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Because each community is unique, it is impossible to anticipate certain highly specific requirements when developing an intelligent automated document generation scheme. Although information provided about Redwood Acres enabled substantial customizing in the generation process, this material should not be regarded as complete and in final form. Rather, this is a *starter* draft—ready for your volunteer association members to review, then further optimize for your association. Your Board may wish to designate an editor to make such changes.

Appoint an editor

Since Redwood Acres has been in operation for about twenty-three years, your collective experience enables you to tune this draft into a superior handbook. The person chosen as editor probably should be the person most intimate with the affairs, management and history of your association—possibly the President or other senior or retired Board member or other experienced and trusted association member. This editor would be responsible to submit subsequent drafts for comments and suggestions by the Board prior to its approval for publishing.

Before printing

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- further customization of these documents for your association.
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Committees' Handbook

REDWOOD ACRES HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

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You are an author of this handbook

This is a living document. So that we can build upon what we've learned rather than keep reinventing the wheel, as a committee or Board member you are encouraged to suggest changes and additions to the Board as you learn new lessons. Periodically, the President or other designated editor should incorporate changes into an updated version of this document. Text for this handbook is in a computer file so it is easily changed.

Conflicts in authority

The contents of this document are subordinate to the Declaration (Declaration of Condominium), Bylaws and other governing documents of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association and codes and ordinances of the City of Orlando and laws of the state of Florida. Any inconsistencies between this document and those authorities defer to the latter. Because applicable laws may change, we should have this handbook reviewed periodically by our attorney.

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Acknowledgments

This document was the product of countless hours of meetings, research, writing and review by people with many years of experience in common interest management, including some of your neighbors.

[Insert names of individuals and organizations.]

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Table of Contents

Committees Introduction	1
Committees are important.....	1
Getting volunteers	1
Keeping volunteers	5
Committee Charters	7
Committees need charters	7
Keep all charters here.....	7
Architectural Review Committee (ARC)—standing	8
Awards Committee—ad hoc	22
Board Advisory Committee—standing.....	26
Budget Committee—standing or ad hoc	27
Contracts Committee—standing or ad hoc	29
Executive Committee— standing or ad hoc	30
Grounds and Maintenance Committee—standing	31
Newsletter & Website Committee—standing.....	33
Nomination Committee—ad hoc	38
Parking and Vehicles Committee—standing.....	41
Rules Committee—standing or ad hoc	49
Social Committee—standing	51

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Committees Introduction



Committees are important

Redwood Acres runs on volunteer power. We rely upon it. It is our lifeblood.

Committees allow us to benefit from the contributions of volunteers without their having to be on the Board. Committees also are a good grounding place for future Board members.

Recording a volunteer as a *committee member* gives that volunteer official standing with the association to receive the support, authority, protection, funding and other resources that the Board chooses or as our governing documents provide.

For a homeowners association, a *committee* may include almost any number of volunteers—from a single individual appointed to accomplish a task, to many volunteers working on a complex project or a standing committee.

Committees may be *standing* or *ad-hoc*. A standing committee is permanent. An ad-hoc committee is temporary, usually appointed to accomplish a specific task or to serve for a certain period.

Getting volunteers

We have some very creative members who should be able to come up with creative schemes to bring in new volunteers. Who do we know who can spark enthusiasm and coordinate resources to make it happen? Let's ask that person or those people to help us.

Bring the meetings to the members

If we have problems getting members to come to meetings, we can bring the meetings to the members. We can hold each regular Board or committee meeting in a different member's home, regardless of whether that member belongs to the Board or committee. We can hold a lottery to create a sequence of members' addresses where we hope to hold our meetings. Then we can call each member in the sequence, asking if we may put his or her condominium on the calendar as a place for a meeting. We can appeal on the basis of "sharing a fair rotation and doing our part." We can shift the lottery sequence as necessary to accommodate schedule conflicts until we've created our schedule for the next two or three years.

Bringing meetings to the members would expose those who otherwise would never come to a meeting to their association, educate them about how we operate, introduce them to their neighbors who are participating in our operation and make meetings more *interesting*. We would get to know them as possible contributors and they would see first hand that participating can be interesting and even fun. It doesn't matter if the host doesn't have enough chairs—some of us can sit on the floor. Who knows?—sometimes we may be lucky enough to have a host who will provide us with cookies or other proper refreshment.

Committee membership drives

Periodically, to find volunteers for committees and projects it may be necessary for us to mount a public campaign. A well-publicized campaign should have two benefits:

- to draw-in volunteers for our committees.
- even for households that don't volunteer it should have an educational effect—to remind and put non-participating homeowners on notice that buying a condominium at Redwood Acres obligates each of us to share responsibilities for helping in our management through contributions of time. This may be a revelation for some—that volunteering really is an *obligation* and is *expected* of all households. It also may help to put Board members in a new light—that we are volunteers, homeowners like them, who have answered the call and are taking our turns.

Two committees can be particularly helpful to us in this: the Newsletter/Website and Social committees.

The Social committee can set up a social event, like a “Find out what’s cookin’” event where we cook hot dogs, distribute inexpensive, fun door prizes, then have each committee chairperson give a *brief*, positive, engaging orientation to attendees about what the committee does, the value its members contribute and what committee members get out of it. As the orientation begins, forms can be distributed allowing each person to indicate his or her interests, talents and what he or she would be willing to do on committees or on the Board or in other ways.

The Newsletter/Website committee can publicize the event, promoting it for its fun and informational aspects. (If it is promoted as a volunteer solicitation, not many will come.)

After the event, we can send the same form to those homeowners who did not come, requesting that they, also, provide us with a completed form. The newsletter can help by following-up a few weeks later with a reminder.

Below is an example form that might be used in such a campaign. We have a copy of it on a computer disk should we wish to modify it. It is entitled *One good turn*. It asks the member to list his or her interests and preferences for future involvement. It is a way for us to *inventory* the talent pool in our membership, discover those who are ready to volunteer now and identify those who anticipate volunteering in the future. We can keep a file of the returned forms as a resource from which to draw future committee members and volunteers for special projects.

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One good turn...



It is only fair that each of us takes a turn helping to manage our collective affairs at Redwood Acres. Maintaining our high standards takes much good talent—and each of us must, periodically, make commitments of time to our management.

If you are not yet aware of your obligations to contribute time to help in our management, please take the time now to review the first few pages of your Residents' Handbook.

If you have not yet taken your turn on a committee or on our Board, thank you for taking the time now to plan how you wish to make your commitment. To help us (and you) plan for our future, we have enclosed a form for you to complete and return. It would be most helpful if you would return it to us by the end of the month. It is very important that you return it. We will be following-up on unreturned forms.

Please, do not be reluctant to complete the form simply because you're short on time now. You may not necessarily be called upon in the immediate future; we will use the forms as a resource for planning our committees and projects into the future.

Fortunately, we make it a point to have a good time while meeting these obligations. We do manage to enjoy ourselves at committee meetings and at Board meetings, which are often followed by refreshments and conversation with neighbors.

Please tell us how you would prefer to make your commitment...

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Yes, I can help and here's what I can do: (Please check as many boxes as you can.)

☐ Attend the Annual Meeting in September and at least one Board meeting per year. (Everyone is asked to make this commitment.) Please select *at least one* Board meeting:

☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____

☐ Be willing to volunteer occasionally for special projects.

