



The Lakes Communicator

August 2023 Edition

President's Message – Charlene Carson

HAPPY AUGUST!! We are certainly experiencing the intense heat of a southern summer. Please be aware when spending time outdoors – stay hydrated and do not overdue exposure to the sun. Our ponds are fed by Mother Nature and while she grants us the occasional summer thunderstorms and downpours, it is not always enough to keep our ponds full. If you use the ponds for irrigation, please be mindful of the levels and your usage. The higher than usual temperatures we have recently experienced also increase the evaporation rate from the ponds. Be kind to the ponds and the community by limiting your use of the pond water.

QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The Lakes as a community has historically held four (4) membership meetings each year – January, April, July, and October. We are one of the few communities in the area that meet so frequently. The meetings in January, April and July are generally community information meetings – an opportunity for the Board to bring the community up to date on actions/activities. While business (actions that require community input) could be conducted at any of those meetings, generally the October meeting (aka Annual Meeting)

has been the one business meeting for the Lakes community. Why is this important? For an organization/association to conduct business a minimum number of members of the organization/association must be present. This is known as a QUORUM. The quorum for the Lakes is currently 10% of the membership – which is 80 Properties (homeowners of the same home count as 1 “property”) attending a meeting. That number (80) is achieved by a combined in person presence and/or proxy. **A quorum is required so an organization /association can conduct a business meeting – NOTHING MORE.**

THIS IS NOT THE NUMBER/PERCENTAGE OF VOTES REQUIRED TO TAKE NEW ACTION OR MAKE CHANGES TO EXISTING PRACTICES/POLICIES.

I hope this helps to better explain a quorum, as well as how and why it applies to our meetings.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The quarterly POA meeting on Monday night, July 17, 2023, was the last

Table of Contents

President's Message	Pg. 1
Finance Update	Pg. 2
Community News	Pg. 4
Committee Updates	Pg. 6
Neighbor Spotlight	Pg. 8
Funny Side of the Lake	Pg. 10
Events Calendar	Pg. 11
Contacts	Pg. 12

meeting at the Inlet Square Mall meeting space. Reservations are no longer being accepted as the mall is scheduled to be demolished later this year or early next year. Efforts are underway to find a new location for future POA meetings. Currently under consideration are the following locations:

South Strand Recreation Center – Scipio Lane | Robert Reed Recreation Center – Market Commons |
St. Michaels Church - Garden City

Capacity (minimum 200 people), rental cost, distance from the Lakes and ease of access/parking are all considerations for a future meeting site. If there are suggestions for other meeting spaces, please send the information to POALakes@gmail.com as soon as possible.

SOLICITATION

There has been a marked increase in the resident calls about solicitation in the Lakes. The most recent “offenders” have been phone/internet service providers, gutter and roofing companies and pest control. If someone visits your home (and you choose to answer your door), inform them that solicitation is not permitted, and they need to leave the community. Note the name of the company, if possible, along with the day and time of the event, then report it to Karen at LITUS (Ktucker@litustolet.com; 843-448-9000 ext. 129). A letter will be sent to the company stating the ‘No Solicitation’ policy for the Lakes. Permission to solicit in the Lakes community HAS NOT been given to any company/organization.

Additionally, advertising for services by placing business cards/flyers on/in mailboxes (individual or centrally located) or door hangers is solicitation and not permitted.

SIGNS ON STOP SIGNS/SIGNPOSTS

Please DO NOT tape signs/notices (e.g., yard sales, lost pets) to stop signposts. It destroys the reflective strips and will subsequently mean the reflective strips will need to be replaced. Taping signs to the STOP sign obstruct the sign and is also damaging to the sign. Posting on street signposts often leaves unsightly tape behind when a sign is removed.

In closing, I would like to thank all the individuals that generously volunteer their time and talents to the community. It is a small, but extremely dedicated group that are the ‘feet on the ground’, keeping the community running.

Stay safe everyone and enjoy the rest of the summer!

