

## The Woods At Elm Creek Homeowners Association

PO Box 453

Champlin, MN 55316

[thewoodsatelm creek@gmail.com](mailto:thewoodsatelm creek@gmail.com) - [thewoodsatelm creek.com](http://thewoodsatelm creek.com)

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April 10, 2020

Dear Homeowners,

The board hopes this letter finds each of you healthy and adjusting to the new normal of schedules, work, and school amidst COVID19.

The board of Directors for The Woods at Elm Creek Homeowners Association met on March 29, 2020, to discuss the Annual Meeting. This meeting was planned for May 3rd, 2020 at the Champlin Ice Forum. Given Governor Walz's Stay at Home order, the recommended social distancing mitigation strategies to slow the spread of COVID-19, and the uncertainty of when these restrictions will be lifted, **the board has canceled the annual meeting.**

The board recognizes that the annual meeting is an important way to communicate a summary of work completed over the year and any ongoing work or pending concerns. Additionally, this meeting provides a critical opportunity for both directors to connect with our members and homeowner members to connect with directors and each other. The decision to cancel the annual meeting was not one taken lightly. However, in the interest of safety, it is the right thing to do given this unprecedented time.

Alternatively, **use this letter as an overview of agenda items** that would have been discussed at the meeting, including our budget.

The board welcomes your [feedback](#) to this letter as well as any other general questions, comments or concerns you may have. The contents of this letter will also be posted on our [website](#) for you to review at your convenience.

The board appreciates your understanding in this matter and encourages you to continue to stay safe at home. Rest assured, the health of our association is very good. Thanks for your help in making The Woods at Elm Creek community a great place to live!

Sincerely,

Board of Directors,

The Woods at Elm Creek Homeowners Association

Todd McDowell (President)  
Mike Young (Vice President)  
Jon Speich (Secretary & Treasurer)  
Shanna Johnson (Member)  
JeffLinders (Member)

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## Old Business

**Landscaping:** The board continues to implement our strategic landscaping plan. You likely saw work throughout the summer season. Our long-term plan to achieve a standardized design of plantings in our common areas has already proven beneficial in managing expenses. The board asks homeowners to refrain from any personal planting in these common areas. The board appreciates your patience with your respective culdesac. The board continues to prioritize specific areas that were very distressed and it may take some time to see its full potential. Our upcoming landscaping plans include but are not limited to:

- Tree removal and trimming
- Mulch added to specific islands
- Mailbox edging and rock on finished Rosemill road areas.
- New plantings for select cul de sacs

**Budget:** The 2020 WECHA budget was approved by the board at our quarterly board meeting on March 29th. A copy of the budget is attached to this letter. Also, find a copy posted on the WECHA [website](#). The board continues to manage the budget responsibly by reducing our contracted expenses, utilizing the new home buyer/home seller revenue streams, and strategically plan for the future. As a result of these financial management measures, the association is seeing a positive trend in our balance sheet. For our 154 properties, the board recently voted to hold annual dues at \$140 for the foreseeable future.

- **Late Fees:** Thank you to all the members that remain current with their annual dues payments. This directly affects our ability to hold the costs associated with collection efforts, including accounting, lawyer fees, and mailings. Reminder, late annual payments are subject to a \$25 late fee and interest charges.
- **Home sales:** Your association has a \$420 new member initiation fee charged to new buyers in our association. There is also a \$100 HOA document fee charged to sellers. These additional revenue streams have helped stabilize our annual dues. The board forecasts five home sale transactions per calendar year.
- **Forbearance:** An important note, if your 2020 dues are impacted by the Coronavirus or any other financial hardship, please [let us know](#). The HOA wants to work with you in whatever way possible to help with any financial challenges you may have.
- **WECHA financial health:** The long-term strategic goal is to cap our annual fee at \$140 and possibly reduce this fee. It is standard practice for a healthy HOA to maintain 3x their annual income in reserves. The association is not quite there but will be soon.
- **New projects:** The board has developed a standardization policy for all four entrances. Some areas require transition work to be in alignment with our policy.

## New Business

### **Landscaping:**

The board has consulted a tree service as many common areas are seeing significant issues with age and Emerald Ash Borer evidence. There are a number of trees that require trimming and others that are causing

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damage to nearby trees. Again, thank you for your patience as the board addresses some overdue issues that may not look great at the start.