☐ Be willing to attend a seminar orientation for new and prospective Board members on _____. This is a great opportunity for you to discover some of the legal, financial and operational issues that Board members deal with and to help prepare yourself as a future Board member.

☐ Attend a neighborhood walkthrough one Saturday morning per quarter for about an hour and survey for problem areas requiring attention.

☐ Help organize refreshments to follow Board meetings.

☐ Help to organize social events, for example, a holiday social or picnic.

☐ E-mail or telephone neighbors to inform them of important association needs or events.

☐ Be willing to host a meeting in your home.

☐ Serve on ad hoc committees occasionally, for example, an Disaster Preparedness group, a Rules Committee, Budget Committee or a committee to research an important issue affecting us.

☐ Write articles for or help to compose and publish our newsletter.

- ☐ Help maintain our website.
- ☐ Use your personal computer to help maintain our activities tracking list. This list includes items on our maintenance list, projects assigned to individuals and committees, and management tasks to be completed. It includes the status for each activity such as priority, who's responsible for completing, and progress tracking.
- ☐ Help to monitor and control our parking situation.
- ☐ Monitor expenditures and income, for example, utility costs and CD interest rates, to spot trends and cost savings opportunities.
- ☐ Review our financial statements, research past expenses, project future expenses and help to develop a budget.
- ☐ Serve on the Architectural Review Committee. We are particularly interested in candidates with backgrounds in architecture, construction, horticulture, or related disciplines and neighborhood or municipal government. Simply a strong interest in these areas and a willingness to learn may also qualify a candidate.
- ☐ What, huh? I've already actively served on a committee or Board for at least two years. Contact me again in another few years.
- ☐ Is there any other way you would like to help?

Managing Redwood Acres involves many disciplines and we rely upon the diverse backgrounds and experience of our members in managing our affairs. We'd love to know about what background, experience and talent you can apply in our management of Redwood Acres:

What other member do you think would make a good Board or Committee member due to a valuable skill, talent or experience, and why? (Go ahead, we won't tell him or her who told us!)

Please, check at least 3-4 boxes and return your completed form before _____ to any Board member or send it to: Community Management, 505 Orchard Avenue; Orlando, Florida 32822. If you have questions about volunteering, committees, the Board or about anything discussed on this form, please don't hesitate to call any of us. Thank you!

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Keeping volunteers

A person may join a committee or serve on the Board for any of a number of reasons: because he or she was persuaded by the Nomination Committee, or to fulfill a sense of duty, to correct an adverse condition, to learn more about the management of our business, to satisfy curiosity, to gain feedback from exercising a newly-learned skill, for satisfaction in accomplishing something for the neighborhood or for social reasons.

Although getting productive volunteers will remain a challenge for us, keeping them will be even more difficult. Even though we may succeed in a volunteer drive, we will lose those volunteers if we neglect them. We must

- provide direction and clear objectives.
- support them with resources.
- acknowledge their contributions and make them feel valued.
- be sensitive to their burden and longevity of service.
- sustain them with energy, encouragement and enthusiasm.

We're not recruiting squads of selfless workers. We are really creating and nurturing relationships. If the nurturing ends, or if it never existed, the relationships will soon end as well. We, the Board members and committee chairpersons are responsible for keeping those relationships healthy.

Provide guidance

No matter how good the intentions, appointing a committee to solve a complex problem or accomplish an important task without a written charter may well result in confused, disorganized, floundering and frustrated volunteers, slow progress and an unsatisfactory result.

Except, perhaps, for very short-lived, ad-hoc committees to accomplish very simple tasks, it is very important that any *significant* committee we appoint have a *written* charter that clearly establishes its authority and mission. When appointing such a committee, if a charter does not already exist, then the President or someone appointed by the President should draft a charter for Board approval. It needn't be very long—a few sentences may be adequate for a simple committee.

Included in this Handbook (see below) are descriptions and charters for committees—not only for committees now active, but also for committees we may appoint in the future.

Establish Board/Committee Liaisons

The President, or we as a Board, should appoint a Board member liaison for each committee as the principal means of contact with the committee. (In the absence of such an appointment, the President should be the liaison.) The liaison will be responsible to ensure Board requests for committee action are relayed to committees and that committee requests are received by the Board. Each liaison should reinforce and encourage participation by committee members, demonstrate Board support for their activities, alert the Board to additional resources required, and make the Board and Awards Committee

aware of special contributors deserving acknowledgment and recognition in the newsletter, on the website and at the Annual Meeting.

Energize

The President, we as Board members and the committee liaison should attempt to make a volunteer's experience on a committee positive and rewarding. Beyond recognition and awards, we can further this by promoting a pleasant atmosphere at meetings. We may even arrange occasionally for *extracurricular* activities, like meetings over pizza (try to keep grease off of the financials).

People like to be associated with a winning team. Empowering volunteers, recognizing and complimenting successes, and channeling energy back into the committee helps to create and sustain a team and environment that better attracts and keeps volunteers who produce positive results.

Never stop looking for new talent

Realistically, there will always be some drop-out from committees. Therefore, to maintain our collective health we must keep new blood flowing. And it's only fair that our members take turns participating. Although our drives for Board and committee members may be seasonal, always keep your eyes open for that sharp, level-headed, clear-thinker and for that homeowner with special talents and background we can apply to our business. Also, watch for that high-energy sparkler with infectious enthusiasm and talent to inspire and motivate others. Keep a list and when it comes time to appoint new committee members or assist our Nomination Committee, use that list.

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Committee Charters



Committees need charters

Except, perhaps, for very short-lived, ad-hoc committees appointed to accomplish limited tasks, it is important that any *significant* committee we appoint have a *written* charter that clearly establishes its mission. This serves

- to help committee volunteers understand what they are expected to accomplish—the committee’s mission.
- to avoid misunderstandings and committee activity not intended by our Board.
- to ensure consistency and continuity as the makeup of a committee changes year-to-year.

Below are charters for our current committees as well as example and “stand-by” charters for committees we may appoint in the future. Charters we have *formally* adopted have their adoption dates written on them. Those without dates are the example charters that might be helpful should we create other committees someday.

Keep all charters here

All charters, including revisions, should be recorded in this section. As new committee members are appointed, relevant pages of this section may be photocopied and provided to them.

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Architectural Review Committee (ARC)—standing

Function

This committee protects our property values from possible detrimental impact of uncontrolled exterior changes by homeowners. It does this by reviewing and then approving or disapproving homeowners' applications for such changes based upon conformance of the proposed changes to our architectural standards. The committee also educates our members about our architectural review process.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from Article 6 of our Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association.

Appointment

This is a standing committee, specifically chartered in our Declaration.

Background

In a higher-density living environment such as ours, the investment each of us has made in our property is vulnerable to actions of our neighbors. Therefore, the Architectural Review Committee has been chartered in Article 6 of our Declaration to protect our property values from possible detrimental impact of uncontrolled exterior changes by our neighbors.

Years ago, homeowners associations went about the process of architectural review rather casually. The committee evaluating an application might have approved or disapproved an application based upon subjective criteria, for example, whether or not they felt the proposed improvement "looked nice" or whether the neighbors living near the applicant had any objections to the project.

Case law has since determined that approach to be unacceptable—making such association's actions vulnerable to challenge as being arbitrary and capricious. Therefore, homeowners associations have been compelled to adopt procedures not unlike those used by city planners, employing objective standards and well-defined procedures for application review.