Charlene

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**Financial Report for the August 2023 Communicator**

By The Financial Committee via Debbie Wolcott, Treasurer

**What happened?**

At the Second Quarter POA Member Meeting, we announced that the “Specific Assessment” proposal was withdrawn. Originally, the Specific Assessment and the rollover of that assessment into the dues for 2024 were approved by the Board of Directors (BOD) at the June meeting. Unfortunately, once the article was released in the July Communicator, that vote was contested. To make everyone feel confident in the Specific Assessment and dues increase, the topic was discussed in the July Work Session before the BOD meeting.

It was here that our lawyer reiterated that our governing documents are seriously outdated and are silent on the “Specific Assessment,” making it an available option for the BOD to assess the increase without a membership vote. During this discussion, the wording was crafted to again vote for the increase. Long story short, the vote did not happen.

After the July BOD meeting, it was decided to table the Specific Assessment since no one was feeling comfortable with the BOD using a “loophole” to levy it. For now, we feel that staying within the parameters of our current governing documents is the best course of action.

**Found money and Second quarter activity:**

- DR Horton paid impact fees for an additional 5 lots in the amount of \$7,035.55. (Note: This brings our total number of lots in the community to 801; leaving only 3 lots left to be built in these phases).
- DR Horton paid pro-rated assessments on lots in phase 19 & 20 netting us \$20,000.
- We recovered escrow funds from our former attorney in the amount of \$5,618.16.
- We recovered a billing error from Santee Cooper of \$8,070.31 in July (Will apply to Q3).

**So where does this leave us now?**

Our cost cutting has worked great for the books, but not so great on the aesthetics of the community. Without additional funds to spend on landscaping and needed projects, the community will continue to be less maintained than any of us would like.

**Here is our current situation:**

|                                                                  |                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Operating account as of 6/30/23</b>                           | <b>\$178,616.34</b>   |
| LAC Electric Recovery                                            | \$8,070.31            |
| Average Expense for 7/1-12/31                                    | (\$162,000.00) *      |
| Deposit on Reserve Study (Balance due w/i 30 days of completion) | (\$3,600.00)          |
| Horton Overpayment Refund                                        | (\$7,414.00)          |
| <b>Total Projected balance for 12/31/23</b>                      | <b>\$13,672.65 **</b> |

**Additional Notations:**

\*First 6 months avg. \$31K included Premium Landscaping @9,781.48/mo (Jan-Mar); with reduced landscaping @3,599.00 per month, expected to average \$27K per month.

\*\*Providing we do not incur any additional expenses.

This balance, with NO contingency fund and insufficient reserve funding is an extremely low balance for a community of our size. A realistic assessment / dues increase is STILL imperative. We will try to bring new ideas to the table for the BOD to consider.

Homeowners will be the ones to decide how we move forward. We can choose to keep our property values high by voting to fund increases, or let values slip by not voting, or voting against increases.



## Community News & Updates

### Top 3 Topics from the Quarterly POA Meeting

In case you missed the July POA Quarterly Meeting the Communication Committee wanted to make sure were aware of the top 3 topics.

1. There was an extensive conversation among the Board, Homeowners and The Lakes POA Attorney, Paige Bellamy, in regards to the Quorum number (10%) in place since 2016 and the former number, 51%. The debate centered around whether the community should revert to the former number (51% or 409 property votes) or keep the 10% or 80 property votes. There is a group of property owners that would like to see the number return to 51% or 409 property votes but there is significant concern that the community is barely able to rally 80 property votes at any one time. Without the ability to gather 10%/409 property votes the community cannot hold a Business Meeting, elect new Officers in October or pass any new community initiatives and therefore cannot carry out community business. There was a Board Vote to retain the 10%.
2. There was a revocation of the Finance Committee's recommendation to see a specific assessment of \$250 per property to cover the 2023 Budget shortfall, create a 3-month operating reserve for unknown (but likely expenses in the next few months) and a 3 month functional reserve to help ensure the POA can pay the new 2024 operating budget while the Finance Committee and Board establish a new operating budget for 2024. The Finance Committee presented an additional overview of the need but ultimately withdrew their recommendation.
3. The ongoing and concurrent theme throughout the meeting, and the last several meetings, is that our community By Laws and Covenants are significantly outdated and are restricting the community's ability to operate effectively in the current environment. There were several requests from Board Members and the community to drive change and progress with new documents.

