

October 10, 2022



The Lakes POA

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fall 2022

George Duhaime

It's difficult to believe that it's been almost 20 years since I bought my home in the Lakes. Back in 2003, the Lakes was a small community (around 350 homes) with all the neighbors knowing each other. As time went on, I became more involved in the day-to-day operations of the Lakes by serving on the Board in a variety of roles and positions. I served on several committees, was elected to serve as an At Large Board member (3 years), then Board Vice President (2 years) and finally Board President for the last 5 years.

Over these years, I've seen the community change and grow dramatically. We're now a community of 725 homes (approximately) and continuing to build. I've welcomed many new residents and remembered many residents no longer with us.

Serving on a Board (especially as President) is not an easy or popular position. Decisions made and projects done, will not please everyone. As I retire from my service on the Board of Directors, I want to say that I am proud of the changes I helped make happen around the community.

It's been my pleasure to serve the residents of the Lakes and I love the community that will continue to be my home.

Sincere thanks to all those that have served with and alongside me all these years.

See you on the beach!!

George

POA Quarterly Meeting Dates – 2022

- October 22, 2022**

All quarterly meetings will be held at the **Inlet Square Mall Meeting Room, 6pm.**

**** 2022 Annual Meeting
Saturday, 10:30 am, Inlet
Square Mall, Meeting
Room**



The Lakes Office is available for Homeowner Events!

The Lakes Office is open and available for Homeowners to host small events such as game parties, book clubs, get togethers and more. Gambling, fund raising, and/or drinking events are prohibited. The POA is a non-profit organization and is not able to allow or facilitate these types of events.

Homeowners interested in reserving the Lakes Office should complete and submit a reservation request form. The forms will be available at the office, as part of each newsletter/Communicator and on the Lakes website – Frontsteps – in a folder titled Office Reservation. The completed reservation form can be returned to the ACC Dropbox located outside the office or emailed to POALAKES@gmail.com . (Inquiries about date/time availability can also be sent to POALAKES@gmail.com prior to submitting a reservation.)

Reservation requests should be submitted for consideration at least 1 week prior to the requested event date. Reservations will be approved on a first come, first serve basis, availability of the room and availability of the Office Coordinators who will need to open and close the space.

Additional Details:

- Homeowner that reserved the facility must be present at the event.
- Reservations are for 4 or 9 hour increments (NOTE: 2 joining sessions may be selected for 9 hrs.)
- Morning Session: 8 am-Noon; Afternoon Session: 1-5 pm, or Evening Session: 6-10 pm
- Maximum capacity: 20 people or less.
- The space includes use of three 6 foot tables and 20 folding chairs.
- Food and Non-alcoholic beverages are allowed; however, there is NO kitchen or refrigeration available.
- There is a restroom (wheelchair accessible) with basic toiletries (hand soap, paper towels, toilet paper, and cleaning supplies).
- Parking is available around the Lakes Park (across the street); 3 spots in front of office.
- It is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure the space is restored to its original condition. A \$50.00 refundable deposit (via check) is required to reserve the space. The deposit will be returned as long as the office is not damaged and is cleaned after use.

Projects Around the Lakes

The following projects have been completed, scheduled or remain open on the project list:

- **Primary swales (Open)** – All activity related to the primary swales is on hold until further notice.
- **Drainage (Open)** – The Stormwater Standpipe near the junction of Ashley River Road and Ashley Court needs to be cleaned. Requests for bids will be made to vendors/contractors interested in this work.
- **Seneca Lake Spillway (Completed)** – RS Parker has completed construction of the spillway. This action should remedy the issue with the water level of Seneca Lake.

FINANCE REPORT

by Doug Owens

I think we have beat to death the fact that the year of 2022 has been horrible when it comes to all our expenses, personal as well as your Property Owners Association. I also think we all realize that we will all have to make adjustments, such as raising our annual dues, if we want to be able to pay our every day bills and at the same time, maintain our levels of services next year.

So, since we all know these things, let's then discuss one of the brighter areas of Finance that have occurred this year and this quarter!

Our friends at Horton continue building out Phase 19 and as a result, I was just given the plans and appropriate checks for 27 additional new homes for a total of \$36,100 in Impact Fees. This money in addition to what we have already received during 2022, will total around \$74,000. This is very good news and goes directly into our Road Reserve and now brings its total to around \$290,000+, the highest it has been in our memory.

