



Serenoa Sentinel

A Family & Golf Community

Published by The Serenoa Community Association

December 2023

Neighborhood Corner:

Serenoa is dedicated to the preservation of our tree canopy and the wildlife that is nourished and sheltered by it.

ATTENTION COMMUNITY

Serenoa is a canopy community. Please be advised that you are NOT allowed to cut down any tree in your yard without prior ARC approval. Please read the ARC guidelines and our Covenants on our website myserenoa.com or send any correspondence to serenoaarc@gmail.com.

Serenoa Men's Poker Club

If you are interested in playing in the Serenoa Poker Club, please call or email Dave Lechner at 941-586-6404 and dlechner7248@gmail.com

Ladies Bunco

Join us for Bunco! We play the third Wednesday of each month. There is a \$5 entry fee which go towards our prizes for the evening. We gather at 7P.M. and roll the dice at 7:30. Anyone who is interested in being a 'regular' or a 'substitute', please contact Karalyn Kibbey at 630-272-8001 or send an email to karalynk@comcast.net or kkibbey@brookdale.com.

2024 Serenoa Business Events Calendar

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
January 2024	ARC Community Inspection
January 15, 2024	Annual Homeowners Meeting- Club House @ 7 pm
March 18 2024	Board of Directors Meeting - Club House @ 7 pm
May 20, 2024	Board of Directors Meeting - Club House @ 7 pm
August 19, 2024	Board of Directors Meeting - Club House @ 7 pm
October 21, 2024	Board of Directors Meeting - Club House @ 7 pm
November 2024	ARC Community Inspection
December 2, 2024	Board of Directors Meeting - Club House @ 7 pm
Serenoa ARC meets every 1st Wednesday of the month at 7325 S Serenoa Dr @ 1 PM	

2023 Adult Social Calendar

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
January 13, 2023	Ghost of Christmas Past
March 26, 2023	Neighbor Open House
April 22, 2023	Around the World/Time Goes By
May 9, 2023	Co-Ed Bunco
June, July 2023	SUMMER
August 2023	BREAK
September 15, 2023	Ladies Coffee Social.
October 6-20, 2023	All Faith Food Bank – Cash preferred
October 14, 2023	Block Party
November 11, 2023	Blood Drive
December 9, 2023	Christmas Party
December 13, 2023	Ladies Gift Exchange

* Details will precede events

2023 Children Social Calendar

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
February 2023	Valentine Cupcake Decor
March 2023	Bingo
April 8, 2023	Easter Egg Hunt and Golf Cart Parade
May 2023	Play-doh sculpting challenge
June 2023	Summer Kick Off
July 2023	Scavenger Hunt
August 2023	Back to School
September 2023	Painting with a Twist
October 2023	Halloween Party
November 2023	Book reading & Book Exchange
December 16 2023	Christmas Party

* Details will precede events

Adult Christmas Party 12/9/23



Ladies Gift Exchange 12/13/23`





Kids Christmas Party 12/16/23









OUR AWESOME SERENOA MOMS !!!!!!!



SERENOA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, December 5, 2023
7:00 P.M.
SERENOA GOLF CLUB
NOTES

AGENDA

1 Call to order.

The meeting was called to order by President Martha Singler at 7:00 pm.

2 Proof of notice.

Meeting notice was properly posted by entrance sign, website and community-wide email.

3 Establish quorum.

Members present were Martha Singler, Kris Fanberg, Marc Miller, Cathy Aquaro, Cary Chichester, Joe Moon, and Robert Wiebusch represented PCM.

4 Approval of the October 16, 2023 meeting minutes.

Motion made by Cary Chichester, seconded by Joe Moon. The motion unanimously passed.

5 Board Member

Todd Leavenworth has resigned from the Board effective November 15, 2023. Rachel Angers has agreed to assume the Board position for the remaining term along with overseeing the Landscape for the Community.

Motion to appoint Rachel Angers as a Director to the Board made by Cary Chichester, seconded by Joe Moon. The motion unanimously passed.

