

August Newsletter

Board News

It should not be surprising to anyone, since there were two candidates for two positions, that Larry Tingwall and Karen Garst (aka Cynthia) were elected to three-year terms for the Board of the Abiqua Heights Homeowners Association. Their terms run through July of 2023. The Board would like to thank all those that voted, attended, or signed proxies as a quorum was reached rather comfortably in a particularly difficult time.

The Board is starting to work on a budget for 2021 and increasing the number of landscape visits (extra mowings) has been discussed at some length. The success of the dumpster effort was also deemed worthy of inclusion in the 2021 budget. Work on the 2021 budget will continue in September and a finalized draft budget will be sent to the members after the October AHHA Board meeting. Final approval will come at the November AHHA Board meeting. If you have questions, concerns, and/or suggestions for the 2021 budget please forward them to the AHHA Board.

Financial Reports for July as well as the draft Minutes for the July 25, 2020 AHHA meeting can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Community Work Day

The 2020 Community Work Day will be Saturday, August 22. For those of you new to the community or those with plans in the past the Community Work Day mostly consists of spreading barkdust to the beds and tree rings of the Commons and the refurbishment of cedar chips to the play area. The work begins at 9:00 AM and is usually finished by 11:00 AM. Wheelbarrows, garden carts, and rakes are useful to the effort. Last year we were lacking in wheelbarrows and/or garden carts so if you cannot make it to work please let the Board know if you have a cart or wheelbarrow available for use. It will definitely be returned to you. All ages and physical ability are OK as there is a lot of raking involved. This year adds specific challenges but there will definitely be social distancing. Drinks and snacks will be available, all prepackaged. Please email the Board with questions or willingness to work, after all it is your neighborhood.

Queries, Concerns, and/or Complaints

In the time between newsletters the Board receives (and responds) to a number of emails, phone calls, and personal interaction with members of the community. Some of those communications will be addressed here.

The Board was notified that a resident had stumbled and had nearly fallen where sections of the sidewalk were uneven. This is not a matter that falls to the AHHA but as a courtesy to all the members the Board will walk the community and notify homes where the sidewalk is uneven via a door-hanger. It is your option to act on the sidewalks in front of your home and in the past the City has partnered with the homeowner on sidewalk replacement.

Signs have become more prevalent in the last few months and the AHHA has a very clear sign policy, it is posted on the AHHA website. Some members have contacted the Board about perceived violations. Outside of the time near elections most signs can only be displayed on a temporary basis. For those of you who are fervent to display your message, here are a couple of suggestions that can, hopefully, work for everyone. You can display a sign inside any window (every, if you feel the need) of your home. If you deem the need for outside placement you can make a request to the Board for approval. It would aid your request if you were specific in your request for a limited period of time.

The condition of the pond surfaces almost every summer as hot summer days and lack of precipitation change the look and condition of the pond. Without going into a long history of the pond and the issues that impact its appearance, here are a few factors that many of the members are not aware of that impact the pond.

- The pond does not belong to the AHHA, it belongs to the City of Silverton.
- Virtually all of the water that enters the pond is from street runoff, so all the small particles (rubber from tires, gravel from winterizing the streets, fertilizer, roof de-mossing, leaves, etc.) along streets and curbs end up in the pond. In addition, leaves in the fall and grass clippings whenever the Commons is mowed are deposited in the pond.
- The huge amount of organic material deposited in the pond must be filtered and used, nature offers no other option. The cattails and pond leaf are nature's most beneficial uses and filters for the organic material. If too much organic material is present the result would be a significant amount of algae. It is a balancing act and the Board works with a pond specialist to do the best for everyone and that is why a meter for the application of beneficial bacteria was installed a couple of years ago. It is an imperfect situation with an imperfect conclusion.

It was suggested by a member at the Annual Meeting that prior to any dumpster event next year that the community embrace a "free day" where residents could place along the sidewalk in front of their home anything that they were willing to give away. The suggestion was made because a significant number of items placed in the dumpster were removed by passersby, as they were deemed useful.

Bits and Pieces

Please be aware that when the Board walks the neighborhood for sidewalk issues, they will also be leaving door-hangers for minor issues that should be corrected. If you receive a door-hanger and have questions please contact the Board, board@abiquaheights.com.

The Board recognizes that very few who read the community newsletters make it all the way to the end, but we will continue for those that do.

Your dues remain at the current level because so many do so much more than their duty or responsibility calls for and their efforts should be recognized.

- The ARC currently functions with efficiency, communication, and understanding at unprecedented levels for the AHHA. Thanks go to Don Kaminski and his group.
- Karen Garst answers all queries and demands from escrow companies regarding transactions and refinances in the community. This was not the case when an outside management company was in charge.
- The pond equipment and everything else mechanical is constantly monitored and repaired by Larry Tingwall at the cost of materials only.
- David Ortega has taken it upon himself to wrap and then unwrap the young oak trees in the Commons to prevent damage from the ever-present deer.
- Financial Reports are so detailed and timely that the Board never receives a question about them, thanks go to Wayne Trucke. That has not always been the case.
- Unexpected events like fallen trees are removed and broken sprinkler systems are quickly repaired at a fraction of the cost of outside vendors.
- The dog waste station miraculously empties every week.

2020 has been an exceptional year, the Board hopes that all the members of this wonderful community stay safe and healthy. Please email the Board if you have any thoughts or suggestions to ease the disruption and isolation the pandemic has brought to all of us.

Please email: board@abiquaheights.com.