

# PARK PLAZAS NEWS

## From the President

Let's talk about "appearances"...

**Our Grounds.** Some have expressed concern about grounds maintenance in areas that appear overgrown. That is the case and results from a number of factors - the best monsoon in many years, for which we should be thankful; our inability to hire reliable seasonal workers; and a decision to let grasses and flowering plants in certain areas go to seed as part of revegetation (particularly the meadow surrounding the Community Garden). If you walk past the meadow, you'll see it blooming with sunflowers for the first time in many years; hopefully next year it will be awash in them. The same is true in other portions of the Common Area.

We could remedy the concerns by increasing our full-time staff – but that would increase costs four times as much as hiring seasonal workers, result in far more staff than needed other than in the summer months and add pressure to increase monthly assessments.

Meanwhile, our Manager and Nora Haskins, Landscape Committee Chair, meet weekly with Oscar Mendoza, our head groundskeeper, to prioritize what can be done with our limited staffing, concentrating on high visibility areas throughout the community.

We have many landscape projects in the works – Emergency Ecology Solutions; analysis of irrigation systems throughout the Common Area; the Committee's work on short-, medium- and long-term landscape plans, identification of "significant" or "monumental" trees throughout the Common Area; special irrigation procedures for them; and a new water standpipe for our crew at the entrance to La Luz cul-de-sac to reduce vehicle traffic through the meadow to the Community Garden, the previous water source.

**Our Homes and Lots.** The Architectural Control Committee conducted property inspections in April and May, sending out 91 reports of properties needing maintenance attention in June. It will reinspect those properties late in September and early October and, where required work isn't done, send follow-up notices.

**Our Cul-de-Sacs.** We do annual asphalt maintenance where required and it is underway as the News goes to press. This fall, work includes crack filling and/or seal coating on Narciso, Cisne, Flores Chamisa, Tortuga, Chili and Campanilla cul-de-sacs costing approximately \$44,000, funded from our Reserve Fund. In addition, AFJ Custom Paving, our long-time contractor, will patch certain areas on Puesta del Sol cul-de-sac pending overall asphalt resurfacing in 2023 and, under warranty, seal coat Lirio cul-de-sac to give the patchy looking overlay done in 2021 a more uniform appearance.

**Our Yard Debris and Other Discards.** With the assistance of a focus group of cul-de-sac representatives, our staff has begun planning a late October community-wide "clean up" day on which yard debris, hazardous materials and surplus small electronic equipment will be picked up throughout the community and disposed of at no cost. Complete details will be distributed in advance of the event.

**Our Short-Cuts.** Over the years, residents have taken short-cuts off the paved paths throughout our community. These are variously known as "social", "informal" or other kinds of paths.

Based on an inventory done earlier this year, we decided to formalize three of them and reconstruct a fourth. In August, the path from the top of Flores to the paved path from Plaza Blanca to Plaza Rojo was reworked. This fall, the paths from the top of Colina to that path and diagonally across to the southwestern corner of the "back 40" will be reworked, and the "rustic" path behind Orquidea and La Luz cul-de-sacs will have deferred maintenance performed and be reworked. These improvements, funded out of the Reserve Fund at a cost of about \$22,000, bring definition to "high-use" short-cuts by using an organic, porous, stable surface that blends with the environment and prevent further degradation of it through erosion and use.

Comments? Concerns? Let me know at [president@parkplazas.org](mailto:president@parkplazas.org).

*Tom Carr, President*

# Manager's Report

1. Efforts to clear up larger past due accounts receivable balances continue to be effective and except for a few, have been resolved.
2. Lot owner charges for the variable sewer costs (B4 charge code) have been recalculated and applied to the September billing costs. The variable sewer cost billed to the Association by the City decreased by \$1,611 per month – a \$19,332 annual reduction.
3. Modern outdoor solar lights have arrived and will replace the existing lights for the monument signs at the Camino Carlos Rey and Plaza Verde entrances.
4. A social path at the southern end of Flores Plaza has been redefined using a crusher fines surface (small particles of crushed rock and gravel) with metal edging. Once the surface becomes fully compacted with use and moisture, it will become more stable and blend in with the natural surroundings.

*Richard White*

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Newly installed surface just after a rain...

# Board Notes

The Board of Directors held a regular meeting at the Association office on Wednesday, August 24th.

Highlights of the meeting were as follows:

- ▶ social paths” (also known as “informal paths” or “short-cuts”) off the paved paths at the top of Colina cul-de-sac to the paved path from Plaza Blanca to Plaza Rojo, across the southwest corner of the “Back-40” and the rustic path will be improved with crusher fines and metal edging to create a more uniform surface and stop damage to the Common Area from erosion;
- ▶ the Sign Study Group will make a formal proposal to the Board at its September 28th meeting concerning replacing the existing signage throughout the community identifying cul-de-sacs;
- ▶ an extensive discussion of the issue of short-term rentals occurred, with the Board consensus being that while there was no material evidence of the presence of such land uses now that warranted any attempt to modify the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions to clarify use restrictions, the community should be monitored to determine if a pattern of such uses develops, at which point such an amendment would be reconsidered.

