

The Meadow Lark



A Monthly Publication by and for the Residents of The Meadows, a Family Condominium Community

Proxies Needed!

Annual Meeting Set for December 10

The Meadows Council of Co-Owners Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 10 at 7:30 PM in the cafeteria of Cub Run Elementary School here in Centreville. The school is located at 5301 Sully Station Drive, it is just a block north of Braddock Road.

As a community function there will be a discussion regarding the topic of overcrowding in the community as part of the meeting. A representative from Fairfax County Zoning Enforcement as well as our attorney will be present to answer questions on this important topic.

Proxies and ballots for the Annual Meeting were mailed in November. If you did not receive them or have misplaced the materials, please contact The Meadows office during regular business hours, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday. You can stop by or call 703-830-4464, as well as email meadowsoffice@verizon.net.

If you have not already done so, please return your proxy and ballot. The latest that they can be accepted is Monday, December 9 at 4:30 PM, the day before the Annual Meeting. Please plan now to attend this important meeting.

2014 Budget Passed

In their meeting on October 17, The Meadows Board of Directors adopted the 2014 budget as published on-line at www.mymeadows.net and is found within this issue of The Meadow Lark. While home values and investments are continuing to show improvement, we know that financial recovery is not yet on the horizon. People are still working hard and struggling to put gas in the tank and food on the table, so it is understood that even the smallest increase in the condominium fee matters, which is why the Board worked so hard on the budget once again this year.

That being said, we must be sure that our community is financially sound and able to meet its obligations and responsibilities to its Co-Owners. The adopted 2014 budget fulfills these obligations and was adopted to minimize the financial impact on our Co-Owners by keeping the

monthly assessment change at only a 4% increase. **Beginning January 1, 2014 the monthly assessment for a two bedroom condominium will be \$266 and for a three bedroom will be \$300.**

It should be noted that once again this year a big part of your budget is for water and sewer. The other major factor in the needed increase is the roofing project. It has been identified by our engineers that the roofs within the entire community are in need of replacement. In order to do this in the most cost effective manner, it was decided to award one contract for the re-roofing of the entire Meadows. This was done recently, and as a result in order to make payment for this project a loan was secured from a local financial institution. The roofing project began on November 11 and will continue for the next nine months or so.



DECEMBER

Board of Directors Meeting: Because of the holiday season, the Board of Directors will not meet in December. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 16, 2014, 7:30 PM in the Clubhouse. Residents and Co-Owners are encouraged to attend. Agendas are posted online and at the Clubhouse on the Tuesday before the meeting. Minutes available upon request at The Meadows office and online at mymeadows.net.

Annual Meeting: Tuesday, December 10, 7:30 PM at Cub Run Elementary School.

Holiday Decorating Contest: Friday, December 22. Turn your lights on by 7 PM.

Office Closed: December 24, 25, at noon on December 31 & closed January 1.

Christmas Tree Pickup: Dec. 26–31.

Residents and Co-Owners are welcomed and encouraged to attend any committee meeting. Meetings are held in the Clubhouse.

You will receive new coupon books in the mail by mid-December. If you do not have them by December 15, please contact SFMC at 703-392-6006. Please note that your payment will be due on the 1st of the month even if you have not received your coupon book.

We hope you will recognize the hard work that went into making sure that the 2014 budget is appropriately funded, conservative and protective of your hard earned money.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

2014 Budget

President's Corner

The holidays are fast approaching! I just can't believe it. Where has the year gone? As we enter the holiday season, with all of the frenzy most of us experience, please take time to remind yourselves of several safety tips. To help ensure a happy and safe holiday season, when decorating with lights make sure to only use Underwriters Laboratory (UL) approved lights and electric cords and thoroughly inspect them prior to use for broken or frayed wires and loose connections. Always unplug lights before leaving the house or going to bed. In addition, if you have a gas furnace, check your Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarm to ensure it is functioning properly...or if you don't have a CO alarm, consider getting one.

During the holidays we are often reminded of the diversity that our world is made up of. People celebrate the holidays according to their separate heritage, traditions, and beliefs. Our community is sort of like a microcosm of the world. We are made up of people of varying differences, but we are all connected by the fact that we share a community together. And, although we have our differences in opinions, perceptions and desires, we can benefit through cooperation, compliance and respect for our neighbors. During this holiday season as we celebrate in our own tradition, let's try to hold on to that spirit of unity, harmony and peace that all traditions embrace and apply it to all of our community neighbors....all year long.

Cheers!

~ Linda Lachapelle

Keep the Lights On!