For an organization of our size and complexity which has also gone through relatively recent explosive growth, we are still financially strong and, even subtracting our deficit, we still have over \$500,000 in reserves and savings.

The Board learns a lot by listening to you in meetings like the Quarterly Meetings, the Bylaws Review meeting and the recent Candidates Night. I've noted that one confusion that continues to come up is that there seems to be a continued misunderstanding between "budgeted" and "unbudgeted" expenditures. Most of the spending complaints we hear are really about "unbudgeted" expenditures...and not about our everyday budget!

For instance, the electric bill and the water bill are all examples of "Budgeted" expenses. These are expenses that we need to pay monthly to operate our community. "Unbudgeted" expenses are things like stocking the Lakes with fish, fixing road issues, fixing drainage issues, improving cul-de-sacs. These types of expenses tend to come up during the year in response to community needs and we do pay for them out of our Reserves, like the Road or Lake or Drainage Reserves. That's the purpose of reserves

To further our example and give you an idea as to our general Budgeted expenses, 92.2% of our budget is recurring expenses, like our water bill. Only 7.8% is flexible, or items we had planned to buy or spend during that budget year. This year for instance, things like replacing or adding road signs, costs for additional or new plantings or replacement plants or mulch, costs for Horry County police services, benches or dog stations are examples of the flexible part of the budget. These items are indeed "budgeted" but are things we would "like" to do, but may not get to do, based on weather, changing needs, availability of specific products or services.

The bottom line is that even though we are currently financially strong, we are now somewhat income poor and if we do not start to raise our yearly income, eventually that will affect our strong overall financial picture. This is why in periods of inflation, like now, rising daily expenses will force us to raise our annual dues.

Additionally, other comments seem to run along similar lines; poor financial communication and an inability to get financial information. We will be discussing these issues and will bring some new ideas to the membership meeting and additionally submit these for consideration by the new 2023 Board. These issues will be provided in a future issue of the Communicator.

I think we have come a long way in the Financial Department during the last five years. We no longer have two sets of books; no more checkbooks; third party simplified bill authorization, processing and payment process; all accounts centralized in one bank; Road Reserve Study completed; Compliance account audited; new Compliance Account Procedure developed, regular annual audits completed; By-Law (and eventually Covenants) review in process and regular and open communication with Lakes developer and his contracted builder.

There still are lots of things to do. Lots to improve in our financial information communication and availability system. But these things are not a one-person job; volunteers are always needed, more now than ever. If we want additional or better services from your Board, the plain fact is the community membership has to become involved and "step up" and volunteer to do these improvements ourselves...or pay someone else to do it for us!

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### **Welcome Night!**

The first Lakes Welcome Night, on September 14, was a huge success! Board members and committee chairs welcomed many new homeowners to our Lakes Community. The evening was an exciting exchange of information, meeting new people and having questions answered. The room was alive with conversation and laughter. If you missed this one, keep an eye open for the next Welcome Night in the near future.

### **Thanks to all who attended!**

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### **Meet the Candidate**

On Monday, September 26, 2022, 6 of the 8 candidates who volunteered in serving on the Lakes Board of Directors attended the Meet the Candidate Night. They had an opportunity to introduce themselves to the community and answer questions from the event moderator and the homeowners in attendance.

Thank you to candidates Jackie DiVincent, Stan Fortune, John Price, Erin Rodgers, Carla Wessells and Debbie Wolcott who attended Meet the Candidate Night!

The candidates were asked a variety of questions about their skills, interest in current or future committees or projects, ability to make difficult decisions, position on expenditures for non-emergency costs, willingness to volunteer if not elected to the board, their biggest concern and what they would personally look to change.

Our candidates responded with a great deal of thought and care for the community. We invite all of our Homeowners to review the candidates' qualifications attached to the Ballot and responses from the Meet the Candidate Night to help make their decision on who they select to vote for the Board.

