

PARK PLAZAS NEWS

February 2022

www.ParkPlazas.org

From the President

Let's talk about glitches, communication and participation

In the January News, I wrote, "as we re-transition to self-management, there will be glitches, friction here and there, and a less-than perfect process." As it turns out, I was a soothsayer.

AUTOMATIC BANK PAYMENTS

Belatedly we learned that, unlike in the transition to WestGate in 2020, we cannot use the ACH (automatic bank withdrawal) authorization forms we have for hundreds of owners to automatically process their monthly payments. As we communicated to those owners via an e-blast yesterday, and I want to repeat here, **you must reregister for ACH** following procedures that will be explained in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, **you should make your February payments by check** left in the Association box on Fresa Plaza, dropped off at the Rodeo Plaza Office, or mailed to 2801 Rodeo Road, E-1, Santa Fe, NM 87507. As this is an extra burden on owners, **the due date for February payments has been extended to the 25th**. The silver lining, however, is that now owners using ACH can choose the day each month their payments are processed.

ACH is a secure, free, simple way to have the amount owed automatically deducted from your bank account – now *on the day each month you choose*, not on a day arbitrarily chosen by the Association. When the new ACH system is operational, all owners – both users and non-users – will receive an email announcement that will include the link to register for ACH.

MONTHLY BOARD PACKET

Before each Board Meeting, Richard White, our Community Manager, prepares a packet containing the Meeting Agenda, the Association's current financial statements, his own report, and reports of our various committees. We now post the entire packet at ParkPlazas.org before each meeting. The goals are to:

- provide greater transparency,
- generate community interest in attending meetings and give input during the community input time set aside at each meeting,
- enable those who are interested but unable to attend to read the materials.

I encourage all owners to take advantage of this opportunity to gain more insight into the month-to-month activities of the Board overseeing our community.

WEBSITE

All owners should have received detailed instructions for registering for the TOPS portal we will be using as the gateway to their account on ParkPlazas.org. If you did not register, or tried but encountered difficulties, please contact Richard at communitymanager@parkplazas.org, Cathy at officemanager@parkplazas.org, or me at president@parkplazas.org. We will do our best to help you. Our goal is to register all owners and, as is discussed in Board Notes in this issue, as many tenants as possible. Note that the website is a work in progress.

WELCOME PACKET

Many of us remember receiving a "Welcome!" packet when we moved to the community. That hasn't been done for a number of years but is being resurrected. The reborn packet will be available on the website to all residents and those exploring the purchase of a home in our community. It will be provided electronically to those entering into contracts to purchase homes, and a hard-copy will be mailed to new owners.

BOARD NOMINATIONS

I've previously shared that pursuant to our Bylaws, I appointed a Nominating Committee to nominate candidates to stand for election at our March 23rd Annual Meeting to fill three Board positions that become open at that time. If you would like to join the Committee to help with the very important process of interviewing candidates and recommending a slate or would like to be a candidate, contact Bruce Bender, Committee Chair, at ACC@parkplazas.org. Volunteers are the life-blood of our community. I encourage anyone interested in participating in governance and having a bit of time to devote to the process to join the Nominating Committee or step forward as a candidate for a Board position.

Questions? Comments? Concerns? Feel free to contact me at president@parkplazas.org. In the meantime, anticipate the coming of Spring and be safe in this era of Covid-19.

Tom Carr, President

Manager's Report

- ▶ Beginning 01/01/2022, lot owner payments and related deposits, vendor payables and vendor payments have been administered through TOPS, our new HOA management software.
- ▶ Beginning 02/01/2022 monthly billings will be generated from TOPS and will include a beginning balance. Not having a beginning balance from one billing cycle to the next has made it easy for a small number of lot owners unknowingly to fall behind. Bringing that important piece of information back to the statement will help home owners stay current.
- ▶ Also beginning 02/01/22, our monthly billings will reflect the new variable water and sewer charges that went in to effect with the City's bill to us this past August. At that time, the City increased our variable water and sewer charge by \$2,044 per month. Their calculation for that increase is based on our average monthly consumption during the preceding months of December, 2020 and January and February of 2021. The new rate appearing on this month's bill is based on each lot owner's average monthly water consumption for the same three months. Due to the noted increase, most everyone will see a slight increase in this line item. If you have questions about how your charge was calculated, please call, email or stop by the office.
- ▶ The vehicle left in Piñon Plaza has been removed.
- ▶ The Manager's Office has replaced approximately 16 water sub-meters during December and January. There are approximately seven to eight meters remaining. We've ordered 10 back-up sub-meters to be on hand as needed for future replacements.
- ▶ **Nora Haskins, Marianne Murray, and Richard White** met with Mick Nickels, arborist/ecologist, to discuss and define the irrigation and vegetation mapping project. They will start on Relampago, Lirio, and Campanilla Plazas. Mick expects to start on the project in the middle of February. The agreed cost is \$40 per hour, not to exceed \$4,000, potentially \$1,000 more than has been allocated in the budget.
- ▶ Our website: the [ParkPlazas.org](https://www.ParkPlazas.org) domain has been redirected from the CINC environment (our previous HOA software) to our new website host. At this point the site is serving as a starting point for building our presence on the web. We've selected a simple, yet very elegant template from which to build our site. Please note: If you go to the domain and end up at the old site, you should clear your browser cache and/or type in the complete URL address:
<https://www.ParkPlazas.org> to access.



