

# MEMORANDUM

May 21, 2020

*From* : Meadows-Ferndale HOA Board of Directors  
*To* : Meadows-Ferndale Owners and Residents  
*Subject* : 2020 Mid-Year HOA Report

With the COVID-19 inspired "STAY HOME – STAY HEALTHY" mandate from the Governor, the activities and decision points of the Meadows-Ferndale HOA Board have not been as visible as when we were having regularly scheduled meetings and publishing the minutes of those meetings. We have therefore decided to provide a brief summary of the key issues, concerns, and actions of your Board since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. For details, please refer to the meeting minutes and news articles posted on the community web site ([www.meadows-ferndale-hoa.org](http://www.meadows-ferndale-hoa.org)).

## 1. Rules and Regulations (Rules)

This document is intended to amplify and clarify the CC&Rs and By-Laws. A draft was prepared by the Board and distributed to all homeowners for review and comment. The Board then considered the inputs and prepared a final draft which was reviewed and adopted at an open meeting on January 27, 2020. Collectively, these three documents are referred to as "the governing documents".

## 2. Enforcement of Governing Documents

The Board deliberately waited until after the Rules review (Topic #1) to begin enforcement of the governing documents. Since then, several Notices to Comply (NTCs) have been issued, but the Board has attempted to maintain a fair and modest approach because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 3. Budget carryover

Fiscal year 2019 ended with a budget surplus (income exceeding expenses). By Board Resolution 2020-1, the majority of the surplus (\$30K) was transferred to the HOA Reserve Account for future expenses. The remainder was kept in "retained earnings", a category of capital assets intended to provide a cushion for the 2020 budget. See Item #17 for more about the Reserve Account.

## 4. Abandoned car

A car was abandoned on Josie Lane. It was apparently part of an attempted robbery of construction equipment, but incurred a flat tire and could not be driven away. The Ferndale Police Department investigated, but since Josie Lane is a private street, would not take custody of the vehicle. The Board had the vehicle towed and impounded.

## 5. Split Rail Fence maintenance

Several sections of the split-rail fences separating the wetlands from the rest of the property have failed. After due consideration, the Board has decided that the split-rail fences should be the responsibility of the HOA rather than individual homeowners. The Board is therefore negotiating a process for routine fence maintenance.

## 6. Snow removal

Each winter we have a small number of snow "events" that complicate driving in our community. The City of Ferndale will plow the public streets, but our streets are fairly low on

their priority list. The City will not plow our private streets and common area (shared) driveways. To help resolve this issue, the Board has implemented an "as needed" contract with a snow removal company which will come on-call – when called by a member of the Board. See Item #10 for more information about communicating with the Board.

#### 7. Wetlands care and maintenance

The Board has distributed several notices relating to the care and maintenance of our wetlands. Remember, these are governed by rules imposed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Washington State Department of Ecology. The HOA is a custodian, or steward, of these areas and it is our duty to abide by the rules or face the penalties. Please: people and pets stay on established paths, leave no trash and pick up after your pets, keep all pets on a leash, and leave all flora and fauna in place.

#### 8. Pets

The City of Ferndale has a leash law. The Board has adopted the key features of this law for our community. This means that pets may not roam free beyond of property limits of their owners. They must be on a leash and they must be kept out of the wetlands (except on the walking paths as mentioned above). They must not be allowed to disturb or soil any aspect of private or common property (yards, flower beds, bark or rock landscaping, etc.). All pet waste, anywhere on the property, must be picked up and disposed of properly. Waste bags and trash receptacles are provided at entry points to the wetland paths.

#### 9. Board meeting protocol

The Board encourages discussion at our meetings, but attendees should remember that the Board meetings are for the Board members to meet and discuss community-related issues. There is a specific agenda slot for interaction with the attending owners and residents and interaction should be restricted to that segment of the agenda. Also, those wishing to speak should stand (if able) and identify themselves by name and address (or lot number) so the Board can consider the discussion from the proper perspective. For example, if there is a comment about speeding, it is important for the Board to know where this is an issue and whom to contact if follow-up discussions are needed.

