

On June 19th, Audubon Trace Owners discussed the budget, which was sent out a month prior, with Board Members and Management at the Golden Age Center. No decisions were made, no motions were passed. It was an information and discussion session. These are some notes from the meeting that may be of a general interest.

Specific budget items

- The audit costs were reduced due to changing the type of audit. It is less costly, meets the needs, and may be available more quickly. Presently, audits take about a year to do after the year being audited ends.
- Gas line item covers more than just the AT truck, It covers gas powered tools and more. Will look into providing a clearer category, as the expenses are not tracked separately.
- A Miscellaneous item was explained to associated with costs of bringing the bookkeeping on site. Will look into a clearer category
- The pest control line item is for exterior treatment. This changes happened several years ago, and owners were reminded of this.
- The professional dues expense was explained and examples were given of how the information from the groups Management belongs do has translated into cost savings.
- The answering service fee was discussed, and alternatives were actively discussed. The action was taken to revisit this item prior to Board Approval of the Budget.
- The Lumber and Construction costs were explained to contain other maintenance items like mortar than the like. Some of the categories are standard labels and are not intended to be an itemization.
- The Employee Bonus item was clarified to be a regular way of handling pay and goes to all employees.
- Pool furniture was not upgraded last season despite a line item in the Reserve Budget for that. The money is still available. Looking for the quality pool furniture need and dealing with any cost difference is a matter for the coming year. The Reserve Budget will be re-visited once that is completed.

General Comments

- This meeting was inspired by some comments in the Meet the Candidates meeting about the budget and a lack of a budget committee, which was affirmed by audience members to have not worked well in the past. Discussing these at the properly noticed and planned Open Meeting would not have given time to react to suggestions, perhaps, and there was no need to rush discussion.

- The idea of having a Gazebo Meeting to help address unit-specific concerns or owner-specific concerns prior to these community meetings was praised.
- It was pointed out that Condo Fees have been flat for a number of years. This is in part due to good fortune with respect to insurance costs and packaging of insurance policies along with smart long-term management of ongoing expenses, such as investing in LED lighting to reduce recurring electricity costs. Other items have been explored to help control cost growth or to be more effective with the spending, but at some point fees will increase.
- Concern was raised over the roof spending from reserves, bringing the reserve amount down, while being told that strong reserves, or a high reserve amount, being a strength of Audubon Trace. It was explained that the necessity to remove the liability of needing to replace the roof is as valuable as the reserve amount to do it, if not more, as such large expenses looming are one reason the reserves are needed. Once those looming expenses are removed, the reserves may appear even stronger if the project is managed well. Moreover, as the roof replacement will take place over time while the reserves continue to be funded, the balance will not drop by the full project amount in any given year. Additionally, as several reserves were designated by the insurance company to be covered at actual value, not replacement cost, this expenditure is reducing the liability by a greater degree than normal.
- The roof replacement has been negotiated in a way to lock in materials and costs. Not only does this control costs and get our work done sooner than later, the roofing materials are set aside and warehoused. Thus, in the event of a storm, we will be unaffected by supply shortages and associated costs increases.
- These new roofs are high quality and are rated at 25 years rather than 15 years like the prior roof job. While conditions may necessitate replacement prior to 25 years exactly, this is another step in controlling long term cost growth.

Virtual Board Meeting Policy

State Law provides for Board Meetings to occur other than in person LS RS 12::224-(10). The Audubon Trace Board of Directors sets the following policy for such meetings.

- 1) Virtual Meetings are intended for resolving procedural matters where debate is deemed unnecessary.
- 2) Virtual Meetings are intended for use during times of hardship when an in-person meeting is impractical or unnecessary.
- 3) Virtual Meetings must meet all other standards for Traditional Board Meetings, such as a quorum, along with the conditions of LA RS 12:224.

LA RS 12:224-(10)

The board of directors, or any committee of the board, may hold a meeting by means of conference telephone, facsimile, or similar communications equipment provided that all persons participating in the meeting can communicate with each other. Participation in a meeting pursuant to this Paragraph shall constitute presence in person at such meeting, except where a person participates in the meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business on the ground that the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. The provisions of this Paragraph shall not apply to any public body or any other entity provided for in R.S. 42:13.

ATCA Owners,

Several Owners met with Board Members on June 19th at the South Pool. Some of the discussions deserve general circulation or required follow up. The rest were completely addressed or the Owners were satisfied at the time with the response or advice they received on how to proceed. Additionally, we are following up on items from the prior meetings.

We will continue to have these regularly, as we feel they have a positive effect for everyone. As a reminder, issues and suggestions need not wait for these meetings. The Property Manager is available in person, on the phone, and via email.

Thank you.

- Following Up regarding the whirlpool tub at the North Pool: The Handbook has been updated to reflect that we have a "whirlpool tub" and not a "hot tub" at Audubon Trace. The signs in the area will be updated to reflect this when the signs are up for replacement.

- Following Up on New Owner Welcome: It was decided to draft a small info sheet to give to new owners to give the few most important rules, policies, and bits of information along with the website info and Property Manager Information.

- 0 Work Orders were generated and 0 Information Sheets were filled out. Later in June, a drive to collect owner information was instituted, and there were 0 responses.

- The idea of replacing the website with a more modern one was brought up. The Board had been discussing it, and recent changes with hosting have raised the priority. This will be taken up by the next Board.

- Hank and Sue Marchal brought up many concerns regarding plants around the Trace, especially in light of new planting occurring in the coming years around the perimeter of the Trace. It was recommended to them to supply the Property Manager with companies they feel would be best suited for Audubon Trace needs. After various quotes are collected, it was recommended for them to followup with Management to see if their recommendations are cost-effective. If not, further discussions should ensue. Recommendations from Owners are welcome, but quotes have to go through Management for various reasons since this is in fact a private commercial entity, if a non-profit. There higher costs for these jobs for many reasons and various restrictions in place that are always clear to those used to the residential marketplace.