- ▶ Approximately 115 Association members have registered for the online portal to TOPS, our HOA management software. If you have not yet registered, see Page 4 for instructions on how to register online.

Richard White
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Board Notes

At its regular meeting January 26th, the Board took no formal actions other than routine approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting, acceptance of reports, and authorization for the President to endorse a proposal submitted to the City of Santa Fe by resident Bob Fisher to improve speed control on Plaza Blanca at the sharp curve.

Two matters of general interest to owners were discussed: how to better address those residents in our community who are renting their homes, and the continuing need to assure that the Board is in a position to fund the Association's financial requirements.

Renters –

We will be exploring ways to enhance communications with tenants and increase their involvement in the community. Means of doing this may include:

- developing a more complete database of homes that are non-owner occupied by adding associated tenant names and contact information (including email addresses), and establish a means of updating that database as tenant turnover occurs,
- providing information to tenants about how to access information about the community at ParkPlazas.org, and
- encouraging tenants to volunteer on our various committees (as some already do) and step forward as candidates for election to our Board. Directors do not need to be owners and it is felt that having the tenants' point of view represented is desirable.

Anyone with further suggestions relating to this issue should share them with our Community Manager at communitymanager@parkplazas.org.

Funding –

Many years ago, the membership approved an increase in the permitted monthly assessment to \$130, though the assessment has never been set at that level.

Our governing documents permit the Board to set the actual assessment at or below the \$130 maximum amount and to adjust the \$130 maximum without member approval for the impact on the purchasing power of the dollar caused by inflation. Had the Board done that since 2012, the last time the actual assessment was increased (from \$95 to \$105), the current maximum permitted assessment would be about \$160.

As was reported in the January Park Plazas News, at its December meeting the Board authorized an increase in the maximum assessment from \$130 to \$138, reflecting the 6.8% rate of inflation over December 2020. The Board is considering a further increase to \$147 to be effective January 1, 2023 based on the 7.0% rate of inflation in January 2022 over January 21.

It is important to recognize doing so is playing "catch-up" ball, as such an increase would still not be sufficient to offset inflation since 2012. It is equally important to recognize that this would increase the permitted assessment -- not the actual assessment. The difference between the permitted assessment and the actual assessment is a cushion available to the Board to meet unforeseen Association requirements without imposing special assessments on members.

The Board will continue to establish the actual assessment at the minimum level necessary to fund the Association's Operating Fund and assure the adequacy of its Reserve Fund.

Any member interesting in commenting on this issue may join the February Board Meeting (see Page 6) and comment during community input time. The Board packet and link will be posted beforehand at ParkPlazas.org.

RED RIBBONS marking our trees



The Park Plazas landscape team has placed red ribbons on dozens of trees throughout the neighborhood. These "significant" trees are being marked so they can receive additional care.

Don't forget to give your own trees TLC during the winter months – water them once a month to keep them healthy.

NEW WEBSITE PORTAL - REGISTRATION

The new Park Plazas Online Portal is now ready for both owners and tenants to register for access.

The Online Portal provides registered owners and tenants with access to their profile, account balance, transactions and online payments, calendar, documents - governing documents, committee documents, copies of newsletters, etc., FAQs, and our directory of residents who've opted in to get started.

To get started, click on this link <https://comwebportal.com/login> and follow the online instructions. If you need assistance, please email the Community Manager at communitymanager@parkplazas.org.

SPRING IS ON THE WAY!

It's the time to request your bed in the Community Garden.