In protecting our property values, members of our Architectural Review Committee have serious responsibilities. As a member you must be able to divorce yourself from personal and social considerations and evaluate applications objectively relative to our architectural standards. You must be prepared to make hard decisions. There may be times when you will have to deny an application for someone you know. We have four primary means of dealing with this awkwardness of regulating ourselves:

- fairness
- education

- administrative insulation
- participation

Fairness—First, our Board goes to great effort to ensure the review process itself is fair. We discuss and approve our standards openly and publicly, allowing everyone fair opportunity to be heard. We attempt to pass standards that are not unreasonably restrictive, yet protect our common interests. Also, our procedures ensure that everyone is treated fairly and uniformly.

Education—This is *important*. Many conflicts arise through misunderstandings by homeowners about their obligations. We inform our members about our architectural review process and of what to expect—in the newsletter, our website, our Residents’ Handbook, notices and letters, in meetings and in neighbor-to-neighbor conversations. Being very thorough in publicizing requirements for application submittal and conformance with standards can help greatly—both in preventing problems and in protecting our association’s position should enforcement by the Board be challenged.

Administrative insulation—We let our Manager do the *dirty work* of sending enforcement notices. That is one of the services our Community Association Manager provides.

Participation—We openly encourage members to become involved with their association and we recognize and commend them for that participation. A homeowner who participates, whether on a committee or on the Board, feels more a part of the association. Seeing first-hand how our association operates makes misunderstandings less likely.

Suggested activities

Specific activities of the committee include

- Evaluating and approving or disapproving applications submitted by homeowners who wish to construct exterior improvements. Applications should be evaluated relative to our standards as published in our Residents’ Handbook and any subsequent amendments. Broadly speaking, this is the review process.
- Educating homeowners about the review process and complying with our standards. This may be by answering questions of applicants, making helpful suggestions, periodically publishing articles in the newsletter and on our website and briefly outlining at the Annual Meeting the requirement to apply for approval of exterior modifications and how the review process works.
- Performing walk-through inspections of the neighborhood as requested by the Board or President, noting and reporting violations to the Board so that notices may be sent.

ARC member orientation

Every ARC member should read

- the explanation of the *Architectural review process* in our Residents’ Handbook.
- Article 6 of our Declaration.

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- the discussion in the Directors' Handbook section entitled *Rules creation and enforcement*. This is because violations of architectural standards and the architectural review process may involve enforcement. Although enforcement is a function of the Board of Directors, committee members should be familiar with the enforcement process to have a sense of their standing in administering architectural controls.

Attorneys specializing in homeowners associations advise that *procedures we adopt, such as those specified in those documents, should be followed diligently.*

Our records

Minutes must be carefully taken at each committee meeting. Also, all actions taken by the ARC and notices to homeowners *must* be in writing. All such documents must be filed in the records of that committee.

We keep 220 file folders, one for each condominium. We file all ARC applications and all committee actions that relate to a particular condominium in its respective folder. The chairperson of the ARC is the keeper of those records.

The committee chairperson or secretary also should maintain a folder that includes every notice ever sent to homeowners about the requirement to apply for approval for modifications. This should include the relevant page(s) from the Declaration, letters, newsletter articles and any posted notices. Having this folder may be invaluable should the Board be challenged some day by a homeowner who alleges insufficient publicity of a rule.

The review process

All aspects of our review process described below are subject to conformance with our Declaration. Any conflict between the descriptions below and our Declaration defer to the latter.

We have adopted a set of forms that we use to ensure the integrity of the review process. These forms follow this discussion and are referred to below.

Here are the steps we follow in our review process:

The homeowner submits an application

The owner of a condominium who wishes to apply to make an improvement should complete and submit three copies of a form entitled *Application to modify exterior*. It should include scale drawings with top (plan) and side (elevation) views as necessary to clearly indicate proposed location and elevation of the proposed modification. The drawing should also include existing structures and boundaries where necessary to indicate relative location.

The drawing need not be an art masterpiece. What is important is that sufficient details are included as to enable all aspects of the project to be evaluated and issues to be addressed with respect to conformance with our architectural standards.

We receive the application

When the committee receives an application, the committee chair or secretary records it in the *Applications Log*. This is the *master list* of all applications ever received. Notice,

as we record a new application into this log, we assign a unique identifying *Application Number* to it by which all documents relating to that application are keyed.

After the application is received, the committee chair or secretary should provide a receipt to the applicant confirming that it was received. This may be simply a photocopy of the application form with a notation at the bottom of the date received.

The clock starts

The Architectural Committee *must* approve or disapprove an application within a certain time limit from the date of submittal. *We must not neglect to act within this time limit!*

If we promptly determine that the applicant omitted important information that prevents the application from being considered, we may deem the application incomplete and inform the applicant of that fact, requesting more information. Once we have done that properly, we may not be constrained by the original submittal date—only by the date at which the application is finally complete.

The application is assigned to a committee member

After receiving and recording a new application into the Applications Log, we assign the application to an ARC member to work-through the case. This person will be the liaison between the applicant and the committee. (We rotate through our committee members in these assignments.)

The committee member investigates the project

The investigating committee member represents the association to the applicant. Care should be taken to project a fair and positive image. Every homeowners association seems to have at least a couple of unenlightened homeowners who never read their Declaration and who resent any restrictions on what they may and may not do with the exteriors of their condominiums. This liaison should respond to any defensiveness with patience, assuming a helpful role, answering the applicant's questions and helping the applicant to understand the purpose of the review process and why we must follow it. Failing to follow it diligently may compromise enforceability of its provisions and, thus, its protections.

The investigating committee member should establish contact with the applicant, inspect the site and discuss the project with him or her. Then the committee member records comments and recommendations onto an *Application investigation worksheet*. (See the forms that follow this discussion.) This will be used at the Architectural Review Committee meeting when evaluating the application.

The Architectural Review Committee holds a meeting

Minutes must be carefully taken at each committee meeting. Also, action taken by the ARC *must* be in writing.

The committee evaluates the application relative to our architectural standards approved by our Board. The committee itself may not create and approve new standards, although it may propose new standards to our Board. Only our Board is empowered to create standards.

The committee may approve only applications consistent with our standards. If specifications in an application do not conform the committee may

- disapprove the application or

- conditionally approve an application, even though not in conformance, by listing conditions it must meet in order to conform. This allows an applicant to proceed with a project observing the new conditions, without having to start the application process all over again. Of course, the project must meet those conditions to be deemed approved.

Although the committee may not approve an application that does not conform, it may recommend that the Board grant a *variance* on appeal if there are circumstances unique to the site that would justify it. A *variance* is an exception granted because the applicant has demonstrated circumstances sufficiently unique to justify setting aside a standard that would otherwise restrict a project. Should the committee wish to recommend that a variance be granted by the Board, it should not wait for the Board to act; the committee must disapprove the application and *then* recommend the variance. The committee *must* meet its deadline for action on the application.

A variance should not be granted casually or be used to avoid the unpleasantness of having to deny an application. Remember, standards exist to ensure fairness, uniformity and defensibility of committee and Board actions. For a variance to be granted an applicant must demonstrate that the basis or rationale for the standard does not apply in a particular case and that no ill-effects would be realized by the proposed deviation.