**Homeowners are reminded that your proxy must be returned to the Association no later than 12 noon, Wednesday, October 19, 2022, by mail to The Lakes POA c/o LITUS\*To Let, Post Office Drawer 9000, Myrtle Beach, SC 29578-9000 or by fax to 843-626-0101.**

## SOCIAL COMMITTEE



### **The Annual Lakes Halloween Parade and Party!!!**

**Date:** Saturday, October 29, 2022  
(Rain Date: Sunday October 30, 2022)

**Time:** 1-3 PM

### **ALL LAKES RESIDENTS ARE INVITED**

The Lakes annual Halloween parade will start promptly at 1pm at the intersection of Waccamaw River Road and Cooper River Road and end at the park at the front of the Lakes. There will be a police escort to lead off the parade and the owner of the new commercial building has given us permission to park in his lot.

Prizes will be awarded for the children's costumes (original, scariest, funniest) as well as for the most creative transportation (cart/wagon/bicycle/golf cart). Please get your number sticker for judging at the parade start line.

Pizza and Treat-or-Treat candy will be provided.

**RSVP** to Michele at [lakesparkevents@gmail.com](mailto:lakesparkevents@gmail.com) by **Monday, October 24, 2022**, if you plan to come to the festivities. Also, if you would like to volunteer (set up, clean up, etc.) please contact Michele!

**BYOC (Bring your own chair!!)**

**Looking forward to a fun time for everyone**





## **The Second Annual Lakes Chili Cookoff!!!**

**Date:** Saturday, October 29, 2022  
(Rain Date: Sunday, October 30, 2022)  
**Time:** 1 – 3pm

Come and cast your vote for the best Chili in the Lakes!!

Tantalize your tastebuds with the flavors of chili prepared by none other than your neighbors in the Lakes. The event will be held at the park at the front of the Lakes, alongside the Annual Halloween Parade and Party.

Be a kid again - wear a costume, enjoy an afternoon of fun and food and mingle with your neighbors.

Contest rules will be posted at the event.

Prizes will be awarded for the best chili in the competition.

Show off your Chili skills and be part of the Cookoff. **RSVP** to [lakesparkevents@gmail.com](mailto:lakesparkevents@gmail.com), by **Monday, October 24, 2022** to add your name to the list. More information will be provided when you enter the contest.

**BYOC (Bring your own chair!)**

## ANNUAL 2022 POND NEWLETTER ARTICLE

By Debbie (Deborah) Wolcott, Pond Facilitator for "The Lakes"

### OVERALL

The ponds in the Lakes are in pretty good shape. We've had a struggle keeping up with the excessive growth occurring because of weather changes (longer draught periods). This allows more sunlight to reach the floor and facilitate growth.

I can't express enough the importance of having every homeowner's help in keeping the ponds as pristine as physically possible. "Spoil" accumulation reduces the depth of the pond, further reducing their effectiveness during storms. Dredging ponds because of excessive accumulation is very, very expensive and the equipment can cause damage to property and seawalls. **Please remain extra vigilant at keeping grass, leaves, branches, and pet excrement out of our ponds. Keeping the 10 ft. easement clear of trees and brush is an enormous help.**

### CURRENT PROJECTS

Since May, we've been working on several troublesome areas. In doing so, we sought three (3) proposals. We received one immediately, and after three (3) months (with reminders), one company failed to provide one, the other indicated that doing so would be cost prohibitive. Finally, we were able to move forward.

In October (actual date TBD), we have two areas on Lake Hartwell that will be hand dredged by TLC. These are areas where excessive accumulation has occurred regularly along some of the swales (Cost: \$2,000 for both areas). In addition, the island in Rainbow Lake will be cleaned up to increase water flow in that area (Cost: \$1,500). To come later, will be light dredging and the addition of underwater aeration (Back side of Rainbow Island) to control stagnation in that area (Current cost proposal is \$15,000).

### POND NAMES

In keeping with the ponds all being named after Lakes in SC, the following names were approved at the September BOD meeting:

--The pond extension between Winyah Bay and Gillham loop is part of **Long Bay Lake**.

--The currently "Unnamed" pond surrounded by Gillham Loop will be: **Lake Monticello**. (LOL, yes New Yorkers, it just happens to be the name of a Lake there as well!)

Signs will be ordered for those areas.

### SNAILS

I'd like to give a very loud shout out and thank you to all those homeowners who are working diligently to control the apple snail population. They continue to be a nuisance throughout several of the ponds, esp. around the construction areas. The redear sunfish we stocked do seem to be helping reduce the number of adults, but they are still plentiful. There are no new updates from the SCDNR about potential treatment that will not impact other wildlife.

