

The Northborough Post

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HOA Fees To Be Voted On

Northborough homeowners will be asked to vote Wednesday night on an \$18 increase in HOA fees from \$162 to \$180. Multiple reasons are given for the increase for our small community (28 residents) which has one of the lowest fees in the Lorain-Cuyahoga County area.

Increased operating costs, deficit of \$10,000, new expenses, and a need for more money in the reserve fund are among many of the reasons for the requested hike.

Income and expenditures have been closely monitored by Rob McMinn, retired accountant and current HOA Committee member who has presented financial figures to other committee members throughout the summer since the inception of the committee.

In checking with other like communities, we found that it almost impossible to make a comparison of HOA fees due to many factors. However, we found that of the communities we are aware of, only one has fees under \$200.

That community in Strongsville has 90 homes, currently collects \$155 a month (will be raised 3% in 2015), does not have a swimming pool or clubhouse, has \$238,000+ in their reserve account, and has been in existence for approximately 20-25 years.

Their biggest expenses are management services (\$11,280), landscaping (\$32,000), and snow removal (\$9,440).

By comparison, we have no management company, our

landscaping contract is \$14,835, and snow removal is \$6,134.

Muirwood Village, across the street, reportedly has monthly fees of \$240 a month. It is believed that they do not have a pool but have a clubhouse. However, roof repair and replacement are included in the fee.

The North Ridgeville Del Webb retirement community south of us also has a much higher monthly fee.

Our increased operating costs in the areas of taxes, landscaping/snow removal, clubhouse and pool, necessitates an increase in fees. This does not include the need for getting rid of the \$10,000 debt, putting more money into our reserve fund, and taking care of present and future needs.

For example next spring we will be building a much needed storage shed at the back of the clubhouse which will cost somewhere between \$1,200 and \$1,500. That one-time expense amounts to about \$50 per home based on 30 homes in the community.

In addition to the reserve fund, we also need to establish a "short term" reserve fund to handle such things as major pool replacement and repair expenses, clubhouse furniture, replacement benches along with major common area landscaping issues.

Where your money is going.....

These figures are based on 30 homes in Northborough at \$162 a month times 12 months
 $\$162 \times 12 = \$1,944 \times 30 = \$58,320$ income

Some of these amounts are not exact but rather estimates of what our costs are going to be. In some cases the figures are different or presented in a different way than what Rob McMinn discussed Monday night. But between the two of the figures that Rob has presented and what follows will give each homeowner a good idea why an increase of \$18 per month is needed. This is simply a different way to look at the numbers. The listing is broken down to the annual community cost, the individual homeowner yearly cost, and the homeowner monthly cost.

	<u>Annual Cost</u>	<u>Homeowner Cost</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
Landscaping	14,835.45	495.00	41.25
Mulch (2")	2,875.50	95.85	7.99
Snow Removal	6,134.40	204.48	17.04
*1. Salt (10 times)	1,917.00	126.00	5.34
*2. Calcium (10 X)	480.00	36.00	1.40
*3. Irrigation	6,500.00	216.67	18.06
Electric (common)	1,100.00	36.67	3.06
*4. Repairs	1,000.00	33.34	2.78
<u>Clubhouse</u>			
Real Estate Taxes	7,800.00	260.00	21.67
*5 Utilities (clubhouse)	4,300.00	143.34	11.95
Direct TV	1,035.00	34.50	2.88
Cleaning	2,160.00	72.00	6.00
Utilities (pool)	700.00	23.30	1.95
*6. Pool Maintenance	1,500.00	50.00	4.16
*7. Pool Clean & Testing	<u>2,500.00</u>	<u>83.34</u>	<u>6.94</u>
	\$54,837.35	\$1,881.00	\$155.80
Reserve Fund	<u>6,480.00</u>	<u>216.00</u>	<u>18.00</u>
	\$61,317.35	\$2,043.91	\$170.32

Wow! Looking at income of \$58,320 and expenditures of \$61,317.35 No wonder we are down approximately \$10,000.

Explanation of asterisks:

1. Salt to all roads per application is \$191.70.
2. Calcium to be applied to clubhouse walks and mailbox.
3. Irrigation: includes, water, repairs, winterizing, spring opening, etc.
4. Repairs: estimated for clubhouse and common area.
5. Utilities: gas, water, heat, air conditioning
6. Pool Maintenance: includes opening, closing, permits, chemicals, misc. expenses.

Pool Cleaning and Testing: Hiring a company to assist in the daily operation.

