



March 2024 Newsletter

A Message from Your HOA President

Simona Hellinger

Spring greetings to our homeowners! As always, I want to thank the Board of Directors and committee members for their time and commitment to this community. We welcomed a new board member in January, Sara Doran. Sara comes with HOA board experience, and will be filling the vacant seat of Tom Carter. I want to thank Tom for his service to the board. His approach to issues was always logical, concise, and thoughtfully presented. Tom resigned from the board in January due to anticipated schedule conflicts.

As we move past the rainy season and into spring, we need to begin spring planting on our slopes. As part of this process, we will be reviewing our slopes budgets in order to optimize our spending. Slopes are our largest expenditure.

Please know that our board meetings are open and if you have any questions or concerns you are encouraged to come to the board meetings. The board is committed to serving the homeowners to enhance and maintain our lovely neighborhood.

Membership Committee Report

Our board members and committee members are all volunteers, and we need more! Your willingness to serve your community in this capacity is greatly appreciated. If you might be interested, please email us at the address shown at the end of this newsletter.

All homeowners are invited to our Annual Meeting on **June 12th at 6 pm** at Solana Vista Elementary school, where we'll be electing four members to our Board of Directors. Your participation is crucial as we discuss key issues and shape the future of our neighborhood. We look forward to seeing you there!

Coyote/Dog Walker Cautionary Tales

While the HOA website cautions homeowners regarding the challenges of living adjacent to wildlands ([link](#)), dog walkers have reported that coyotes have become less responsive to yelling, air horns, sticks, etc. Homeowners and especially dog walkers are advised to be aware of their surroundings and keep their pets out of harm's way. When walking, don't let your dog trail behind you, and note that our HOA covenants require pets to remain on-leash when not on their owner's property.

Slopes Committee Report

For the past six years, your HOA has been in the process of upgrading the original galvanized pipe irrigation system throughout the development. We have spent over \$10,000 annually, identifying slopes with the highest need, converting the system to PVC pipes, water efficient sprinkler heads, and moving many valve and control boxes in this process. This year, we completed this work along Santa Victoria, south of Santa Petra. Now that the irrigation work is done, we will continue to replant that area.

Upon completion of the arborist's evaluation in September 2023, we have followed his recommendations for Eucalyptus tree trimming and removal on our slopes in the west half of the neighborhood. While rains have caused some delay, the majority of the work is done and all should be completed in early March. We will focus on the slopes in the eastern half of our development this fall as part of the important and ongoing tree-management process.



Fire Hazard Zones

As many of you are aware, the State Fire Marshall has classified lands within state responsibility areas into fire hazard zones for many years now. The most recent update to this classification process has identified most of our development as high fire hazard severity ([link](#)). We strongly encourage you to maintain a defensible area of at least 30 feet from your dwelling. The Solana Beach Fire Department has a Fire Prevention Specialist who we meet with regularly and who would be more than happy to come out and meet with you and your neighbors regarding this important issue (858-720-2415). Now is the time to do preventative work!!

Architectural Committee Report

We've seen a slowdown in new architectural requests since the post-COVID rush of last year, with 13 received since June compared to 28 in same period a year earlier.

If you are planning to make changes to your home other than those listed in Article 8.4 ([link](#)), please download and submit a Request for Architectural Improvement form from the HOA's website at the address shown below.

Treasurer's Report

Paul Sagar

Your HOA continues to be in good financial standing. It is noteworthy that all of your board and committee members are keenly focused on

budgetary discipline. In particular, all those responsible for slope maintenance, our greatest cost center, have done yeoman's work in maintaining and improving the appearance of our slopes. We should be especially grateful for the work done by Sandy Punch of the Slopes Committee despite considerable inflationary pressure. I suggest that this effort has in part been responsible for the extraordinary rise in property values in our pleasant community.

We have been fortunate that the rainfall has saved us from some expensive water bills, but the cost per unit of water has increased like everything else. Last year, we were able to keep the increase in HOA fees to a mere 3%. While no decision has yet been made, I expect that we will have to see a larger increase this year to cover inflated costs of items such as new plantings (to fill in gaps and replace old vegetation) and dump fees – the cost of taking the heaps of cleared tree and shrub trash to the municipal dump.

Efforts continue to ensure that semi-annual HOA fee invoices reach their intended recipients. However, we still have several late payers. Our practice will be to send, at the beginning of each March and September, an email invoice to the approximately 147 members who prefer that method, and 45 "snail mail" invoices to those that prefer to get hard copies. Please look out for these and provide prompt payment. Those members who have unpaid bills after 30 days can expect to receive a "snail mail" reminder, and another one every 30 days thereafter so long as bills remain unpaid.

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