In order to promote safety in our neighborhood, everyone is reminded to leave your porch lights on, both front and rear. Generally, criminals like to operate in the dark, so the more light that is present, the less likely they will be to strike in that area.

Although we are blessed to have street lights, they cannot provide full light everywhere. If all units keep their porch lights on, the level of light in the community will be much more of a crime deterrent.

Board of Directors Motions

At the November 21 Meeting:

- Passed a motion to deny a request to place an air conditioning condenser on a balcony.
- Passed a motion to reaffirm previous email votes to approve a roof repair, loan financing document, gutter cleaning, two waterproofing jobs and a letter to be sent to a staff member.
- Passed a motion to hold the election of officers immediately after the Annual Meeting.
- Passed a motion to conduct a holiday decorating contest with an allowed expense of \$100.
- Passed a motion to use Service First's software accounting system at a cost of \$150 per month.
- Passed a motion to deny a request to pay for repairs to a utility room door.
- Passed a motion to waive two violation fees except for a \$50 administrative fee and waive a dog fee with a letter to be sent that any future violations will each result in a \$50 charge.
- Passed a motion to send a letter approved by our attorney concerning accommodations requested by a Co-Owner.
- Passed a motion to approve performance evaluations for our staff members.
- Passed a motion to approve bonuses for staff members.
- Passed a motion to follow our attorney's recommendation concerning issues with a Co-Owner.

COMPLETE MINUTES OF BOARD MEETINGS
AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE

Security Totals

October 15 – November 14, 2013

Vehicles Ticketed: 53

Vehicles Towed: 10

Calls for service and/or situations involving or requiring security assistance, by street:

Avocado Court: 1

Cool Oak Lane: 3

Golden Oak Court/Road: 5

Rustling Leaves Lane: 4

Saguaro Place: 3

Saint Germain Drive: 4

Strasburg Drive: 7

Turin Lane: 1

Calls referred to FCPD/FCFD: 3

The Meadows



Fire Regulations

- Kerosene, or any fuel heaters, are forbidden by Meadows regulations.
- Residents should not store combustibles in furnace rooms. It is a serious fire hazard and is against County and Meadows regulations.
- Smoke detectors are required on *each level* of homes in The Meadows.
- Residents should maintain a fire extinguisher in their units. It should be rated at least 2A:10BC.



Carbon Monoxide Detectors

The furnaces and most hot water heaters in The Meadows use gas. It is imperative that all homes have a working carbon monoxide detector. Carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas which can cause death.

Utilities Must Remain On!

ALL Co-Owners are required to keep the utilities on in their units. The heat must be set at or above 65°F in all units, vacant or occupied. This temperature may seem a little high, but one must consider that the furnace room where the pipes originate is unheated and may be affected by the wind chill factor. Another thing to consider is if the water is turned off, it remains in the pipes and is subject to even quicker freezing. Every year, major damage to several units has occurred as the result of pipes freezing and breaking in this manner.

Any damage resulting from broken pipes, etc., caused by improper heat being maintained in a unit will be the responsibility of the Co-Owner. A minimum of 65 degrees Fahrenheit must be maintained during the winter months.

– Rules and Regulations.

In addition, to this regulation, The Meadows Rules also includes a Utility Maintenance Requirement for all units. It states:

In the event that a Co-Owner does not keep electric and/or gas utilities connected as required, the Council of Co-Owners shall take any and all measures reasonably necessary to protect the common elements of the condominium which shall include but are not limited to the appropriation of funds to reconnect and maintain electric and gas utilities. All costs and changes incurred by the Council shall be assessed against the unit owner.

You can help by reporting vacant units to the office as soon as you notice them. Send reports to the office via email, fax or phone. Make sure that you include the address. Report any evidence of possible broken pipes or water coming from a unit immediately! See the back of this issue for office and emergency after hour phone numbers.

The Meadows of Newgate, Council of Co-Owners

POLICY RESOLUTION NO. 13-53

(Authorization for Execution of Loan Documents)

WHEREAS, Article III of the Bylaws the Board of Directors shall have the authority and responsibility as is necessary for the administration of the affairs of the Council; and

WHEREAS, on August 29, 2013, the Board of Directors approved an effort to apply for a loan with Access National Bank (“Lender”) in the amount of \$2.2M for the replacement of roofs, gutters and downspouts, in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in a loan commitment letter of September 20, 2013; and

WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 9 of the Bylaws states that all agreements, contracts, deeds, leases, checks and other instruments of the Council shall be executed by such person or persons as may be designated by the Board of Directors by written resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors hereby resolves to duly authorize the President of the Board, Linda Lachapelle, to execute all documents related to this loan, including, but not limited to, a promissory note, commercial pledge agreement, and any other such other documents, instruments or agreements that the Lender may require that relate to the terms and conditions of the loan commitment letter of September 20, 2013. If Ms. Lachapelle is not available to perform as authorized, the Vice President of the Board may act.

