



## Jan – Feb 2024 Newsletter

### Greetings

Hello again to all members of the Estrella Vista HOA. Since our last newsletter went out in November 2023 the Board held its bi-monthly meeting on January 10, 2024 and the following are a few of the topics discussed at that meeting

### Update on Board Directors

The Board sent out an invitation in November 2023 and again in December 2023 for volunteers to fill the remaining vacant Board seat. We had several members express an interest in volunteering. However, the Association received only one application from Molly McClain for the open board seat. The Board had the opportunity to meet Molly at the meeting and discovered that she has lived in our community for over 23 years. Molly is the original homeowner of the house that was one of the first homes built in the development. The Board voted unanimously to bring Molly onboard and we welcome her as a new Board Director. Molly will be serving the remainder of Cynthia Harlow's term which will expire in May 2024.

### Architectural Committee

The Board is still seeking to add interested volunteers from the Association membership to serve on the Committee. As mentioned in the last newsletter, there is no maximum to the number of members who are allowed to serve on the committee, but the total number must always be odd. This odd number includes at least one of the Board of Directors, who will serve as the Architectural Committee Chair. All committee member terms are for one year, unless the member resigns or is removed by the Board, and may be reappointed each year for a new one-year term.

## **Architectural Guideline Update**

The updated Architectural Design Guideline has been approved the Board and includes several new architectural rules and updates to several existing rules. The document is now undergoing review by the Association's legal counsel. When approved by legal, the guideline will be made available to the membership for a 30-day period before implementation.

## **Association Rules and Regulations Update**

There are two new Association Rules being considered by the Board concerning when a homeowner is allowed to place bulk trash out for pickup and the parking of Commercial and Recreational Vehicles on individual lots. These new rules should make it through the legal review process soon.

- **Bulk Trash** – There has been an increase in the number of households placing trash out for bulk pickup way too soon. Some households have placed bulk trash out up to four weeks before the scheduled pickup date. The current recommended date/time for placing bulk trash out for pickup is vague and unenforceable. To standardize the date/time for placing bulk trash out the new rule will establish bulk trash not be placed out any earlier than 6:00 am on the Saturday prior to the scheduled pickup date. The Association inspectors will make this a priority area to look for during their inspections.
- **Commercial and Recreational Vehicle Parking** - There has been some confusion as to the parking of Commercial and Recreational (C/R) Vehicle parking. The Declaration grants the Board the right to approve certain limited types of C/R vehicles for parking within the community. However, the Declaration is very specific and clear that any overnight parking of a C/R vehicle can only be within a garage or Recreational Vehicle Parking Area. There is no leeway for the Board to approve overnight parking of a C/R vehicle in the driveway or any public or private street. The new rule will further address this issue and is being reviewed by the Association's legal advisor. For clarification, the Board has determined the definition of "overnight parking" as being from 12:00 am to 5:00 am each day.

## **Update on Annual Meeting**

The Annual Member's Meeting and Board Elections will be held May 8, 2024. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the Association will begin holding these annual meetings in person. The location is still to be determined. However, we are reaching out to the Avondale School District to determine if we will be allowed to use the Desert Star Elementary School library as we did in the past. Of notable interest for this annual meeting is that all five Board member positions will be open for election. More information on the meeting location and for those who have an interest in submitting an application for Board member will be made available at the March 2024 open meeting.

## **Playground Equipment**

The installation of the new playground equipment for playground 1 (near W. Meade and S. 156<sup>th</sup> Ave) and playground 4 (near the community pool) is underway and is expected to be completed in the next few weeks. You may notice some excavation material that is placed temporarily in the roadway. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. The Board has approved the purchasing of a shade canopy for the playground 1 area but, has postponed determining the details of the canopy (size, color, maximum cost, etc.) until the July 2024 open meeting.

## **Five-Year Water Conservation Plan**

The Five-Year Water Conservation Plan is still under development and is expected to be completed by the March 2024 open meeting. The Board held a discussion with the landscaping contractor at the January open meeting to go over the details, costs, and efforts needed to remove the grass areas and convert them to granite landscaping. As a starting point for the discussion and initial test area the Board chose the retention basin near W. Durango St. and S. 156<sup>th</sup> Dr. for complete removal of the turf area and conversion to granite landscaping. At present, the discussion is only for planning and budgeting purposes. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the association members will be made aware before any work begins on converting any grass areas to granite.

## **Landscape Maintenance**

The Board received several complaints from members concerning areas that the members believed were not being maintained as well as they should, specifically the bushes near or along the roadways and trees that appear overgrown. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the landscaping crews work in a rotation among the five areas that cover the 19 acres of landscaping within the Association. Below are summaries of the discussions the Board held with the management and landscaping companies concerning these issues.

