



# MoH Newsletter – Fall, 2022

## Message from the Board

Meadows of Highland

### President’s Annual Report

The Board of Directors of the Meadows of Highland, along with Andruschat Real Estate Services, Inc., is responsible for managing the business and affairs of the Meadows of Highland Homeowners Association. Our Association continues to thrive, thanks to the dedicated work of our board members, committee volunteers, and Ed Dzioba, Property Manager.

As we have all noticed, costs are rising in all facets of the economy. Fiscal responsibility requires us to keep pace. After maintaining our HOA fee at \$385 for the past year and no increase in 2020, we had to raise it to \$410/month for this coming fiscal year due to increases in all the services we utilize.

We have approximately \$485,000 in our reserve fund. While this seems like a lot of money, we are anticipating large expenditures like roofing, siding, landscaping, plumbing repairs, lighting, pond repairs in the coming years. This fund, effectively managed, precludes having to charge special assessments and distributes the costs of maintaining a large property equitably.

Projects completed during the past year (2021/2022) include the following:

- An Open Forum for resident input was added at the beginning of each board meeting. A few specific issues brought attendees, but the forum, for the most part, was not utilized by residents. The opportunity for resident comments and/or concerns through Open Forum will remain.
- New awning patterns were chosen by a committee for Phase 3. Architectural standards now require owners to choose either Sunbrella 4799, grey/black/white or Stattler 320839, element stripes grey.
- There was a discussion of restricting parking in the unassigned parking spots in Phase 3; however, no changes were made. The spots remain unassigned.
- “Swim at your own risk” signs were posted at the pool in accordance with the NYSDH rules regarding privately-owned community pools.
- Tennis and pickle ball courts saw increased use this year. The landscapers now blow off debris weekly and a broom is available for interim clean-up.

*Continued on Page 4*

*Managing Agent:*

**Andruschat Real Estate Services, Inc.**

PO Box 448

Getzville, NY 14068

716-583-5180



Property Manager: Edward Dzioba

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**Monthly Board of Directors meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Clubhouse.**

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## TRASH COLLECTION



**Please put your trash out after dark on Thursday evening or Friday morning in a secure container with a lid—NO BAGS.**

When a holiday falls during the week and trash is not collected (New Years Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas) - the pickup day will be on Saturday. Put your trash out on Friday evening or Saturday morning.

If the weather forecast is for high winds on the night before collection, PLEASE wait until the morning to put out your trash and recycle bins. Modern Disposal has stated that they will allow the recyclables to be placed in clear plastic bags before going in the recycle bins. This may help with windy days.

**Please note**—construction debris cannot be disposed of in the normal trash. Owners have to call the management company (Andruschat @ 583-5180) for a special pickup.

Please be considerate of your neighbors and do not put your garbage into someone else's container.

**No bags—put garbage in a container with a secure lid. The animals are out at night looking for treats.**

**THANK YOU !**



## Meadows of Highland Board of Directors – 2022 / 2023

Laurie Patterson	60 Bridle Path	667-0762
Tom Lunt	170 Bridle Path	662-3944
Leslie Skwara	120 Bridle Path	316-8378
Roy Uebelhoer	177 Bridle Path	213-8266
Katie Burdette	100 Bridle Path	667-2530

## Winter Parking

**Please be aware of the winter parking regulations:**

From November through April, parking **WILL NOT be permitted in front of the unit's garage door** or any other location other than the parking space assigned to the unit. Short-term parking for purposes of loading and unloading will be permitted.

Please advise family members, contractors, and visitors to your unit of this policy. It is hoped that all owners will comply this; however, if an owner shall fail to comply, the Board of Directors will be forced to impose penalties in the form of a fine.



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## Meadows of Highland Website



Our website is up and running! If you have not registered as yet, please do. To register, follow these steps:

Go to:

<http://meadowsofhighland.org>

The “Home Page” will display. The left sidebar has a list of pages; click on the **Member Registration** page.

Fill in required fields and create your own username and password; then click REGISTER. Your Member Log- In and Registration will be activated within a couple of days. Note: activation is not immediate.