Should the committee be considering an application for a project already completed or in progress, the application must be considered with the same objectivity as if the project had not yet been constructed. Committee members must not be influenced in their decision by the prospect of expense of improvement removal or hurt feelings. Nor should they be biased against the applicant because the application was not submitted before the project was constructed.

The Architectural Review Committee records its decision

Upon reaching a decision the committee

- records its decision in the *Applications action log*. This two-sided form documents the status of the application at any given time.
- records its decision on the form entitled *Notice of committee action on application* and sends it to the applicant.

If the application is approved

If the application was approved, the homeowner may begin construction, meeting any conditions imposed by the ARC or Board. The ARC may inspect the improvement for conformance to standards and conditions as prescribed in our Declaration.

If the application is disapproved

If the application was disapproved the applicant may

- modify plans to conform with Architectural Standards and resubmit them to the ARC.
- appeal the committee decision in writing to the Board of Directors within 15 days of the decision. If such an appeal is made, the ARC should submit a written recommendation to the Board and the Board must act on the appeal within 45 days. The Board may act to
 - uphold the committee's decision.
 - approve the application, overriding the committee's decision.

- conditionally approve the application.
- grant a variance. Again, a *variance* is an exception granted because the applicant has demonstrated circumstances sufficiently unique to justify setting aside a standard that would otherwise restrict a project.

Neighborhood inspections

The Board or President may request that the ARC schedule a neighborhood walk-through during which committee members note unapproved improvements and other violations.

Should the committee become aware of a violation or an improvement constructed without approval, it should be treated as a rules violation. (See the Directors' Handbook section entitled *Rules creation and enforcement*.) The committee should complete a *Request to correct condition* form and give it to the Board President for approval and to send to the homeowner, requesting that an application be submitted for the noted improvement. Further notices or enforcement then becomes the Board's responsibility. Rules enforcement is documented in our rules enforcement flow chart in the Directors' Handbook.

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Architectural Review Committee Forms

This is a brief explanation of the forms tools we have adopted to facilitate the architectural review process at Redwood Acres. We can photocopy them as needed.

- **Application to Modify Exterior**—This is the form completed and submitted by the applicant planning exterior changes to a condominium.
- **Applications Log**—This is the *master list* of applications. It is a log of *all* applications ever received. Notice, as we record a new application into this log, we assign a unique identifying *Application Number* to it by which all documents relating to that application are keyed.
- **Application Investigation Worksheet**—After receiving and recording a new application into the Applications Log, we assign the application to an Architectural Review Committee member to work-through the case. This is the worksheet given to that committee member to record comments, special issues and recommendations. That ARC committee member assigned will be the liaison between the applicant and the committee. He or she will inspect the site if necessary and assume an educational role, answering the applicant's questions and helping the applicant to understand the review process.
- **Application Action Log**—This two-sided form documents the status of the application at any given time.
- **Notice of Committee Action on Application**—This is the official notice of the action taken by the Architectural Review Committee that is sent to the applicant. (It may be used with a window envelope.)
- **Notice of Board Action on Variance Request or Appeal**—In the event an application must be forwarded to the Board to consider a variance from standards, or if an application has been disapproved and appealed, this is the notice sent to the applicant of the action taken by the Board on the variance or appeal. (It may be used with a window envelope.)
- **Request to correct condition**—This notice is located in the Director's Handbook section of this binder under *Rules creation and enforcement*. since its use is part of the rules enforcement process. It may be sent to a homeowner who has constructed something for which an application has not been received. This form provides a neighborly, *educational* approach to inform a violator about exterior maintenance and architectural standards, the review process and his or her role in protecting our property values. It requests an application from the homeowner.

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Redwood Acres Architectural Review Committee

You may deliver this completed form along with drawings, in triplicate, to the Architectural Review Committee chairperson or Board President or to the Community Association Manager. A copy of this form will be returned to you shortly with the bottom portion completed as your receipt.

Signed: X _____ Date: _____

E-mail:	Phone:
---------	--------

Applications Log

Redwood Acres Architectural Review Committee

Application number assigned: _____ Application date: _____

Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Property address, if different: _____

Project: _____

Application number assigned: _____ Application date: _____

Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Property address, if different: _____

Project: _____

Application number assigned: _____ Application date: _____

Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Property address, if different: _____

Project: _____

Application number assigned: _____ Application date: _____

Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Property address, if different: _____

Project: _____

Application number assigned: _____ Application date: _____

Applicant: _____

Address: _____

Property address, if different: _____

Project: _____

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App. No.

Homeowner contact(s): _____

Phone

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Redwood Acres Architectural Review Committee

Applicant: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Property address, if different: _____

Date of application: _____ Date receipt issued: _____ By: _____

Date hearing notice sent/given to applicant: _____ By: _____

Hearing notice also posted at or sent to: _____

Applicant confirmed receipt of hearing notice on _____ by contacting _____

Date and location of ARC meeting/hearing: _____

☐ Approved ☐ Disapproved ☐ Conditionally approved ☐

Notes, conditions of approval or reason(s) for disapproval: _____

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Date homeowner notified: _____ By: _____

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Board of Directors Action (Variance or Appeal)

Date and location of Board meeting: _____

- ☐ request for variance for a project not conforming to or not covered by existing standards.
- ☐ appeal of Architectural Review Committee decision.

Description of Board action: _____

Date homeowner notified: _____ By: _____

Project Completion/Inspection

Date of construction inspection: _____ By: _____

- ☐
- Conformance
- ☐
- Nonconformance Comments/Action: _____

Date of construction inspection: _____ By: _____

- ☐ Conformance ☐ Nonconformance Comments/Action: _____

Date of construction inspection: _____ By: _____

- ☐ Conformance ☐ Nonconformance Comments/Action: _____

Notes

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Notice of Committee Action on Application

Redwood Acres Architectural Review Committee

App. No.

Date: _____

To: _____

Committee Action

At a duly called meeting on _____ at _____

the committee acted on your application received on _____ for the project described as _____

Your application was

☐ Approved ☐ Disapproved ☐ Conditionally approved ☐ _____

Conditions of approval or reason(s) for disapproval: (Additional pages may be attached.)

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For Architectural Review Committee:

An approval is subject to all conditions listed above and to compliance with the Redwood Acres Architectural Standards.

Redwood Acres Homeowners Association

Date: _____

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21

Awards Committee—ad hoc

Function

This committee helps to preserve a positive spirit of participation by helping us to recognize those volunteers making noteworthy contributions to Redwood Acres.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This is an ad hoc committee, normally appointed around August to enable selection of award recipients at the Annual Meeting.

Background

Redwood Acres's lifeblood is our volunteers. *Recognition* and *thanks* are the only currencies we have for our volunteers. We should ensure plenty is paid.

Traditionally, at our Annual Meeting in September we present a modest award, such as a plaque or framed certificate of appreciation or other token, to retiring Board or committee members and to volunteers who have made notable contributions. Such tangible reminders memorialize those contributions (upon which we greatly depend) and may encourage their future participation as well. We also credit homeowners who have helped keep our neighborhood attractive with exceptional landscaping maintenance. This kind of visibility fosters additional pride and we see increased attention to condominium appearance.

Suggested activities

Identify these awards recipients:

- Retiring Board and committee volunteers who have contributed at least a full 2-year term of service with good effort.
- Volunteers who have made especially notable contributions—You can identify these individuals by interviewing Board members and chairpersons and members of other committees for their suggestions.

