



Cypress Isles News

The official newsletter of the Cypress Isles Homeowners Association
August 2013 Edition – Published Quarterly since 2001
<http://www.CypressIsles.org>

Welcome to Cypress Isles!



Go over and say, "Hi!"

Welcome to our new neighbors at:
548 Divine Circle

email, please email me at:
sanden@bellsouth.net to be put on the newsletter list. Please also include your name and phone number, in case there is a problem with the email address, I can call you for clarification.

Sandy Horazak, Editor



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2013 Budget at September 17th Meeting



Even though it's only August, the Board is starting to work on next year's budget for Cypress Isles, including homeowner fees. The current plan is to present the budget for approval at the September 17th Board meeting, which will allow time to print and mail coupon books to homeowners in December.

Homeowners are welcome to attend the meeting at 6:30 at Connect Realty, 11513 Lake Underhill Road

Dennis Horazak, Secretary

CI News to Stop Home Delivery

After 12 years, we're cutting costs by going to online and email only.

The November 2013 issue of the *Cypress Isles News* will be the last paper edition delivered to your door. The newsletter will still be available for viewing on our website:

<http://www.cypressisles.org> and by email. If you would like to receive the newsletter by

Aerating the Cedarwood Pond

The board is planning to aerate the Cedarwood Pond, which will be the first capital improvement since 2006. Some homeowners have expressed some concerns about the project. So Dennis and Dennis ask questions, and give answers.

What is the purpose of fountains or aeration devices?

Healthy ponds have balanced ecosystems with animals and plants living in clear circulating water. Stagnant ponds stratify into stagnant layers, and the bottom layers accumulate decaying nutrients, which deplete oxygen near the bottom, turning it into a “dead” zone. Fountains and aerators both circulate the water vertically, bringing oxygen to the bottom and nutrients to the top to nourish and oxygenate the plants and animals.

Wikipedia has good background material: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_aeration and Airmax Ecosystems has a short video that describes how pond aeration systems work: <http://youtu.be/S5WFv7DWKoY>

Which is better – fountains or aeration?

They are both good for the pond, while fountains add visual appeal – but at a price. Fountains are prettier but aerators are the most cost-effective option.

A fountain would cost \$8,000 to \$10,000 to install and \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year or \$5 to \$7 per quarter per home to operate. An aerator costs less -- about \$6,000 to install and about \$1,700 per year or \$3 per quarter per home to operate.

Orange County offers grants to pay half the initial cost of a fountain as a beautification project, but there are no grants for aerators. But, the savings due to the fountain grant would be lost in a couple of years because of the higher operating cost of fountains. That’s why only aerators are being considered.

How would we pay for the \$6,000 initial cost and the \$3 per quarter operating cost? Do we have money in the budget, or would we need a special assessment?

Funding plans are not firm yet, but initial cost would come from some combination of operating funds and a loan from our reserve account – but not from a special assessment. The ~\$3 quarterly operating cost would be added to our quarterly fees.

Which ponds will be affected by this project?

Only the Cedarwood pond will be affected. Because it is larger and deeper, the Crystal

River pond has stayed healthy with minimal maintenance, while the Cedarwood pond needs the kind of help that aeration can provide.

Why now? The ponds have been there for 19 years without aeration.

The Crystal River pond has been stable for most of the 19 years, but the Cedarwood pond has had algae problems for years, and all attempts to control it have been unsuccessful. WLCA had similar problems with several of their ponds (such as Pond #16, which divides Bradford Lakes from Cypress Isles), so in 2010 they started aerating their ponds to solve those problems.

Why not use chemical treatments?

Chemicals are only a short-term fix. Chemicals can kill things, but they can’t infuse oxygen or circulate the water. It is much cheaper to support the aquatic plants and animals and let them take care of the ponds.

What is the current cost of annual maintenance vs. future operational costs?

Our annual pond maintenance contract is about \$1,200 per year for both ponds, and that service will continue. However, the current annual maintenance has not been enough for the Cedarwood pond, and aeration is indicated. An aerator would add about \$3 per quarter per home to operate.

But this is about pond survival, not cost. A more meaningful comparison is between aeration and dredging – the other way to clean the bottom of the pond. Periodic dredging can cost tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars, most likely funded by a special assessment. That’s why WLCA went with aeration, and so will we.

I don't live on a pond, why should I have to pay for its maintenance?

Various homes in Cypress Isles are adjacent to various scenic areas, such as the seclusion provided by the walls at the entrances, the arboreal vistas offered by the greenbelt areas behind Spring Island Way, or the placid settings of the two ponds. These adjacent features are owned by the association and maintained through homeowner fees, which “must be fixed at a uniform rate for all Units” (Article VI, Section

4, WLCA Declaration of Neighborhood Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions).

Why should Cypress Isles take care of this, why not Orange County or WLCA?

