

ODED'S WEEKLY REPORT

02-27-2026

QUEEN PALM TREES – This coming Monday, ACI Tree Care division is scheduled to be on-site to perform the semi-annual pruning of the Queen palms. That said, please note that ACI Tree Care is only going to address palms that are over 15 feet tall. Therefore, don't be alarmed if you see them working on your neighbor's house, "skipping" your tree/s, and then moving on to a different neighbor's house. If you have a tree that is less than 15 feet tall, it will be trimmed by BrightView Landscape's pruning team. Please note that Foxtail and Royal palms will not be trimmed as they are considered self-pruned palms. In other words, Foxtail and Royal palms' older leaves die and quickly fall from the palm to facilitate new leaves, which do not require maintenance. Please also note that ACI is instructed, per best pruning practices, to remove only dead fronds and green fronds that are growing below a horizontal line. As a side note, and while on-site, they will also make sure to address all the Bamboo clusters along the south wall of the community. This new initiative was recommended by the Landscape Committee and approved by the Board of Directors. With all that is said and done, and most importantly, we ask that residents keep their distance from the working crew for obvious safety reasons. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation during this project.

UPDATE - ROOF REPLACEMENT OF AMENITIES CENTER – If everything is going to go according to plan, the Clubhouse, Pool, and Club Room will resume normal operation hours starting Tuesday of next week. As explained last week, the last thing the Association wants to do is to close these amenities, but please understand that this closure is done for your own safety. Therefore, residents are asked to stay away from work during construction hours. This precaution will help ensure the project proceeds smoothly and without incidents. We wish to thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation on this important matter.

DECISIONS - In a recent communication, an active member of the community was surprised to learned that what seemed to be a very trivial matter was much more complex than meet the eye.

If there is one thing learned from many years in this profession, it is that members and residents of this community have good intentions and the community's best interests in mind. They wish to contribute and assist as much as they can for the common good of the community. With this in mind, one must accept the notion that these intentions are based on subjective points of view, which are only normal and quite understandable. After all, we all view the world based on our own point of view. Unfortunately, subjective points of view at times can clash with the objective needs of the community. Here is a made-up example to emphasize the above.

Let's say there is a community called ABC Homeowner Association, and they have a very active Amenities Committee. One of the members of the committee is a retired architect. During one of the committee meetings, the architect/member suggested installing window planter boxes with annuals on all the windows at the back of the clubhouse building. The former interior designer, who is also a member of the community, rationalized this suggestion by saying he can see the back of the clubhouse from his lanai, and in his opinion, this section of the building looks dull and unattractive because it is lacking significant architectural features.

The committee reviewed the issue, agreed with the opinion, and thereafter suggested to the Board of

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Directors to accept a recommendation to invest x amount of dollars in this project. While reviewing the recommendation, a few questions are raised:

- How would this recommendation benefit the Association as a whole?
- Why is the recommendation made just for the clubhouse building and not for the other amenities buildings?
- Were there any other alternatives to consider for this project?
- Where do the funds for this project come from, Reserves or Operations?
 - Assuming they would come from the operations, what services does the committee suggest “cutting” to finance this project?
 - Assuming the funds would come from reserves, how many years does the committee suggest collecting the required funds?

After hearing the answers and reviewing the matter, the Board of Directors agreed with the notion that this section of the building looks dull and unattractive but decided to table the recommendation, explaining:

- The financial impact on membership dues and the maintenance concerns related to this project are unwarranted.
- Only a handful of the community members would benefit from it, i.e., those with a view of the clubhouse.
- The proposed funds for the project would better serve the community if invested in replacing the clubhouse air conditioning unit.

While the above is an oversimplified and totally made-up example with no ties to this or past Boards, the moral of it is that recommendations and/or suggestions are made at times within the sphere of interest of a person or a small group. Of course, some would argue, rightly so, that the members of any Board of Directors are also individuals who have subjective points of view. However, the main difference is that Boards of Directors' decisions are driven by their duty to objectively examine recommendations while considering the bigger picture and the best interest of the community as a whole. A duty that is often referred to as a **fiduciary duty or responsibility**.

Florida State Statute 720.3033, Officers and Directors, (1)(a), direct any association member who is elected or appointed to serve on a Board of Directors to “...**certify by an affidavit in writing to the secretary of the association that he or she has read the association’s current articles of incorporation, bylaws, and the mobile home park’s prospectus, rental agreement, rules, regulations, and written policies; that he or she will work to uphold such documents and policies to the best of his or her ability; and that he or she will faithfully discharge his or her fiduciary responsibility to the association’s members.**”

In other words, the main difference between decisions made by Boards of Directors and anyone else, even a committee, is the ultimate responsibility for such decision-making. Boards of Directors have a legal responsibility to act solely in the best interest of the Association’s members, while committees' main goal is to assist the Board of Directors in making such decisions.

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It is not uncommon, therefore, that Boards of Directors, at times, are forced to make unpopular decisions such as increasing quarterly dues, enforcing the governing documents, adopting strict policies, etc. A real-life example of this can be found in the recent decision made by the Board to close the pool and clubhouse for the duration of the roof replacement project. It was only natural that some members/residents were unhappy and/or frustrated with this decision. However, the Board of Directors has the responsibility, i.e., fiduciary duty, to ensure the safety and well-being of ALL members and residents, even if this decision comes at the expense of those who use the clubhouse and/or pool on a regular basis. Again, this is simply an example to show how a newly elected Board of Directors had to make a decision that it perceived to be in the best interest of the community.

The point to be made is that decisions are made based on the bigger picture, which may be a little bit more complex than meets the eye, and the impact it has on the community as a whole. While at times such decisions may be unpopular and/or in contradiction to one's subjective wants and needs, please remember that a Board of Directors has a fiduciary duty to the entire membership. Hope this information is useful in explaining the subject matter, and thank all in advance for their understanding.

Have a quiet and safe weekend,

Oded Neeman, LakeRidge Falls Community Manager