ForeverGreen Selected As New Landscaper; Company Promises Improved Lawn Service

ForeverGreen, located locally in Elyria, has been hired under a two-year contract (one for lawn and one for snow) to handle the landscaping and snow removal for Northborough.

The two contract agreements replace Zscape who handled both services for the last two years.

It was agreed by the HOA committee and Tim Hinkle, GreenQuest representative, that the change would be in the best interest of the community. Many felt that the previous landscaper was not providing the quality of service that should have been provided.

Bare spots, trees not being pruned, grass damaged during mowing, failure to weed, were among the complaints among the residents. Some residents were also not happy with the snow removal.

Even though the contracts are for two years, they contain an escape clause for either side with 30 days notice.

Lawn Care Provisions

Lawn service cost is \$14,835.45 (tax included) for the year which includes:

...spring cleanup removing all leaves and debris.

...edging all bed lines in mulched areas.

...weekly mowing, trimming and bed weeding.

...pruning all plants up to 12 ft. twice during the season.

...fertilization four times during the season.

...grub application once during the growing season.

...fall clean-up to remove all leaves and debris at the end of the year.

...cutting and pruning perennials at the end of the season.

Forever Green has also agreed to apply mulch two inches deep at a cost of \$2,875.50.

Snow Removal Contract

In a separate contract ForeverGreen has agreed to snow removal from Nov. 1 to March 31 for \$6,134.40.

The contract states that all driveways and service walks will be plowed and that snow in front of garages and service walks will be shoveled.

Damage to lawn, trees, shrubs, and buildings caused by snow plowing will be repaired at the expense of ForeverGreen as long as the damage is reported by April 1, 2015 and is determined to be the fault of ForeverGreen.

Other services not included in the above are as follows:

...snow removal from driveways and walks on newly constructed homes---\$40.95 per month.

...salt applied to all roads---\$191.70 per application.

...calcium applied to clubhouse walks and mailbox hut---\$23.96 per application.

With 30 homes in the community, the per resident monthly cost for lawn service is \$41.25 (payments every month for 12 months).

Many landscapers charge homeowners \$40 to \$50 per month just for mowing. For complete service including fertilization, pruning and trimming, spring and fall clean-up can run as high as \$100 or more a month.

GreenQuest Wants Bd. Of Trustees, Election of Officers; Northborough Committee Not In Agreement On Issue

The Northborough Committee, along with some residents, are in disagreement over the formation of a Board of Trustees for the management of Northborough. Understandably, the GreenQuest group wants the board formulated to better transact business and update the by-laws/regulations which is a legitimate argument and position.

It is also believed that GreenQuest group desires to “unload” the responsibilities of managing the operation of Northborough.

It seems that the biggest stumbling block among many of the residents and the “Committee” is the provision in Article III in the Membership and Voting Rights section which deals with the two classes of voting under “A – B”.

Those two paragraphs define “Class A” voting memberships as having one vote for a lot while the “Class B” membership is entitled to nine votes for each lot owned.

A “Class A” membership is simply a homeowner while a “Class B” membership is GreenQuest.

Further complicating the issue is the belief that anyone buying under a land contract does not have a right to vote and that vote goes to GreenQuest which will have nine votes for each of the land contract homes.

With that in mind, Northborough currently has 25 votes for each lot.

On the other hand, GreenQuest has two lots which are for sale (18 votes), and at least three land contract lots (27 votes). That makes 45 votes to 25 votes if an issue came up which GreenQuest was not in agreement with.

It is not an issue of us against them but rather one in which each party wants to look out for their own best interest first.

The GreenQuest team has been very helpful and cooperative with Northborough and, at times, very generous in dealing with us.

However, both sides understand that it is important to make decisions which are in their own best interest.

The solution to the board issue that GreenQuest wants resolved lies in the second paragraph of the “Class B” statement in Article III which states:

“The Class B membership shall cease and be converted to Class A membership when the total votes outstanding in the Class A membership equals the total votes outstanding in the Class B membership or at such earlier time as the Declarant may waive Class B membership, in writing.”

If GreenQuest should waive, in writing, rights to Class B membership, the possibility of forming a Board of Trustees will have a much better chance of passing a vote and an election of officers taking place.

However, some residents feel that it is too early for the formation of a board as we have 30 homes built out of 52 projected in Phase II and III.

Some feel we will incur more responsibility and expenses with such a board. Those expenses include approximately \$1,000 per year in indemnity insurance for the board, possible attorney fees or yearly costs for advice, possible management company, and other unknown expenses.