This Resolution may be executed in several counterparts, each of which will be deemed to be an original and all of which together shall be deemed to be one in the same Resolution. Signatures transmitted by facsimile or email shall be deemed original signatures.

Ice & Snow and Our Trash Service

In the interest of safety, drivers will make a judgement call as to whether they can make it up and down our streets in inclement weather. If your vehicle skids five feet in the snow, a large trash truck will slide at least thirty feet. The rule of thumb on snow/ice days should be to put your trash out. If the trucks can't get there that day, they will not return for it until the next scheduled pickup day. (If your trash is not picked up, remove it until the next scheduled pickup.)



Christmas Tree Pick-Up



According to Fairfax County regulations, Christmas trees must be recycled—they cannot be put out with your trash. For your convenience, a drop off area will be located next to the Clubhouse on Strasburg Drive, December 26–31.

All decorations, including tinsel and garlands, must be removed. If you use a carry plastic bag, this must also be removed.

Meadows Website: www.mymeadows.net

APPROVED OPERATING BUDGET (January 1, 2014 - December 31, 2014)

2BR Fee = \$266 / 3BR Fee = \$300

	Adopted 2013	Projected 2013	Approved 2014
INCOME			
Assessment Income	\$2,039,128	\$2,035,584	\$2,119,395
Late Fee Income	11,000	7,148	7,000
Interest Income	7,074	6,498	6,807
Owner Interest Income	3,000	4,844	3,500
Owner Admin. Fees Income	500	280	350
Miscellaneous Owner Income	2,500	929	1,200
ARC Violation Income	1,500	8,700	2,500
Miscellaneous Income	2,200	1,853	2,800
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,066,902	\$2,065,836	\$2,143,551
EXPENSES			
UTILITIES			
Electricity	\$37,000	\$33,248	\$35,000
Telephone	5,500	4,872	5,000
Gas - Clubhouse	1,900	1,900	1,900
Water & Sewer	408,550	398,997	408,550
Total Utilities	\$452,950	\$439,017	\$450,450
GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE			
Education & Training	\$800	\$124	\$800
Newsletter	3,500	3,516	3,500
Office Equipment & Repairs	500	405	500
Office Supplies	2,350	4,213	2,350
Lease Exp.- Office Equipment	3,500	3,298	3,300
Uncollectible Charges	50,000	35,000	35,000
Legal - General	35,000	19,149	20,000
Legal - Collections	35,000	43,662	40,000
Legal Fee Reimbursements	(5,000)	(15,403)	(9,000)
Legal Fees Other	35,000	15,791	10,000
Uniforms	500	306	500
Insurance Loss/Deductible	5,000	(1,024)	5,000
Social & Rec	2,500	2,288	2,300
Postage & Mail	2,000	3,637	3,500
Printing & Reproduction	450	1,069	800
Realized Loss on Sale	0	0	295,971
Website	400	450	1,000
Miscellaneous Expense	2,500	1,859	2,000
Total General & Administrative	\$174,000	\$118,339	\$417,521
MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS			
General Maintenance & Repairs	\$7,000	\$18,841	\$7,000
Plumbing Repairs	9,800	9,000	9,800
Painting - Supplies	250	43	250
Exterminator Services	10,000	7,530	7,500
General Supplies	6,000	5,489	6,000
Welding	1,000	1,000	1,000
Antenna Repairs	1,500	1,176	1,000
Roofing Repairs	2,000	1,000	2,000
Gutter Repairs & Cleaning	10,000	10,000	10,000

