

December 2023

THE LAKES NEWS

"Remember, if Christmas isn't found in your heart, you won't find it under a tree." —Charlotte Carpenter.



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Financial Report—Larry, Treasurer

Cash on hand of \$17k against accounts payable and prepaid member fees of \$38k. Leaving a deficit balance of \$21k with hopes that some of that will be made up in December if the weather co-operates.

Reserve Member Fees are tracking to budget with no major delinquency, but a couple of co-owners are slightly behind, but not yet requiring hard collection measures.

Operating Expenses: Lawn & Grounds Maintenance for 2023 will be very close to budget. Fall cleanup should be adequate for year end December work. Sprinklers and aerators combined will be \$6k over budget. Not a good year. Building Maint and Other Contractors goes into December with \$36k remaining. We were hoping this

was going to give us the extra funds for the overspend in reserve window repair. Structural, roof, drywall, garage door will offset each other as long as December does not slip us a surprise. Winter Expense has a remaining balance of \$36k, should be enough. Combined utilities will be a wash. The 10k over on consulting (legal) and insurance are lost \$'s. All other variances are small \$'s. The Reserve Account was fully funded for 2023 plus \$80k of what we were hoping would be underspending in Operating Expenses when the final 2023 numbers are in there will be a portion of that, that will have to be returned to the Operating funds. Reserve Spending: We did catch up on the initial fees in Oct/Nov expenditures for the mailbox project stand at \$78,584. There has been little activity in the window replacement expenditures in Oct and Nov. We expect to have some December installs that will be reflected in the year end numbers.

Landscape Update—Barbara, Secretary



Waking up Sunday November 26th was quite a surprise. I did not realize that we were due several inches of snow and freezing cold. But now it is melting and not quite so cold. That's what living in Michigan gives us.

The landscape committee is quiet now until early springs. This will give a pause to remember what we accomplished last summer/fall, and what we can do this coming spring.

Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season.

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Property Manager—Sheila, Property Manager

Pet Owners – We need your help please!

The management office has received reports of people not cleaning up after their pets. All residents within this lovely community benefit from the thoughtful cooperation of all pet owners properly taking care of their pet's waste.

- Be a courteous pet owner and neighbor, please pick up your pets waste IMMEDIATELY! Simply place it in a bag, tie it up and throw it in the dumpster. Please, understand that cleaning up after a pet is not a function of our maintenance staff.

- The Woodbridge Hills community has 2.5 miles of walking paths, which is a wonderful place to walk your dog with several pet waste stations for you to use.

Landlords, please make sure to share this information with your tenants.

Amazon Packages - Secure, convenient package pickup in our neighborhood!

With the holiday season upon us, it's more important than ever to guard against porch pirates.

Amazon has pickup locations conveniently located in our neighborhood so you can rest easy knowing that your packages are kept safe and secure until you're ready to pick them up.

Amazon Locker Pickup Location near us:

Rite Aid – Lockers are located back by the Pharmacy

1950 W. Centre Avenue, Portage, MI 49024

How it works:

1. Enter a location to find a locker or counter near you and add it to your address book.
2. Shop on Amazon and select Locker as your delivery address during checkout.
3. After receiving your delivery confirmation email, go to the locker location and follow the simple instructions included in your email.

Snow Plowing—Stephen, Director

Just a few winter reminders:

- Keep your vehicles in the garage, so they can plow your driveway.
- If you need salt, leave a bucket by your front door and call or email Sheila.
- The association only removes snow when it snows two inches or more.
- No holiday decorations may be attached to the buildings, and all decorations must be taken down no later than two weeks after the holidays are over.

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Update—Aimee, Acting President

Mailboxes— All cluster mailboxes have been installed. Many of you are already picking up your keys. We are planning for **DECEMBER 18th** to be the **EFFECTIVE DATE TO START RECEIVING YOUR MAIL**. Make sure to get your keys from Sheila.

Windows—Blackberry has received the windows for our first homes and will be contacting the owners to schedule installation. We will keep you updated on the results of the installation.

Portage Water Bill—If you are 65 years or older, you can go to the City of Portage and fill out a form (Senior Citizen Water Billing Discount Application). You will receive a 10% discount on your water bill. You can also locate this form on their website to print and fill out.

Locking Mailbox Parcel Locker Instructions

If you received a package too big for your mail slot, the postal worker will place a key in your mail slot. Place the key in the lock, turn to open. Once this is done the key will not come out. Remove your package and close the door. The postal worker is the only one that will be able to remove the key. If all the parcel lockers are full, your package will be placed at your front door.

New Payment Books—New payment books were put in the mail to you on December 5th. Please watch for these to arrive. Also, if you have any automatic payments set up please make sure to adjust that amount when you receive your new payment book.

Just an FYI..... there will not be a January Newsletter, we will return with the monthly Newsletters in February.

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Update—Aimee, Acting President

Fun Facts about Christmas

- 3 billion Christmas cards are sent in the U.S. each year.
- Tinsel was originally made with real silver.
- Christmas trees have been sold in the U.S. since 1850.
- It takes about 15 years to grow the average Christmas tree.
- Alabama was the first state to officially recognize Christmas in 1836.
- "White Christmas" by Irving Berlin is the best-selling single record of all time, with over 100 million sales, worldwide.
- The song "Jingle Bells" holds a Guinness World Record for being the first-ever song played in outer space.
- The largest gingerbread house ever made was as big as an actual house.
- "Silent Night" is over 200 years old and the version that we sing today is actually a translation.
- The original Christmas pudding recipe had meat in it!

Why did Rudolph have to attend summer school? Because he went down in history.

Why does Santa love Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer? Because every buck is dear to him!

Merry Christmas Wish—Aimee, Acting President

During the Holidays each year I am reminded of how blessed we are to live in such a beautiful community. I would like to thank each of the Board Members that give of their time freely to help ensure that our community stays safe, well cared for and in good fiscal standing.

Our Property Manager Sheila, it is your effort, support and willingness to work with each and every owner in The Lakes that is the key to making our community a wonderful place to live.

I would like to thank each owner who goes above and beyond to help their neighbor, volunteer within the community to trim, weed, organize and more. I am proud to live in a community that works together.

During this time of year many of you will be traveling for the holidays, our roads are busy, please drive carefully. Let's make this a safe and joyous holiday season.

From The Lakes Board of Directors, we would like to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May your life be blessed beyond measure.

Merry Christmas!!