

Countryside Homeowners' Association, Inc. 2023 Winter Newsletter

March 2023

To all new and ongoing Countryside homeowners, this document serves as your notice for the annual homeowners' meeting, providing herein sufficient information for you to attend or provide a proxy vote for the meeting. The items below may be discussed and/or voted upon at the annual meeting. This is YOUR ASSOCIATION! We really need your input and strongly urge you to be present.

1. Annual Meeting Date, Time, and Location Announced

The Countryside Homeowners' Association Inc. annual meeting will be May 3, 2023 at 7:00PM. The meeting will take place in a virtual meeting room. Information on joining the meeting will be available at <http://www.countrysidevt.org/business.html>

2. **Annual Budget Vote**

The Board of Directors has prepared proposed budget to be voted on at the annual meeting. The proposed budget is based on meeting the Association's 2023 anticipated operating and capital expenses. The proposed budget meets this objective. The Board has determined that the annual assessment will need to rise to \$155 for 2023 in order to meet our operating needs. We encourage you to review the proposed budget and attend the meeting where the proposed budget's details will be discussed. If the budget is adopted by the membership, the assessment will increase to \$155.00.

For a more detailed accounting of the proposed budget, and to obtain copies of the Association's 2023 financial statements, please contact the Association Treasurer at treasurer@countrysidevt.org. These documents will be delivered by return email. If you want printed copies of the document please specify that in your email.

3. Payment of the Annual Assessment

The Board would like to thank the homeowners in our community who pay their annual assessment in a timely manner. The Board has an obligation to its members to ensure collection of the assessment and it is incumbent upon each homeowner to ensure timely payment. You will receive a statement for the assessment, along with the spring newsletter, in mid May. If a payment plan is needed, take the initiative to contact the Treasurer or an Association Board member. We are aware that this year's timeline is different than in previous years. There may be additional changes pursuant to the transition to professional management of the Association proposed below.

4. Proposed Budget Items

This year's budget includes funding for:

- transitioning to professional management of the Association's business (discussion below);
- pool attendants as usual;
- maintenance of the median garden; and
- adding additional sun shading to the pool area.

Our Fund Balance continues to grow in anticipation of future infrastructure needs (e.g., pool, tennis courts).

We welcome bids for projects and accounting from qualified parties (preferably from the neighborhood). Please contact the Board at board@countrysidevt.org.

While most of the proposed 2023 budget reflects standard operating/minor improvement costs, the proposed transition to professional management warrants some explanation. In recent years, it has become apparent that the operation of Countryside Homeowners' Association, Inc. is time-consuming and effort intensive, and service on the Board does not attract much interest. The current Board estimates that this is due at least in part to the expectation, developed over years, that service on the Board entails not only equitable, measured, and informed decision-making, but also operational responsibilities such as contracting for maintenance services, accounting, staffing the pool, and mailing this newsletter.

Having identified this as a challenge, the current Board obtained proposals from three providers of suitable services, two local and one regional/national concern, and determined that Garrett's Properties can provide for the HOA's needs at the most reasonable cost to homeowners. Garrett's can handle the operational work currently handled by the Board — the mechanics of maintaining the HOA's shared property and membership notification and fee collection, lining up pool attendants, and distributing Resale Certificates, to name a few — and also offer improvements such as an online portal for accepting fee payments at a cost of \$30.00 per household per year above previous years' assessments. The new total would be \$155.00 per household per year.

While we recognize that any increase at all may be a hardship for some of our members, our volunteer Board cannot sustain the level of involvement necessary to both make strategic decisions *and* perform the operational tasks necessary to maintain the quality of property and services we have come to expect as a neighborhood. The Board should be guiding the performance of these important tasks in accordance with the membership's expectations; instead we spend all available time performing the tasks, leaving little for soliciting- and responding to the community's input.

This is an opportunity to obtain professional services where needed while opening up the Board to spend more of their volunteer time engaging the community, determining what we want in common as a neighborhood, and providing a forum for discussion of those things. We hope, too, that such a change in the profile of the Board's work will entice others to join us in directing that engagement. And we look forward to discussing with you during the Annual Meeting in May.

5. Community Events

The date of the annual yard sale will be Saturday June 3 from 8:00am-2:00pm, and the CHA Board will provide the advertising in the local papers. Pickle Ball leagues and periodic "BYO" get-togethers at the Rec Area will continue again this year, with more information to follow in our May newsletter. If you would like to organize a community event like an ice cream social or community BBQ, please contact your CHA Board to coordinate.

6. Community Note and Contact Information Request

There have been changes in the CHA Board, and we have lost members. Please consider serving!