	Adopted 2013	Projected 2013	Approved 2014
Vehicle Expense	500	1,188	1,000
Pool Repairs, Supplies, Maint	350	1,066	1,000
Playground Repairs	250	650	500
Landscaping Improvements	3,000	3,000	5,000
Tree Planting	10,000	10,000	5,000
Tree Maintenance	25,000	23,010	25,000
Total Maintenance & Repairs	\$86,650	\$92,993	\$82,050
CONTRACT SERVICES			
Pool Contract	\$59,725	\$56,125	\$56,700
Management Contract	84,222	84,222	87,591
Auditor	5,900	6,000	6,000
Architect & Engineering Services	0	1,176	0
Insurance Master Policy	157,525	156,140	162,336
Painting - Exterior	96,000	96,000	80,000
Grounds Maintenance Contract	63,504	63,504	87,025
Security Contract	156,832	155,882	166,832
Snow Removal	15,000	7,570	18,000
Trash Removal	77,868	72,590	79,368
Pet Waste	5,500	4,800	5,500
Total Contract Services	\$722,076	\$704,009	\$749,352
PAYROLL			
FICA Payroll Taxes	\$17,674	\$17,554	\$18,045
Unemployment Taxes	456	451	510
Group Health Insurance	22,524	18,108	23,200
Life Insurance	3,412	5,835	2,875
Pension Contribution	9,352	8,778	9,436
Staff payroll	233,787	232,132	233,787
Temporary Labor	0	0	0
Swim Team Coaches	3,000	0	1,500
Total Payroll	\$290,205	\$282,858	\$289,353
TAXES & LICENSES			
Income Taxes	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Personal Property Tax	125	125	125
Licenses, Fees & Permits	1,700	1,700	1,700
Total Taxes & Licenses	\$4,825	\$4,825	\$4,825
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$1,730,706	\$1,642,041	\$1,993,551
RESERVE EXPENDITURES			
Expected Reserve Expenditures	\$200,000	\$223,632	\$300,000
Total Reserve Expenditures	\$200,000	\$223,632	\$300,000
RESERVES CONTRIBUTIONS			
Replacement Reserve	\$331,191	\$331,191	\$150,000
Reserve Interest	\$5,005	\$5,005	\$0
Transfer from Reserves	(200,000)	(223,632)	(300,000)
Sub-total	\$136,196	\$112,564	(\$150,000)
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,066,902	\$1,978,237	\$2,143,551
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$0	\$87,599	\$0

Council of Co-Owners
The Meadows
6100 Strasburg Drive
Centreville, VA 20121

The Meadow Lark is published each month exclusively for the benefit of the residents and owners of The Meadows. It is the official publication of the Council of Co-Owners and is under the purview of the Board of Directors. News items, personal ads, and such are welcomed and should be placed in the large mailbox in front of the Clubhouse, emailed to meadowsoffice@verizon.net or faxed to 703-815-0755. The deadline is the 20th of each month. Personal ads must be 25 words or less, on 8½x11-inch paper. Include your name, Meadows address, and telephone number. They must be renewed each month. The Meadows does not endorse any advertisers.

EDITORS: Bill Liedtke and Joan Orvis

Meadows Office
Monday–Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Phone: 703-830-4464
Fax: 703-815-0755
E-Mail: meadowsoffice@verizon.net
Website: mymeadows.net

**24-Hour EMERGENCY ONLY
Service First: 1-888-980-8958**

Security
703-628-9481

Towing
Battlefield Towing: 703-378-0059

AAA/Republic Services
703-818-8222
Call for special pick up, Thursdays only

Remodeling?

Any desired changes to the exterior or interior of your unit must be submitted on an ARF or Request for Interior Alteration form to the Board of Directors for approval **PRIOR** to the change being done.

A/C UNITS

If you replace your air conditioning unit, you may install it inside your utility room or submit an ARF for proposed exterior installation.

Satellite Dishes in The Meadows



Holiday Decorating Contest

On Sunday, December 22 judges for the Holiday Decorating Contest will be making their rounds of the community between 7:00 PM and 8:00 PM.

They will be looking for the best decorated homes in The Meadows, so be sure you have all your decorations out and the lights on.

Gift certificates will be awarded to those units which display the best decorations and holiday spirit.

Thanks in advance to everyone who will be decorating to help make the community festive during this holiday season.

What To Do If You Experience a Leak

If you experience a leak in your unit you must contact your own plumber to respond.

If your leak appears to be from a neighboring unit you should attempt to reach your neighbor and have them shut off the water to their unit to minimize damage. Most shut off valves are located in the utility closet behind the hot water heater; however, if there have been any plumbing changes in the unit by a current or previous Co-Owner, the valve may have been moved. If the neighbor is not reachable or unable to shut off the water, contact the Fire Department and they will report and turn the water off. In these cases, you may contact the Management Office on the next business day; however, since this is a neighbor-to-neighbor issue, The Meadows involvement is limited. You are encouraged to contact your neighbor directly or if that is not possible, file a claim through your homeowner's insurance company.

The only exception to the procedures outlined above is if you are in an upper unit and inspection of your attic indicates the leak is coming from the roof. If this is the case, please contact the office to schedule an appointment for a maintenance technician to inspect the leak. In the meantime, simply place a bucket or pan under the leak to keep the water from penetrating into your living space. While this is not an after-hours emergency call, we do ask that you let us know as soon as possible so that we may see the attic while it is still wet. This helps us determine where the problem is.