## ***Word to the Wise***

If you happen to notice your pet sneezing, or scratching or you find unexplained little bumps. Investigate. A Park Plazas resident noticed her pup with some of these symptoms. A trip to the vet revealed a bot fly larva had burrowed into the skin, and was the cause of the inflammation. The vet said bot flies, while in the air, can drop their eggs on mosquitoes and, due to the greater rain fall, mosquitoes are in abundance and can land on us and our pets. They also lay their eggs on blades of grass and attach themselves to passing dogs. Antibiotics and removing the larva restored the pup's health.



**It's that time of year again!**

# New Sewer Charge

The City of Santa Fe calculates our sewer charge once a year, and changes – up or down – are reflected in the City's August bill. Your new charges are reflected in the September 1st billing statements. The City uses the average monthly water consumption for the three months of December (mid Nov to mid Dec), January (mid Dec to mid Jan) and February (mid Jan to mid Feb) and then applies the rate structure that's current at the time. The Association calculates the average monthly consumption for each lot owner and then allocates the total cost billed by the City. This allocation is based on multiplying the City's sewer charge by the percentage an individual lot owner's average monthly consumption bears to the sum of all lot owners. The product of that calculation becomes the new variable sewer charge for the coming 12 months. On your monthly statement, this charge code is *B4 – Variable Sewer Charge*.

Speaking of charge codes on your monthly statement, here is a listing of the charges and their definitions:

**A1 Monthly Assessment.** The governing documents allow the annual assessment to be paid monthly. In the event the assessment remains unpaid for 60 days, payment of the outstanding balance and remaining balance for the year becomes due and payable immediately. Billing period: From the 1st to End of Month.

**B2 Fixed Water and Sewer Assessment.** The City of Santa Fe charges the Association a monthly charge for the use of its infrastructure. This includes the water mains and the meters of which we have 36; one for each cul-de-sac. This cost is itemized on the City's bill to us and is divided by 442 lots to come up with the amount charged per lot. This amount is applied to the January, March, April, June, July, September, October and December billing periods.

**B3 Fixed Water and Sewer Assessment and Conservation Fee.** This is the same charge as B2 with the addition of the Conservation fee. The conservation fee is applied to the February, May, August and November billing periods.

**B4 Variable Sewer Charge.** This amount is what the City charges for sewer service. In August of each year, the City recalculates their charge to the Association using current rates. The Association allocates the new monthly charge to each lot owner based on the percentage their average monthly consumption bears to the sum of the whole using the non-irrigation months of

December, January and February of a given year. It is variable in that it is recalculated each year; fixed in that it remains the same for the next 12 months.

The new charge is effective on the September 1st billing and continues for the next 12 months.

**AA1 Water Charge.** This amount is based on what the City charges us for the water consumed during the billing period. This amount is divided by the total gallons consumed by the 442 lots to determine the rate per 1,000 gallons. This rate is then applied to the gallons consumed at each lot. Please call the Manager's Office if you have any questions.

## A Major Contributor...

Thanks to Kathy Hargrave for her fine work on the website, the newsletter, the sign study and so much more! Her efforts have made a positive difference!

What others have to say:

- *There is a saying "if you want something done right" and that certainly describes Kathy's work! She has years of experience in design, marketing, public relations, etc – all qualities that have brought so much value to her work with Park Plazas! We now have a comprehensive user-friendly website, a new resident booklet with pages of helpful information, and a well-researched updated monthly Park Plazas News. THANK YOU Kathy for bringing your expertise and sharing your concepts with us – love our new look!*  
...Friends of Kathy
- *Kathy has a great gift as a communicator, and we've all benefitted from her brilliant design work with the Park Plazas News. As a compulsive editor myself, I've appreciated Kathy's eye for detail and accuracy, and as a resident here, I'm grateful for her commitment to keeping our community informed not only about Board decisions, but also what's happening out and about in our neighborhood. Thank you, Kathy!*  
...another friend
- *Kathy's commitment to doing the best possible job - in everything she undertook - was inspirational. Thank you, Kathy, for offering your time and professional skills to Park Plazas News and for enhancing and enriching our community.*  
...another friend

Kathy served alongside Deirdre Stiles as Co-Chair of the Communications Committee from its inception. Deirdre's family responsibilities took priority and Kathy stepped up and carried on. Her influence can be seen nearly everywhere. Even in this newsletter format!  
*Thanks for a job well done.*

# Contact the Office...

## Engaging the Landscape Crew

So that Oscar and Arturo can get as much done as possible, we've advised them to refer residents to the office when tapped on the shoulder to work on a particular landscaping matter. Many thanks to those who've called the office to register their landscape needs; doing this helps us manage the projects more efficiently and to schedule any new work appropriately within the existing workload. This has been a big help to the crew and is very much appreciated by all.



...mowing along the Rodeo Road fence.

The Association is attempting to contact this woman. If you have contact information for her, please email the office at [officemanager@parkplazas.org](mailto:officemanager@parkplazas.org) or call 505-471-8809. Thank you.



## PARK PLAZAS COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

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### BOARD of DIRECTORS

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PPN is prepared by the  
Communications Committee

## September Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 28  
6:30 PM

~ in-person, Rodeo Plaza Office ~  
(Proof of vaccination and booster required to attend.)

Community input is invited  
at the beginning and end of the meeting.

Download the Board Packet 2 days before meeting:  
[www.ParkPlazas.org](http://www.ParkPlazas.org)