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- Homeowners with the best landscape maintenance (our “*Beautification awards*”)—Get one or more volunteers with an eye for flowers, plants and landscaping, and tour the neighborhood, making note of exceptional efforts on landscaping maintenance. Select the top three for First, Second and Third place awards, and as many as are deserving for Honorable Mention. Be prepared to read a *very* brief summary during the awards presentation of what made the winners’ landscaping or other appearance aspects so attractive.

It is also the responsibility of the committee to buy or create the awards and have them ready for presentation at the Annual Meeting. Statements for compensation may be submitted to the Treasurer. We have funds budgeted for awards through our operating expense account entitled *Association Functions*.

At our Annual Meeting, the President and/or members of the Awards Committee will present the awards. (A presentation by the President lends that *extra aire* of importance.) One way to do this is to have members of the Awards Committee read the citations while the President presents the awards.

Awards don’t have to be expensive. It’s the recognition and public acknowledgment that counts. You can create an impressive certificate of appreciation, like the example that follows, with a personal computer and laser printer using a quality bond paper. You can emboss a gold seal for the certificate with our Redwood Acres corporate seal, kept by our Secretary. Having the certificate signed by the President and/or Secretary and put into a frame can complete the effect—a memorable expression of thanks, virtually only for the price of the frame.

The example certificate

The example certificate that follows was created with the same word processor file that was used to generate this handbook. That means we already have the word processor file for it—we can use a copy of that file and simply change the names and the message to produce our own certificates.

If you want to produce a certificate using the file

If you want to use the original file used to produce the example certificate, then you will need to have access to and know how to use the word processor that was used to create it. The example certificate uses features of the word processor program that most casual users never use. *Do not attempt to use the file unless you have consulted the word processor program manual and learned about **Frames** and **Styles**.*

While Frames and Styles are powerful features, they can also cause havoc if you try to edit a file that uses them if you don’t know what you’re doing. For example, simply deleting or adding a single line that uses one of those features can cause surrounding text to completely change its appearance or jump to a different location on the page. And if you don’t know how Frames and Styles work, you may not know why it happened or how to fix the problem.

Hints on using the example file

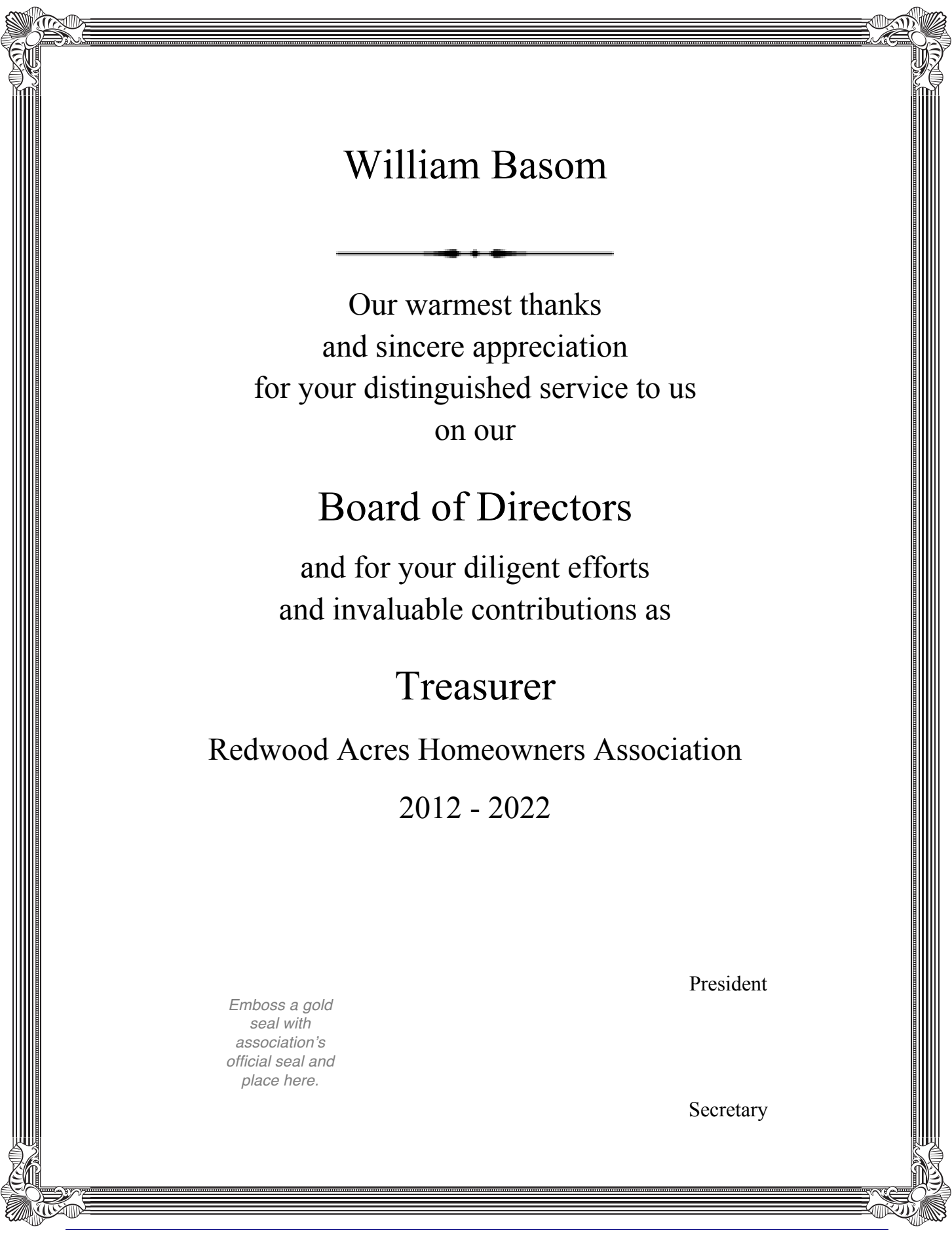
- First, learn about *Frames* and *Styles* from your word processor’s user manual while editing a file of text that you wouldn’t care if you lost.
- Do not edit the original file on the original disk. Copy the file *Example-Award* and edit the copy.

- Use the appropriate *view* mode while editing:
 - Select the *View-Normal* mode from the pull-down menu to see where text is actually located in your file and to repair mistakes.
 - Select the *View-Page Layout* mode from the pull-down menu to see how the certificate will finally appear when printed.
 - Select the *File-Print Preview* mode from the pull-down menu to move a frame to its desired location on the page.

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William Basom

Our warmest thanks
and sincere appreciation
for your distinguished service to us
on our

Board of Directors

and for your diligent efforts
and invaluable contributions as

Treasurer

Redwood Acres Homeowners Association

2012 - 2022

*Emboss a gold
seal with
association's
official seal and
place here.*

President

Secretary

Board Advisory Committee—standing

Function

The Board Advisory Committee advises the Board of Directors. Its members also have standing to participate in meeting discussions, including closed meetings.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This is a standing committee. Normally the committee should be appointed at the regular Board meeting in October, following officer elections. The President may appoint retiring Board members who he or she believes represent a valuable resource to our association, and may reappoint those already on the committee who remained active and who contributed during the year.

Background

Each year, we will lose Board members as their terms expire or as they retire. This may be just when a Board member is most experienced and of most value to us. The Board Advisory Committee provides us with the means to retain the benefits of participation and contributions by some of these experienced, former Board members, without the burden of the continued high level of commitment and responsibility they had as Directors. Their standing justifies participation by committee members in closed executive sessions and appointment to tasks or positions for which some official standing is desirable.

