bids that bid out EGLE approved design (previous bids aside from Coastal were informal, based off of sketches)

Additional Reason to start the build in 2024

- As the Pool Project Assessment money comes in, the bank loan amount required to be financed will be lower, therefore leaving us more room in the budget as a contingency
 - The current quote from Coastal does not include other expense we need to plan for such as new pool deck furniture and possible a new Guard Shack
 - Any money we have left in the Pool Project budget may be considered for these types of additional expenses.

Pool Project - Updated Plan for 2024

1. Coastal to obtain EGLE approval
2. Notify Coastal that we are not comfortable starting this late in the season (Max + Paul B)
3. Bid out the approved design to additional contractors (Jane Lowell, Paul Rapier, others)
4. Pursue build quotes from other vendors based on EGLE approved design drawings
5. Board to vote on selecting the build vendor with a specific quote, secure the necessary funding
6. Builder Contract to be finalized
 - a. if vendor other than Coastal, we might have to negotiate terms with them
 - b. if Coastal, recommend to hire an external attorney
 - c. decide and agree on date to start, date to finish, and various ways to hold builder accountable
7. Discuss and decide if we need to hire a management company to run this complex project
8. Break Ground no earlier than July 31, 2024, to be completed by May 1st, 2025

Pool Assessment – Collection Status

As of 12/23/23 there are 64 unpaid invoices. However, 14 of the 64 are on a payment plan. That leaves 50 households that owe the \$600 and have not made any contact with me yet. The 14 on the payment plan will NOT have late fees added to their balance but any household that does not reach out prior to January 1, 2024 will start incurring the late fees as of January 2, 2024.

Two households paid the full \$3,000 special assessment and one resident paid \$2,250 to date leaving \$750 as the remaining balance.

So, total collections towards the 2023 special assessment as of 12/23/23 is \$178,600.

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OTHER Board Business

Todd -

- Annual dues for 2023 99.9% collection rate. One outstanding annual due to date.
- Total collections towards the 2023 special assessment as of 12/23/23 is \$178,600.
- Invoices will be going out for annual dues
 - So, we need to make decisions on Inflation increase
- Proposing to send out all invoices moving forward electronically, only mailing paper invoices to houses without a valid email address.

Jane

- \$600 handed over to Todd
- Reported that she's very pleased with using Skedda for online scheduling and digital payments via credit card.
 - Significantly reduced time spent on handling money for rentals

Jen Pecic

- Special thanks to Kathy Kaye
 - She hung Xmas decorations at entrances
- Light out at Oakbrook
 - Electrician said we need to rewire and replace bulbs to LEDs
 - \$350
- Closing out books for balance of the year
- Open to bidding out contracts for next season

Paul Scheidemantel

- Mark Hall has won the vote to take over the position for clubhouse coordinator
- Pump Room vents has been resealed with heavy duty plastic
- Added extra insulation
- Paul B installed 2 temperature monitors
- Plan to sit down with Mark Hall

Gary Givental

- Next year - focus on Advertisers for Fox Tales

Paul Bernstein

- Has money from Fox Hills clothing sales
- Proposed to have a Fox Hills flag printed by the same company that did the Fox Hills clothing:
 - Board had a short discussion - YES on the flag w/ Fox Hills
- Pool Manager plans to come back

David Postwaite

- P/L statement
 - Our Budget is OK
 - We spent more on grounds
 - We spent more on pool (mostly repairs)
 - But we made more on concessions and on the clubhouse rental

FOX HILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Discussion regarding annual dues increase based on CPI / Inflation:

Motion - Gary; 2nd by Todd

- Increase the dues by \$30 to keep up with inflation
- Discussion
 - Kathy - would like to know the list of projects
 - Max - wants to give community a break
 - Todd - maybe it should be less than \$30
- VOTE
 - 4 YES
 - 5 NO <- FAILED

Motion - Gary; 2nd by Todd - \$15 dollar raise - \$5k

- VOTE
 - **5 YES <- PASSED**
 - 4 NO

Outcome:

- FHCA annual dues for 2025 will go up by \$15

Full Board Member Reports

Todd Sonquist – Financial Secretary – Full Report

Hello and Happy Thanksgiving!

Special Assessment:

For the neighbors that have not paid the \$600 special assessment that was due October 1, 2023 please make the payment to avoid any late fees. Some of you have already contacted me about a payment plan so this is just a reminder to please make your next payment.

If you have not contacted me about setting up a payment plan please do so.