### **New Members:**

We've added several new homeowners this year. Welcome to WECHA! If you are unsure if you are on our email list or have a more current email address please [reach out](#) to us. WECHA does not send out many emails but when time-sensitive or important updates arise impacting our members it's a wonderful and cost-effective way for us to connect.

### **Architectural Control:**

The board is seeing the end of exterior property repairs from the strong storm a few years ago. As an [architecturally controlled community](#), The board wants to thank all those who notified the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) of the change of color and or design of the exterior of their homes. All submitted plans were consistent with the covenants and intended design of the neighborhood. It was reassuring to see the level of commitment by our current homeowners to our neighborhood's esthetics throughout all the exterior projects. Additionally, the board has been hearing from many new homeowners just how valuable they feel our covenants are in holding property values and esthetics. If you have lived here a while, it's easy to see our compliant, open, and uncluttered lots as normal. Be assured, others *do* notice that this is not normal in other Champlin neighborhoods or other surrounding communities. The board gets many positive comments about how driving into our neighborhood feels different and special. It does not go unnoticed how our lots are uncluttered, natural, and well maintained. These are truly great perspectives from our newest homeowners. Thank you!

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### Reminders:

As summer approaches, and we get outdoors, please continue to [reach out](#) to the ACC with any exterior projects or questions that you may have before beginning any work. A few other reminders:

**Yard waste & leaves:** Please don't blow leaves or yard waste into cul de sacs or other common areas. Our maintenance contractor will charge extra for the "unnatural collection of leaves".

**Pet waste:** Homeowners continue to see pet waste in several cul de sacs. Please pick up after your pet or the association will see additional cost during spring and fall clean up.

**Trash & recycling receptacles:** Homeowners are seeing a trend of receptacle cans being left out after collection day. This is unsightly and not allowed per Article X, Section 9 of the WECHA Articles of Incorporation. Be kind to your neighbors, bring your cans in after collection day. Contact the ACC if a screening plan is desired for your situation.

**New board members:** Your homeowner association has a healthy and fully functioning volunteer board. This requires an engaged and steady group of member volunteers. Some director terms are ending this year. The HOA is seeking new homeowners for these important positions. We've worked very hard to update documents and put in place strategic planning in order to ensure that the time commitment moving forward for our volunteer directors is manageable. The board is proud of the work done thus far. The board encourages anyone that may be interested in volunteering to [contact us](#). If you have lived in this community for a long time, maybe it's time for you to contribute to the well-being of our association. If you are new, all would benefit from the new energy and perspective you could provide.

**Security:** Be on the alert and report suspicious activity. If you see something, say something. Call 911. Here are some other tips:

- **Suspicious activity:** homeowners working from home, especially now during the Stay At Home order, have noticed slow-moving cars looking for packages. If you see this, write down a license plate or take a picture. It may help days later if you hear of a theft nearby. The simple act of raising your phone can deter someone from coming back.
- **Mail theft:** WECHA was targeted for mail theft a few years back. Our locking mailboxes have been effective as a deterrent for mail theft.
- **WECHA email:** Let the association know if you are a victim. Security cameras, Ring doorbells, and people that work from home may have seen something. The board encourages you to send us an [email](#) letting us know about any events or patterns, including vandalism, theft, nuisances, or any other activity that may affect our use and enjoyment of our community.
- **Facebook:** There is a homeowner managed Facebook page ([The Woods at Elm Creek](#)) that can also be used for communicating amongst neighbors. (Note, this is not an official communication outlet of the WECHA.)

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## The Wood at Elm Creek Homeowners Association, Inc.

04/08/20

### Approved Budget (3/29/2020)

Accrual Basis

January through December 2020

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	<u>Jan - Dec 20</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Income-Annual Dues	
Income-2020 Annual Dues	21,490.00
Total Income-Annual Dues	21,490.00
Income-HOA Docs Fee	500.00
Income-Late Fees	250.00
Income-New Member Initiation	2,100.00
Total Income	24,340.00
Expense	
Accounting Services	2,200.00
Bank Fees	18.00
Computer and Internet Expenses	300.00
Insurance Expense	2,384.00
Landscaping and Groundskeeping	
Irrigation Repair & Maintenance	0.00
Landscape New Projects	3,500.00
Landscape Repair & Maintenance	7,000.00
Snow Removal	1,000.00
Total Landscaping and Groundskeeping	11,500.00
Legal Services	500.00
Meetings	250.00
Misc Postage	100.00
Utilities-City of Champlin	0.00
Total Expense	17,252.00
Net Ordinary Income	7,088.00
Net Income	<u>7,088.00</u>