

GHCA BOARD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – MAY 2022

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

"Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to irrigate." Borrowing badly from the poem of the Ancient Mariner, this phrase sums up what many neighborhoods have felt off and on this month as irrigation breaks during a drought period have left lawns and plantings around the community begging for water. Our ponds do have water, but it was not getting passed through to the irrigation lines.

One break, on a main irrigation line, was very hard to locate and left all the homes and HOAs on West and East Harbor Village Drive without irrigation for many days. A team from the Grand Harbor Club and GHCA worked together and eventually found a cut pipe on River #16 hole that turned out to be part of the main irrigation line feeding most of the northeastern part of the community. Hats off to Phil Schwinn, Tom Kruger and Alan Romano for solving the puzzle and fixing the break.

Several other communities have experienced recent irrigation interruptions, and it is important to understand that while the River Golf Course is being fully renovated this summer there may be more interruptions, because there is no master layout of all the pipes that distinguish purely golf course irrigation lines from community irrigation lines, mostly because many of them do both.

Speaking of water, we really need rain. Now is the time of the year when we leave the transition period between the winter dry season and the summer wet season, which is supposed to start officially in mid May, but we are still waiting. Everything that needs water to grow, including the low levels of most of our ponds, is badly in need of rain.

Turning to a much more serious subject, there were three recently reported in-home thefts of jewelry in St. David's. The Sheriff's office was immediately contacted by one of the residents, but no progress in solving the case(s) is yet known. In addition to the normal precautions of keeping our doors and any outside cars locked at all times when we are not at home, please be on the alert for any possibly suspicious people or activities that you may notice. Call security at the Grand Harbor front gate if you have a suspicion. If you become aware of an actual crime, call the Sheriff's Office immediately, not our security. Time is critical, and our security cannot intervene in an actual crime.

After a long hiatus from any developer construction activity in Grand Harbor, all the undeveloped lots in The Falls and in Laguna Village have now been bought by new developers, and construction activity will resume this summer. GHO, who has been building new homes in Oak Harbor for a few years, will now be building in The Falls, and a developer based in Central

Florida will be building all the new homes in Laguna Village. There is more news on this subject in the New Construction Committee Report.

Lastly, I would like to try to answer some questions that I have received from Grand Harbor and Oak Harbor residents who are not members of the Grand Harbor Golf and Beach Club, and who wonder about the construction activity and the appearance of the River Golf Course during its current renovation. First of all, it's good to understand that one of the features of our community that makes living here desirable is the presence of the Clubs, Grand Harbor and Oak Harbor. Even if you are not a member yourself, living on or near a golf course adds to the value of your home.

Similarly, when a golf course has been completely renovated, as the River Course will be when it reopens in October, it will help attract future home buyers, both for new and existing homes, which can only help with property values. The River Course renovation is being financed entirely by the GH Club and its members, at no cost to resident non-members, who unfortunately do have to put up with the construction noise and some flying dust on windy days. Once the heavy part of the job is completed as early as this summer, and new grass starts to be seeded, life will begin to return to normal, and normal should be a little better for everyone than it was before.

FINANCE/TREASURER'S REPORT:

Last month we stated that we would put a copy of the 2021 Audit on our GHCA.online website and it has now been posted there. We have also been trying to post our first quarter 2022 financials, but we want to show them in the same format as presented in the audit report. So far, that has been a challenge, and the financial results will be posted online as soon as the reporting format issues are resolved.

Through the first 4 months of 2022, our operating costs are better than budget except for Security Expenses, which are about 10% worse, primarily due to significant expenses for our security gates. Spending on the bridge replacement is \$700,000 so far, and has been financed with our Marine Bank loan. We have also spent \$60,000 from our Litigation Fund so far this year as we engage more professional help for our case. It will likely be necessary to call for additional funding prior to the scheduled trial date early next year. We hope to have a full financial picture available for posting soon.

A R CHOICE MANAGEMENT REPORT:

Harbor Bridge #2: A new concrete deck was poured over the eastern section of the bridge on May 23rd. The new concrete appears to be very rough, but please understand this was intentional. The completed bridge will have asphalt pavement over roughly finished concrete to give a better bonding surface for the asphalt to adhere.

The next concrete pour is scheduled for May 31st to create a barrier/wall on the east side of the bridge. Then on June 3rd traffic will be switched from one side of the bridge to the other so that work can then begin on the western half of the bridge.

We ask again that all casual foot, bicycle and vehicle traffic not go beyond Bridge #1. This is a construction zone and there is a narrow one-lane road servicing two-way traffic. There are people working on the site and there is heavy machinery in use. It is dangerous, so please do not walk or ride your bike through this area.

Reclaimed Water Pond Bulkhead: Our contracted engineer, Steve Boehning, has completed the survey of the pond, developed some conceptual designs of the replacement wall, and is consulting with Indian River County Engineering for permit requirements. He should be presenting the design alternatives to us in about a week.

