

Westwood Village Condominiums Newsletter

With Spring upon us and Summer nearly here, time to catch up on the latest updates and prepare for our communities' Annual Meeting.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Meeting – May 1

Club House, 650 Westwood Drive
Board of Directors – 6:30 PM
Council Meeting – 7:00 PM

Pool Opening – May 25

Pool Hours: Noon – 8:00 PM daily

Pool Closing – Sept. 2

HOA Meetings – Sept. 4 and Nov. 6

Club House, 650 Westwood Drive
Board of Directors – 6:30 PM
Council Meeting – 7:00 PM

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Updated Insurance Declaration

If your mortgage company is requesting a copy of the current condo master insurance policy document, it can be found both on the Westwood Village website and in AppFolio under the "Shared Documents" in the "Insurance" tab.

Election Season has Arrived!

WWV Council Elections are here! Currently, there is one position open on the Council. This means the Westwood Village community will elect one person to serve on Council. Only unit owners receive a ballot and may vote for Council positions. Votes are weighted based on the square footage of the unit. This approach ensures each vote reflects the portion of the Community the unit represents.

PAST ISSUES

[May 2023](#) – check out the
overview of condo insurance

[May 2022](#) - check out page 3
for money saving tips!

On more of a Federal/State/Local level, the Cumberland County Board of Elections changed the polling location for East Pennsboro Precinct 8, which covers WWV. They moved for the last election but are back to the previous location at the East Pennsboro Elementary School at 840 Panther Parkway. Feel free to visit the Cumberland County Bureau of Elections web page for helpful information regarding the voting process: <https://www.cumberlandcountypa.gov/66/Bureau-of-Elections>.

Westwood Village Rules Revamp

Janet Swisher

Our Community Rules & Regulations have not been updated in quite some time. The Council is working to revamp the rules to better reflect the needs of the community. These rules are not the notarized governing documents, but rather a broad list of expectations for all community members. Both unit owners and renters are encouraged to provide feedback on the draft revision of rules provided with this newsletter. Please send your feedback to wvca_webmaster@yahoo.com no later than June 1st.

Janie is a Blessing

Janet Swisher

Janie Blessing officially concluded her service to Council last month and so it is a good time to look back on the countless hours of hard work and sacrifice she has made for our community. Janie has been a major force within Westwood Village for eighteen years. Not only a resident, but Janie acted as Property Manager and Bookkeeper for over 10 years. During that time, Janie was the single point-of-contact for questions and emergencies of all sorts. She coordinated all the maintenance and repairs, landscaping, cleaning services, meter readings, and capital reserve projects. She also managed subcontractors, paid bills, created financial reports, responded to maintenance requests, and filed court documents. There have been so many behind the scenes actions that the role of Property Manager became so much more than just a full-time position. While the Property Management torch has been passed, Janie is still an active member and leader in our community. She continues to serve as the Board of Directors President and already has her "Pool Manager" hat back on for the 2024 pool season. Janie, you really have been a blessing to WWV and thank you for your dedication and commitment to making our Village an amazing place to live.

Thank You Ted

Belinda Eigen

This month Ted is stepping back from his role as President of the Council. He is running for re-election, but his future serving on Council is unknown until ballots are returned and tallied. During his multiple terms on Council, he oriented new council members

to the needs in the community, planned agendas, acted as webmaster, and served as the main point of contact for property management. As a leader, he diligently monitored our bank accounts, guided us through a management transition, and prioritized major repairs to make the community a safer place to live. Here are a few highlights of what he has accomplished:

- The majority of our streetlights were replaced and/or upgraded so that people can have a lighted pathway when they walk at night.
- The replacement of outdated electric panels in the Sonoma buildings begins in May and should be completed by the end of 2025.
- Siding repairs and replacements were restarted on a systematic rotation around the community, prioritizing emergency work as needed.
- He took us from a dangerously low account balance to ensuring we had enough funds to meet our budget, cover emergencies, and undertake major projects.

