

MINUTES | Cascades HOA Board meeting: 4/3/2024

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Cascades at Azalea Lakes Property Owners Association, Inc. was held on Wednesday, April, 2024, in the Cascade Villas clubhouse on Azalea Lakes Blvd.

Board members present: Dennis Buttimore (president), Ryan Robinson (vice president), Kathy Strauss (secretary/newsletter), Adina Daniels (treasurer), Joey Childress (member-a-large)

Representing SemperFi Property Management: Billy Rivera, Property Manager and new accountant, Mandy Richard

Call to order: Mr. Buttimore called the regular meeting to order at 6:28pm

Meeting reached quorum

Acceptance of Minutes: The Board was provided a copy of the minutes from the regular meeting, January 3, 2024. The minutes were provided for review prior to the meeting. There were no corrections or comments. A motion was made by Ms. Strauss to approve. They were seconded by Mr. Buttimore.

Financials: Mr. Buttimore reviewed the financials ending on February 29, 2024, to the Board's satisfaction. He stated that at the end of 2/29/2024, the Operations account had a balance of \$19,000 and the Reserves account had a balance of \$19,000. Putting us in a good spot as we want to have about 20% of what's going to be our total operating budget because you never know there will be an emergency, etc.

Aging Reports/collections: Mr. Rivera reported that after conferring with the President and the board, stated that there are 9 homeowners that are ready to go into collections with a collections attorney. What the attorney does is put a lien on the house. They start with an attorney's fee of \$505 to start the proceedings and after a 120-day period if it's not resolved, another \$505 is added, etc. If it goes further, the property could go into foreclosure. SemperFi has reached out to each of these homeowners by phone, email and certified letters. There were approximately 20 homeowners that were behind, all but these nine have brought their accounts current. These nine accounts total \$10,000 that should be in the budget, and it is because of these nine delinquent homeowners and the trash service cost that increased that the association raised the dues up by \$5/month from \$55/month to \$60/month.

Appfolio: there was a discussion about the Appfolio service fees for paying monthly dues. If you use a debit or credit card, there is a \$9 convenience fee added. This does not go to SemperFi, it's an Appfolio processing fee. If you use a direct draw from your checking account, there is no extra fee. There are coupons that the homeowner can print off via their Appfolio account to use to pay the dues. SemperFi does not mail coupon books like other management companies did to save the community money. Appfolio sends out notices for dues approximately 10 days prior to the due date (beginning of the month). Any questions are to be directed to SemperFi.

Newsletter was sent out with the community yard sale information in it. All the other information from the board and property management, and input from the community went out. It will be posted on the homeowner's website.

Finished Business:

- Cleaned out a lot of the end of Great Lakes Circle pond where it gets very skinny. Bushes and other weeds were trimmed out and that area cleaned up. Where the small trees were pulled from that section, the hill was repaired.
- The garbage service fee was raised with a \$5000 increase from year to year (12 months x \$231/month = \$5000). The community had signed a contract, a 4-year contract in Nov. 2020 that said there would be no environmental increases. GFL tried slipping it in saying that it was environmental. After the board fought it a bit, GFL said the increase was because the county charged more money to use the dump. Because of this, the increase in costs needed to be passed onto the homeowners.
- Where did the money go? Questions were addressed in the newsletter too. Around 2010-2011 on the advice of Stormwater Management, the community was told on Great Lakes Circle to fill it in with dirt, move the pipe, move rocks and then put grass on top. Another \$20000 (2017) was spent also on Great Lakes Circle for pond dredging because there was no water in that section of the pond. Repairs included dredging, cleaning out the pipe because it was clogged and debris removal. Since 2017 the community hired Total Lake Control (TLC) to do over \$70000 of repairs on the pond hills throughout it. To recap, approximately, \$95,000 has been spent on repairs throughout the community.
- It was announced in the newsletter that there is a President's challenge to the homeowners – anyone that can research and find a new/lower cost/reliable vendor that the community can hire for multi-year contract, to please do so and to please let Mr. Buttimore know.
- Comments from Mr. Rivera
 - A new landscaper was hired last year. Regardless, there have been some homeowner complaints about fire ant mounds especially around Salt Water Loop and Spring Water Loop. He is getting a price from Horry County Ground Management on a maintenance program to come spray and kill the fire ant mounds twice a year. He asked if there are any concerns/complaints to not approach the landscapers but to talk to SemperFi.
 - There was a report about a damaged sign in the community and that's being replaced. He also said that the road/drainage maintenance that's being done at the entrance of Azalea Lakes Blvd/17 Bypass will take approximately one month to complete. He only found out about the project when homeowners started calling the office. The county said that the project was costing approximately \$3.5 million to complete – but that is not being charged to the community.
 - He also said that with the trash service, if the truck breaks the homeowner's trashcan – do not call SemperFi to ask them to call GFL for a replacement. GFL will only talk to the homeowner about that.
 - **If there is an (ACC) ARC request to be made, go to the Cascades website and download an ARC request form. (www.cascadesatazalealakes.com). All ACC requests are to be done on the portal.** He also said, please do not do any type of repair or other without an ARC approval from

the board. Please make sure to include as much detail as possible with verbiage, pictures, colors, drawings, etc. to help move the process along for approval.

- The HOA meetings for the remainder of the year will be on Thursday, June 27th because the normal Wednesday evening is July 4th. Friday, Oct. 4th for the Annual Meeting, and then Wednesday, Nov. 13th

New Business

- Mr. Buttimore reported there are 2-3 jobs on Great Lakes going up Salt Water, with another at the back of Great Lakes and another close to the clubhouse. The total of the projects is about \$8000, but the homeowners have agreed to pay half of the projects that take place on their section of the pond banks.

Open Floor to Homeowners

- There was another discussion about how the dues collections takes place when there is a delinquent account.
- A homeowner pointed out that the power box that runs the fountain in Great Lakes Pond (along Azalea Lakes Blvd) was falling over. Mr. Buttimore said that was scheduled for repair.
- Another homeowner pointed out the power box that's on the entrance fountain needed repair.
- A homeowner questioned who made the annual budget, he also questioned where the reserve money goes to. After attempting to point out that things were being done incorrectly and where the money was being spent. Mr. Buttimore explained that the money was there for emergency or unforeseen use (hurricanes, hill erosion, etc.). They also asked if an audit was being conducted. Mr. Buttimore said the board was looking for an independent auditor that didn't cost a lot of money.
- A homeowner asked how long the coir log hill repair was supposed to last. Mr. Buttimore said about 10 years. The logs get absorbed into and part of the hill. The coir logs are the least expensive way to do the repairs. The best way is to build bulkheads, but those cost \$15,000-\$20,000 per job to do. They suggested talking to Storm Water management again, and either Storm Water says to dig up the mud and repack it into the hill or cut the grade of the hills from 42-44 degree angles to 28 degree angles. The problem with that is it will eat up all the homeowner's backyards. When Bill Clark built the community, it was legal to build it 42-44 degrees. Storm Water finally learned that it should be 28 degrees.
- A homeowner pointed out that there is a beaver making a dam on the pond on by 107 Coldwater Circle by the entrance. Mr. Buttimore said they would call Snake Chaser to help remove/relocate the beaver.
- A homeowner who had not been to some of the previous board meetings commented there were some new faces on the board and property management. Introductions/names were given to all in attendance.

Adjournment: There were no further comments or other business to discuss. Mr. Buttimore adjourned the meeting at 7:03pm.