

Pinewood Country Estates Home Owner's Association
"Working for a Great Community for Great Neighbors"
New Years 2023

Thank You: The Board of Directors would like to extend Best Wishes for a prosperous and healthy 2023 and offer a big "Thank You" to all owners for your efforts to make Pinewood a great place to own and live! We've fought through COVID and escalating prices for everything. We've also welcomed several new neighbors over the past couple years. Welcome home!

Escalation: Speaking of escalating prices, you all received a proposed budget with the notice of the November meeting. We must admit to our surprise there were no complaints about the proposal, which raised annual dues from \$440 to \$550. The residents that attended the meeting in fact were quite supportive, albeit there were only two of them! In the end the Board worked out compromises that set the annual dues at \$520 or \$130 per quarter. Your statements and annual coupons are attached with this correspondence.

The facts are the community upkeep has experienced increased costs for everything, just like your own budgets. The last couple months of 2022 forced us to go into the reserve account to pay bills.

The annual dues were \$400 in 2006 but increased to \$440 in 2014. According to the government web pages, cost of living has increased 25.87% since the last increase (2014) in dues and 47.23% since 2006. Our increase represents 18.18% since 2014 and 30% since 2006.

The Board will review the dues amount more closely and look at increments more often to eliminate the shock of the big increase in the future.

Declarations of Easements, Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions: All owners, by virtue of their deed restrictions, are bound by the documents filed with the State of Florida upon completion of the project in the 1990s. The "Declarations" referenced herein are posted on both the Pinewood and garrison web sites for your review.

Some of the important points that are contained therein include Architectural Reviews for any changes to the exterior of the homes including painting, roofing, landscaping, fencing and more. Application forms for approval are on each web site also.

The Board retains Garrison Property Management as our managers and they are in charge of accounting, billing, policing adherence to the Declarations and maintaining all of our documentation. In terms of policing the company is supposed to do bi-weekly drive throughs but, like many businesses, a short staff and hurricanes have played

havoc with those schedules.

The most common violations are for leaving trash bins exposed (see below), overdue yard maintenance, washing walks and homes and repair of fences.

Trash pick up: This is the most abused item on the violation list. Recall that Monday is our day for recycling and yard waste pick up and Tuesday for trash. According to the Declarations, bins must not be put out until the night before and must be hidden from sight the night after pick up. Also remember that the driver will not get out of the truck to pick up excess materials. Large items or debris is picked up by a separate Polk County truck that must be called to arrange removal. The phone number to call is 863-484-4319.

Safety: The design of PCE, one way in/one way out, helps control unauthorized visitors and reduces our chance of crime. The Board has contracted with the Polk County Sheriff for periodic 4 hour surveillance shifts and we are looking at a front gate video system that will monitor license plates of all vehicles entering and leaving. Still there is always the potential for unauthorized people visiting our site. Please keep your eyes open for any suspicious activity.

No Soliciting: Speaking of unauthorized visitors, the sign at the front clearly states solicitation is not allowed and even defines what that means. In essence, no one should approach any house to distribute or sell anything without prior consent from the homeowner! Whether they are distributing pamphlets, taking surveys or selling solar heating systems, they are not to be knocking on our doors. Since the HOA has no ability to quickly act on this, and it is also illegal in Polk County, the action to take is to inform the visitor that they must leave and call the Sheriff at (863) 298-6200. The Sheriff's Office has been very good and getting here quickly in the past.

Unbearable!: Just after this note was drafted, on Thursday night November 17, 2022, a black bear was picked up on video in Pinewood! It was about 1030pm and he/she wandered Pinewood and Bay Head Streets in search of food. Be aware if you are walking in the dark that Florida has gators, snakes, coyote and bears! Please alert any visitors and guests.

Thanks again to all for your efforts.

Pinewood HOA Board

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