He was always very deliberate and spent time thoughtfully considering the best course of action before proceeding with a decision or providing a response. Thank you, Ted, for demonstrating consistency, compassion, patience, and dedication. We hope this transition allows you to more fully enjoy your retirement years.

It Pays to Shop Around

Ed Clapper

Although it is only six years old, the sliding glass door to our patio has warped, something that is not uncommon for vinyl doors and windows that are subjected to direct sunlight. It has become very difficult to move so I set out to get prices for replacing it. It is eight feet wide and nearly seven feet tall, so I knew this was not going to be an inexpensive proposition.

My first stop was Lowe's. Like most stores, they offer a "house brand" and an upgraded brand. Their upgrade is Pella. For their better door, which is vinyl, and installation for \$1,170, the total cost was estimated at just under \$4,000. Home Depot's upgrade brand is Anderson, and their better door is made of their proprietary Fibrex material, a combination of fiberglass and vinyl, so it is much more resistant to warpage and is actually lighter, so

it is easier to move. Home Depot's installation charge is \$697 so the total estimate was \$3,199, about \$800 less than Lowe's.

I was about to sign the contract when the gentleman assisting said we should wait. He explained that Home Depot has something they call "Bid Box" and he wanted to submit our proposal to it. To qualify for Bid Box consideration, a client has to buy an item that sells for \$2,500 or more and our door was priced at \$2,502. He said I should check back later in the day; when I did, he told me the door price had been lowered by \$695! Between the lower retail price for the door, lower cost for installation and the Bid Box discount, our new door is going to cost us \$2,504. That is not chump change and is substantially less than Lowe's would have cost.

Our homes are worth investing in as it is very difficult to find housing in this area that also has an HOA to handle the exterior maintenance and repairs for a price that retirees like us can afford. It took our realtor two years to come across this one and we placed an offer on it the first day it was on the market. Our unit is one of the smallest here at 1,010 square feet and has undergone extensive renovation. Our total purchase price was \$92,500 in 2018. The interior was all-new, but the exterior appearance was bad; it was "ghetto-like" when I first saw it. Overgrown shrubbery obscured the bedrooms' windows and patio wall, the landscaping beds around the unit had not seen care in years and the lawn's leafy vegetation made it look like a salad.

Soon after moving in, we spent \$3,060 having the shrubbery replaced, the beds mulched, and an arbor placed in front of the shed. I apply weed and feed every spring, so the lawn is grass instead of weeds. My wife grew up on a farm and took care of her parents' greenhouses. She now struggles to walk but still changes flower arrangements frequently and decorates for every holiday. To illustrate the value of a first impression, our home appraised for \$140,000 in November of 2022, a little over four years after we bought it. The appraiser commented twice about the nice appearance, so keeping your unit updated and in good condition will repay you in resale value should you ever wish to sell.

Capital Reserve Study Results

Bob Wineland

Westwood Village was one of the first condominium communities built in central PA and some of the

oldest units are approaching 50 years of age. While the community remains an inviting place to live, the accumulation of years of deferred maintenance is apparent. Even a casual walk-through reveals evidence of deterioration that requires attention as soon as possible. As you know, any real estate property requires ongoing repairs and updates to preserve its viability. These are a necessary investment in our homes that will keep them safe, comfortable, and beautiful. As an added benefit, this investment will help the unit owners participate in the increased property values being experienced in our area.

CAPITAL RESERVE PROJECTS: The Council recognizes the need and has begun to undertake the most urgent repair projects, those items that represent an immediate risk of failure or are a safety hazard. The outdated electrical panels in the Sonoma buildings were chosen as the most pressing need. Council has selected a contractor and reserved and planned for the funds to complete this project by the end of 2025. The project was delayed because of supply chain issues with some of the components, but it is now on track and two replacements are currently scheduled for May in the 843 Melissa Court building and the 810 Charlotte Way building. There is also an immediate need to replace the rubber roofing on the Sonoma buildings. This portion of the roof holds the A/C condensers for each of the twelve units within the buildings and requires coordinating with multiple contractors for their portion of the work. Council will be working with our new property manager, York H-G, to identify a contractor to complete these repairs.

