

## PINE CONE REVIEW

January 24, 2018

Greetings Pine Forest Owners and Happy New Year!

I'm sitting at my desk in our cabin on Rocky Top, looking out onto the dense clouds and falling snowflakes. The last week in The Methow has definitely had its moments, stretching into days of low clouds and generally gloomy weather. Snow has been falling though, temperatures (almost too) moderate and the skiing good.

This note provides a summary of the January 14, 2018 Board meeting and news in general for Pine Forest (PF). If you would like to read meeting minutes, they are now posted on the PF website, in the drop-down banner for Governance.

### **New Owners:**

Please welcome new owners Jordan Barrows and Rebecca Gerhart! They recently purchased the home previously owned by Vicki and Larry Anderson.

### **Budget/Dues/Fiscal Year:**

PF ended 2017 with a small budget surplus, adding to the funds we had on hand at the beginning of the year. We will provide specific numbers once the books are reconciled. As of the January 14, 2018 meeting we had about \$37,000 on hand for general use. In addition, we have \$96,000 earmarked for the Shaded Fuel Breaks Project and \$10,000 in refundable building deposits.

Looking ahead to 2018 The Board voted to change the PF Fiscal Year from a calendar year to one beginning July 1 and ending June 30. The primary reason for the change is to match the budget/fiscal year with the members' vote on the budget, which currently happens at the annual meeting in late May.

*As a result of this change we will have a year of transition for billing in 2018.*

- The week of February 5, we will send invoices for 1/2 the total 2017 annual dues and water fees.
- A *second billing* will be sent in June following owner ratification of the 2018/2019 budget. In addition to the usual categories, the proposed budget will include adding funding to create a Reserve Account to cover "unexpected costs," such as the emergency repairs related to the water system.
- The *summer 2018 billing* will be for a full year. Subsequent annual billings will thereafter be in June.

As described in Board meeting minutes, the Board is continuing its evaluation of current accounting/bookkeeping services with the primary purpose of maximizing efficiencies. Our goal is to reduce logistical issues associated with mail and banking and with turnover of the volunteer treasurer position. In addition, we are seeking a professional service with both a holistic understanding of the operation of an HOA and its associated accounting requirements.

### **Water System:**

Fingers crossed, we have not had any issues with the water system infrastructure in several months. Bill Ellis has agreed to be the Board lead on water issues and will be working with Brad

to recommend to The Board a priority list of the system repair and updates that are needed. Budget planning will reflect costs to address identified priorities.

PF did have a failed water test on December 4, 2017. This is a rare occurrence and, after an immediate second round of expanded testing, the water tests passed State inspection. It is likely the contamination occurred at some point in the collection or testing of the water.

### **Roads and Snow:**

As always, owner opinion on winter road maintenance continues to run the full spectrum of satisfaction. Jim Wurzer, the Board's lead for road issues, will be writing a description of the parameters represented in our current contract for plowing and will post that on the website. We will also continue to explore the issue of sanding, which, as with snow pushback from the roads, incurs additional costs beyond those specified in the plowing contract. In light of the additional costs, the Board is mindful that decisions to call for sanding need to be strategic, so that, for example, sand isn't quickly rendered ineffective by new snow. One solution that needs additional consideration is placing barrels of sand at notoriously slippery spots that could then be accessed as needed for immediate sanding.

### **Shaded Fuel Breaks Project:**

Heather provided a general overview of the project status. She is still waiting to receive the invoices for the project before writing a complete summary of the outcome for work completed last fall. More detail is available in the minutes but, in brief, due to some key modifications, the project costs are less than the work done in 2016. We, again, extend our thanks to Heather Dean and Steve Meyers for the significant time they've donated to manage this project.

### **Garbage:**

Brad commented owners did a great job over the holidays of better managing use of the dumpster...fewer recyclables in the dumpsters as well as items that cannot be hauled away. Thank you!!

We will be placing a sign at the dumpster site with a few key reminders to owners on the Do's and Don'ts of dumpster use.

### **Committees:**

FireWise: Jim Wurzer will organize a meeting of the FireWise Committee to prioritize goals plan for future action.

By-Laws: Jim Harrison is heading up the effort to review the PF By-Laws that are woefully outdated. We will submit an update proposal to owners at the annual meeting.

### **Meeting Dates:**

The next Board meeting is Sunday, March 25 in PF. The location is to be decided.

The annual meeting, to be held over Memorial Day weekend, is scheduled for Saturday, May 26.

With thanks for your support,

Anne Fox  
Board President