Our plan last year was to transition to email-only for communication with the community. Instead, the proposed management company will handle official bulk communications. However, we would like to maintain an email list for notification of social opportunities. If you have not already done so and wish to opt into these communications, please email board@countrysidevt.org including your name and home address by June 30, 2023. We will endeavor to coordinate maintenance of a master address list with the management company, but in the meantime will keep our own.

7. Selling Your Home

Whether by owner or with a realtor, a re-sale certificate from the Countryside Homeowners Association is NEEDED! Please contact our Treasurer in ADVANCE of your closing date. Please contact a Board member with any questions.

Please check our website regularly for updates: <http://www.countrysidevt.org>

Existing Board Members:

	President		president@countrysidevt.org
Evan Einhorn	Vice-President	802-872-1169	vicepresident@countrysidevt.org
Sam Hooker	Secretary	802-324-0500	secretary@countrysidevt.org
Micah Hagan	Treasurer	802-497-4034	treasurer@countrysidevt.org
Matthew Phillippo	Director	802-872-9885	board@countrysidevt.org
Gail Connors	Director	802-316-7182	board@countrysidevt.org

8. Proxy Voting

In the event that you will not attend the annual meeting, please complete and return the proxy to the Association. Return it by (1) mailing to the Countryside Homeowners' Association; PO Box 606; Essex Junction, VT 05453-0606; (2) placement in the drop box located at **13 Tamarack Drive**; or (3) scanning the completed form and emailing it to the Association at board@countrysidevt.org. For those who are unfamiliar with this process, voting by proxy is the legal means by which your vote will be included in your absence at the annual meeting.

To mail your proxy vote, use this form below:

COUNTRYSIDE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING 2023
BALLOT FOR PROXY VOTE

I, _____, residing at _____
(Please print name) *(Please print street address)*

do hereby assign the Countryside Homeowner's Association Board of Directors the right to cast my vote by proxy at the Annual Meeting on May 3, 2023. My voting preference is marked below.

Signed, _____ this _____ day of _____ 2023.
(Please sign here)

- YES I approve CHA 2023 Annual Budget
- NO I DO NOT approve the CHA 2023 Annual Budget

Please mail to Countryside Homeowner's Association, PO Box 606, Essex Junction VT 05453.

Vote must be received by May 3, 2023 to be included in the vote.

**Countryside Homeowners Association
PO Box 606
Essex Junction, VT 05453**

**Countryside Homeowners Association (CHA)
Annual Newsletter - March 2023**

**Countryside Homeowners Association
ANNUAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY MAY 3, 2023 – 7:00PM
ON-LINE**

ANNUAL YARD SALE

SATURDAY JUNE 3, 2023 – 8:00AM TO 2:00PM

COUNTRYSIDE HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.										
2022 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET										
Proposed March 21, 2023										
	2021	2021		2022	2022		2023			
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE	BUDGET	ACTUAL	VARIANCE	BUDGET		BUDGET	
INCOME										
Assessments	31,250	31,250	0	31,250	31,125	(125)			38,750	
Late Fees Income	0	255	255	0	50	50			0	
Miscellaneous Income	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	
TOTAL INCOME	31,250	31,505	255	31,250	31,175	(75)			38,750	
EXPENSES										
Accounting	1,200	975	(225)	1,200	1,275	(75)			0	
Administration	1,200	1,110	(90)	1,200	1,212	(12)			1,200	
Capital Expenses	2,500	2,060	(440)	2,500	1,725	775			2,500	
Electricity & Water	1,850	1,570	(280)	1,625	1,791	(166)			1,673	
General Repairs and Maintenance	3,500	0	(3,500)	3,500	0	3,500			4,000	
General Supplies	125	232	107	125	53	72			125	
Grounds Maintenance	3,800	1,710	(2,090)	2,296	5,327	(3,031)			4,000	
Insurance-Property	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	
Insurance-Liability/Directors & Officers	1,850	1,762	(88)	1,850	1,786	64			1,850	
Insurance-Workers Compensation	825	619	(206)	825	635	190			700	
Legal Expense	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	
Payroll Taxes	740	624	(116)	768	666	102			828	
Pool Attendants	7,400	6,901	(499)	7,681	7,645	36			8,280	
Pool Maintenance	5,600	5,590	(10)	5,600	5,820	(220)			5,700	
Port-O-Let	618	466	(152)	495	509	(14)			545	
Postage	350	143	(207)	368	146	222			250	
Social Activities	100	39	(61)	100	74	26			100	
Bad Debts					148	(148)			0	
Garrett Properties									6,825	
TOTAL EXPENSES	31,658	23,801	(7,857)	30,133	28,812	1,321			38,576	
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(408)	7,704	8,112	1,117	2,363	1,246			174	
PRIOR FUND BALANCE	26,346	25,938		33,642	34,759					
ENDING FUND BALANCE	25,938	33,642		34,759	37,122					