### FUTURE PROJECTS

Due to skyrocketing costs on EVERYTHING this year, it is unlikely that any additional pond expenditures will be approved for the remainder of this year unless it is critical to drainage; however, I will continue to work on identifying and prioritizing needs and issues.

We currently have some other areas under evaluation on: White Lake, Lake Marion, and Lake Seneca (behind Enoree Court / Seneca River Road).

Fish stocking (carp and redear sunfish in additional ponds) was originally anticipated for October or November (TBD).

We're also evaluating major swales for treatment and/or care on a priority basis. Meanwhile, please ensure your property grates, ditches, and swales are free of grass and debris for maximum water movement in the event of heavy rains, storms, and/or a hurricane.

### YOUR HELP IS ALWAYS NEEDED

It's impossible to get a visual inspection of every nook and cranny on every pond (on an ongoing basis), so we greatly appreciate your emails with questions, concerns, issues, and compliments that come in to LITUS. They help us (myself and the TLC staff) keep on top of this monumental task.



## Architectural Control Committee

**RESIDENTS ARE REMINDED THAT CONTRACTOR WORKING HOURS ARE 7AM TO 7PM, Monday thru Saturday.** No contractor work is allowed on Sunday. It is the residents' duty to inform the contractor of these rules. We hope you will help us in ensuring that this requirement is enforced.

Fall is a time for you to relax and think about the great summer you had with friends and family, and the projects that you were able to complete. Many projects are ongoing in the community, such as patios, decks, fences and pools. Just a reminder that prior to any exterior projects being started, you must submit the proper forms for approval to the Architectural Control Committee. Project approval request forms can be found on the Lakes website (<https://thelakes.us/>) under the folder-Documents, sub-folder External Documents. There are many ways to submit your forms for approval. US (snail) Mail to 400 Waccamaw River Road, email to [thelakesacc@gmail.com](mailto:thelakesacc@gmail.com) or the drop box located at 400 Waccamaw River Road.

**Residents are reminded that contractor working hours are 7AM to 7PM, Monday thru Saturday.** No contractor work is allowed on Sunday. It is the residents' duty to inform the contractor of these rules.

Most projects are addressed by one of the following forms:

|           |                                              |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------|
| ACC-2-MJP | Major Project Approval Request Form          |
| ACC-2-SP  | Swimming Pool/Spa Approval Request Form      |
| ACC-2-BHD | Bulkhead/Dock                                |
| ACC-2-MIS | Miscellaneous Projects Approval Request Form |

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact:

|                           |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Robert White 843-251-7625 | ACC Chairperson |
| Tom Fontanazza            |                 |
| George Molina             |                 |
| Jack Rowles               |                 |
| Bob Tomassetti            |                 |



# **Welcome to the Neighborhood!!**

(Jodi Vecchio – Welcoming Committee)

|                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ashley River.                    | Mark Wing & Mary Ann Leifken                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Cooper River Rd.                 | Edward McFadden & Melia Hoffman<br>Walter & Mary Stokes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Lumber River Rd.<br>Gillham Loop | Kevin Ward & Tracy Stankunis<br>Samuel & Deborah Elmo<br>Thomas & Sherell Goff<br>Brian & Lisa Payne<br>Daniel Stone<br>Ronald & Sara More<br>Stanley & Marie Ann Wojtalewicz<br>Melissa Hartley<br>Diane Fazenbaker<br>Gary & Arlene DeFilippis<br>Barbara Mai<br>Burton & Mary Thompson |
| New River Rd.                    | Roddy & April Roscoe, Sybil Pegram                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Seneca River Rd.                 | Vernon & Katlyn McGalliard                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Suwanee Ct.                      | Paul McGovern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Waccamaw River.                  | John Clemons & Dianne Colino<br>Robert Allman & Barbara                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



**Happy to have you be part  
of the community!!**



## Neighborhood Reminders

**Street Parking** – Parking on the street is prohibited between the hours of 2am and 5am. (The Lakes Rules and Regulations - Item 1 Parking Regulations (street and driveway), sub section a.)

