

Stanton Farms Townhomes HOA Newsletter

January/February 2015

Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Community Associates Institute

2011 Medium Community HOA

The Stanton Farms Townhomes Homeowner's Annual Meeting for 2014 was held on Tuesday, December 9. Thanks to everyone who made it possible to achieve a quorum at our annual Homeowner's Meeting. Charla "Char" Newcomb was elected to the Board of Directors for a 3 year term by a vote of acclamation. Candyce Cavanagh of Orten, Cavanagh, and Holmes, LLC, answered questions regarding the updating of our 30 year old documents as well as questions about why fees can vary from community to community. Two directed proxies were submitted and voted to approve the updated documents. Michele Giometti, CPA, reviewed the steps she performs in our annual audit. She reviews both the income and the expenses for the Association. The majority of her time is spent on the expenses and she reviews most of the invoices. She reads the minutes for the meetings of the Association and also cross checks the payments to the contractors to make sure they are in agreement with the contracts for the Association's contractors. The Reserve expenses are closely checked. The notes in the most recent audit (2013) state that Reserves should be funded, held in a separate account, and not available for normal operating expenses.

Thank you, Susan Sands

Susan answered the call to fill a vacancy created on the Board in 2013. In the time she served on the Board, Susan was actively involved in reviewing our 30 year old documents and assisted in updating and clarifying those documents as well as addressing the other needs of the entire community. Also, during this time she remained an active and hard-working member of the Landscape Committee in which she has participated since it was formed in 2009.

Our thanks to you, Susan, for your willingness & efforts in helping to make our community a better place for all of us.

A Message to All from Susan...."I would like to thank the Stanton Farm Townhome Community for its support while serving on the Board of Directors. I met and worked with some amazing owners who gave great direction on the needs of the community. I hope you will continue to support & guide our current & dedicated board members in their quest to serve you."

Thank you and Farewell, Sherry McManus-Anderson

Sherry resigned from the Board of Directors, effective January 15, 2015. She recently married and her husband accepted a position in Illinois, where they will be relocating. While serving on the Landscape Committee, Sherry worked very hard to improve our community in that area. Then in December, 2012, she was elected to the Board of Directors and has served as Secretary/Treasurer for the past 2 years. At the beginning of those 2 years, the clarification and updating of our documents began and she also accepted that responsibility. As a homeowner, committee member, and Board member, Sherry has been instrumental in improving and moving our community forward.

Our thanks to you, Sherry, for your dedication & hard work and our best wishes to you & Terry.

The Board of Directors meet the second Tuesday of each month beginning at 7:00 pm at the Lilley Gulch Rec Center. Homeowners are invited and encouraged to attend and become aware of the issues that affect all homeowners, become more knowledgeable about the state of our community, and hear what improvements are being made.

Beginning in February, 2014, a time for homeowner education was added to the agenda near the beginning of each meeting. In 2014, specific areas that required necessary maintenance or improvements were discussed during this section. In 2015, the focus will be on addressing the items that affect the budget. There are approximately 45 separate line items that need to be considered when the Board prepares the budget and what will be the impact on the entire community. If you have any comments or questions regarding the budget, please bring these to the Board before, not after, the budget has been prepared. The following individuals are scheduled to attend the upcoming Board Meetings -----

Tuesday, Feb 10, 2015 - Jim Figg - Western Maintenance
He will discuss and answer questions regarding snow & ice removal from our streets.

March 10, 2015 - Pat Wilderotter - Cherry Creek Insurance
She will do the annual review of the Insurance Policy for the Stanton Farms Townhomes HOA & answer questions.

?? What Factors Affect the Fees in a Townhome Community ???

Homeowners have questioned the monthly fees in our community and a couple years ago one homeowner actually compared our fees to those in a number of other Associations. That list of Associations was reviewed to determine similarities and differences with Stanton Farms Townhomes. There were many differences between our Association and those. Again at the Homeowner Meeting in December, 2014, a comparison of fees with another community was made. (Continued on Page 2)