Paving Delayed

According to Tim Hinkle, the repaving of the original two alleyways in Northborough most likely will be delayed until spring or summer of 2015 due to contract issues and cold weather.

The alleyways that were going to be resurfaced are those that are south of Bridgeport Drive.

It is hoped that the deep hole at 36153 Bridgeport will be temporarily repaired sometime in the near future before snowfall as it is getting deeper every day.

Accidents, automobile damage, and perspective buyer interest are all factors in the need to get that 8-10 inch hole filled in.

It is hoped that Tim Hinkle and/or Bud Hagy, builder, recognize the importance of getting that filled in before a problem arises.

Leak Fixed.....Finally

The water leak in the main sprinkler system which has been costing the HOA several hundred per month while on, has finally been repaired at a cost of \$1,325.

Cause of the leak was due to improper installation of pipe at the connection point at the north side of Bridgeport Drive.

Thanks needs to go to Jack Hall who discovered the leak and expedited the repair. Tim Hinkle hired "Excavation Experts" who found the problem and repaired it in one day.

Men's 2nd Tuesday Breakfast

Breakfast for all the male residents of Northborough will be at City Diner on Center Ridge Tuesday October 14 at 8:30 a.m.

The first Tuesday of every month, the ladies go to a luncheon.

Free Spaghetti Dinner Oct. 15

All residents are invited to a "free" spaghetti and meatball Italian feast at the Clubhouse at 6:30 p.m. in the clubhouse.

Sign-up sheet is in the clubhouse at the bar counter. If you would like to bring an item to share, just mark your name in and what you will bring. Otherwise, just put your name down and the number attending.

In addition to spaghetti and meatballs, appetizers will be available as well as salad and dessert.

This is a great opportunity to enjoy an evening of relaxation and conversation with your neighbors in Northborough.

ZENTANGLING ????

Learn How To Do It

If you are a "doodler" this should interest you!

Boring meeting or long-winded telephone calls can provide you with the opportunity to be come an artist----a doodle artist!

Learn the compulsive artistry of ZENTANGLE at practically no expense. All you need is a ball-point pen and a sheet of paper. No lengthy need list of supplies for this art form. If you're interested just show up.

Pat Nelson will be teaching ZENTANGLING at the clubhouse on Tuesdays Oct. 14, 21, and 28 from 7 to 8 p.m. Refreshments will be provided.

Come join the fun!.

If you have questions, you can call Pat Nelson at 327-0084. She said, "If you have a lot of questions I can always Zentangle and talk at the same time."

Flag Up & Waving

The American flag has now found a home in front of the clubhouse. It was installed about a month ago at a one-time cost of \$198.

Jerry Moran, a veteran and Northborough's first resident has agreed to maintain the flag and removing it during the winter months.

Thanks Bud!

Many, many thanks are due to Bud Hagy and his team, both with GreenQuest and Bistro 83, for throwing a fantastic party for the residents of Northborough Sunday August 10 at Bistro 83.

Seldom does a builder ever think of the residents already in his development. Most developers are only interested in getting people to move into the development. Bud is a different breed of a person who not only builds quality homes but is not afraid to spend money when he knows nothing is to be gotten in return.

We are very fortunate to have him and Tim Hinkle heading up the construction and development of Northborough.

Bistro 83 To Hold Clambake Sunday Oct. 19

Bistro 83 will be holding it's second seasonal Clambake Sunday October 19 at 3 p.m.

For \$25 you will receive clam chowder, one dozen clams, sweet potatoes, corn, salad, rolls and butter. It is \$30 for a steak and \$35 for lobster tail.

Call 353-2828 for more information and reservations.

Clubhouse is "Spic-n-Span"

Since changing over from the previous method of clubhouse cleaning to two residents, Barb Moran and Joan Caldwell, handling the duties, residents have noticed a marked improvement in the cleanliness of the interior of the clubhouse.

Movie Night & Game Night

Don't forget "Game Night" is Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. in the Clubhouse and Movie Night is Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Poop Bag Station To Stay

Contrary to what was previously believed, the "Poop Bag Station" is being used by residents and will stay in the community.

Previously it was thought that the station was not in use and was going to be given to Jim Gideon, GreenQuest accountant, to use in his development.

Sorry Jim----we know you were counting on it but it is needed here.

Don't Forget Web Site!

Residents are reminded to sign up for the HOA Web Site created by Jack Hall.

If you have not signed on yet, you can do so by going to www.northborough.org .

Don't Forget Meeting

**The meeting Wednesday
October 8 at 6:30 p.m. is an
important meeting for all
residents. Please make every
effort to attend.**