**Parking on/at Islands** – All Lakes residents are reminded that No Parking, at any time, is permitted on the islands on any streets/cul-de-sacs. This is in accordance with the Lakes Rules and Regulations. Vehicles parking on/at the islands block access for contractor services (landscaping) as well as access by Fire and Emergency service vehicles. Vehicles may be towed at the owner's expense. (The Lakes Rules and Regulations - Item 1 Parking Regulations (street and driveway), sub section c.)

**Pets** – Residents are reminded to pick up after their dogs. Recently, several islands in the community have become convenient dumping stations for pet waste. Please respect your neighbors and your community by cleaning up after your pets.

**Foxes** – There have been increased sightings of fox in the community. The ongoing construction activity is disrupting their natural habitat. Fox sightings during the day are not unusual/uncommon as they move through their territory. Fox generally avoid human interaction unless they are attracted to a food source – pet food left outside or unsecured garbage. As a caution, young children and small pets should be supervised when outdoors.

**Signage** – Residents are asked to refrain from taping (with any adhesive material) signs to STOP signs, street signs or any signpost in the community. Taping signs (eg. yard sale, estate sale, etc.) on the STOP posts obscures the reflective strip on the post and when removed, damages/destroys the reflective strip and requiring it be replaced. Signs taped on any PVC covered post, when removed, often leaves behind 'bits' of the tape creating an unsightly appearance. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

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ON THE FUNNY SIDE OF THE LAKE!

WHAT DID THE WANDERING CRAB
SAY WHEN HE FINALLY MADE IT
BACK TO THE OCEAN?

LONG TIME NO SEA!



BEACH PUNS © ALLWORDING.COM

Lakes Directory

All issues or inquiries should be directed to our property manager Karen Tucker at LITUS (KTucker@litustolet.com) or 843-448-9000 ext.129. This provides a central point of collection and coordination.

The Lakes Official Website is **thelakes.FRONTSTEPS.com**. Registration is required to access homeowner information. Please ensure your homeowner data is up to date to receive all correspondence regarding your Lakes property. Please contact LITUS for assistance with registration.

Lakes POA Board Members

President – George Duhaime

Vice President – Charlene Carson

Secretary – Michele Ferrante

Treasurer – Doug Owens

Directors at Large (Elected) – Tom Fontanazza

Bill Vesely

Deborah Wolcott (Appointed)

Ad Hoc Members - Robert Tomassetti

Lakes POA Officers and Committee Heads

President – George Duhaime

Vice President – Charlene Carson

Secretary – Michele Ferrante

Treasurer – Doug Owens

Committee Heads:

Architectural Committee

Bob White

Beautification/Maintenance

Bill Vesely

Bylaws/Covenants Review

Charlene Carson

Communications

Charlene Carson

Drainage

Mike Healy (V)*

DR Horton Liaison

Doug Owens

Lake Maintenance

Deborah Wolcott

RS Parker and Sons Liaison

Doug Owens and George Duhaime

Social Committee

Michele Ferrante

Welcome Committee

Jodi Vecchio(V)*

*(V) = Volunteer

All Board members/committee heads are homeowners and Lakes neighbors volunteering endless hours of their time. There is always a need for more volunteers. Consider volunteering a few hours of your time, knowledge, and special skills to your community.

OCT 2022

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

01

02

03

Lakes Office
Hours 12pm -
3pm

04

05

Lakes Office
Hours 12pm -
3pm

06

Lakes Office
Hours 9am -
12pm

07

Lakes Office
Hours 12pm -
3pm

08

**By Laws Review
Meeting 1:30-
3:00. Inlet
Square Mall**

09

10

Lakes Office
Hours 12pm -
3pm

11

12

Lakes Office
Hours 12pm -
3pm

13

Lakes Office
Hours 9am -
12pm

14

Lakes Office
Hours 12pm -
3pm

15

**The Lakes Board
Meeting
6 pm**

16

17

18

19

Lakes Office
Hours 12pm -
3pm

**Proxy Ballots
are due by Mail
to LITUS**

20

Lakes Office
Hours 9am -
12pm

21

22

**Lakes POA
Annual Meeting
10:30am
Inlet Square
Mall**

23

24

25

26

Lakes Office
Hours 12pm -
3pm

27

Lakes Office
Hours 9am -
12pm

28

29

**1pm- 3pm Chili
Cook Off &
Halloween
Parade**

30

**Chili Cook Off
& Halloween
Parade (Rain
Date)**

31