Suggested activities

Specific activities may include

- participating at Board meetings as a Board member would, but without a vote.
- advising Board members, collectively or individually, concerning the conduct of Association affairs.
- requesting that certain business be placed onto the agenda.

- proposing business for Board consideration.

- suggesting resolutions.

- acting in other roles as the President or Board shall request and as these committee members shall agree to volunteer.

Budget Committee—standing or ad hoc

Function

The Budget Committee assists our Board in managing the budget and finances of Redwood Acres.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This may be either a standing committee or an ad-hoc committee, as determined by our Board. Appointment as a standing committee allows the committee to be in place for any finance-related projects that may develop at any time. Should none be anticipated, simply appointing this committee in July as an ad hoc committee may meet our requirements.

Chaired by the Treasurer, this committee normally operates between July and November, when the budget must be mailed out.

Background

Managing our budget and finances is a vital Board activity and our Budget Committee is the principal organ for helping us do this. It focuses primarily upon developing our budgets between July and November, though it may be reactivated at other times of the year for special projects as needed.

Suggested activities

In planning the budget, the committee

- anticipates future operating expenses.
- notifies committee chairpersons to make known any special budget requirements.
- conducts or causes to be conducted a Reserves Study to
 - update estimates of remaining life for each class of physical assets.
 - get bids and estimates on replacement costs for those assets.
 - recompute contributions to reserves necessary to ensure that sufficient funds are available by the time they are needed to repair or replace those assets.
 - works with the Association's Reserves Study consultant, if retained, to develop an estimate of funds required for near-term maintenance or replacement.

To ensure sufficient time for the process, we must initiate our budgeting process relatively early. The President appoints our Budget Committee around July. The first

draft of the budget should be completed in time for review by the Board in August. The substantially completed version should be approved by the Board in October. If adjustments are required after that, they must be made in time for the final budget to be approved by the Board and mailed to members by November 15th.

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Contracts Committee—standing or ad hoc

Function

The Contracts Committee reviews and evaluates written contracts with our services vendors and advises our Board with respect to their value and compliance.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This may be either a standing or an ad-hoc committee.

Background

Our association has contracts with a number of services vendors. The Contracts Committee provides the means for evaluating and tracking performance with respect to these contracts to help ensure that we get good value.

Suggested activities

The Contracts Committee may

- evaluate costs and terms of contracts before we sign or renew them and make recommendations to the Board.
- monitor performance of contractors relative to the terms of contracts and advise the Board about changes, if appropriate.
- evaluate responsibility domains among contractors and make recommendations on changes to optimize service coverage.
- for substantial contracts, the committee may request the President to have them approved by our association's attorney.

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Executive Committee—standing or ad hoc

Function

The Executive Committee may serve as a special committee to work with the President between regular board meetings or on occasional high-level tasks or projects.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This may be either a standing or an ad-hoc committee.

Background

This committee may be created should the President and/or Board require a committee to work directly with the President on a special project(s) of some significance for which official standing may be desirable or required. One member of this committee must be the President. Members of the Executive Committee will normally be either Board members or former Board members—those very knowledgeable of Redwood Acres affairs.

Suggested activities

The Executive committee may

- serve as a working group between Board meetings to study an issue not otherwise assigned to another committee.
- work on issues of a high-priority or sensitive in nature, such as negotiations with another party, and personnel or legal issues.

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Grounds and Maintenance Committee—standing

Function

The Grounds and Maintenance Committee monitors exterior landscaping maintenance by residents as well as the performance of our association's own maintenance systems—our grounds landscaping contractors and maintenance people, and management's performance in facilitating maintenance to our high standards.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This is a standing committee.

Background

Regardless of the contractors or systems we use to maintain our neighborhood to the high standards we have set for ourselves, we the members will always be responsible for the result. The Grounds and Maintenance Committee assists in this by monitoring exterior landscaping maintenance as well as the performance of our association's maintenance systems.

Feedback from this committee helps the Board to track maintenance performance of homeowners and the successes and failures of our common maintenance program, allowing us to make adjustments as necessary.

Suggested activities

Systems maintenance plan development and oversight

The committee may develop a preventive maintenance program for maintaining our common physical assets. This may include preparing an inventory of the major components and development of checklists to be used by maintenance contractors that describe maintenance tasks and required attention frequencies.

The committee may recommend to the Board the engagement of outside professionals to study our physical assets and to assist in the development of such a plan.

Walk-throughs

Each quarter, or as determined by the Board, the committee should walk through the development, noting and transferring onto the Activities Tracking Report the common area structures and grounds items requiring maintenance attention. (See discussion of the

Activities Tracking Report in the Directors' Handbook.) These may include our sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, buildings, two pools, two tennis courts, hot tub, community center, exterior lighting, trees and landscaping and other physical assets.

With concurrence of a majority of the committee members, the committee should also complete *Request to correct condition* forms describing any problems and violations on residents' patio or deck or balcony or immediate vicinity and give them to the President for approval to send to homeowners. (An example form and discussion is under *Rules creation and enforcement* in the *Directors Topics* section of the Directors' Handbook.) Preparation of those forms needn't be limited to walk-throughs; a non-conforming condition may be written up any time with concurrence of a majority of the committee members and given to the President.

The committee should track performance by homeowners pursuant to those notices and may attempt to work with homeowners to resolve any problems. The committee should report inadequate homeowner responses to the Board for consideration of enforcement action; the committee itself is not empowered to take enforcement action.

At least twice per year, the Committee should inspect the common area irrigation systems and notify management of components requiring repairs and adjustment.

Committee walk-throughs may also reveal Architectural Review Committee violations that should be reported to that Committee.

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Newsletter & Website Committee—standing

Function

The Newsletter & Website Committee, acting on behalf of the Association, shall periodically publish a newsletter and maintain our website through which our Board can inform members about Association affairs, provide notices as required in our governing documents, and further the interests of our membership as described below.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This is a standing committee.

Background

This committee is an extremely important organ of the Association. Our newsletter and website shape, to a great extent, our membership's impressions about their Board of Directors and its conduct of our business. This is the face of the Association and of the Board; it may be the only face some members will ever see.

The President should be familiar with the content of both our newsletter and our website. Our Community Association Manager may write our newsletter. However, no one represents certain homeowners' interests better than homeowners. We can have a better newsletter when we do it ourselves. A Community Association Manager does not have the same license we have to write in a neighbor-to-neighbor style or to speak as members, using the *we*'s, and *us*'s, and *our*'s that reinforce the perception that our Board and committee volunteers are *us*—members taking our turns as volunteers and that we're all *in the same boat*.

Because of its importance and indelibility and because our newsletter may, from time to time, give treatment to sensitive issues, the President should review each issue of our newsletter before distribution. Should the President be the author or otherwise be unable to review it, the Vice President or other member that the President designates should review the issue. The newsletter should *never* be distributed before each article has been reviewed by someone other than its author. This helps us to catch substantive errors and language that could be misinterpreted, as well as less significant errors of grammar and punctuation.