6 Motions

- In the December 2022 Board meeting minutes, a unanimous decision by all present to bring the responsibility of the Sidewalk maintenance responsibility to a membership vote was made. The discussion that followed reiterated the way in which this issue could be brought before the community for a proposed covenant change. According to Robert's Rule, in cases where unanimous consent is already apparent, the chair may assume the passing of the subject being discussed. This was the case with the Sidewalk Initiative coming to a membership vote. In addition, we make the following motion.:

Cary Chichester moves to bring the proposed Sidewalk Initiative that seeks to transfer the responsibility of the sidewalk maintenance from the homeowners to the Association for a membership vote at the 2024 January Annual Homeowners Meeting. Seconded by Joe Moon. The motion passed unanimously.

- The American Disability Act (ADA) defines a trip hazard as any vertical change over ¼" or more at any joint or crack. Sidewalk slopes need to be less than 1:20 (1 inch rise

over 20” in length). Although the ADA is mandated primarily for public walkways, it is a good standard for private communities to adopt to prevent tripping hazards.

Mike Bell, Lot 21, stated that the Association could not adapt part of the ADA, that we would have to adopt the ADA in its entirety.

Martha Singler replied that this was not true, that we were able to use 2 of their criteria to minimize trip hazards. It is important that, going forward, Serenoa has standards with which to monitor potential trip hazards.

Larry Prohs, Lot 39 questioned why ADA standards would apply to us? It should not be private owner for ADA compliance.

Cary Chichester explained that we need a standard to define what needs to be repaired and the ADA is a good standard to adopt.

Larry Prohs, Lot 39 also spoke about the letter sent from the lawyer and how it dictates December 31 deadline for the sidewalk repairs. He asked what would happen if not done.

Cary Chichester explained that the board is now proposing a new deadline of March 1, 2024 to allow extra time for repairs and if not fixed by March 31, 2024, the HOA will initiate the repairs.

Residents from the ‘Sidewalk Committee’ also questioned why there was no vote on if the sidewalks should be brought up to standard.

Mike Angers, Lot 59, explained that there are many trip hazards existing on the sidewalks at present and it is a smart idea to have it fixed. There have been multiple falls, and it is good protection for everyone to have the sidewalks fixed.

Martha Singler also explained that the Board was advised by the Attorney that sidewalks should come into compliance prior to assuming responsibility of sidewalks.

Larry Prohs, Lot 39 stated that many homes have no ‘official sidewalk; per county.

Martha Singler replied that according to the Sarasota County Code of Ordinances, sidewalks are mandated in our community. This can be further discussed at the Sidewalk Workshop on 12/11/23.

Larry Prohs Lot 39 also strongly asserted that every word that was said tonight, according to Robert’s Rules, has to be in the minutes.

Martha Singler explained that minutes are not verbatim but the essence of what is discussed. (It was later verified that it is indeed the essence of what is said, not verbatim).

Sue Bell, Lot 21 expressed concern about missing motions in the past Board minutes.

Martha Singler stated that if the motions were not in the past minutes, then no motions were made. However, she would follow up with Sue about specific concerns.

Joe Moon moves to adopt the two above-mentioned ADA standards (1/4" and 1:20) for the resident sidewalks in Serenoa. Cathy Aquaro seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

- The membership will be voting at the 2024 Annual Homeowners Meeting on transferring the sidewalk maintenance from the individual homeowner to the Association. Should the membership meet the required vote for the community to assume the sidewalk maintenance responsibility, all notified homeowners that need sidewalk repairs are to be completed by March 1, 2024. For the sidewalk repairs that have not been completed, the Board will choose their vendor of choice to implement these repairs and then bill the appropriate homeowner for their respective sidewalk repair.

Cary Chichester makes a motion that should the Sidewalk Initiative pass, March 1, 2024 be the final date for residents who have outstanding sidewalk repairs to make these repairs according to the two specified standards (ADA). Should the resident not make this repair, the Board will initiate the repair and then subsequently bill the resident for the cost of the repair. Joe Moon seconded the motion. All board members were in favor except for Kris Fanberg. Motion passed.

