

President's Message – Karen Harris

Spring is well on its way and so is your Association Board!

We've had several meetings since the fall of 2023 and settling into our roles for the upcoming year.

Scott Mato has agreed to continue heading up Landscaping. One of his key objectives is to define a multi-year plan for improving the cul-de-sacs, entryways, and commons areas.

Matt Guyot agreed to continue as Secretary, and to take on the additional responsibility of monitoring our initial storm sewer survey work this year. His initial focus is work with a local contractor to selectively investigate the status of the subdivision's storm sewers and to assess what, if any, maintenance work is required of our 30 plus year-old system.

Alan Lach agreed to assume responsibility for the Treasurer role, keeping tabs on homeowner payments and vendor expenses. Kudos to Alan that in his first year as Treasurer he has succeeded in achieving 100% payment on dues for this year!

Andy Martin has joined the Board to assist with special projects. We appreciate the help!

Finally, I agreed to take on the President role this year. My many years serving on the Board will help to provide continuity to our new Board members. I will be focused on two areas. The first is keeping a close eye on expenses as our vendors react to their inflationary pressures. Early indicators suggest our dues increase last year may not keep pace with vendor cost increases. My second area of focus is to ensure that improvements we plan for the subdivision reflect the increased value placed on our subdivision by the market. The reality is that our subdivision has become one of the most economically attractive subdivisions in the City of Novi – and I believe the “look and feel” of our subdivision needs to continue to reflect that market reality!

Subdivision Garage Sale – May 17 thru May 18

The annual spring subdivision garage sale date has been set for Friday and Saturday, May 17 & 18, 9 AM – 5 PM. Signs will be put at the entrances of the subdivision prior to the sale. Ads for the subdivision garage sale will be posted on various online websites, but we highly recommend posting your own ad.

The best way to get buyers to your home is to post your own ad for free at www.garagesalefinder.com; www.yardsalesearch.com; www.garagesaletracker.com; www.nextdoor.com and Craig's List. There may be other sites as well. Posting your own ad allows you to enter your street address and specific items you have for sale, bringing a potential customer directly to your house.

Good luck with your sales.

Food Trucks – Starts Wednesday April 3

With the encouragement of our residents, Andrea Torres is once again coordinating food trucks for Dunbarton Pines. They will be returning on Wednesdays, beginning April 3. The time is from 4:30 PM to 7:30 PM. The last truck will be Wednesday, September 25. The trucks will be located at the Foxton Rd/Dunbarton Drive intersection, at the curb of the commons area entrance.

Please stay on the common area grounds and off the neighboring lawns when visiting the food trucks. These are your neighbors so please respect their lawns and property. If you are driving to get your food, be aware of where you park your car on the street. Do not block mailboxes or driveways and watch for pedestrians, children and pets.

The food truck schedule can be found on the subdivision website: www.dunbartonpines.org or <https://yourneighborhoodbites.com/detroit/subdivisions/dunbartonpines>. The schedule for neighboring subdivisions can also be found on the “your neighborhood bites” site.

Andrea is asking for a few volunteers to help manage our food truck signs: putting the signs out on Tuesday and removing them on Wednesday night (or Thursday morning). If you can help, even for a couple of times, it will be greatly appreciated. Contact her at: andrealtorres1030@gmail.com.

Yard Signs – Association and City of Novi Limitations

Want to take this time to remind our Homeowners of the restrictions on signs in the subdivision. Our Covenants read, in part: Signs may be displayed . . . ONLY IF . . . they pertain to the sale or rental of the premises upon which they are placed. That means no contractor signs or political signs are allowed in yards in our subdivision.

The Association wants to support the annual garage sale activity and will be tolerant of temporary garage sale signs placed on Homeowner lots. The City of Novi has Ordinances covering signage, which notes that signage of any kind is not allowed on public property or in the public Right of Way, and

on property near subdivision entrances only with the permission of the appropriate property owner.

Your neighbors may be inclined to remind you of that restriction in the months ahead!

Financial Report – Alan Lach

It has been an interesting journey for me throughout 2023 having to learn the Treasurer role from Karen while simultaneously using two financial systems, TOPS and PayHOA. I want to thank Karen and Rod Harris for their support, without which my transition to Treasurer would have been much more confusing and time consuming.

