

This will be the first installment in what I hope will be a monthly newsletter. I plan on using this space and time to keep you informed of Association related business. We held our annual meeting on Monday, March 2nd and as expected a great deal of discussion revolved around the budget. What I came to realize is that many don't understand what expenses and legal responsibilities we have. My intent will be to help clear that up.

One resident suggested that we as a board should send every line item (expense) "out to bid". The fact is we do not bid out every line item as there are roughly 30 separate expenses and the majority can not be "sent out to bid". Examples of these would be postage, printing, property taxes, and utilities. In addition, some expenses such as the Management Company and legal counsel are not bid out annually but are shopped and retained until decided otherwise. Some of the remaining line items in which we do utilize a bidding process would include landscaping and insurance.

Another resident at the meeting requested that before the trustees make a decision they should solicit input from residents first. Although we always try to get input from membership, the reality of contacting 492 separate households to ask their opinion is impractical. A better approach is for residents to get involved in committees where these issues are discussed and then decisions are made. If you don't have time to get involved, then perhaps communicate with your trustees and respective committee's ahead of time.

Right after the 2009 budget was mailed; I posted on the website a file that listed the 2008 Budget, the 2008 Actual Expenditures along with the 2009 Budget. In each line item title, I inserted a comment box which supplied amplifying information concerning that particular expense. If you haven't already looked at this file (2008_2009Budget), please take a moment and locate it at the Finance Committee link as there is a lot of good information that I believe will be helpful.

We are planning on more changes for the website as it's a terrific communication tool for us all. One thought currently under discussion is a Q&A Section where residents can post questions to Board Members/Committee Chairmen. Through use of a drop down menu you will be able to view different questions and when selected, see the corresponding answer. This will also enable you to view only the questions that interest you the most. Our web master is Jordan Levy; his time is voluntary so we don't want to overwhelm him as we really appreciate all he does but as time becomes available to him, I'm sure you'll begin to see some changes.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at home (350-1640) or email me your comments/questions at avcmcchi@sbcglobal.net.

By working together, pooling our resources and building on our strengths, we can accomplish great things. Ronald Reagan ~