- Should the Sidewalk Initiative pass (2/3rd's required for passing once a quorum is reached), the 2024 Operating Budget for the Sidewalk Maintenance is calculated at an additional \$150 per home to the approved 2024 HOA fees. This is derived from an average concrete repair estimate of \$850/job for 25 homes per year. The average is calculated by the estimates given by the contractors to the 50 homeowners that have requested them. Due to the maturity of our oak trees and the short-term fixes to the sidewalks that some homeowners have done, it is estimated that ¼ (25) of the homeowners with sidewalks will need repair in 2024. The \$150 per home includes an annual power washing of the sidewalks.

There was discussion of the \$150 increase in HOA dues per home should the Initiative pass.

Patti Quinnelly Lot 102 questioned the cost (\$150) and inquired about shaving sidewalks as she stated that is what Serenoa Lakes does and was told the cost was around \$6500.

Paul Cherry Lot 144 questioned why the HOA was asking for additional money prior to the Sidewalk Initiative passing. Questioned if the Initiative doesn't pass, will there be a refund?

Cary Chichester explained that the only way the residents will be billed \$150 will be if the Initiative passes. If it doesn't pass, there is no \$150 bill.

John Hashagen, Lot 75 wondered how fees would be affected if the Oak trees need to be taken down as the roots are causing problems.

Mike Bell, Lot 21 suggested cutting down the Oak trees as a solution.

Pam Williams Lot 179 that cutting down the Oak trees was absolutely not an option!

Larry Prohs Lot 39 asked if the date to vote could be moved.

Mike Anger Lot 59 explained that our insurance company knows there are problems with the sidewalks and if we do not address asap, they will drop us.

Larry Prohs Lot 39 asked if there was budget for sidewalks or money in reserves for them.

Marc Miller said that, at present, there is no budget for sidewalks in the Operating Budget or in the Reserves. He explained that the Reserves must be used for the line items that they were allocated for.

Duane Steyer Lot 192 introduced himself as a member of the Finance Committee and stated that there is a misconception that the Reserve fund is a pot of gold which is a fallacy. Reserve fund outlines all of HOA responsibilities - specifically states not for mailboxes, sidewalks, posts, etc. and other improvements on a lot. One example that the Reserves is for is the roads. We have a responsibility to use reserves for what they are outlined for – that's why HOA's go bankrupt if we do not adhere to this. If we want money for sidewalks, we must put money in.

Pam Williams Lot 179 stated that the sidewalks should not be the Board's responsibility, but the owners' responsibility and residents should be grateful that the Board is addressing their request. She also stated that she was horrified by the emotional outbursts of some of the residents present tonight towards the Board members. Pam also stated she was confused why \$150 is an issue for residents that are complaining about sidewalks and requesting that the Board take over care of sidewalks.

Marc Miller stated a reserve study is in the budget for 2024 and will be done next year. It hasn't been done for 10 years. He stated the \$150 per home could go up or down and that was for the experts to figure out during the reserve study.

Michael Patrick Lot 190 introduced himself as part of the Finance committee. He stated the Finance Committee had met the previous evening to go over the budget and there was nothing in the budget to deal with sidewalks. \$150 will be an additional fee for 2024 should the Initiative pass (there must be money to handle sidewalk repairs in 2024). If the vote passes, the budget committee will make sidewalks a line item.

Cary Chichester makes a motion to approve the \$150 addition to the approved 2024 HOA fees should the Sidewalk Initiative pass. Seconded by Joe Moon. All board members were in favor except for Kris Fanberg. Motion passed.

- **Joe Moon moves that, pending approval by the Membership, the Association formally undertakes and assumes the responsibility and obligation to maintain and**

repair all sidewalks within Serenoa (excluding sidewalks owned by the Golf Club) – whether the sidewalks are located on private lots or Association property. If approved by the membership, the Association would assume this liability as of March 31, 2024, which will provide the Association time to pursue compliance from current Owners who still bear the obligation to repair their sidewalks under the Governing Documents and historical practice of the Association. Seconded by Cary Chichester. Motion passed unanimously.