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July Yard of the Month Winner



WINNER: 826 Wacamaw River Rd



Runner Up: 221 Ashley River Rd

THE ANNUAL LAKES POA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS ARE AROUND THE CORNER!

The Lakes Homeowners will be asked to elect 4 Board Members at the annual meeting in October! There are several dates to keep in mind over the coming weeks. Please remember the date for the outgoing mailings is approximate and receipt of the documents are dependent on the postal service.

- On or about August 21, 2023 - Board of Director Nomination Application packets will be mailed to all Lakes homeowners.
- September 7, 2023, by 12pm- Completed Nomination Applications need to be mailed and received at the address provided on the Nomination Application form to be considered for the proxy/ballot. Please use only the form provided for your information.
- On or about September 18, 2023 - Residents will be mailed Proxy forms listing the candidates for the Board. A copy of each candidate's application will be transcribed for readability and included with the proxy form. Additionally, the applications will be available for viewing on the Lakes website.
- September 25, 2023 - Meet the Candidate Night- Property Owners will have an opportunity to meet the candidates running for the Board. This is a moderated event hosted by the Communication Committee with time for community questions for the candidates.
- October 25, 2023, by 12pm- Proxy forms need to be mailed and received at the address on the proxy. Residents who wish to change their previously mailed proxy can do so at the Lakes POA Annual Meeting, Saturday, October 28, 2022, at 10:30 am, Location TBD.

Calling All Artists & Crafters

The Lakes is pleased to announce the 1st Annual Art in the Park Event to be held from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. on September 16 in our park at the Hwy 17 S Bypass entrance. (Rain date September 17). Come on out and strut your stuff! This is a fantastic opportunity to show the community what you can do, sell your art and handcrafted items, and meet new customers and neighbors. We know we have some incredibly talented professionals and hobbyists living in The Lakes! We will have the Lobster dogs food truck available with delicious, fresh Maine lobster rolls, as well as their other great menu items to feed hungry mouths. It should be a great day to socialize with friends and neighbors and do a little holiday shopping to find that special something for your home or a unique gift!

Spaces will be available for our residents and non-resident artists and crafters to put their work on display. The Lakes residents' discounted price for a 10'x10' space is \$25 and is \$40 for non-residents. If you are a professional retailer, do not despair! Fill out a registration form and we will include as many as we can. All goods for sale must be brand new, no used items. Crafters & Artists are to provide their own canopy, tents, tables, etc.

Space is limited so do not delay! You can pick up a printed registration form at The Lakes' office (See the calendar below for office hours) or send an email request to lakesparkevents@gmail.com. Registration forms will provide further details for vendors participating in the fair.

We are so excited about this new event and the opportunity to meet new neighbors, show off your artistry or hobby and enjoy some good food! This is a great opportunity for our residents to meet the talented folks we have in our community, earn some extra income and meet new customers!

Do not delay! Spaces are available on a first-come, first served basis!

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### **Closing Fees Charged – Not Part of the POA Fees**

There have been some property owners who are concerned that they have been charged a \$2000 fee by their builder, as part of their closing fees, because The Lakes POA is charging the builder \$2000. This is NOT true! The Lakes POA charges the builder an Impact Fee of \$1,407.11 (for 2023) that is credited to The Lakes Road Reserve Fund. If you are unsure what fees are being charged and why please contact your closing agent, builder contact or Real Estate Agent. If you have a fee listed as a Lakes POA Fee that is different, then the \$1,407.11 please send a copy to Karen @ [ktucker@litustolet.com](mailto:ktucker@litustolet.com)

*Reminder:* The Lakes POA did not/does not own any of the land being developed by the current or former builders. RS Parker owns the land and the rights to build on the property. The Lakes POA did NOT receive any compensation or commission for the sales or purchase of the property, or lots being built.

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COMMITTEE UPDATES

Beautification Committee, by Bill Vesely

People in the community have been questioning why the landscaping is not looking as good as it once looked. The reason for the difference is the lack of funding. The landscapers are working on basic services such as mowing and blowing. Once there is a solution to how to add additional funding, we will hopefully be able to add more services to the landscaping budget.