- **Bushes** - Beginning in January and February of each year, as part of the annual maintenance routine, most of the bushes throughout the community will be cut back to near ground level. This may seem extreme, but it is the proper way to maintain this vegetation to ensure its healthy growth for the next season. After the new growing season begins, these bushes are trimmed on a more frequent occasion through late in the year. The trimming is scaled back beginning October/November until the January/February timeframe when they are cut back to near ground level again. If during these times homeowners notice any overgrown bush they believe needs immediate attention (other than routine maintenance) please contact the Association and the landscaping company will be notified.
- **Trees** – The Association is responsible for maintaining 459 trees of different varieties within the 19 acres of landscaping. Working with the landscaping contractors the Board has approved the removal of 11 trees for various reasons such as disease, decay, damage, etc. As part of the five-year plan for water conservation, trees removed for

these reasons will typically not be replaced. In addition, the landscaping contractor has identified 150 trees that are in need of more a thorough or detailed level of pruning, trimming, or thinning. It is the Board's intent to have all these trees trimmed or pruned more thoroughly as recommended. Unfortunately, the additional costs for this amount of work will prevent every tree identified from being scheduled this year. The Board is working with the landscaping contractors to identify the 30 or 40 trees, or area, most in need of this extra care that we can schedule this year. Several trees that are encroaching upon member's properties have been identified and hopefully we will begin the trimming or removal of those trees within the next few weeks. The Board and landscaping contractors will further develop additional plans to prioritize and schedule all remaining trees within the Association for this more detailed trimming over the next five-years. With that said, if any homeowner who has not previously notified the Association of any overgrown tree or broken tree branch they believe needs immediate attention (other than routine maintenance) please contact the Association and the landscaping company will be notified.

### **Painting of Homes and Sidewalls**

Over the past several years the Association sent out broad email messages to members addressing the need for some homeowners to repaint their homes or to clean or paint the sidewalks that face public roadways. Because these emails were non-specific and vague there was some confusion as to who they were addressing and an uncertainty as to what standards were being used to determine when a house needed painting or a wall cleaned/painted. At the January 2024 open meeting the Board concluded that before a notice is issued for house painting or wall cleaning/painting, there needs to be an objective, standard established for the inspectors to use. Hopefully, by the March 2024 open meeting the Board will have a draft of that standard available to share with the members.

### **On-Street Vehicle Enforcement**

This is probably the most contentious and problematic Restriction the Association has to enforce. Nearly fifteen years ago this Association (as well as other Association's nearby) adopted the current policy whereby a violation for on-street parking is sent to the homeowner of the house nearest to where the vehicle is parked with a request the homeowner provide their (or their renter's) vehicle information to verify accountability. For multiple reasons, on multiple levels, this policy has been both ineffective and inefficient in preventing homeowners or their renters from repeatedly violating the Declaration's Restriction for on-street parking. For these reasons, the Board will be changing and updating this policy over the next several months. This will be a topic of discussion at the March 2024 Open Board Meeting and we hope to have the new policy in place by the May 2024 Annual Meeting. However, please be aware that until the Board has a new policy in place the existing policy will still be in effect.

### **Agenda included in mailing and meeting notification**

As a recommendation from one of the members in attendance at the January 2024 open meeting, the next open meeting's agenda will be included in each open meeting email notification.

### **Short-term Rentals**

The Association was made aware of several homes in the neighborhood being used as short term rentals. Unfortunately for these homeowners, section 8.2 of the Declaration clearly prohibits the use of any home within the Association for a short term rental, bed or breakfast, or any other related business. The HOA is asking those homeowners who are using their homes for such businesses to cease their operations. After March 1, 2024, the HOA will start issuing violations to those homeowners who are still using their home as a bed and breakfast or short term rental.

### **Basketball Goals**

The HOA has received a number of complaints concerning basketball goals left out overnight in the Public Yards (front yards) and on the streets. As per our Architectural Design Guidelines, these portable basketball structures are allowed in the front yards only when in use and must be stored in the Private Yards (backyards) when not in use. During several recent assessments of the community there were from eight to twelve of these basketball structures left out in the front yards, on the street, or in the landscaping area in the middle of cul-de-sacs at any given time. Over the next several months the HOA will specifically monitor the neighborhood for these structures that are left out and issue violations to the homeowner. For clarification, if the basketball structure is in the front yard or street and is not actively being used at the time of inspection, it will be considered in violation of the Architectural Design Guidelines.

### **Animal Waste in Common Areas**

Several years ago the Association installed animal waste courtesy stations near all playgrounds and some common areas. Over the last several months there has been an increase in animal waste noticed in other common areas and along walkaways throughout the community where the stations are not installed. As a result, the Board has approved the installation of more courtesy stations in the areas most needed. All pet owners should be aware that they are responsible for picking up their pet's waste regardless of where it is deposited. Everyone's cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Thank you all once again. We look forward to seeing and hearing from you.

Victor Pattarozzi  
EVHOA President