

Country Acres Homeowners Association – News – June 2014

Since the Annual Town Hall Meeting last October, your elected Board of Directors has been managing various CAHA responsibilities. Here's a summary.

Membership Dues Increase: CAHA dues cover lake treatment, grounds, insurance and other general CAHA expenses. Revenue from water billings is used only for water system operating expenses, including a reserve for future system renovation, upgrades and major repairs. Water system revenue has been sufficient to meet expenses and build the reserves, as reported at the Town Hall meeting.

Membership dues, however, have been barely sufficient to cover other CAHA expenses over the last few years. We've had increases in lake treatment costs, a major expense from May through September; and this year we have a \$900 dam inspection fee to pay. The dam inspection is required by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) every 5 years to ensure that the dam remains in sound condition. A qualified engineering firm does the inspection and writes a report to us and the DEQ.

As a result of increasing costs, the Board **increased dues by \$10 per household per year**, the first increase in over 10 years. Otherwise we would not have enough funds to operate without "raiding" the water system fund; and that's not the right thing to do. We keep the two funds separate.

CAHA Web Site: We've launched www.countryacresatpainterlake.com to provide CAHA information to members and the broader community. We expect to add information and post timely announcements in the future. Check it out.

Lake Treatment: We engaged All Things Water for the 2nd year. Their experienced technician served us well for many years while working for a different firm. When that firm was sold, there were changes, and our technician left. That was the year before last, when we had such poor results from the new operator.

Last year, our former technician was back, and we asked All Things Water to make their proposal for treatment services. He knows our lake, and has found some new ways to improve its condition, weeds, algae and lily pads. Also we

were able to get our annual treatment permit in to DEQ early this year and start treatment at a good time, no delays. The lake's looking good.

Beaver and Muskrats: As we all appreciate, we have a fair amount of wildlife in our community, and sometimes it's destructive. There was a beaver lodge in the west end of the lake, and there were lots of trees along the shore that were chewed up, cut down for building material. We had a trapper friend catch those furry tree choppers, and five large beaver were trapped. Mike Clancy has photos on his smart phone. Maybe Paul Hoge does too.

We also have muskrats that like to swim in our lake and drill lodges into the shoreline, including the lake's dam, a bad thing. Our trapper friend plans to catch them for us.

Derelict Boats at the Landing: We've had abandoned boats left at the launch area (or landing) for a few years, or more. They are clutter and create mosquito breeding grounds. Paul Hoge, our Lake Director, was authorized by your Board to find the owners, if possible, and ask for unused boats to be removed. All boats should be removed and stored elsewhere during the winter months. If Paul can't locate owners, the Board will authorize him to have the boats removed for scrap. Only CAHA members are permitted to have boats at the landing.

Keys to the Landing: We've changed the locks on the chain across the road to the launch area. All CAHA members are entitled to keys to that area. If you need a key, you may get one from our Treasurer, Jerry Thayer. If you lose a key, there's a fee for the replacement.

Only members of CAHA are entitled to a key, or to use that road, the park at the boat launch area, and the lake.

Street Lights and Safety: At the Town hall meeting, last October, we discussed a safety concern, the need for more street lighting in appropriate locations. We are exploring this with Indiana- Michigan Power, and it looks like it's feasible to install decorative, carriage style, lamps in a few locations where needed, near the intersection of Hillpoint and Lakeland, and on each of the three cul-de-sacs on Meadowbrook Ct., West Lakeland and Hillpoint. The nice-looking lamps don't cost any more than the wooden poles. At this writing, the project needs some more definition, but it looks feasible.

Neighborhood events: By the time your read this, the annual **June garage sale** will be over, and we hope it's as big a success as last year when 20, or more, residents participated.

We are planning a **September picnic** at the landing, assuming enough members indicate that they will attend. Some years this has been a well-attended social event, and some years we've had to cancel. We hope to enjoy a successful get-together this year.

And, of course, we'll have another annual Town hall meeting in October.

Annual Income Tax Return Filed for 2013: CAHA is a Michigan non-profit corporation, renewing its status each year. Although CAHA is a non-profit organization, the IRS requires a corporate Form 1120 tax return, just like for-profits, and we pay some taxes. This tax requirement is because the water system revenue is relatively large, compared with our other homeowner association dues revenue. If we operate and bill for water services (we do), then if it's enough revenue from those services (it is), then we gotta file the 1120 and pay tax. Anyway, **our tax returns and tax payments are up to date.**

CAHA Officers and Directors:

Sharon Cochran, President	471-1747
Douglas Janssen, Vice President	269-325-7003
Jim Temple, Secretary	471-5164
Jerry Thayer, Treasurer	473-2516
Mike Clancy, Director – Properties	471-4241
Paul Hoge, Director – Lake	471-7362
Don Starlin, Director – Water System	471-5052
Hazel Wright, Director – Social	471-7260

Water System Operator:

Henry Davis