As a reminder, because this special assessment came up quickly this year, the board decided to waive the late fees for October, November, and December 2023. If you have not paid the special assessment by January 2, 2024, the late fees will begin accruing and will be added to your balance. January 2024 will be a \$10 late fee and every month after that will be a \$25 late fee per month that the special assessment is not paid.

Please note that people that contact me before the due date and set up a payment plan will NOT be charged the late fee.

If you have any questions or are ready to set up a payment plan please call, email, or text me.

A payment can be made in a number of different ways.

1. Mail a check to the P.O. Box:

FHCA

P.O. Box 164

Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303

2. Set a time to meet with me to drop off a check or cash at my house (1997 W Spinningwheel). If it's cash, we definitely need to meet. Otherwise, others have put the check between the storm door and front door.

3. Payments can be made through PayHOA. I do not have access to your payment information and PayHOA does not store your information. It is a one-time transaction. Credit cards have an approximately 3% processing fee. Using a bank account has an approximately \$1 processing fee.

Annual Dues:

This is a reminder that the invoices for the annual dues will be emailed out before January 15, 2024. The due date is April 1, 2024. If you need a payment plan for the annual dues, please contact me well before the due date and we will find a plan that works for you.

In 2023 our annual dues were \$645. Each year the board evaluates the cost-of-living index and votes to either increase the dues to keep up with inflation or maintain the annual dues at the previous year's amount. The board voted on this item at the board meeting on Tuesday December 12, 2023.

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The cost-of-living index shows 5% inflation when comparing 2023 to 2022.

$\$645 \times 5\% = \32.25

The vote did not pass to raise the dues by the full \$32.25.

However, a \$15 dues increase did pass.

So, while the 2023 annual dues were \$645, we want you to be aware that the 2024 annual dues will be \$660.

We understand that these increases are coming back-to-back but please also consider our position. For decades the annual dues in the subdivision were underfunded and did not increase even though inflation has been increasing nearly every year. As a board we are now trying to correct the underfunding issue from the past and put the dues in place each year that will help us avoid the shortfalls that happened as a result of the decades of underfunded annual dues.

Sincerely,

Todd Sonquist

Financial Secretary

Fox Hills Community Association

foxhillsfinance@gmail.com

248-302-4116

Russ Conner – Architecture Control

To maintain the overall appearance of the neighborhood, Trash and Recycle containers should be stored in your garage or behind your residence. These containers should not be placed by the road until the afternoon before the scheduled trash pickup day. If you must store the containers on the side of your home, they should be screened from the road by shrubbery or a decorative screen. Please refer to the Fox Hills Continuous Property Maintenance Directives on the community website or PayHOA for details.

FOX HILLS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

FHCA Improvement Projects Scheduled for 2023 - STATUS

Project	Area	Cost	Status	NOTES
Replace Pavilion furniture cushions	Pavilion	\$1,200	DONE	New cushions have been purchased and 2 new tables
Clubhouse - new furniture and fixtures	Clubhouse	\$3,500	Deferred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new tables + tablecloths - new chairs - new folding tables - bathroom supplies - kitchen supplies
Clubhouse - rental scheduling software	Clubhouse	\$500	DONE	https://foxhills.skedda.com is now live and can be used to check rental availability for the clubhouse and the Pavilion
Repairs to piping	Pump Room	\$1,000	DONE	When the plumber was out to repair frozen piping, he recommended that certain parts of the piping be replaced, including to bring parts for the boiler up to code.
stock concessions	Pool	\$2,000	DONE	purchasing items for concessions
Lockable storage cabinets in guard shack	Pool	\$1,175	DONE	
2 replacement picnic tables	Pool Deck	\$500	DONE	
1 replacement metal table and chairs	Pool Deck	\$1,000	DONE	
Grounds - Cedar Fence Repair	Grounds	\$2,000 \$2500	DONE	<p>Replace portions of Split Rail Fence along Opdyke. 3/14: we're now quoted at \$4k, will get more quotes and re-evaluate</p> <p>5/10: re-negotiated down to \$2k</p> <p>7/17: on vendor's schedule – should be done in next few weeks</p>
Grounds - Tree Trim/Removal	Grounds	\$3,500 \$2,145	DONE	Trim Trees at Entrances and remove falling tree
Grounds - sprinkler repair - option 2 - full fix	Grounds	\$7,000	DONE	Full Repair w/ new lines 7/17: paid in full; invoice submitted to Treasurer
Pool Deck - Music selection DJ software	Pool Deck	\$120?	DONE	Allows us to play legally licensed music