

**ORCAS HIGHLANDS ASSOCIATION
FALL 2018 NEWSLETTER**

WATER The water system sale is complete! Everyone should have an account set up with Washington Water Service (WWS). According to reports so far, WWS has been very responsive to all calls for service issues and final sorting of the accounts is going well. If you have any issues, please contact WWS. This includes everything from low water pressure to sale of your property.

Following is a summary of the accounting for the sale:

Sale Price: \$196,500

Permits, fees, and tax review: \$1,354.79

Legal: \$9,660.50

We had enough funds in the water expense account to cover the fees and have opened a CD savings account with the full amount of the sale price (196,500). The balance of water capital fund will be refunded to owners with refund checks prorated to the amount the current owner has paid into the fund minus any outstanding invoices you owe on your property. We will make these refunds once we are certain all tax obligations have been paid and that there are no outstanding bills. We currently are seeking advice from our tax expert to finalize exactly what our federal tax liability will be.

DUES IMPORTANT NOTE: We still have OHA dues. The Board has elected to stay with quarterly billing. The invoice will be for OHA dues of \$120 / quarter. This covers \$60 per quarter for dues including fire prevention maintenance, snow plowing, mail box station, community burn pile and maintenance, insurance, accounting, legal, bank processing fees for credit card and AHC transfers, and other association activities. The second \$60 / quarter goes to the road fund for paving, maintenance, ditch and culvert work. We would prefer members pay the \$120/quarter to minimize our bookkeeping. We can also take advanced payments and credit them to your account, if you plan to be traveling or wish to break down the dues to monthly payments.

The first new invoice will be out within the next two weeks. We are working to close the books on all water related costs and are currently rebuilding all the invoices with a fixed fee. We are transferring the online payment account to a new system that allows for credit card payments as well as the current AHC payment option. If you have an outstanding invoice for the final water billing, your prompt payment would be greatly appreciated.

FIRE PREVENTION MAINTENANCE (reducing fuels) Now that the dust has settled on the water issues and the roads are freshly paved we are turning our attention to the remaining major issue for the Association this calendar year – fire maintenance. We are in the process of finalizing a contract with Harvey Logging to clear the Shade Fuel breaks along the community property adjoining Olga Road. A shade fuel break is a separation of ladder fuels (things that let a fire climb the hill) and ground fuels while thinning the tree stand to a healthy level. We will be tackling the 7.3 acres adjoining the main road which has the highest fire threat potential. As part of this work we will also address a foot trail escape route in the area of Highlands Dr. and Colorado. This work is planned to begin in December.

MAILBOX STATION We are out of room on the new mailbox station. Please let Harvey Aldort or another board member know if you are currently NOT using a mailbox at the base of Lindsay Way. We are committed to providing space for all owners who want an **active** box. We can only offer one box space per property. Unused box must be removed to make room for others.

WEBSITE We are in the process of giving the Association website a facelift. The new site is nearly complete. The site will feature a new page with links for all the information a new or potential buyer needs to learn about the Highlands and provide resources the real estate community needs for accurately marketing and assisting buyers interested in living in the Highlands.

CAPITAL FUND INVESTMENT Committee Needs Volunteers: Now that the water sale is wrapped up we need a committee to help decide how to invest the capital funds. The leading suggestion is to invest in the middle mile for fiber throughout the Highlands. This would benefit all home owners and increase property values. There are some options with fiber installation and also options for other capital investments. Please let the Board know if you would like to participate in this next step.

PETS Please remember to keep your pets on leash when you have them outside of your enclosed property. Even if your pet is under voice control, other distractions may make them break loose. Owners have a responsibility for their pets and issues of “at large dogs” and potentially dangerous dogs are addressed in San Juan county ordinance 6.08.

Highlands Association Board Member Contact Information for 2018 - 2019. Please let us know if you have questions or would like to volunteer for committee or board work. The Welcome committee is looking for a new chair. Please let Bob Wyatt know if you are interested.

General Information: **New website address** - www.orcashighlands.com
New email - orcashighlandshoa@gmail.com

ORCAS HIGHLANDS ASSOCIATION DIRECTORS and COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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