There are 54 ponds in Waterford Lakes. Eleven are owned by Orange County, 22 are owned by WLCA, and 21 are owned by the neighborhoods. Cypress Isles owns the pond behind Crystal River Drive and the pond behind Cedarwood Court. Homeowners do not own or maintain any ponds.

The people who live on the ponds chose that property, so why can't they take care of it themselves - with the HOA Board's approval?

Like all common area assets, the ponds and their surrounding sloped borders belong to Cypress Isles, not the owners.

People who chose to live next to an entrance or greenbelt area are not required to maintain the walls or the woods, and people who chose to live next to a county or WLCA pond are not asked to maintain those ponds by themselves either.

I don't ask the HOA to pay to have my backyard cleaned up when the woods encroach on my land; I take care of it myself. I clean up vines, branches, weeds... all coming from the woods. If the HOA pays for the ponds will they pay to have my lot line cleaned quarterly?

Homeowners who live on the ponds also have to take care of their own property, including whatever blows up from the ponds. The HOA does not maintain private property.

So where is the board now on this project?

The board is only considering aeration because it is less expensive to operate than a fountain, and only considering Cedarwood Pond because it is the only pond with circulation issues.

Who will make the final decisions?

The Board makes final decisions on all common property matters in accordance with Cypress Isles and WLCA documents, which state that common areas are paid for equally by all homeowners. ("Neighborhood Common

Expenses," Cypress Isles Declaration of Neighborhood Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions, Art. I, Para. R.)

How can I voice my opinion?

Any resident can discuss any project with any board member at any reasonable time. Emails between meetings are preferred, but you can also come to regular board meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of odd-numbered months at 6:30 at Connect Realty. The board makes decisions at board meetings, but discussion can happen anytime. All board members do not have to be involved in discussions.

It appears there has been a lot of research on the cost of aeration or fountains. If this single project increases our HOA dues will it be presented to all the homeowners?

Florida statutes and our documents require that any dues increase more than 15% must be approved by homeowners. Fifteen percent of \$51 is \$7.65 per quarter, but current aeration estimates are less than half that amount, so a vote will most likely not be required.

The board has been getting vendor quotes and compiling costs for several months, and is now looking at how much of the initial cost can be offset by reserve accounts. Final decisions will probably be made in time for 2014 budget discussions at the September 17th board meeting.

By Dennis Bode and Dennis Horazak

No Annual Meeting

Keeping with Florida Statutes, since there were not enough homeowners for an annual meeting, the directors keep their jobs.

There was no annual meeting on May 21st because only 9 homeowners were present and only 10 proxies were submitted, but 42 owners are required for a quorum. In accordance with Florida Statutes, the incumbent directors stayed on the board and held their annual organizational meeting, at which time they decided to keep the same officers and committee members.

Meeting minutes are at www.CypressIsles.org and click on Archives > Cypress Isles Board of Directors Meeting Minutes.

ARC Request & Approval

As a reminder, all changes to the properties within Cypress Isles community are required to be approved by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) prior to implementing the changes.

So how does the ARC review & approval cycle work?

1. Contact the WLCA office at the community pool cabana, call 407-380-3803 to get the proper ARC application form, or go to our website: www.cypressisles.org to download it.

DO NOT IMPLEMENT REQUESTED CHANGES PRIOR TO APPROVAL BY THE ARC.

2. Complete the top section; provide information on requested change. Listed below are examples of the information that is needed with the application when it is submitted.
 - If submitting a structural change (fence, swing set, landscaping, pool, building addition), include a copy of the plot plan with the changes noted on plot plan.
 - If requesting solar panel approval, note which sides of the roof the panels will be installed.
 - If changing the color of the home, include samples of the colors and note where colors are to be used (trim, walls, porch, etc.).
 - If tinting windows, include sample of material to be used.
3. Take the completed application form to the WLCA office by the pool at 453 Mark Twain Blvd. WLCA will log it in and send it to the Cypress Isles ARC. The CI ARC and WLCA have up to 30 days to approve or disapprove the request.
4. Once approved by both the Cypress Isles and WLCA ARCs, a copy of the application will

be mailed to the requestor. If disapproved, the ARC will provide written rationale for disapproval or ask homeowner to resubmit the application.

Architectural Review Committee

CIN Publication Schedule

Check out our website - www.cypressisles.org to see your newsletter in color.

The *Cypress Isles News* is published quarterly by the Board of Directors for the residents of Cypress Isles. Copy deadlines are February 1 for the February issue, May 1 for the May issue, August 1 for the August issue, and November 1 for the November issue. Articles may be edited for length, clarity, or content.

Thanks...

...to the Symons, Engolds, Gallaghers, and Greens for delivering the newsletter to our homes.



...to our Webmaster Dennis Bode for maintaining the best website in Waterford Lakes – <http://www.Cypressisles.org>



Sandy Horazak, Editor

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