You will receive emails from WordPress regarding the process.

### TIPS:

Save <http://meadowsofhighland.org> in your favorites or bookmarks.

If you forget your password; go back to the “Home” page and click on **Change Password**.



#62—Whitney Zwerdling

#132—Daneen Eisinger

#112—Thomas and Monika Poslinski

**Looking for volunteers . . . . . the Board will be organizing the committees of the MoH for the upcoming year.**

**If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, please contact a Board Member (see listing on Page 2) The committees are: Welcoming, Landscape, Maintenance, Architectural.**

## VOLUNTEER



## VETERANS DAY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

### Please Clear the Drains.....

Please make sure the drains in your parking area are clear and free from pine needles, leaves, sticks, and debris.

If they are obstructed, the water will not drain properly and will create flooding and ice issues during the fall and winter months. Thanks for your cooperation.



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## President's Report—continued from Page 1

- Geese Away lights were installed last year to deter geese from living around the pond. They continue to do their job and are now anchored in the pond and will stay there year-round.
- Twenty grass carp were added to the pond to reduce plant growth in the water.
- An automatic garage door opener was installed on the maintenance garage (across from unit 160). The garage houses the golf cart, yard tractor, power washer, and a multitude of tools and equipment which can all be borrowed by residents.
- A new, single sign identifying our community was researched and chosen. The sign will be on Bridle Path closer to unit 40. It is expected to be completed in the spring of 2023 at which time the current signs will be removed.
- A committee was formed and work has begun to replace lighting fixtures on shared garages and lamp posts in Phases 1 and 2.

**Projects anticipated** for the coming year (2022/2023) include:

- Fourteen trees are slated to come down. Thirteen new trees and some shrubs will be planted in their place.
- Replacement of the garage roof which houses units 66, 78 and 80.
- Update light fixtures on shared garages (Phases 1 & 2).
- Installation of new entrance sign.
- Consider amending bylaws to restrict renting of units.
- Find and record where all building water shutoffs are located. Put in outside shutoffs where feasible.
- Rectify gutter and drainage issues on building 7 (148-164).
- Possibility of purchasing an automatic pool vacuum .

## Board recognition & volunteers

Katie Burdette

Our longest serving member, Katie manages the clubhouse and pool, is chairperson of the Welcoming Committee and publishes our quarterly newsletter. As Secretary, she is also responsible for recording and posting meeting minutes.

Roy Uebelhoer

As Treasurer, Roy oversees our petty cash and monitors our financial activity. His accounting skills are a great asset to the Meadows.

Tom Lunt

Tom was elected last year and brings a wealth of knowledge regarding serving on boards. He serves as chair of the Architectural Committee.

Laurie Patterson

Laurie had served as a board member in the early 2000s and has brought her valuable institutional memory with her. She has a broad knowledge of the community and a desire to take care of our surroundings which she does as chair of the Landscape Committee.

Kathie Laudisio

As the President of the board, I have been responsible for running the monthly meetings and contributing to the quarterly newsletter. I stay in contact with Ed Dzioba, maintain the Meadows g-mail account, and am administrator of the MoH website.

I would like to offer thanks to all volunteers who have helped with summer pool testing and special projects. A lot of maintenance work is done by volunteers. Our grounds would not be in such good shape without them. And a shout out goes to the residents in Phase 1, 2, and 3 who return emptied garbage cans and recycle bins to their neighbors every week.

Eight units (56, 62, 68, 76, 86, 112, 132, 156) have been sold this year, and three more are on the market. Most units sold within days of going on the market. A good sign of the health and desirability of the Meadows of Highland.

I would like to acknowledge the work Ed Dzioba of Andruschat Real Estate Services. Ed manages our finances, negotiates contracts with vendors, keeps us informed, and responds to our needs promptly.

Kathie Laudisio

October 2022

**A special THANK YOU to Kathie Laudisio for her time , hard work, and loyalty as the President of the MoH .**





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## **Three Top Benefits of Living in an HoA (Homeowners Association)**

Many homeowners associations offer a range of amenities that can include swimming pools, tennis courts, clubhouses, and ponds. The typical association also provides services such as trash pickup, driveway paving and lighting, snow removal and the maintenance of common areas—services that were once the exclusive province of local municipalities.

