



Your CasaBlanca

December, 2010

Mail Box Replacement Project is Approved

At the December 21 Board meeting, the Board voted to replace all of the mail boxes throughout our complex with cast aluminum maintenance free boxes mounted on metal posts that will be set into concrete. The landscaping in the immediate area of the mail boxes will be replaced with water saving desert plants and decomposed granite.

Grass and water hungry plants will be removed. The irrigation systems will be redesigned into a drip system to conform with the new plantings. There will be no more rotted out mail box posts and gardeners weed eaters chipping away at them.

The whole project including labor is estimated to cost about \$57,524. Funds from our Reserve Account will pay for the majority of the re-landscaping cost and a special assessment of about \$225. will be assessed to each homeowner to pay for the new mail boxes and support part of the labor costs. Gail has already submitted the plans for the mail boxes and landscape improvements and obtained City approval for the project.

More on the December Meeting

At the opening of the meeting, Gail announced that the pink Candidate Filing Form that was mailed to each homeowner had a mistake on it. The deadline for filing the form is January 15, 2011, not December 15.

The meeting then commenced with the Homeowners Forum. Compliments were given to the Board and Management and one question was raised about funding of our Reserve Accounts. The minutes from the November Board Meeting were approved as written.

Treasurers Report

Lindsey Griffith gave the Treasurers Report. She reported that all Reserve accounts are currently fully funded. She is looking for a bank that pays more interest on a Money Market account than what we presently are making from the current banking institution. We have three properties with liens placed against them and a former owner has been located that left with about \$4000. due us in assessment fees. The Treasurers Report was accepted by the Board.

New Business

A proposal to have an engineering firm, ESSI Engineering, inspect the perimeter wall on our North side for damage done to it by the former owners of Portofino. The report will be filed with the City of Palm Desert. The concept is to have an independent professional inspect the wall, make a report and provide "official" testimony on damage that was done to support possible legal action with the former owner or in the future with the present owner. The estimated cost for the inspection and report is about \$360. The proposal was approved.

An Estate sale and garage sale will be held in our complex on January 14- 15. Anyone interested in participating in this project, contact Gail Christiansen at 834-9286.

The Board also approved the instillation of the Seismic gas shut-off valves for the four swimming pool utility rooms. Randal's Plumbing was awarded the contract at about \$458.00 for each valve.

A home on Aventine Ct. had a citrus tree that a owner some years ago had planted too close to a common area sidewalk and the roots have raised segments of the walk. The tree has been removed at Association expense (our expense) and a portion of the walk way needs to be replaced at a cost of \$680. The Board accepted the bid to do the concrete work. All of this expense is due to someone not following Association rules.

Management Report

Rhonda gave the Management Report outlining that the annual Budget has been mailed out to homeowners, the tree trimming is in process, technical reports made to management on the automatic shut off Stengl valves installed in our pools and spas

when Whitestar Management was in charge of our complex. She also reported on the entry gate repair/ replacement project.

The next Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 18 at 11:30 AM at the US Bank Meeting Room.

Committee Reports

Committee Reports were given. Evelyn had submitted a report for the Architecture Committee on a concept for developing uniform outside lighting for our complex. She was not at the meeting and some questions were raised that need clarification. Therefore, her request was tabled until issues can be cleared up.

Syd gave the Communications Committee Report from the December 14 meeting.

The meeting was called to order in the pool #1 area at 10 AM. Approximately 20 homeowners attended.

Syd Sonneborn, Chair, opened the meeting by complimenting the volunteers, Juleen Gerhardt, Gail Christiansen and Jim Laraby for the Holiday decorations at both gate entrances to our complex. The owners' forum followed.

Syd started by having Gail Christiansen, President, give an update on what happened Sunday, Dec. 12th, to the entry gate at the Ladera main gate area. It seems a real-estate agent lost control of her car and drove through the gate, derailing it and bending it. She did not report it to police and they are treating the incident as a "hit and run". The name of the person is known to management. It looks like it will take somewhere around \$ 3800.00 to replace the gate.