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Suggested activities

The Newsletter & Website Committee shall include such information in our newsletter and on our website as the Board of Directors shall direct. Additionally, these publications may

- serve as a source of information about Board and Committee activities and announcements.
- publish notices of meetings and hearings for new rules and policies or significant changes to them.
- notify members of matters on the agenda for the next meeting(s).
- publish other notices as required by our governing documents, Florida state law and policies.
- alert our membership to important issues.
- publicly thank volunteers who have made notable contributions.
- regularly provide a reference about persons to contact regarding Association affairs.
- provide a bulletin board-style forum for exchange of member's personal and general notices.
- provide a calendar of events, including times and locations of meetings.

Every issue may also include a publisher's box with

- names of Board and committee members. Providing visibility and recognition for committee volunteers helps to sustain involvement. It lets our members know that we're an active, vital organization. It is also useful as a roster to confirm membership status for committee members.
- contact information of principle contacts, such as the President, committee heads and management.

Issue frequency

We should try to have an issue prepared each month. Occasionally, for those months when we have no notices and for periods during which not much has happened, we may skip an issue.

Budget

The annual budget of the Newsletter & Website Committee may include funds for copy preparation, duplication, mailings, production of special issues, Internet Presence Provider fees, domain name registration fees and other allocations specifically approved by the Board.

Production

Our newsletter and website needn't be art *masterpieces*. Almost any production technique will work for us. A simple page has a *home-grown* charm, reminding its reader we're hard-working volunteers, while a slicker, more professional look has its own strengths, broadcasting an attention to quality and thoroughness that reflects the attention our Board and committee members lend to their other work. Inevitably, the *look* of our newsletter or website will vary, depending upon the volunteers working on them, the techniques, computer, publishing software, printer and other resources being used.

The example newsletter

An example newsletter follows. You can extract it from the word processing file for the document you are reading (the Committees' Handbook) should you wish to adapt it for Redwood Acres. However, *anyone wishing to use the example file should read the following information about it.*

You will need to have access to and know how to use the word processor. The example newsletter uses features of the word processor that most casual users never use. *Before editing the file you should learn about **Sections**, **Frames** and **Styles**.* Those word processor features are used extensively in the newsletter to give it its nice appearance. While Sections, Frames and Styles are powerful features, they can also cause havoc if you try to edit a file that uses them if you don't know what you're doing. For example, simply deleting a Section or Paragraph marker, which contains important layout, frame or style information, may cause surrounding text to completely change its appearance or jump to a different location on the page. And if you don't know how Sections, Frames and Styles work, you may not know why it happened or how to fix it. (You can always use the *Undo* feature or extract material from the original master file should that happen.)

Hints on using the example file

- First, learn about *Sections*, *Frames* and *Styles* from your word processor program user manual while editing a dummy file.
- Do not edit the original file on the original disk. Copy the file containing the material you are reading onto your hard disk and edit the copy. Extract the newsletter portion from that copied file.
- Make sure you backup your file frequently while you edit, in case you make a mistake—and you *will* make mistakes.
- Use the appropriate *View* mode while editing:
 - Select the *View-Normal* mode from the pull-down menu to see where text is actually located in your file and to repair mistakes.
 - Select the *View-Page Layout* mode from the pull-down menu to see how the newsletter will finally appear when printed.
 - Select the *Tools-Options-View* mode to display all non-printing characters.

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Around the Block

Newsletter of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association

May 2022

“Around the Block...” our newsletter premiers

This is the first issue of our new newsletter. With it we're inaugurating a new format and a new way to keep us all apprised of events at Redwood Acres.

With several new projects in the works, there should be plenty to talk about. Soon we'll be discussing publishing new Directors' and Committees' handbooks. And we'll be preparing a new Residents' Handbook containing our rules, architectural standards and answers to frequently-asked questions. We'll also be considering adopting new management tools, including a task management calendar and tracking system.

We hope to use this newsletter to keep everyone informed about progress on these projects and to provide notices about meetings, agenda items and hearings before officially adopting new rules and policies. We'll also use our newsletter to alert you to important issues affecting us and to announce social events.

Want to help?

Here's your chance to be a reporter for our newsletter—to attend some Board or committee meetings and report about what goes on—or if you'd like to offer your word-processing or desktop

publishing skills in producing our newsletter, we could use your talents! Please call Ken. Oh, and “thanks” for asking.

New Board Advisory Committee chartered

Each year our homeowners association can expect to lose Directors as their terms expire and as they retire from our Board. Losing a valued Director just when that person is most experienced and, perhaps, making his or her most valuable contributions seems a waste. We've come up with a solution. We've chartered a new committee—our *Board Advisory Committee*—to which we will ap-

point outstanding former Board members from whose experience we can benefit enormously. Members on this committee have standing to participate in all Board meetings but without the vote or burden of an active directorship.

Welcome to our new committee Jeff Dean, JoAnne Minor and Bill Gossett. In the brief time since their appointments they have already proven the value of this committee.

Can you spell “SQUISH?”

We have received a complaint about kids leaving toys outside. At least one toy has been run over. (Unfortunately, it was an Arnold Schwarzenegger action figure and one report has it that the vehicle was demolished.)

Potluck picnic will be buns of fun



Everyone who lives at Redwood Acres is invited to our annual potluck picnic on Sunday, June 14th. Bring friends, beach towels, lawn chairs, sun screen, sun hat, sun glasses—and a pot of something to share like a potato salad, casserole, fruit plate, dessert or other dish. We'll arrange to have some grills so bring some meat for your family to cook, like hot dogs, hamburgers, steaks or chicken. We'll provide the paper plates, cups, plastic ware, napkins and soft drinks.

Games for the kids will start around 3 PM. We'll light-up the charcoal in time to eat around 4.

If you'd like to volunteer to help out (like organizing kids' games or decorating) or if you have any questions, call Nancy Sharpe 969-1234 or George Cole, 969-9765. Mark your calendar!

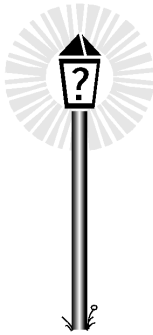
Squeal on your neighbor

Our Nomination Committee has just been appointed to identify qualified candidates for our upcoming board elections. What neighbor do you know who would make a great candidate?—someone with special talent, education or experience you would trust to help manage our business affairs? Call our special “squeal-on-your-neighbor candidate hot line,” (Bill at 969-9876). Our Nomination Committee may pay a visit to our unsuspecting member.

Poll illuminating

Results are in on the poll we conducted on our exterior lighting. (The response was excellent.) Over 84% of responding members feel illumination is satisfactory and recommend no change. Only four sites were identified by homeowners and confirmed by our ad hoc Lighting Committee as requiring better illumination. Therefore, our Board has authorized installing new fixtures at two of those locations, trimming branches from around one and increasing the bulb wattage at another.

Thanks to all for participating!



Committee opportunity

Would you like a more direct role in protecting your property values and the appearance of our neighborhood? Soon, our Architectural Review Committee will be filling new openings. It is

an excellent committee for those interested in learning more about how Redwood Acres operates in before becoming a Director.

We are especially interested in applicants with backgrounds in construction, architecture, horticulture or related disciplines and neighborhood or municipal government. But simply a keen interest and desire to learn may also qualify you. This is an opportunity to work with some fun people and learn a lot about Redwood Acres that you never knew. Call Nate Goodrich at 968-2345.

Carpet is great canvas for young neo-impressionists

You may have noticed that the black sealant we use to repair asphalt can get kind of soft and squishy in the warmer weather. You may wish to remind your children and family members to be careful to avoid tracking any into your house. That black stuff is nasty, can get on your shoes and stain your carpet. (Tastes pretty bad too!)