7 Correspondence/Property Manager Report – Bob Wiebusch

MANAGER’S REPORT

Since the October 16, 2023, meeting:

A letter was sent to Lot 182 regarding a propane gas tank not buried underground.

The Board of Directors will be adopting a budget for 2024 tonight, recommended by the Finance Committee. When the budget is adopted, PCM will mail a green invoice to every homeowner stating the 2024 annual dues. Mail your check to PCM.

Robert Wiebusch

Community Association Manager

8 Committee Reports:

• Finance - Marc Miller

Serenoa Treasurer Report

Our November report is not available as of today. For October, assets for operating were \$137,028 and \$1,464,919 for reserves. Total assets are up \$56,452 since 12/31/22 and are down \$1000 from September.

Operating had \$56,914 in liabilities. Total liabilities are \$16,276 lower than September.

All owners have paid their assessments.

Year to date operating income through October is \$2,724 higher than budget. Most expenses are either close to or under budget for the year to date, with the exception of tree trimming, irrigation maintenance and the security gate. Tree trimming is over due to the removal of trees. Earlier in the year the security gate had unexpected expenses.

Reserve interest income is \$31,957 through October, total interest income for 2022 was \$21,722.

Budget

Operating

Account 7150 Insurance - our insurance agent indicated a potential insurance premium increase in the spring of 2024 to \$8000.

Account 7235 Trees/Plants and Shrubs – this includes regular annual maintenance as well as hedges on Ibis, thus the increase.

Account 7270 Tree Trimming/Removal – year to date on that is over 17K. We anticipate having the same amount of activity in 2024 as well as tree trimming along Ibis.

Reserve study – we are recommending that a reserve study be conducted in early 2024. Estimated costs for a reserve study range from \$5,000 to \$6,000. The last reserve study was conducted in 2014 and should be updated for costs and conditions of components.

7480 Management fees – our management company will be increasing fees by 5% in 2024.

Reserves

- **Marc Miller made a motion to budget for future reserve studies based on the finance committee’s recommendation to create a reserve line item which will be added to the 2025 budget with an \$10,000 estimated cost and 10 year life resulting in \$1,000 funding per year. Seconded by Joe Moon. Motion passed unanimously.**

For Reserves, we have reduced lives for a year. It is estimated that road resurfacing costs have stabilized. The committee has recognized that the roads will need to be resurfaced. We believe that a reserve study will clarify the costs and lives of many of these components.

- **Historically, operating has paid the income tax that is associated with the interest being generated within the reserve account, then residents being assessed for that income tax. For the sake of matching with the taxable income, I make a motion to have reserves pay the income tax associated with the interest income instead of including that cost with operating assessments.**

Marc Miller made the motion, seconded by Joe Moon. Motion passed unanimously.

- **The wetland purchase costs reserve has a residual negative balance, we do not expect to incur any future costs on that, and I make a motion to transfer \$4959 of the unallocated interest to restore the wetlands reserve in lieu of assessing for the negative balance.**

Marc Miller made the motion, seconded by Joe Moon. Motion passed unanimously.

- **The finance committee has approved a budget in the amount of \$1105 per unit. We have tried to keep costs down and this is the first increase in 2 years, however costs have substantially increased over the last 2 years.**

Marc Miller made the motion, seconded by Joe Moon. Motion passed unanimously.

Marc Miller
Treasurer

- **Architectural Review – Patti Quinnelly**

There were no ARC meetings during October and November.

Approval was given for:

Repainting lots 114, 173, and 96.

Roof replacement for lots 109 and 130.

Generator installation for lot 111

- **Security/Gate - Mike Fanberg**

- **Gates-**

- Both electronic beams, one each on the incoming and exit sides, were replaced in November.

- Cost- \$989.00

- **Infrastructure - Joe Moon**

The pothole at the main entrance was repaired. Holiday decorations will be put up on December 6th. Nothing else to report at this time.

