

Highwoods of Madison HOA

October 2018

HAPPY FALL Y'ALL

Soon the crisp mornings of fall will be evident even though summer temps are still lingering! The leaves are going to start falling but the grass growing has slowed down. Football is the topic of conversation and fall decorations are showing up; so it must be time for our fall update from the Highwoods HOA Board of Directors.

Our neighborhood looks great with the newly paved streets. It took a long time to finally see the results of YEARS of correspondence with and promises from our elected City of Madison and County of Madison officials but it finally paid off!

The front entrance and monument have had new plants in the last few months (a couple new junipers still remain to be installed at the monument but they are coming from the nursery shortly!) Several front entrance landscape lights have been repaired and after some investigations over the summer, the electrician has the monument light, wall sconces, and timers working again. The sprinkler leaks have been addressed. The landscaper is ready to do some fall cleanup at the entrance and has begun some pest control on the magnolias, holly and lantana at the front entrance.

Updating the lighting and look of the front entrance are on the planning board for the future. However, budgetary constraints are holding back those projects. An increase in HOA assessments is planned for January. We have not had an increase in 5 years so while expenses have steadily increased our income has not. Please see a note regarding assessments on the next page.

If you have any suggestions for updates to the front entrance or the neighborhood, please let the Board know. Input from all neighbors is important to keeping our neighborhood looking great and you don't have to wait until the annual meeting to voice your thoughts. Simply call a board member or send an email (someone always responds within a day to acknowledge your email).

Welcome to your new neighbors who have moved in since the spring:

Randy & Jackie House 126 Highwoods
Seth Wingrove & Michelle Dittloff 150 Highwoods
David & Leigh Ann Carr 115 Silvertree Xing
Clay & Libb Crosswhite 116 Silvertree Xing
Trey & Melissa Rice 121 Silvertree Xing
Gretchen Halloway 134 Spindlewood
Nick & Casey Anderson 248 Sycamore
Patricia Melvin 134 Woodberry

*Thank you Dick
Largel for always
welcoming our new
neighbors so
promptly!*

Annual Assessment Letters will be mailed
January 1st.

Annual HOA meeting is in February
(date to be announced).

Assessments must be paid no later than the meeting
to avoid a late fee.

Watch your email and Nextdoor for the date of our
Annual Meeting and any other important HOA
announcements.

Interested in being more involved in the
neighborhood? Have you thought about being part of
the Board of Directors? Want to help plan
neighborhood activities? Or help decorate the front
entrance for the holidays?

Email the HOA or call a Board Member to find out
more about getting involved with your HOA or
joining the Board. Elections are held at the
February Annual Meeting

Highwoodsmadison@gmail.com

HOA Board of Directors

Feb 2018-Feb 2019

President

Trey Tracy
601-397-1446

Vice-President

Winky Newman
601-594-6682

Secretary

Patricia Bynum
601-842-2421

Treasurer

Marty Prater
601-955-1606

Member-at-large

Josh Dennis
601-497-0332

Member-at-large

Lisa Thompson
601-209-2355

Highwoods Mailing Address

PO Box 2364

Madison, MS 39130

Highwoods Email address

highwoodsmadison@gmail.com

Financial Updates

2019 Assessments \$198.00

Annual assessments have been \$180 for the last 5 years. HOA income has not increased but our annual expenses have steadily been increasing. The Board has determined that an increase to the annual assessment is needed to keep up with the increase in expenses and to budget for any future projects. The covenants allow for up to a **10% increase per year** without a vote, Article IV, Section 3(a); Increases over 10% per year require a full vote of the homeowners. Our new annual assessment will be \$198.00 beginning in January 2019.

Our annual income is \$19,080 (106 homeowners x\$180). This income pays for our landscaping, insurance, electric and water bills, postage and PO Box rental, welcome baskets, and misc. repairs (usually electrical and sprinklers).

Two years ago, we installed security cameras at the front entrance (which have assisted the Madison Police Department and our neighbors with several cases, so well worth the investment) and replaced the fencing at the entrance on Highwoods and repaired fencing on Rice Road. The cost for these two major projects was \$21,000. Last year we updated our covenants and had some electrical repairs resulting in payments of about \$6,000. The current year has been much kinder to the checking account but we are anticipating more repairs to the front entrance lighting as it is no longer aging gracefully.

Updating the front entrance appearance and replacing the lighting (39 regular landscape lights, 2 large landscape lights, 2 sconces and 1 monument sconce) will easily run \$12,000 to \$15,000 for both depending on the scope of the project. The increase to \$198 will result in \$1,908 more in the budget for 2019. If other expenses remain consistent, we could anticipate replacing the front entrance lights in 2019 and possibly start work on the front entrance updates the following year.