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### **Communication Committee**, by Co-Chairs: Barbara Cardinal and Jeri Mathur

The Communication Committee continues to be busy publishing our monthly newsletter, The Communicator, and working with the board to make decisions on how to best communicate with homeowners. We appreciate the very positive feedback that we have recently received from some homeowners about The Communicator. Many thanks!

We are pleased to announce that a member of our committee, Linda Ponterio, has volunteered to post pages, each month, from The Communicator onto the park bulletin board. Stop by and take a look! Thank you, Linda!

Please remember that you can always submit ideas for review by the Communication Committee by sending an email to Karen at [ktucker@litustolet.com](mailto:ktucker@litustolet.com).

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Roads Committee, by Jack Price

The Roads Committee has almost finished inspecting all the roads in The Lakes community. Once completed I will send to the BOD a completed list of all the roads that need attention along with recommendations to repair them. Most roads are in good shape, but there are various roads that if left unrepaired will become bigger issues with bigger price tags.

Currently the Roads Committee has sent out 6 project requests to bid on repairs and is waiting for a reply. With all the construction projects going on in the areas around us it is hard to get qualified contractors to get back to us for small jobs.

After bids are received, they will be submitted to the BOD for discussion and approval.

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## **Pond Committee – By Debbie Wolcott, Pond Committee/ Facilitator**

NOTE: This full report did NOT get shared with the Community at the July 17<sup>th</sup> Membership Meeting, so I am including it here.

In the past 3 months (April, May, & June) there has not been a whole lot of activity in regard to our ponds. All POA (owned) ponds have been treated with algaecide and herbicide (as needed), and trash detail was performed. Shoreline growth was sprayed, floating algae and pond fingers throughout the community were tended. The changing weather patterns in the area continue to impact growth and algae accumulations. TLC attempts to keep up with it but there are still areas that get away from us. It's essential that homeowners continue to be our eyes in your specific area and report areas of concern to me through Karen at Litus. A reminder that as the heat increases, please limit or (preferably) eliminate your use of pond water for irrigation and check water levels to protect your personal irrigation pumps. Stormwater ponds are controlled exclusively by Mother Nature, and the POA is NOT responsible for your private irrigation system pumps because of insufficient water levels. I can speak from personal experience (in the past) they can be costly. I now use city water.

Since there are no extra funds in the current budget, as a result of the ongoing funding shortfall, I am not working on identifying new areas that require attention, the Rainbow Lake Project is still "on hold", and fish stocking that usually occurs in the fall is also "on hold."

The two new ponds in Phase 19 and 20 (Named Lake Royal and Lake Sunrise) have not yet been transitioned from the builder. We do not know when that will occur. However, the swale in that area (by both 1004 and 1007 Saluda) continues to be referred to Horton for clean-up. Recently the POA obtained an estimate (approx. \$4,000) for cleaning and notified Horton accordingly. Monies will be charged against their Compliance fees to cover it if they do not take care of it in a timely manner. This swale is the main access to Collins Creek in the event of a big storm and/or hurricane. We are aware that being clogged with weeds and plants could seriously impact performance and result in flooding in the nearby areas, or further downstream.

The swale behind 1004 Saluda (and beyond) belongs to Horry County and they are responsible for that. Remember, every pond owner should have a clear 10-foot easement for weed, brush, tree, and wildlife control. Please do your part to keep yours clear. Your help is beyond appreciated!!!!

Appreciation to our pond monitors: Larry & Betty Sorkin (Lake Marion), Oliver & Brenda Owens and Bob White (Rainbow Lake), Norman & Annamarie Fahad (Lake Murray), Nancy & Bruce Bragg (Lake Hatteras), and Bill Vesely (Long Bay Ext). I think I got everyone, let me know if you volunteered and I missed you.

We are still looking for 1-2 people for every pond.



### DID YOU KNOW?

If that was not interesting enough, due to the nature of their open circulatory system, shrimp have no arteries, so their organs just float around in blood!

### Neighborhood Spotlight!

We are so excited to share an addition to The Communicator...welcome to the place where we highlight our neighbors! If you would like to nominate a neighbor who has helped or shared a kindness to you, personally, or for the community, please send their name and a short paragraph to Karen at [ktucker@litustolet.com](mailto:ktucker@litustolet.com). She will forward nominations to the Communication Committee. There are so many wonderful neighbors in our Lakes Community. Let's honor them!