- **Pond Maintenance - Cary Chichester**

- **Serenoa Homeowners Association**

- **December 5, 2023**

- **Ponds Report**

- Water levels have declined in ponds that are only fed by rain and runoff from the storm drains.

- These ponds are very at this time, and I am concerned that there will be a surge of unwanted growth on the perimeters of these ponds in the coming months without some significant rainfall to raise those levels back up to normal. Levels in ponds that are linked to other ponds seem to be better for the most part.

- Gator activity was nearly nonexistent over the last 30 days with no nuisance activity reported.

- This concludes my report.

- Respectfully submitted,

- Cary Chichester

- **Welcome - Suzanne Reynolds**

- **WELCOME REPORT**

- **No Report**

- **Suzanne Reynolds**

- **Landscape Maintenance – Kris Fanberg**

- The tree behind the street signs at the entrance to the golf course was taken down and hauled away. Cost- \$450.00. Chanelos will remove the stump for an additional @250.00.

- Juniper will be returning to finish planting and spreading mulch at the entrance

- **Adult Social – Laura Williams/Patrice Leavenworth**

Social Committee meetings occur on the 4th Wednesday of each month to discuss and plan events for the Serenoa Community.

Since the last report, we have sponsored the following events:

- Serenoa's Annual Food Drive to benefit All Faith's Food Bank. It was a huge success. Donations totaled \$4,155.00 (41 donors), exceeding our goal of \$3,000.
- Our Annual Blood Drive took place on November 11th. A huge thank you to the 9 Serenoa residents who donated this year. Our hope is for a greater turnout next year.
- Look for photos of our recent events in the next issue of the Sentinel and consider joining us for future events!

Please mark your calendar with these upcoming events:

- Saturday, Dec. 9th ~ Holiday Party @ the Clubhouse RSVP by 12/4 to Sue Bell.
- Wednesday, Dec. 13th ~ Ladies' Gift Exchange, 7-10pm at Joyce McCoy's home. The social committee will supply appetizers and desserts. No RSVP necessary.
- Flier for both of these events were placed in tubes last week.

Please let us know if you have any suggestions or new ideas!

• **Children's Social - Catherine Davenport**

We will be hosting a Christmas party December 16th from 12-3 at the Serenoa Clubhouse. Hope to see everyone there!

• **Hearing - Sam Ralston**

Nothing to report for the hearing committee

Regards

Sam

9 **Unfinished Business**

• Nomination Committee – The following Board positions are coming open in 2024: Cary Chichester, Joe Moon, Kris Fanberg and Martha Singler. If you are interested in serving, PCM will be sending out the appropriate forms.

- **Form Letter from Attorney**

- A Form Letter was written by the community's attorneys asking 50 owners to make needed repairs to the sidewalks. A group of residents questioned this action by saying:

- **The letters are addressed to "Dear Owner" rather than to specific homeowners by name.**
- **The return address listed on the envelope shows Serenoa Community, 7017 N Serenoa Dr, Sarasota, FL 34241 (these were not mailed by the attorney's office or our Management Company, but rather by a board member)**
- **The letters were not sent by certified mail.**

According to our attorney, the Board was correct in how this was sent out (our attorney recommended that they construct the letter). The comments from our attorney are:

“As to that communication, there is obviously no problem with the Association having undertaken the responsibility to mail a letter, even though prepared by our office. Similarly, the letter was a form letter and there is no harm in addressing it to “Dear Owner” rather than modifying however many individual letters which would constitute an unnecessary expense. That letter was not a violation letter (meaning we could not immediately proceed with an enforcement action against the recipients – additional notices would be necessary for that) so there is no obligation for the letter to have been sent certified. If it gets to the point where we have to start demanding compliance and setting up enforcement actions – then those letters would have to be sent certified. “

The letters were sent to Lots

5,6,7,8,9,15,16,17,18,20,21,22,25,26,28,30,31,32,33,34,36,39,40,48,50,51,54,57,62,78,83,85,87,88,90,91,92,93,94,95,96,97,99,102,103,106,168,170,171,172

Martha Singler explained the Attorney wanted to construct the letter. The Attorney agreed the Association was within their rights to send the letter to residents. Martha Singler also stated she personally paid for postage, the mailing labels, and copies for all 50 letters as there was no need for them to be mailed certified. Martha then read all Lot #'s that had received letters.

