

# Villas De Las Flores Homeowners Association

## January 2023 Board Update



It is the end of January already! Palm Springs and the rest of the Coachella Valley has really come alive to resemble our more typical winter resort community atmosphere for the first time since 2019. This despite cooler than normal temperatures this time of year. In addition, we actually had almost .75" of rain this month. Not enough to eliminate the drought conditions but at least it helps a little bit. In addition, it makes Mt San Jacinto look great!

Your Board met on January 28<sup>th</sup> and here are the highlights.

### **Financial Report**

We continue to increase our cash on hand and CD/money market reserves back up to early 2022 levels, with a total now approaching \$900,000. While this seems like a big amount, keep in mind our annual operating budget is approximately \$1,000,000 and we have several capital improvement projects planned for the next several years to keep our almost 50 year old property in good condition.

Our Treasurer, wearing her ever-stylish green eyeshade, summarized the HOA's operating budget versus actual expenses for 2022. Even with some unexpected expenses and significant increases in utility costs, there was a carryover of about \$44,000 for the first time in 4 years. This was done by eliminating or reducing some budgeted items or savings derived by lower expenses in other categories.

## **Architectural Committee**

The Committee has reviewed applications for:

- New exterior tile for a homeowner's patio
- A previously installed awning

Both applications are pending approval until further information is provided

### **Architectural Applications**

If you are contemplating any changes to the exterior of your unit, be sure to submit an architectural application for approval. This includes but is not limited to:

- new doors and windows
- awnings
- HVAC unit replacement with new condenser and power lines
- light fixtures
- screen doors
- "ring" door bells,
- exterior improvements to your patio,
- satellite dishes

The Committee also provided an update on new parking lot signage. The design of the signs is still being finalized. Once a design is approved and installed, it is anticipated that they will also be lit so that they can be seen at night. We expect that the work will be completed by mid-year.

## **Rules/Maintenance Committees**

The Rules Committee recently completed a site walk with a representative from Personalized Property Management. There were a few items that will require individual homeowner's attention and they will be notified accordingly.

Annual balcony inspections and repairs are underway and should be completed in February. The HOA will also be receiving report on the condition of all balconies as required by recent State law.

## **HVAC and Dryer Vent Maintenance**

For many of our homeowners it has probably been awhile since your unit HVAC has been serviced. To keep your system running efficiently filters should be replaced regularly. Make sure to have your condensate line blown out annually. Check to see that your thermostat is working properly.

Internal dryer vents should also be cleaned annually to prevent clogging or reduced efficiency of your dryer. This is a homeowner responsibility. This may require some effort since most vents are located behind the dryer. External vents for single story units are located on the roof but only the grating will be cleaned during roof inspections. External vents for 2 story units are located in the overhang above the patio door. Cleaning them is homeowner responsibility. If your grate can't be removed without damaging the stucco, let Management know and after you remove it and the HOA will repair the damage.

## **Landscape Committee**

The Committee announced that the Pool 3 and adjacent street areas landscape renovation work will begin on January 30 and should be completed by the spring. Recent cleanup of the front entry and new plantings in the entry was completed and the Board approved a proposal to replace aging landscape lighting in this area.

As has been mentioned in previous newsletters and Board meetings, owners are encouraged to replace plants on back patios to desert friendly varieties. As landscaping outside of your patio uses less water, the irrigation in your patio will also decrease as it is on a shared timer.

## **Neighborhood Watch Committee**

### **Vehicle Tags**

Our Neighborhood Watch Committee has now received our vehicle tags! To help identify resident and guest vehicles, each homeowner shall be provided with vehicle tags that can be hung off the rear view mirror. The tags will be sent out with the Annual Meeting information, so look for that material in your mailbox in late February or early March.

### **Front Entry Gate**

The Committee is also working on ideas for a front gate for the entry drive. This effort is in the early stages of information gathering. It is being contemplated as part of an overall goal of adding increased safety and security for our property. There is another advantage to consider; according to available research and information from local realtors, a front entry gate also increases property values. Look for an informational survey in the annual meeting packet.

Entry Gates, should the Board feel that is appropriate and economically viable, will require approval of a majority of the homeowners since it is considered a “new” structure or element. Entry gates have to meet City ordinances, be properly designed and have reliable operational systems. Regular maintenance costs must also be included in the HOA annual operating budget.

## **Solar/EV Charging Station Committee**

The Board had a report from our newest committee. They have begun to look at various opportunities to use solar voltaic arrays to power our common area lighting needs. They are also reviewing potential options to install electric vehicle charging stations on site. The Committee provided an update regarding fixing the existing solar pool heating systems to reduce our dependency on expensive gas heating in the winter. Their conclusion at this time is that the system does not generate enough additional heat to offset the repair costs. The Board looks forward to the Committee’s additional recommendations as they are developed. Thank you for all your hard work!

The Committee also brought forth a potential communication tool, Slack, for the HOA. According to the company’s website, “Slack is a messaging app, primarily used by businesses, that connects people to the information they need.” It would allow our Board, Management Company and HOA members to share information in a non-public setting. Our website is viewable by the public, currently.

Since one version is available at no cost, we will experiment with seeing if this app will be useful. Stay tuned!

## **Board Nominations**

The deadline for submitting a nomination application for a Board position has passed. We have five candidates that have applied for the four seats that are up for election. If all are elected, this will be the first time that the Board will have all seven positions filled. Homeowners will receive information on the nominees in the annual meeting package.

## **Miscellaneous**

We recently learned that in addition to food and yard waste, soiled paper products such as pizza boxes should be put in the green bins. A complete list of what goes where is available on the PSDS website.

As the irrigation usage decreases, domestic water usage continues to increase. Recently, the excessive usage has all been in buildings with rental units. Please make sure there are no leaky faucets, showers or running toilets in your units. All owners should not have to pay for the units with excessive usage. If usage continues at the current rate, the Board will explore options

such as converting to individual meters (may require a special assessment) or charging a surcharge to buildings with excessive usage.

Finally, with many full and part time renters now back at Villas, it is important that homeowners make sure that their tenants are fully aware of the HOA rules and regulations. Make sure they have access to a copy or direct them to our website where a copy is posted. Thank you for your cooperation!

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Board,

Scott Gaudineer