#### 10. Communicating with the Board

The Board appreciates the need for an effective and efficient process for communications between the Board and owners/residents. We try to distribute all relevant, necessary, and potentially useful information via direct mailing from Windermere Property Management (WPM), via Board meetings (with attendant minutes), or via the official HOA web site at [www.meadows-ferndale-hoa.org](http://www.meadows-ferndale-hoa.org). The web site has a "Send Us A Message" portal at the bottom of the home page for messages or responses from owners/residents to the Board. Please note that the Facebook account used by many of our owners/residents is NOT a sanctioned medium of communication. It should not be used for any aspect of official HOA business. We have also established a separate gmail account for direct two-way communications between the Board and owners/residents. The email address is: [meadowsferndalehoa@gmail.com](mailto:meadowsferndalehoa@gmail.com). This email capability is referenced in the "Send Us A Message" portion of the web site home page.

#### 11. Landscape maintenance

Several homeowners have expressed concern about the spraying done by our landscaping contractors. These concerns are applicable to both the wetland and non-wetland areas and include fertilizers and agents for the control of invasive and unwanted species of flora. We investigated this and have been advised that the spray agents are eco-friendly and fully compliant with all applicable regulations.

## 12. Landscape irrigation

The Board recently learned that the sprinkler system for the “planter strips” along our streets covers only the portion of Phase I near the Thornton Street entrance. Consequently, the grass is suffering from lack of water and from invasive weeds in much of the rest of the community. The Board is investigating ways to mitigate this problem without resorting to an increase in dues or a special assessment. Repeat: there will be no dues increase and no special assessment. The analysis is on-going and will include consideration of owner inputs.

## 13. Mailbox Relocation

The USPS will not deliver packages that are too big for our mail and parcel boxes beyond one-half mile from the boxes. The Board is working with the Ferndale Postmistress to develop a plan to move some of the boxes farther up Monument Drive to within the one-half mile package delivery range.

## 14. Speeding

There continues to be intermittent speeding issues on our streets. The Board is considering the installation of solar-powered traffic monitoring display systems that provide speed history data – but no pictures. This will help remind drivers of the speed limits and will allow us to work more effectively with the Ferndale Police Department on speed enforcement.

## 15. Parking

Ferndale Municipal Code prohibits the parking of vehicles (including trailers, campers, and boats) on city streets for more than 24 hours. It also prohibits actions which are specifically aimed at trying to avoid the 24-hour restriction. The Board has adopted identical rules for our private streets. However, enforcement of the street parking rules has been suspended for the duration of the STAY HOME – STAY HEALTHY restrictions since commuting has decreased significantly.

## 16. Architectural Review Committee

The ARC works in parallel with the Board to screen architectural change applications and provide feedback to the submitting homeowner or to provide a recommended outcome to the Board. The ARC processes many applications and the process appears to be working well.

## 17. Reserve Study

The purpose of a reserve study is to forecast extraordinary expenses (such as resurfacing roads) and to recommend a financial plan that will ensure that the required funds are available when they are needed. Late in 2019, the Board commissioned a certified specialist in the conduct of reserve studies to prepare the current version of the study. We received the final report in January 2020 and the 2020 budget reflects the recommendations. A copy of the 2020 Reserve Study is posted to the web site under “DOCUMENTS”.

## 18. Wetland walking path

There are portions of the walking path through the wetland areas that are uneven and provide for awkward footing. The Board is developing a plan to refurbish and repair the pathways as needed.

## 19. Setback distance clarification

Questions have arisen about the proper setbacks for sheds and similar additions to the lots. The Board researched the issue and provided the requisite information from Section 18.72 of the Ferndale Municipal Code to the ARC for use in their review process. The code can be found at the following URL: <https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Ferndale>.

We hope you find this information useful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us via either of the "Send Us A Message" options mentioned in Item #10 above.

/Meadows-Ferndale HOA Board of Directors/