While it was relatively straightforward to identify the electrical panel problem and form a plan to replace the panels, Council understood that the other necessary maintenance projects would present a significant financial challenge to the community. Therefore, we decided to engage a professional engineering firm to perform a capital reserve survey. A consultant from The Falcon Group toured the community shortly before the holidays and provided us with a comprehensive report on January 24, 2024.

A SIX MILLION DOLLAR PRICE TAG: We were not surprised that the report detailed over \$6 million dollars of maintenance and repair projects that are required for the community's upkeep. While this amount is spread over 30 years, it recommends expenditures of nearly \$3 million in the next five (5) years. Replacement of the wood siding and road & curb repairs are the main components of this

recommendation. Council is working to prioritize repair projects and identify options that may be less costly, for example, replacing the wood siding with vinyl. Council is also looking at spreading these costs out over a longer time period. For example, the report recommends replacing the wood siding in a three (3) year time period starting in 2026. If some of the units do not require immediate replacement, it may be possible to extend the timeline.

In any case, our community is facing a significant financial challenge that is for the most part unavoidable. Owners should begin preparing for the financial impact of these necessary repairs. We will make the report available on our website so you can view the recommendations for yourself. Of course, Council welcomes the input of all owners as we undertake this difficult task.

Why a Property Management Company? Why York H-G?

Janet Swisher and Belinda Eigen

As one of the oldest Condominium Communities in Pennsylvania, our regulatory documentation actually predates the Pennsylvania Condominium Legislation that began in the 1980s. Since that time, Federal and State governments have developed more and more regulations specific to Condo Communities. These new regulations have driven many changes in how communities like WWV can and should operate. With complex legal issues, the growing list of maintenance and capital expenses that come with an aging community, limited purchasing power when it comes to working with sub-contractors, the need for technological upgrades, and no back-up in the event of illness, the list of reasons to explore working with a property management company could not be ignored.

Our Process: Research started with compiling a list of companies in the area that provided the level of service a community our size requires. Outreach to a handful of companies was done to get a better sense of their level of customer service, responsiveness, and if they were taking on new clients. Three companies were invited for one-on-one interviews and York H-G Properties was selected to help bring WWV into the future.

The Future is York H-G: A local company, York H-G has experience working with aging condo communities and has stepped up to help WWV

navigate the large amount of work that lies ahead. Starting January 1, 2024, York H-G assumed Property Management at WWV. While the roll out was a little slow, by the end of January, most everyone was onboarded to the payment/maintenance request platform (AppFolio) and by the end of March, the Team had a better handle on existing concerns. Three months in and much of the feedback from Community Residents/Owners is that this is a solid step in the right direction!

Whom Do I Contact for What?

Submitting a Maintenance Request	<p>Electronic Request: via AppFolio under "Maintenance Requests"</p> <p>Email: associations@yorkhproperties.com</p> <p>Drop Box at the Clubhouse*</p> <p>Non-Emergency Business Hours/Weekends/Afterhours: 717-501-4435</p> <p>Emergency: 717-562-3407</p>
General Questions	<p>Office Phone: 717-501-4435</p>
HOA Payments (all units) and Water Bills (Sonoma Building units only)	<p>Electronic Payment: via AppFolio (\$2.49 fee applies. We are moving to a different FREE service – details coming soon!)</p> <p>Drop Box at the Clubhouse*</p> <p>By Mail: York H-G Properties, LLC, 40 Gotham Drive, Suite D, Red Lion, PA 17356</p>
<p>*Make sure anything dropped in the box includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit address • Clear explanation of what action is needed • Name of the person impacted • Telephone/Email for direct contact if necessary <p>The drop box is checked on the 1st and 10th of each month. If you drop something off on the 10th or later, expect a delay in response.</p>	