This month, we highlight these wonderful ladies who volunteered their time to weed the large median on Gilham Loop! It looks fantastic! Community Spirit is alive and well! Our thanks to Linda Ponterio, Lori Murphy, Leilani Lane, Lynn Frampton and Laurie McCulligh. Additionally, we would like to mention that two children from a neighboring community also came by on their scooters and decided to help! Now that's community at its finest!

**Thank you!!!!**

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## Advertising Opportunities

If you would like to have your small business included in the Lakes Communicator for a nominal fee. For more information, please contact [POAlakes@gmail.com](mailto:POAlakes@gmail.com)

Maureen E. Healy  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
843-446-1085  
ID REQUIRED

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## On the Funny Side of the Lake



# AUGUST 2023

| SUN | MON                                                                    | TUE | WED                                     | THU                                       | FRI                                     | SAT |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----|
|     |                                                                        | 01  | 02<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 03<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>9am – 12pm | 04<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 05  |
| 06  | 07<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm                                | 08  | 09<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 10<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>9am – 12pm | 11<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 12  |
| 13  | 14<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm<br><br>Lakes Board<br>Workshop | 15  | 16<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 17<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>9am – 12pm | 18<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 19  |
| 20  | 21                                                                     | 22  | 23<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 24<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>9am – 12pm | 25<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 26  |
| 27  | 28<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm                                | 29  | 30<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>12pm-3pm | 31<br>Lakes Office<br>Hours<br>9am – 12pm |                                         |     |

Next Board of Directors Meeting: Monday, September 18th, 7pm at the Lakes Office

Next Annual POA Meeting: Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, time and location TBD

## Horry County Community Information

### LOCAL HOSPITALS

|                      |                                  |                |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Tidelands Waccamaw   | 4070 US 17 Bypass Murrells Inlet | (843) 652-1000 |
| Conway Medical Ctr   | Singleton Ridge Rd Conway        | (843) 347-7111 |
| South Strand Med Ctr | 5050 US 17 Bypass Myrtle Beach   | (843) 839-1000 |
| Grand Strand Med Ctr | 809 82nd Pkwy Myrtle Beach       | (843) 692-1000 |

|                         |                 |                |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| MB VA Outpatient Clinic | 1800 Airport Dr | (843) 477-0177 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------|

### POLICE AND FIRE

|                                   |                |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Horry County Police Non-emergency | (843) 915-5350 |
| Horry County Fire & Rescue        | (843) 915-5190 |

### REC CENTERS

|                                |                                         |                |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------|
| Horry County Parks & Rec       | 2830 Oak St Conway                      | (843) 915-5330 |
| Pepper Geddings Rec Ctr        | 3205 N Oak St Myrtle Beach              | (843) 918-2280 |
| Claire Chapin Epps Family YMCA | 5000 Claire Chapin EPPS Dr Myrtle Beach | (843) 449-9622 |
| South Strand Rec Ctr           | 9650 Scipio Ln Myrtle Beach             | (843) 915-5333 |
| Burgess Community Ctr          | 10299 SC 707 Myrtle Beach               | (843) 650-2796 |

### COUNTY OFFICES

|                             |                               |                |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Horry County Treasurer      | 9630 Scipio Ln Myrtle Beach   | (843) 915-5470 |
| Horry County Auditor        | 9630 Scipio Ln Myrtle Beach   | (843) 915-5052 |
| Horry County Clerk of Court | 9630 Scipio Ln Myrtle Beach   | (843) 915-5080 |
| Horry County Probate Court  | 1301 2nd Ave<br>Conway        | (843) 915-5370 |
| Myrtle Beach DMV            | 1330 Howard Pkwy Myrtle Beach | (843) 839-8003 |
| SC DMV                      | 1200 21st Ave N Myrtle Beach  | (843) 448-9957 |

### RECYCLE CENTERS

|  |                                               |                |
|--|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|
|  | 9610 Scipio Ln Myrtle Beach (closed<br>Thurs) | (843) 347-1651 |
|  | McDowell Shortcut<br>(closed Tues)            | (843) 347-1651 |
|  | 4670 Jones Rd                                 | (843) 347-1651 |