Factors affecting the fees we pay Continued

The comment by the homeowner regarding fees in December, 2014, was that our fees would out price us to the competition. However, there are many things that should be considered when comparing fees from one community to another. The physicals needs have a huge impact. Questions to consider are what is the size and layout of the property, what is the age of the property, and how well have the buildings, etc., been maintained in the past and are being maintained now. Then there is the financial side of the picture. To compare Associations to each other, the budget must be considered. What items are included in the budget that determine the fees for the individual homeowner? Associations with lower assessments often put more obligations on the individual homeowner. Other big questions are "How well have the reserves been funded?" and "Have there been special assessments?" Our community is 30 years old and many areas can no longer be ignored. In the past couple years, 6 new roofs have been installed because "repairing" them was not an option. Our reserves should be funded to a higher level. The plan set forth 5 years ago was to address the physical and fiscal needs of our community by using the fees to take care of these areas. Other communities have found it necessary to levy a special assessment or obtain a loan to maintain their community and protect the value of their homes. The hard fact is that if the community is no longer well maintained and desirable the value of our homes and our community decrease.

The question is "How much is your home – your investment - worth to you?"

**NO
PARKING**

**FIRE
LANE**

Towing in Fire Lanes

To help keep our community in compliance with the 2012 International Fire Code, Wyatt's Towing does random checks any day of the year and

any time of the day for vehicles that are parked in fire lanes or non-designated parking spots. The guidelines for parking are outlined in the rules established for our community in June, 2013, and are posted on the Stanton Farms Townhomes official website -

(www.neighborhoodlink.com/Stanton_Farms_Townhomes) - or are available from the Management Company. **It is important for everyone living here that emergency responders are provided with the required access on our streets and to our homes.**

Warning to Pet Owners!!! A recent article in the *Columbine Courier* warned pet owners that it is breeding season for coyotes and attacks on dogs, foxes, etc., increase. To help protect your pets against coyotes don't leave pets outside unsupervised, even if it is inside a fence & it is daytime; keep dogs on a 6 foot, non-retractable lease; throw rocks & yell to drive the coyotes away; and don't feed or turn your back to a coyote.

Marla LaFore, CMCA - Community Manager
Phone: 303.221.1117 x 109
Fax: 303.468.9404

A homeowner comments.....

My husband and I purchased a unit in Stanton Farms a little over two years ago. We are very happy to be a part of this community. However, when we were considering this purchase, one of our hesitations was the concern about the overall condition of the Stanton Farms Townhome community. We are pleased to have a Board that is working hard to address the issues that were causing deterioration of the units, the landscaping, etc. One of the attractions to the Stanton Farms community is the low HOA fees. We are not thrilled that the HOA fees have increased twice since our purchase; however the necessity of establishing an adequate reserve level, coupled with necessary improvements justify the increases.

One of my personal concerns about being a member of a Townhome Association is whether a large number of homeowners can come together in a unified manner to accomplish goals for the greater good of all involved. I am disappointed that it has taken so long and has thus increased the costs we all must bear for the By-Laws, Declarations and Articles of Incorporation to be approved. I have attended many of the meetings, read the documents in detail, submitted change requests which were made, re-read the changes, and even read another homeowner's objections.

As an active member of this community and as a concerned homeowner with a financial stake in this investment, I appeal to those who have not yet voted and those opposed to approving these documents to please pull together and help us to unite so that we can move forward with much needed improvements. The ability for our community to compete in the resale market depends on the solid foundation of a productive, cohesive Association.

We are very appreciative of the many improvements that have taken place since we became owners. The landscaping is better cared for, exterior painting is well underway (although our building is waiting its turn!), repair of gutters, walks, etc. continue to be addressed. All this has been achieved because of fellow homeowners who serve on the board as unpaid volunteers and put in time and energy so that OUR community is safer, more valuable and more attractive. So, please let's pull together as neighbors, as a community. **Anita Haynes**

A Heart-Warming Story Straight from the Heart

Recently Wendell & Louise Mercer, 2 residents in our community, were leaving the store after finishing their shopping. They were approached by a lady who handed them an envelope and said, "This is from Frank." Wondering who from their past this person could be, they went to their car, loaded their purchases, and looked inside the envelope. It contained a new, crisp \$100 bill. Thinking the lady must have mistaken them for someone else, Wendell returned to the store in hopes of finding the lady. When he found her, he told her he felt there had been some mistake. No, there had been no mistake. Frank, a friend of the lady, had passed away and had asked her to randomly distribute \$100 to people she met during her daily routine. On the outside of the envelope was written "Merry Christmas" and inside a heart shape was the name "Frank".