Pond #27: We met with another engineer, Tem Fontaine, and a gel-tube contractor to discuss the mitigation issues for Pond #27. There are two major issues. One is that the pond's northern corner is completely silted, blocking the storm water pipe exit in that corner, and needs to be dredged out. The second issue is that the installed control system does not allow the pond level to go much below the overflow level of 2.76 feet. The cart path elevation north of the pond is at 3 feet, only 3 inches of difference. There is nowhere for the runoff to go in the rainy season and the area north of pond floods consistently.

We are searching for "as built" drawings of the pond level control structure to know what was actually approved by the St John's River Water Management Department and we will not be seeking a new permit to modify that system at this time. We will be applying for a waiver on a permit to dredge the north end of Pond #27 as routine maintenance. We are waiting on costs to dredge and rebuild lake banks on the northern portion of the pond and have suggested to the Grand Harbor Club that they raise the cart path area while they still have the green under reconstruction.

Irrigation: The rainy season is late in getting here and the ponds are at very low levels. We are again in an extreme drought situation. Please continue to water only the permitted two times per week.

LEGAL REPORT

No new activity to report this month. The litigation process and timing set by the court and described in previous newsletters continues more or less on schedule. As a reminder, our trial date has been set for February of next year, although the courts are currently backed up and schedules are slipping.

MARINA COMMITTEE REPORT:

It was a busy month of activity related to the Marina's request to the County to convert 40 current boat slips to liveaboard slips and to modify the parking lot in order to create 15 more parking spaces. In advance of an Indian River County Technical Review Committee meeting on the subject, scheduled for May 18th, many residents submitted impactful personal letters to the County against the Marina's proposals, as did GHCA through its counsel.

On May 16th, the County Development Department issued draft departmental review comments on the Marina's proposed changes. Most notably comment #1 was that staff will not support converting a total of 40 current slips to liveaboard slips. Other important comments in the draft included:

- Even though the Marina separated their application for liveaboards from their application to reconfigure the parking lot, the County will review them concurrently.
- In addition, it was confirmed that the liveaboard application would require thorough Special Exception Approval, and not just administrative approval as requested by the Marina. The special exception approval process requires two public hearings.
- The Marina must submit to the County copies of any correspondences with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection regarding modifying their permits to allow liveaboards, since they are not currently permitted.

On May 18th the Technical Review Committee meeting was held by conference call. All the staff comment points in the draft were reviewed by County Staff and the Marina's counsel. The County made it clear that it was their strong desire that the Marina and Grand Harbor have a series of meetings leading to a negotiated settlement of the Marina's liveaboard request and the many important issues raised by GHCA and Grand Harbor residents.

NEW CONSTRUCTION REPORT:

The GHCA New Construction Committee has continued to refine the Standards of New Construction to guide developers and builders in Grand Harbor and Oak Harbor. The committee met previously with Bill Handler and Renee Maclees of GHO, the new developer for The Falls, and more recently with Shane Acevedo, whose firm purchased the remaining lots in Laguna Village, to discuss his proposed concepts for the completion of Laguna Village.

A draft copy of our Standards of New Construction has been shared with both developers and has already been discussed with Shane Acevedo, whom we expect to submit revised construction designs for our review in the very near future. Preliminary approval to proceed was previously given to GHO for The Falls, and we await their comments on our drafted Standards of New Construction.

SECURITY COMMITTEE REPORT:

Members of the GHCA Security Committee met with MCH Consulting, as well as with the Securitas regional manager and on-site supervisor to review security procedures and access protocols, and to observe Securitas personnel interactions with residents and guests using the access points. MCH has also conducted interviews with site security staff, and is currently reviewing all Securitas contracts and amendments as well as invoicing in context of the contracts and amendments. They are continuing their site inspections and evaluation of current access control equipment and operations.

A community survey was finalized and sent out to all residents and/or individual HOAs to obtain resident input on current security shortfalls, and future security and access expectations. The survey is now completed with well over 50% of residents having participated, for which we thank you. It is anticipated that the results of the survey will be provided to the committee within two weeks, and they will be used by the committee in its comprehensive analysis of security within the community, and in proposing any recommended changes to the GHCA Board that may be appropriate.

FINAL NOTE:

The Great Migration is now well underway. No, not the wildebeests and zebras that roam the Serengeti in search of fresh grass to eat, but your dear friends and neighbors who are resuming their annual migration, mostly north, to their other dear friends and neighbors. Covid interrupted this ritual for many of us the past two years, but only helped delay it this year, as did a very late Easter holiday. Although we have grown accustomed to being all together for quite a long time now, our growing population of full-time residents should not fret about this mass departure. It is only temporary, and your very own flock of snowbirds will return in the Fall, because it is their nature to do so. See you all again soon.

Jeff Caso

GHCA President, on behalf of the Board