Mike Bell Lot 21 asked who determined who received the letters?

Martha Singler answered that she and Dave Vokus, a civil engineer, did the inspections based on which sidewalks needed repair.

Larry Prohs Lot 39 questioned why the residents did not receive the list of lot numbers who received the letter 3-4 weeks ago when requested by him.

Pam Williams Lot 179 questioned Larry why he needed them and what difference did it make?

Larry Prohs lot 39 explained they could have had the opportunity as a group.

Martha Singler explained she has now given out lot numbers to satisfy any residents requesting them.

- **HOA Insurance** – With regard to our Association potentially taking over the sidewalk maintenance, our Insurance Agent says the following when informed that our attorneys had advised the Board to have all sidewalks come into compliance prior to transferring the responsibility:
“Yes, I agree with counsel that all repairs should be taken care of prior to the turn-over. If you are aware of any trip hazards when taking possession, you need to have them repaired ASAP or the board could be held personally negligent.”

10. New Business

- **Proxy wording for Sidewalks and Metal Roofs:**

Sidewalks:

The Board of Directors for the Association wants to assume responsibility for the maintenance and repair of all sidewalks within Serenoa (excluding those owned by the Golf Course). This includes sidewalks located on private lots. The Board would not assume this liability until March 31, 2024, in order to continue the pursuit of claims against current Owners whose sidewalks are currently in disrepair. If this vote is approved, the Board projects that annual assessments for all Owners will increase by approximately \$150.00 per year.

1. Sidewalk Initiative - Are you in favor of transferring the responsibility of maintaining the sidewalks from the individual homeowners to the Association?

2. Metal Roof - Are you in favor of adding premium metal roofs (prior approval for type and color of metal required by ARC) to the current selection of tile or asphalt for roof replacements?

Mike Bell Lot 21 questioned why metal roofs are now being approved when he had previously been turned down?

Martha Singler said that a survey was sent out to the community asking them if they wanted to vote on this subject at the Annual Homeowners Meeting. The response was favorable; residents wanted to vote on this.

Mike Bell Lot 21 He questioned how a metal roof already got approved?

Martha Singler said that ARC had approved a roof that contains metal (the underlayment) but looks like a tile roof. She was asked for input and agreed with ARC.

Kris Fanberg said that she was at the ARC meeting when this was approved.

Martha Singler made a distinction between this approved tile roof with metal underneath it and what is being presented to the residents for a vote. What is being presented is a completely different look than anything we have in our neighborhood. Only premium metal roofs, if the vote passes, would be allowed.

(below are the photos of metal roofs from the HOA email that was sent out on 9/20/23)



Mike Bell Lot 21 stated that all metal roofs looked alike.

Joe Moon explained that there are many types of metal roofs and only those with hidden fasteners would be considered.

• **2024 Board of Directors Meeting Dates**

January 15, 2024 – Annual Homeowners Meeting

March 18, 2024 – Board of Directors Meeting

May 20, 2024 – Board of Directors Meeting

August 19, 2024 – Board of Directors Meeting

October 21, 2024 – Board of Directors Meeting

December 2, 2024 – Board of Directors Meeting

- **Storm Drainpipe repair** needed at Lot 75, 6624 Taeda Dr. Two estimates came in at the same cost. 5' x 10' section. Saw cut at existing control joints. Patch the hole in the culvert pipe. Back fill the hole with dirt. Compact the ground. Form and pour the new section of sidewalk. \$975.00

Kris Fanberg made the motion for the Association to pay to have the storm pipe repaired and required concrete work done in front of Lot 75. Cary Chichester seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

11 Homeowner Comments

12 Date of the Next Meeting January 15, 2024

13 Adjournment at 8:29 P.M.