All HOA projects and expenditures are discussed at the annual meeting in February. If you have any input as to how the HOA could improve the front entrance, please feel free to contact the Board via the email address.

HOA Covenants Highlights

- ❖ **Exterior changes to your home and landscaping probably require HOA approval.** If you are changing paint colors, removing trees, adding a fence, replacing a roof or any project that can be seen from the street, please contact the HOA prior to starting your project. Usually a quick email exchange can keep your project on track. Some projects (like a new roof) require a letter from the HOA in order to obtain a permit from the City of Madison. All reputable roofers in the area are aware of this requirement. If your roofer doesn't mention the permit, consider a different roofer.
- ❖ **Dead trees in your yard should be removed.** For safety sake, please check your trees and any dead ones should be removed by a professional. A dead tree can be hazardous to your home and your neighbor's home. You could be liable if your dead tree falls on your neighbor's house so before the winter winds roll in contact a professional and have that dead tree removed. There are a number of recommendations on Nextdoor for tree removal companies.
- ❖ **Parking of recreational vehicles in your front yard and driveway is prohibited.** The occasional overnight when coming home from a long day of fun is ok but more than that violates covenants.
- ❖ **Yard maintenance is required.** This includes edging sidewalks/driveways, removing weeds, maintaining flower beds and bushes, raking leaves. There are always businesses and neighborhood teens looking for yard jobs on Nextdoor if you don't have time to maintain your yard on your own this fall.
- ❖ **Exterior home maintenance is required.** Gutters should be kept clean and in good repair if they are present. Chipped paint should be addressed. (a change in paint color requires HOA approval). Damaged shutters, garage doors, etc. should be repaired.

Covenants and by-laws are emailed to all new homeowners but all homeowners should review them periodically. Contact the Board for a copy: highwoodsmadison@gmail.com

Covenant violations are dealt with initially with an email or letter. If no response is received to the initial contact, a second letter is sent via mail. Should there still be no response, *the third letter will come from the HOA attorney and it will incur legal expenses for the homeowner.*

Legal fees start at \$157.00. The HOA will pay the lawyer but the homeowner, per the covenants, will reimburse the HOA for legal fees to enforce the covenants.

The Board is more than happy to avoid legal fees so please respond to any letters/emails promptly. Any extenuating circumstances (illness, injury, etc) will be taken into account if the HOA is notified. However, simple failure to respond to the HOA letters in a timely manner does not eliminate a homeowner's obligation to adhere to the HOA covenants. Simply send an email to the HOA email or call a board member if you are contacted regarding a covenant violation.

Crepe Myrtle Infestation

By now you have probably heard about the infestation in central Mississippi that is destroying crepe myrtle's. A sure sign your crepe's have the infestation is if they are looking black with white fuzzy specks on the trunks and limbs. This infestation will not go away on its own and will eventually kill your crepe myrtles and make a sticky, black mess in the process. While it is too late in the season to apply a systemic insecticide drench to the soil as the trees are no longer actively growing this year, you can still spray the trees and kill the active aphids. There are several arborists in the area who can be of assistance and the local garden centers can also provide more detailed guidance. There are also several conversations on Nextdoor discussing the crepe myrtle infestation. If you notice the black soot on your crepe myrtles, please seek out a treatment.

The HOA does not recommend any particular product or treatment but please do something as this infestation will not go away on its own and will continue to spread without treatment not only killing crepe myrtles but making a black sooty mess around the trees.

Recommendations from Nextdoor conversations include the following:

- Mike at Gardens Works 601-856-3078
- Stephen Perkins at Tree Tech 662-832-8733
- Systemic Treatment (only during growing season)
 - Bayer Tree & Shrub Protect and Feed (HD)
 - Systemic Tree & Shrub Drench (amazon)
 - Dominion 2L (amazon)
- Dormant oil Spray (use year-round)

You have probably noticed all the utility marking on our new streets. AT&T is installing fiber in the neighborhood. HOA President Trey Tracy has been in contact with the City of Madison, American Drilling and AT&T as the HOA was not notified of this project prior to it starting.

As the project moves forward, we hope there will be no damage to our new streets and our repaired yards after the C-spire installation.

Should you have any issues with work on your street and your yard, please let the HOA know so we can stay on top of any needed repairs.

Watch your email for updates regarding this project and a phone number for AT&T project manager.

