

May 2018 Palermo Newsletter

The Palermo Board of Directors wishes to provide its owners with a brief update of material activities occurring within our Association that were discussed at the recent Board meeting.

Board Meeting: On May 11, 2018 a Board meeting was held.

Palermo Financial Status: At the Board meeting, an unaudited balance sheet and income statement of Palermo through April 30, 2018 was distributed and discussed by Mark Faford, Treasurer and Secretary. Mark indicated that, as of the balance sheet date, the Association had \$79,623 of cash on hand, for the most part due to the timing of quarterly collections and the fact that some of the expenses payable, such as mulching and insurance, are due and payable in the latter part of the calendar year, and because the \$15,000 planned for sod replacement this year is only partially expended at this time. Mark reported that quarterly fees as of the reporting date remain delinquent from one homeowner, and that efforts are being made to collect the delinquent fee. From an expense perspective, Mark reported that, at present, expenses incurred have been slightly less than those budgeted primarily due to timing as explained above. Further, the Association has provided for an annual expense contingency of \$6,000 and none of those funds have been expended as of yet. The one expense line item that is currently over-expended compared to budget is irrigation repairs, representing replacement of broken sprinkler heads. The Board is focused on addressing this matter. The Palermo financial statements as of April 30, 2018 can be found on the Palermo Web Site. (www.mypalermohoa.com)

New Sod: The Board has budgeted \$15,000 for calendar 2018 for sod replacement at homes for which bare areas are not progressing. Phase I of the sod replacement has occurred with great success at a cost of \$4,629. Based on a homeowner survey of backyard bare area sod needs and several walkthroughs of Palermo by Board Member Phil Occhino and members of the Landscape Committee, Phase II of the sod replacement is now scheduled to be installed. Several bids for this next phase of sod replacement were solicited in order to get the best pricing. Homeowners whose properties are included in Phase II will be informed regarding the schedule for Phase II installation in the coming weeks.

Irrigation: The VG&RC CDD is the responsible party for deciding whether homes are permitted one or two watering cycles (total of two hours each) per week. During this Spring the VCDD has periodically allowed two weekly waterings during some weeks and then has switched back and forth to one weekly watering. No announcement of the schedule is provided by the VCDD, but at the request of the Palermo Board, homeowners can now access the Venetian POA web site (www.venetianpoa.com) and, on the home page of the site, see whether Irrigation Block II is active or not. Also note, that the VCDD monitors rain levels, and on a daily basis decides whether to turn off the irrigation pumps if sufficient rain has fallen.

As homeowners are aware, we have had a very dry Spring and as a result the VCDD allotted water has been insufficient to keep lawns as green as desired. Homeowners can attach sprinklers to their own domestic water spigots if desired to supplement the

VCDD provided water, but short of that practice, the Association has no means of delivering sufficient water to each lot to keep the grass bright green, without the help of Mother Nature. Fortunately, as of late May, Mother Nature has now begun to help us.

The Board is doing its best to explore ways to deliver the most water possible in times of need, by ensuring the sprinkler heads are in good working order, and that any ideas for more effective use of the way the heads are set up are explored. Wet checks are performed by ArtisTree on each property once per month, but please report to Brian at Sunstate any malfunction that you are aware of (i.e. when pavers don't look wet the morning after an expected watering, or any abnormally dry patches of your lawn), so that ArtisTree can be dispatched to check your Irrigation Control Box and lawn condition. Note, that any new bed or tree plantings will not thrive without homeowner intervention (hand watering).

Landscaping: Phil Occhino, Board Landscaping liaison, reported on the two recent walk throughs of the property with ArtisTree and various landscaping related matters. Homeowners offered numerous comments regarding landscaping issues that they have observed. As a result of homeowner input and the Board's evaluation of ArtisTree's performance (specifically lack of supervision of workers and less than desirable communication with management and the Board) we have asked for the ArtisTree Account Manager to be replaced. After a meeting held with ArtisTree management, Phil Occhino, and Brian Rivenbark, ArtisTree has agreed to replace our Account Manager effective immediately. Our new Account Manager will be Gary Murray. The Board members and members of the Landscape Committee will be meeting Gary this week to ensure he is up to speed on our homeowners' and the Board's expectations.

NOTE: All issues of any type, including Landscaping Issues, are to be reported to Brian Rivenbark at Sunstate, either by email or through the Association Web Site portal, and NOT communicated directly to ArtisTree.

Mulch: Cocoa Brown mulch was applied to planting beds in November 2017 and plans are to apply Cocoa Brown mulch again this fall (late October 2018).

We expect to apply 150 cubic feet of mulch to each home's planting beds and tree surrounds, with an opportunity for homeowners to order in advance, at their own cost, any additional mulch they would like delivered for homeowner application, in light of the fact that a few properties have larger beds than the average home. Homeowners will be informed in the future of the planned mulch application date and be given ample opportunity to request additional mulch deliveries. Note that last year we did incur some vandalism, with mulch being stolen before applied. Mulch companies deliver pallets of mulch a day or two in advance of application, so please be vigilant and report any unauthorized removal of the wrapped pallets of mulch stacked at the roadside and ensure that you secure any separately ordered mulch bags upon delivery.

