

August 29, 2015

Dear Meadowbrooke HOA members,

We, the current board of directors elected 7/22/15, are writing this letter in direct response to a letter sent to you all by a *former board* member, Shea Hicks. Shea, as a current HOA member, is certainly within her rights to communicate with you all, but the current board feels her letter was not only biased toward a project she supported while still a board member, but also contained inaccurate facts regarding the “electric gate project” at the main entrance of block 2. Shea also neglected to state the fact that the “electric gate” the 2014 board chose was estimated to cost about \$27,000.00.

The bylaws and covenants of the Meadowbrooke HOA clearly outline the difference between annual and special assessments. Money collected for “annual assessment dues” are to be used for recurring expenses and are listed specifically as maintaining common areas, snow plowing/repair and maintenance of roads, maintenance of the fire suppression pond, weed removal, administration fees, and liability insurance. Money collected for a “special assessment project” is collected in addition to your regular dues. A “special assessment project” is anything that is not an annual or recurring maintenance expense. In order for the board to collect money for a “special assessment project,” a vote of all the HOA members is required. The board must receive a 2/3 majority, no less than 36 lots, to vote in favor of the “special assessment project,” and only the lots which would benefit from the project would be expected to pay.

The “electric gate project” on block 2 should have been deemed a “special assessment project” by the 2014 board. However, the 2014 board did not send out a ballot, provide all HOA members with the total amount of the project or provide all HOA members the additional amount each lot owner in block 2 would have to pay. Also, the 2014 board was using “annual assessment dues” to cover the expense of the “electric gate project.” Lastly, since the “electric gate project” only benefits block 2, no dues collected by block 1 should have been used for this project. Only once a “special assessment project,” such as the electric gate, is voted and approved would the ongoing repair and maintenance be paid for through “annual assessment dues.” Likely, additional repair and maintenance of any project would result in an increase in your annual dues. The 2014 Board of Directors neglected to do any of the above and, in our view, caused great division within the community even beyond the borders of the Meadowbrooke subdivision.

In evidence of the above, per the meeting minutes dated July 6, 2015 agenda items #1 and #6, the 2014 Board of Directors indicated that in paying for a \$27,000.00 gate out of the annual dues bank account the expense would decrease funds to such a point they would be at risk of not being able to afford the annual recurring expenses such as snow plowing, liability insurance, etc.. They specifically state in the minutes they were planning to cash out one of the HOA’s CDs as well as raising annual dues in order to cover the added expenses.

The process outlined in the bylaws that the 2014 board should have followed was ignored and voted on by only a handful of board members. The 2014 board allowed the electric gate project to begin one week before the annual meeting, which **did not** give HOA members an opportunity to discuss the project, nor give their consensus. As a result many of the HOA members who attended were quite upset and as a result the 2014 board was voted out and the new 2015 board was voted in with the expectation that the electric gate project would be halted.

The claims of criminal activity and perceived liabilities of HOA members, which Shea refers to in her letter, was also discussed at the annual meeting. It was found that there have been no police reports filed that would substantiate her claims. The only documented occurrence filed with the police was when a drunk driver collided with a transformer 7 years ago. The 2014 board presented these accusations of criminal activity and liability as justification for disregarding the bylaws/covenants and prevented each HOA member an opportunity to vote on the project. Also, please note, a portion of your annual dues does go toward HOA liability insurance which helps protect us all in the event the HOA would be found responsible for any liability.

We hope this letter will help shed some light on the appropriate processes outlined in our HOA covenants and bylaws. The annual dues collected are to protect and maintain our beautiful community, and was never intended to benefit only a few nor be used at the discretion of only a few. Many in the Marion community who are not part of the Meadowbrooke subdivision have expressed dissatisfaction of a gate that is excluding in its nature and so out of keeping with the community.

It is a goal of the current 2015 board of directors to once again make the Meadowbrooke subdivision a welcomed and valued part of the bigger Marion community. If anyone has further questions, input, or concerns please contact us at email: hoa@meadowbrooke.info, Meadowbrooke HOA P.O. Box 1392 Marion, MT 59925 or leave a voicemail at Ph# 406-530-9462. Thank you all for your time and consideration as we move forward.

Respectfully,

Meadowbrooke HOA board of directors: Wes Rammell, Brian Russell, Robert "Guy" Greene, Sandy Ream, and Amanda Staggs.