Last year also started off as a costly one as we encountered some unexpected landscaping expenses due to snow and ice storms. Many trees were affected in the commons areas that required cutting and removal of branches to make the areas safe and free of debris. In addition, we incurred unexpected expenses for the maintenance of a storm sewer segment within the subdivision. These unanticipated expenses reduced our End of Year (EOY) 2023 reserves balance by \$3,082.

To help offset these unexpected 2023 expenses, we took several cost-cutting measures, many of which provided recurring benefits. These included changing the software used for conducting HOA business, limiting discretionary expenditures, and coordinating with the city on snow removal along the Taft sidewalk. We have plans to modify our entranceway water meters to reduce watering costs. While helpful, these were not sufficient to cover the shortfall in 2023.

When we looked to 2024, we realized that the likelihood of additional storm damage from future storms was high and our vendors were providing notice of additional increases likely for the upcoming 2024 year. As a result, last year we raised our annual dues to \$210 for this year – anticipating that the increase would be sufficient to cover those planned costs. As it turns out, our vendor cost increases were much higher than we anticipated. The dues increase barely covers our planned maintenance costs for 2024. We're crossing our fingers that we have limited storm damage this year. Prudence suggests that improvements to entrances and islands be delayed until we are certain we will have sufficient funds to cover those improvements. When we look to 2025, the situation does not improve. We have already been put on notice of further cost increases from our vendors.

As Karen pointed out in her President's Letter, our subdivision is highly attractive to real estate buyers. Recent sales in our subdivision have demonstrated the value of our Homeowner investments – selling quickly and often at higher-than-asking prices. We need to make sure that the Association maintains and improves the look-and-feel of our subdivision –

reflecting the market’s perception of the value of living in Dunbarton Pines. The first attachment - Neighboring Subdivision Annual Dues - was published in a previous newsletter and will help guide us as we consider the cost of our stewardship in maintaining a safe and appealing subdivision. It appears two area subdivisions have recently increased their dues for this year.

Subdivision	Annual Dues			Recently Updated Dues
	2021	2023	Increase	2024
Dunbarton Pines	\$190	\$210	\$20	
Addington Park	325	500	175	
Autumn Park	340	475	135	
Barclay	400	600	200	
Bradford	325	350	25	400
Mystic Forest	365	395	30	425
Royal Crown	225	295	70	

Turning to the 2024 budget (see second attachment - 2024 Budget and 2023 Actuals), dues have been collected from all 341 homeowners. Thank you to everyone who made timely payments. This saves us time and money, not having to collect late payments and engage a lawyer to assist in collections. As usual, invoices for 2025 will be mailed in early August with payment due September 1.

2024 Budget 2023 Actuals

Income		
Annual Dues-Current Year	\$71,610.00	\$64,790.00
Interest Income	30.00	32.48
Total	\$71,640.00	\$64,822.48

Expenses		
Planned Maintenance	\$43,368.00	\$33,514.38
Unplanned Maintenance	11,000.00	16,115.00
Improvements & Amenities	2,470.00	5,147.48
Software, Subscriptions & Admin	5,021.00	7,263.02
Legal & Insurance	3,270.00	2,707.00
Utilities	3,210.00	3,157.73
Total	\$68,339.00	\$67,904.61

EOY Change in Reserves	\$3,301.00	(\$3,082.13)
-------------------------------	-------------------	---------------------

You may notice that we have changed our “Expense” categories in the budget summary below. This change was made to better categorize those expenses that we plan for each year against those unexpected costs that

affect our spending. As mentioned above, our EOY “Reserves” were reduced by \$3,082 at the end of 2023 primarily due to the unplanned clean-up cost related to storm damage.

The summary also includes the spend plan for 2024 totaling \$68,339 which includes dollars for planned storm sewer maintenance and an Unplanned Maintenance buffer of \$11,000. The Improvements and Amenities category is for the annual lighting of entryways for the holiday season.

Please note our 2024 budget plans to add \$3,301 to reserves, which, if achieved, only offsets the 2023 reduction in reserves last year.

One final note: by providing us with your email address, we can cut expenses by sending all HOA communications via email. Postage alone for one mailing is ~\$250, another potential area of savings.

HOA Contact Information

Email: dunbartonpines@outlook.com – monitored daily

USPS: Dunbarton Pines Homeowners’ Association, PO Box 470, Novi, MI 48376

Website: <https://www.dunbartonpines.org>
or <http://www.dunbartonpinesofnovi.com>

President: Karen Harris Secretary: Matt Guyot Treasurer: Alan Lach
Landscaping: Scott Mato Support: Andy Martin