Most beds are currently assigned, but a new growing season may create some turnover resulting in availability of a few beds. If you are interested in submitting a bed request, please contact **Wayne Darnell** – wayne_darnell@comcast.net, or **Marcus Garcia** – marc_j_g@msn.com. Alternatively, you may leave your request with **Cathy Kosak** at the PPCSA office. The requests will be handled on a first-come/first-served basis.

As a reminder, participation requires signing a Terms and Conditions form specifying some basic rules for gardening, a \$25 key deposit (refundable upon termination of your participation), and a \$25 seasonal fee to cover garden use costs (water, etc.).

Due to COVID we will handle any concerns via email rather than in-person meetings. If you have any questions about the gardening season, please email either Wayne or Marcus.

REMINDER FOR SHED OWNERS -

Effective April 28, 2022, existing sheds cannot be sold or transferred and must be removed from the Yard by the user when the owner sells their Park Plazas lot. If you are thinking about selling your shed, you should make sure you do so before April 28, 2022. The RV Committee maintains a list of people interested in buying a shed and you are encouraged to use that list when selling a shed.

Landscape debris only!



**NO
DUMPING
ALLOWED**

The dumpster located by the RV Storage Lot and the area around the dumpster have become a dumping ground. The dumpster is intended for landscape debris and brush ONLY. Large items may not be dumped in this area.

Your Monthly Assessment at WORK



If you've walked the path between Plaza Rojo and "four corners" recently, you'll have noticed a lot of action where Reese Baker and his RainCatcher crew are re-building the drainage ditch. While normally you might walk past without giving it a second thought, it has a bit of a history. When it rains here in Santa Fe, it RAINS, and all the water from Fresa's asphalt surface flows into this narrow ditch. In a monsoon storm like the one in July 2018, the ditch can turn into a torrent. Several homes were severely flooded during that storm because the runoff overwhelmed the ditch.

So, we turned to an expert to help with this problem. Over the years, Reese has done several major projects here at Park Plazas. You can see his erosion control/water retention work if you walk on the rustic trail between Plaza Blanca and Plaza Verde. The idea behind this work is to slow runoff flow by creating catchment areas, holding the water and allowing it to soak into the earth. You can see the work they're doing on the Fresa ditch is based on this principle – a series of small basins, aiming to slow water flow, capture moisture directly in the earth rather than losing it in runoff, and thus support the surrounding trees and bushes. As our high desert climate becomes hotter and drier, this approach to water management and retention increasingly factors into our approach to the landscape here at Park Plazas.

It's a win-win! We capture additional water for our landscape while providing flood protection to the homes below and on either side of the catchment area.

Read about Reese and his work in Green Fire Times, Pg 24 - https://greenfiretimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/GFT_Nov-Dec2021.pdf.



LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD! Run for the Board.

This year there are three Board vacancies as three sitting Board Members complete their terms.
All Park Plazas homeowners and residents – this could be YOU! –
are eligible to run for a Board position.
The deadline for applying to run is **Friday, February 11**.

Bruce Bender, Chair of the Nominating Committee, is looking forward to hearing from you.
Email him at: ACC@parkplazas.org.

WELCOME PACKET AVAILABLE

The new Park Plazas Welcome Packet contains:

- Updated map of paths and amenities,
- Quick overview of PP amenities and other helpful facts concerning trash collection day, snow plowing, access to the Tennis Courts and Dog Park,
- A summary of covenants,
- A pamphlet with all governing documents.

Look for a downloadable copy on our website later in this month.



Did you know ... ?

- Applications for use of the Dog Park are available on the Park Plazas website.
- The lock code for access to the tennis courts has been changed. Registration forms, available on the Park Plazas website, must be filled out and returned to the PPCSA office to receive the new and subsequent codes. Folks who have already submitted this registration since December 20, 2021, do not need to reapply.
- Landlords are asked to provide contact information for their renters to PPCSA so they can be included in the database and receive newsletters and e-blasts.

February Board Meeting

Wednesday, February 23
6:30 PM

~ virtual, via Webex ~

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

Details are posted at www.ParkPlazas.org.

PARK PLAZAS COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSOCIATION

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BOARD of DIRECTORS

Tom Carr, President
Bruce Bender, VP
Chris Bartsch, Treasurer
Beth Brock
Mary Dolman
Nora Haskins
Bob Jacob
Peter Whitman

Richard White, Community Manager/Secretary
Cathy Kosak, Office Manager

PPCSA Communications Committee:
Kathy Bell Hargrave (Chair), Tom Carr, Laurie Glaze, Marianne Murray, Richard White