

**Jackie Leger**

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**From:** GRAND HAVEN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT <dave@www-grandhavencdd.ccsend.com>  
on behalf of Office <Office@ghcdd.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2023 12:12 PM  
**To:** Vanessa Stepniak  
**Subject:** Highlights from the GHCDD REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING 08/17/2023

# GRAND HAVEN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT NEWS



**To: All Grand Haven Residents**

**From: Kevin Foley, GHCDD Board Chairman**

**Re: Highlights from the GHCDD Regular Meeting and Public Hearing, August  
17th, 2023**

- One of the first things we did was to recognize Barry for his 15 years of great service to the Grand Haven community in his capacity as Operations Manager. The community is fortunate to have Barry's knowledge and commitment to doing things in a high-quality way.
- The business highlight of the agenda was the finalization and acceptance of the 2024 Budget. Our annual assessment will increase by 7.5% from \$2538 to \$2729 or \$191. Most of the increase comes from Operations and Management where there were significant increases in our landscaping contract, staffing, and amenity operations to name a few.
- Our landscaping contract is now going back out to bid and we expect a good number of responses to consider in September. We do not expect decreased cost but hopefully, the competition will dampen the increases. It is important to consider the age of our landscaping and that it takes an increasing amount of labor and plant material to keep it looking good.
- Our payroll is higher partly because we are now fully staffed and that's unusual but at the same time we are paying more in hourly wages. Despite that, I think we are being reasonable with compensation as we seem to be in line with Flagler Beach and Bunnell per their recent salary studies that we obtained.
- Another thing to consider is that we often use in-house staff to do projects that otherwise would be done by outside contractors at a higher cost. I also like to think that the work done by our employees reflects very high quality as they take ownership and pride in their work.
- The increase in amenity operations reflects the continued rising cost of maintaining all our amenities as they age. Keep in mind that amenities include all walking paths, parking lots, pool areas, roadways, buildings, etc., and are not just tennis, croquet, and the like.
- A smaller increase comes from the capital expenditure (capex) budget. The big-ticket items in there include continued spending to repair street, gutter, and sidewalk damage done by our growing live oaks and other related species that line Waterside Parkway and other streets. We anticipate that the cost will be over \$200,000, increasing annually. That is, of course, a lot of money so we are engaging with the University of Florida's horticultural school to do a written study and provide us with alternative, short and long-term, strategies to control that cost. We figure there are two extremes: do nothing or take out every tree. Neither of those are acceptable so we are eager to see what the experts have to say. The good news is that the study is free but it will take more than 9 months to get it done. We'd really like to make this a relationship with the school so they could help us out with ideas for things like managing our ponds and pond banks along with having their management school take a look at our long-term plan.

- The other big item in the capex budget is \$301,000 for a major part of the café renovation. This is an important project and really is the last major step in the overall renovation of the Village Center. There will be more information to come on this as the plans evolve and get finalized over the next several months. If all goes according to current thinking, work will begin in mid-2024.

**At the meeting preceding the public hearing we did a few things:**

- Our counsel and his counterpart from the FCSO reached an agreement in principle that calls for the FCSO to patrol our streets and enforce traffic laws as they do in the rest of Palm Coast. The agreement is customary and required by the FCSO because they consider GH a completely private community given that our bonds are fully paid off. There will be no additional cost to GH for this service.
- A resident brought up the subject of too many drivers speeding on our roads. It continues to be an issue and maybe new FCSO patrols will help. We tried to address the issue by installing 4-way stops at Creekside and at the Village Center and that has surely helped. The sense is that most people drive carefully within the speed limits however there are some who do not. The board may consider additional measures with the advice of our new point of contact in the traffic division of the FCSO.
- Since the cost of a new gate access card has increased to almost \$10 we agreed to pass along all increases up to \$20 for new cards.
- The board directed management to install an automatic door to the café so access will be easy for everyone. We have had trouble with a bad make-up air unit on the café roof that routinely fails, creating a vacuum in the café resulting in difficulty opening the doors for all of us. While that unit is being replaced (remember amenity expense increases mentioned above) it just seems to us that we need to consider “ease of access” for our less mobile residents in all our facilities. This is a bit of a mindset change and it may not be cheap but we think it is the right way to go.
- A resident brought up the issue of pedestrian and bike access to GH. We have to make a decision on this since we are restricting vehicle access to GH to only residents, guests, and those who have legitimate business here. So, the board will consider whether to have some sort of gate access at the five primary gates to The Crossings, Wild Oaks, and the eastern side of GH.
- There is some concern about the bookcases that will be taken out of the café as part of the renovation. We agreed to consider putting those books in the Creekside building; probably at the entrance area on the north side.

- There was some discussion about what assistance amenity employees can provide to those needing to use the pool lift to gain access. None of us like the answer but facilitators are limited to only providing instruction on how to use the lift. The ADA provides that the person in need has to be able to access the lift by himself. We know that can be easier said than done so some folks provide assistance from a spouse, friend, relative, or caregiver.
- Several residents came to the meeting to ask that the dog park in Wild Oaks be allowed to remain open. The truth is that, although we are considering other locations for a dog park, we did not intend for the one in Wild Oaks to close.
- One resident indicated that brush growth in the common area around her home was posing a serious danger in the event of a fire. If you feel there is an issue around your home then please call the CDD office at 386 447 1888 to inform staff. We have a budget that we completely spend every year for Firewise brush removal. We may need to increase that budget so the board may consider it with the advice of management and our horticultural contractor.

Thanks for reading and feel free to comment by email to [office@ghcdd.com](mailto:office@ghcdd.com)

Kevin Foley

Chair, Board of Supervisors



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