Homeowner associations also extend some degree of protection against neighborhood degradation and deterioration—cars on cinder blocks, dilapidated homes, or yards that are not maintained. This requires not only creating reasonable community standards, but also enforcing equitable and consistent rules. While rules differ among associations, the goals and benefits are the same: To protect property values, preserve the nature of the community and meet the established expectations of residents.

### **Governed by Neighbors**

There is usually a correlation between the level of homeowner involvement and the long-term success of a community. While property management businesses provide specialized support to many associations, homeowner volunteer leaders are accountable to the neighbors who elect them. The typical community is governed by a board of homeowner volunteers who are elected by their fellow owners to set policy. Smaller associations with limited budgets also may rely on resident volunteers for various management responsibilities. Homeowner involvement is essential, whether a community is self-managed or professionally managed. Homeowner associations encourage residents to get involved in their communities. There are many opportunities, from leading a specific project to chairing a committee to running for a seat on the board.

### **Managed by Property Management Companies**

Many communities contract with management firms for selected services, such as general management, maintenance, and legal guidance. Property management has become increasingly specialized as community governance has become more demanding. Successful property managers must possess knowledge and skills relating to finance, strategic planning, maintenance, personnel management, insurance, laws and regulations, communications, and covenants enforcement. These professionals must also provide sound advice and guidance.

### **Protecting Property Values**

Community association board members and managers are guided by their association's governing documents. Often known as bylaws, rules and regulations, these documents are created to maintain community standards, protect property values, and encourage a sense of community stewardship. People living in an association-governed community contractually agree to adhere to these codes. While these regulations are developed and enforced to protect all homeowners, they do not eliminate occasional disagreement and discontent. Issues often arise because of unrealistic expectations, misinformation, or misunderstanding. With all their inherent advantages, associations face difficult issues—none more common than the challenge of balancing the best interests of the community as a whole and the preferences of individual residents.

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### **Lets Look a Closer at the 2022-2023 Budget for the Meadows of Highland**

The driving factors in increasing the Association monthly dues this year has mainly been the high cost of inflation that is at an all time high in the past 40 years. This can be seen in all markets such as hazard insurance, health insurance, gas, food etc. Another contributing factor was that the Board of Directors commissioned to have an engineer complete a replacement reserve study for the Association. The study is available from Ed Dzioba, Property Manager.

The fees for management is based on a contract that is directly influenced by the cost of living % increase. Please note that in previous years the increases have been minimal to say the least as those years too were based on CPI. For instance, the fiscal years expanding 2014-2016 there were no increases as the cost of living was minimal; in 2017 there was a 1% increase then none in the 2018 or 2019 fiscal years, then in 2020 there was another 1% increase with no increase in 2021. Now for the 2022 fiscal year inflation is at an all time high of 9% from this time last year. So, if you calculate it over the past eight year there is an average increase of less than 1.4% per year.

The increase for legal services is minimal considering that the average cost for an attorney is \$500 per hour. The Board felt that the increase is necessary due to needed upcoming legal interpretations of the Association's Declaration and By-Laws.

The estimated cost of insurance premium was provided by the Association's insurance agent. Again, the increase is based on an all time inflation factor and the increased costs of reconstruction materials and labor in the event of a loss.

The miscellaneous land and tree pruning increase was based on prior history of need the Association has experienced. We do tree removals and most trimming all at the same time tin order reduce costs (unless there is imminent danger).

The increase for snow removal is due to the labor shortage, gas price increases, and the lack of proposals from snow plow contractors. Other Associations in the area are experiencing a 25-30% increase. The Board solicited pricing from snow plow contractors, however, what is happening in the current market cannot be ignored. The price for our snowing plowing contract has been arrived at \$59,000 for the season. That is an increase of \$20,000 more than last year.

As far as any retained year-end earnings, they are verified by an independent CPA in the annual audit. Any surplus is typically rolled over to the reserve budget.