Common Areas surrounding Palermo: All of the areas of land surrounding Palermo that are not part of homeowner properties are common areas that will ultimately be owned and maintained by the VCDD. These areas include lakes and lake banks, the preserve areas and adjacent land, the roadways, the construction road area, the entrance structural monument area, the area next to 460 Padova, and the cul de sac

island. Presently these areas are owned/ maintained by Lennar. Note that the Palermo Board, VCDD, or POA has no ability to control the adequacy of Lennar's maintenance efforts and is disappointed that they are not doing a better job, primarily with the lack of maintenance of the structural monument and the Padova cul de sac island. Individual homeowners, including Board members in their individual capacity, have complained directly to Lennar about Lennar's poor efforts in this regard, but it remains to be seen if we will see any improvement.

The Association has been informed that the transfer of ownership/maintenance responsibilities, amongst other things, will be subject to the completion of a punch list, which we do not have access to. The Association is not involved in this transfer and has no role in signing off on any punch list. That said, we have been told that it is expected Lennar will remove construction debris that had been thrown into preserve areas during building before transfer.

At the recent Board meeting it was discussed that in connection with review of the items yet to be completed by Lennar, it has been discovered that the developer did not comply with the City of Venice code requirements for tree plantings when building out the Palermo neighborhood. As a result, an additional 183 trees are required to be planted. The 2013 building plan (provided for viewing by the homeowners at the Board meeting) that was approved by the City included numerous trees that still can be planted by Lennar, but also included numerous trees on lots that are now owned by Palermo residents. Therefore, compliance with the building permit would require additional trees to be planted on common areas, ultimately to be owned and maintained by the VCDD. City of Venice requirements are that all such trees be either Bald Cypress, Blanchard Magnolias, Eagleston Hollies, or Live Oaks, or such other approved trees with no less than a 30-foot canopy spread at maturity.

This situation provides a challenge for all impacted parties. This significant number of large sized trees will be difficult to incorporate in the available space (not permitted to be placed in preserve areas and problematic to be placed in proximity to any lake banks, except for Bald Cypress, due to erosion potential). Further, the VCDD is unwilling to take on the cost of ongoing watering, pruning, and fertilization of these trees, which were not originally intended to be placed on VCDD maintained land. Therefore, the VCDD is generally only in favor of the preponderance of trees planted to be Bald Cypress, which are the lowest maintenance trees of the City's permitted choices.

At this stage, as discussed at the Board meeting, a meeting, including Nancy Spokowski, a representative of another impacted neighborhood, the POA, the VCDD, and Lennar, has been held to discuss the various questions and issues that the parties are concerned about. At that meeting the attendees asked Lennar to ask the City of Venice if the required trees can be placed in other areas of Venetian or even if they can be "donated" by Lennar to the City for use in various park areas that need additional trees. Lennar indicated they would broach this subject with the City. Subsequent to the meeting, Lennar informed us that they had hired a consulting firm with prior experience working with the City Planning Department, which must be approached with any modification request to the agreed upon plan, and who must present any proposed modification that they may recommend to the City Council. At this juncture, Lennar has apprised us the City Planning Department has not yet agreed to any meeting date with

Lennar and their consultant. The Palermo Board will apprise homeowners of any new developments on this issue that it becomes aware of.

NOTE: We are seeking additional volunteers for the Landscape Committee. If you are interested in volunteering, especially if you are a year-round resident, please let Brian Rivenbark know.

A Few Reminders:

- If you are leaving your Venetian home for the Summer Season, please ensure that you have a home watch person or other surrogate who is checking your home to ensure power is on, and that the irrigation clock has power to it. The irrigation will not run unless there is a power supply, and if power is restored after going off, the irrigation clock may default (year of 2013 shown in the Current Date window) and likely will not reflect the proper current time. The Association needs to be informed at your earliest convenience of any power outage that has impacted your irrigation clock, so that we can have ArtisTree check it and reset the clock timing, if required.
- Please also ensure your home is fully readied for hurricane season, by putting away any items that may become a projectile in a storm.
- Finally, be apprised of Venetian Rules for Hurricane Shutter installation and removal, so that you can adhere to these requirements.
- **For further information on hurricane readiness attend this important community meeting sponsored by the VGRC Community Association**
 - **What:** Hurricane Preparations at the Venetian
 - **When:** Monday, June 4th, 5 p.m. or Tuesday, June 5th, 9 a.m.
 - **Where:** The River Club

The Palermo Board of Directors
Nancy Spokowski -- Phil Occhino -- Mark Faford

Board:

Nancy Spokowski (philnans@verizon.net)

Phil Occhino (pocchino@gmail.com)

Mark Faford (faf99@aol.com)

Landscape Committee:

Harry Wildman (hwildman@comcast.net)

Richard Stufft (mdmsp08@gmail.com)

Tami Gray (tmtgolfer@gmail.com)

Sunstate Association Management Group:

Brian Rivenbark (brian@sunstatemanagement.com) (941-870-4920)