

**SAN ELIJO HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**P.O. BOX 232, SOLANA BEACH, CA 92075**

**ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES**  
**Solana Vista Elementary School**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2024**

1. **Establish Quorum:** 116 of 192 ballots were returned, exceeding the  $\frac{1}{3}$  needed for a quorum.
2. **Welcome:** President Simona Hellinger called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. She thanked the board and committee members and noted the true value of the annual meeting is the opportunity for the board and HOA members to pass-on information and collect new inputs. Simona specifically thanked retiring board member Chris Costello for his six years of committed service to the neighborhood.
3. **Slope Report**
  - Director John Witting, slopes committee chair, with Sandy Punch, committee member, summarized the efforts of the year. Major points included a status of the irrigation project to replace the galvanized piping with more effective and efficient PVC piping. This measure was initiated 6 years ago and is roughly  $\frac{1}{2}$  complete. A graphic was presented noting the progress. This graphic is accessible on the HOA website ([www.SanElijoHills1.org](http://www.SanElijoHills1.org)). There will be a one-year respite from this pipe replacement activity to redirect slopes funding to necessary plantings. Plantings are required to replace bare spots and older, dying plants. New plants are being selected from an approved lists of species that have low wildfire risk and are drought tolerant.
  - Member Punch presented information on herbicides. The maintenance team has in the past used limited quantities of both Roundup and Fusilade. Based on recent member input, the use of Roundup has been discontinued and alternatives to both Roundup and Fusilade are being sought and will be part of an integrated approach to slope maintenance.
  - The committee has made another inquiry and assessment of the potential to use reclaimed water. Past inquiries bumped into the inability of our water district (Olivenhain) to provide reclaimed water, but recent cooperation and communication between Olivenhain Water District and Santa Fe Irrigation District may allow for an efficient implementation, specifically by making use of adjacent golf course reclaimed water infrastructure. Although recurring cost savings can be had using reclaimed water, the upfront costs have in the past been prohibitive. Interested members are encouraged to become involved with the slopes committee and a signup sheet was made available at the meeting. Please email [info@SanElijoHills1.org](mailto:info@SanElijoHills1.org) if you are interested in helping this very important committee.
4. **Wildfire Risk**

Member Grai Andreason undertook an assessment of wildfire risk, prompted by home fire insurance cost increases and numerous insurers either not renewing policies or pulling out of the state entirely. Member Andreason has been coordinating with the HOA's board from the start and a formal report is forthcoming. To be notified of the report's release, email your request to [SanElijoFire@gmail.com](mailto:SanElijoFire@gmail.com). Here are some of the highlights presented at the meeting:

- 80% of the homes in our HOA are located within a 'very high fire hazard severity area' and this designation is unlikely to change because of our proximity to wildlands. This severity assessment cannot be used by the insurance companies in calculating rates or coverage.
- The slopes and perimeter of much of the HOA were walked and then selectively reviewed with the help of the Solana Beach Fire Department wildfire specialist and local fire marshal. The fire department has consistently noted that the HOA's trimming and maintenance of slopes is consistent with published standards for good management. However, the fire department is not able to provide any written assessment nor is it able to enforce good practices, except in extreme situations.
- The slopes between lower Santa Luisa and Santa Victoria were walked and reviewed with a county ranger, as the County Rangers manage the San Elijo lagoon. The work that could be done in this finger of the lagoon is constrained by safety and accessibility concerns. Specifically, the steep topography precludes work on some slopes and the distance from a public trail appears to constrain this entire section of the lagoon.
- The fire department is available to schedule a walk-through of each individually owned property. They will advise on how to best protect your home against fire.
- Homeowners can form a 'Fire Wise Community' which, through collective fire prevention actions, could reduce insurance costs and improve insurability.
- Insurance changes are underway. Prop 103, implemented 30+ years ago, has capped insurance rate increases, making California unattractive for insurers. This is being reviewed by the state to develop a sustainable insurance strategy. In the meantime, [www.insurance.ca.gov](http://www.insurance.ca.gov) has comprehensive information on plans, progress, and options, including information on which insurers are writing policies in your area. This site also has information about the insurance option of last resort, which is a California insurance consortium called the FAIR plan.

## **5. Architectural Report**

- President Hellinger reported the yearly status and statistics on behalf of the architectural committee. Twenty-two requests for architectural improvement were received and addressed since the last annual meeting, which is approximately half that of the prior year. All were approved, with a few requiring modification to assure compliance with the HOA's covenants (PC&Rs). The median time to approve was 10 days thanks to the responsive support of the committee comprised of Paul Basore, Chris Allen, and Ken Ayers. A more detailed report is published on the HOA website.

## **6. Financial Report**

- Treasurer Paul Sagar reported the HOA's financials are healthy and in keeping with plans and budget. The HOA has been able, over the last several years, to restore a prudent reserve balance of \$40,000. This coming year the budget will address inflation pressures with a 7% increase in the HOA assessments. Cost pressure exists in most categories of spending. Treasurer Sagar also requested that all HOA members stay current on paying their assessments. Overdue payments are a significant distraction for the HOA's volunteers and paid bookkeeper.

## **7. Member Input**

- Member Peter Pawlowski noted a recent encounter with a Southern Pacific rattle snake on his property. He contacted Snake Wranglers (619-204-5117) to remove the snake. This service is provided without fee although gratuities are encouraged.

- Member Harley Gordon recommended that members with owner-maintained slopes on the HOA perimeter (specifically the North and East facing slopes) receive HOA assistance in both the coordination and funding of brush/fuel cleanup by the HOA's landscape contractor. He noted that these slopes serve as a fire perimeter/fire break. President Hellinger recommended that members affected have the Solana Beach Fire Department specialist come out to assess their slopes as a first step.
- There was a general discussion about thefts increasing during the summer season, with the county fair and racetrack operations requiring extra vigilance.

#### 8. Election of Directors

- Member Phil Klein, serving as Inspector of Election, reported the following vote totals: **Paul Basore** (113), **Paul Sagar** (113), **John Wittig** (113), **Todd Vassar** (99), Sandy Punch (1), and Phil Melese (1). One vote on one ballot was disallowed because it was for someone who is not a homeowner in our HOA. The top four vote-getters (**bold**) were elected to a two-year term on the Board of Directors, effective immediately.

#### 9. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm. The next HOA board meeting, at which officers for the next year will be elected, will be held July 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in the upstairs boardroom at the Lomas Santa Fe Country Club.