Gail also reported that a portion of the original Portofino project adjacent to our complex, on the north, has been sold. There will be a meeting on January 4 at the City

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Council Chambers that will have this sale as part of the agenda. Gail would like as many homeowners to attend as is possible. Proposed use and design of this property is of concern to all homeowners as well as the damage that has been done to our perimeter wall done by the last owner. It is our property values and our money to make repairs that may be at stake. A notice will be put out in the bulletin boards and possibly a flyer to alert residents of the actual meeting date and time.

David Mintzer reported that his home had been burglarized on December 9, while they were at a concert. He explained the details of what happened. A Jewelry box and flashlight were taken. Entry was made through a broken window. Sondra Keleman followed on details of a similar break-in at her home about two years ago.

Rita Winer read from a note she had written to criticize Syd Sonneborn, publisher of the Association's newsletter, and Gail Christiansen for not having a rebuttal article refuting the allegations set forth for the Board's Censure of her husband, Jerry Winer.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Syd Sonneborn,
Chair, Communications Committee

Landscape Report for HOA Board Meeting,
December 21, 2010

Howard Butzer gave the Landscape Report:

Our tree trimmers will be finishing up as soon as the weather permits and they will be removing two eucalyptus trees as part of the Board plan to remove two each year.

When the police investigated the recent robbery at 41556 Navarre, they noted the importance of keeping the patio shrubbery trimmed down in order to keep potential burglars from having a cover. When we do our monthly landscape walk-through, we note patios that are overgrown and need trimming for the esthetic appearance of the property and Management sends out letters to homeowners to take care of these problems. Here is another reason we homeowners need to keep our patios free of overgrown plants, shrubs, vines, weeds, etc.

Just a reminder to ALL dog owners:

Even though you may walk your dog in behind houses by the outer wall where there is very little walking traffic, you still **MUST** pick up after your pet. I walk it and our landscapers and crew walk these areas at least once every week and, if you have ever accidentally stepped in a pile of dog manure, left by a lazy and irresponsible pet owner, you know how exasperating and disgusting this is!

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Butzer, Landscape committee

A final forum for homeowners was held. Dog dropping problems and another possible tree removal due to overgrown roots were discussed.

THIS IS MY PROPERTY

By Syd Sonneborn

A series of incidents, City and Resident apathy as well as indecision (procrastination) have evolved in and around our Association, Casablanca HOA. Some recent ones include residential burglaries, irrigation equipment

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issues, the sale of portions of the Portofino property, damage to the north perimeter wall, residents not cleaning up after their pets, and an entry gate damaged by a run away car. The Board experiences homeowners' disregard for the Association's Rules and CC&Rs and hears complaints when the Board enforces them.

Many of us tend to develop a laissez-faire attitude about much of these type of things and just want to "go about our business" without "making any waves".

On the other hand, we complain to our Board of Directors or Association Management if something is a bit amiss when it impinges on our "personal space" of our home or the view from a window. We want the most we can get for the money we contribute for the monthly assessment we pay to the Association. We also want to maintain or improve the investment we have made and the resale value of our homes.

Investments of all kinds do require constant maintenance. It is not enough to just turn it over to someone else "for a fee" but it requires personal involvement, diligence and time.

The point I am trying to make is that we need your personal involvement in helping to maintain your investment in Casablanca. We need volunteers for our Neighborhood Watch program, the Emergency Response Team, Association Committees, and people to serve as Board of Directors members. One can also make a contribution by just simply picking up a piece of scrap paper from the street.

All the common property in Casablanca is your property too. Treat it as such. Help maintain it any way you can.

Coming up on January 4, 2011, is a Palm Desert City Planning Commission meeting at the City Council Chambers. The meeting is scheduled for 6 PM. Residents of Portofino and Silver Sands are planning to attend this meeting also.

We need as many residents as possible to attend to make sure the Planning Commission and new City Council knows that the residents of Casablanca are concerned about what decisions the Council members may make in reference to Portofino and that we intend to watch and make sure the decisions conform to City ordinances and codes.

This issue of your Casablanca was produced by:

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