We'd love to tell you, but first...

From time to time, our Manager, directors and committee members are asked to provide names of services vendors who can handle maintenance problems for homeowners. We want to be helpful, but in providing a referral we must make you aware of the following:

Generally, you are free to choose any vendor you wish for your maintenance. Referrals are made only upon request and then the association, Board or committee

member, Manager or any other person acting on behalf of the association can make no representations about the vendor's qualifications, licensing, insurance or quality of work or make any other claims or warranties about the vendor.

In other words, we're trying to be helpful in providing a referral, but use that company or person at your own risk.

Our next Board meeting...

..will be Wednesday evening, May 15th at 7:30 PM at George and JoAnne's, unit number 14.

We will be discussing next year's painting schedules, proposed revisions to our landscape maintenance program, a preview of our upcoming budget and other association business. All members are encouraged and invited to attend.

Board of Directors

Redwood Acres, Orlando, Florida
Regular meetings 1st Thursday each month, 7PM, 106 Wildflower
Karen Mason, President 967-1234
George Tucker, Vice President
Linda Skeen, Treasurer
Bill Costler, Secretary
Kevin Basom, Director

Committee Contacts

Architectural Review Committee (ARC)
Nate Goodrich 968-2345
Grounds and Maintenance
Wendy Naylor 968-3456
Newsletter & Website
Ken Weller 968-4567
Social
Liz Tower 968-5678

Nomination Committee—ad hoc

Function

The Nomination Committee identifies and recommends to the Board for the ballot as many qualified candidates as there are openings on the Board of Directors.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This is an ad hoc committee. This committee is appointed each year in June and ceases to exist at the conclusion of the annual meeting.

Background

Too often, homeowner association Boards or Nomination Committees begin their candidate search by asking, “Who do we think would agree to run?” What they should be asking is, “Who would make the best managers of our business?”

Selecting someone as a candidate simply because that person volunteered or attended meetings certainly is easier, but that methodology won’t get us the best candidates. Remember, after you leave, the Board that follows will be managing your share of our business, millions of dollars in assets, thousands of dollars of your dues, and dealing with serious legal liability issues. Who would you most trust to manage that? Who do you think is best equipped to manage our business and our future? Get that person to say “yes,” whatever it takes.

The future of Redwood Acres depends greatly upon the success of members of our Nomination Committee in getting us the best candidates they can.

Suggested activities

We compile a list of prospects

We begin to collect a list of prospective candidates in June so the list can be approved by our Board in time for the September annual meeting. The Nomination Committee can collect a list of prospects by

- considering members we know with valuable talents, experience, education or professional skills we could benefit from.
- asking Board and Board Advisory Committee members and committee chairpersons for their suggestions.
- considering those who have made notable suggestions and contributions.

- publishing an announcement of Board openings in the newsletter and on the website.

We qualify prospects

After coming up with our list of prospects, our next step is to qualify them. References are important here. What do those who recommended a candidate have to say about him or her? What contributions has a prospect already made that supports a candidacy? What talents, skills or education does that person have that can be applied to managing our business? For those for whom we have no references, such as volunteers who responded to our newsletter or website announcement, we arrange for an interview with that person to discover his or her qualifications.

Our next step is to rank our prospects for qualifications. We will approach our prospects in that order, asking each to become a candidate until we have filled our slate.

We get them to say “Yes,” whatever it takes

Coming up with a name of a qualified candidate may be much easier than getting that person to agree to run. That is where our resourcefulness comes in. We plan our best approach, using all of our persuasiveness, creativity and persistence. We should anticipate rejection and resolve to be persistent. This may mean a major expenditure at the Hallmark store, tying balloons to our prospect’s car door, a kidnapping on the evening of the Annual Meeting, purloining a potted plant and leaving a ransom note on the doorstep, threats of a string confetti drive-by spraying, or any other compelling strategy we can think of. Remember, the question isn’t whether we’ll get a “No” but rather how long it will take us and what we must do to get a “Yes.”

We select the same number of qualified candidates as we have openings. There is little reason to select more since that would dilute the ballot and guarantee rejection of volunteers who we may wish to run later. Limiting candidates chosen by the Nomination Committee does not preclude others from running. We can include any others on the ballot who wish to run and, of course, other nominations can be accepted at the Annual Meeting. But matching committee nominations with the number of openings does serve homeowners’ interests in filling vacancies with the most qualified candidates we can find.

After the prospect becomes a candidate

The Committee may request from each candidate a brief statement of approximately one hundred words to include background, qualifications or statements that may help to acquaint members with the nominee. When we send out the notice of our Annual Meeting we will include a page with those candidate biographies. An example of such a biographies page is included in the *Annual Meeting* topic in the Director’s Handbook section of this binder. The Committee should copy the example page and give it to candidates for them to use in preparing their own biographies.

The Committee should also inform each candidate that he or she may be called upon at the Annual Meeting to make a brief statement (usually just a minute or so) just before the election.

When the slate is complete

The Nomination Committee should coordinate with the President to ensure that names and statements of nominees are submitted in time to be included in the Annual Meeting

notice. Our Annual Meeting notice should be sent out at least three weeks prior to our September annual meeting.

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Parking and Vehicles Committee—standing

Function

The Parking and Vehicles Committee assists our Board of Directors in monitoring compliance with and enforcing our vehicle rules. (See *Vehicles* in the *Rules* section of the *Residents' Handbook*.)

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This is a standing committee.

Background

Because parking and vehicle violations are among the most common types of rules violations that we experience, our Board has created this committee to enable timely response to them.

Activities

The Parking and Vehicles Committee should

- inspect the property for vehicle rules violations at least every three months, or as our Board Directs, and issue *Courtesy Reminder* or *Vehicle Violation* notices as described below.
- ensure that an adequate supply of these forms is maintained and replenished as needed.
- document incidents and frequencies of violations to ensure fair and uniform enforcement.
- attend disciplinary hearings for those violations being considered by the Board for issuance of fines or other penalties.
- alert the Board each time a Vehicle Violation notice is issued (see below) so that a Hearing Notice may be sent to the owner of the property in violation, consistent with the section in the *Directors' Handbook* entitled *Rules Creation and Enforcement*.
- alert the Board to hazardous or persistent violations requiring that a vehicle be towed. (See *Towing*, below.)
- develop and/or evaluate proposed parking and vehicle rules or policies, or changes to such rules or policies, and refine language for adoption by the Board.

- develop and/or evaluate recommendations to the Board concerning proposed changes in parking and vehicle rules enforcement procedures.

Inspections

Periodically, as members of the committee agree or as the Board directs, one or more committee members should tour the property for vehicle violations. Inspections may be carried out by individual members of the committee; a *meeting* need not take place for inspections to occur.

Care should be taken to ensure fairness when inspecting for violations. This may include (but is not limited to) these practices:

1. Violations should be acted upon uniformly and impartially.
2. Periodic inspections should include the entire property rather than be limited to localized areas. This is to ensure uniformity of enforcement—that individuals are not *singled out* for enforcement.
3. A single violation may be recorded without coincidental inspection of the entire property if that violation is obvious or has been reported. However, such recording shall not be deemed a substitute for the periodic property-wide inspection.

Issuing Courtesy Reminder and Vehicle Violation notices

We have two types of notices that we issue for vehicle violations, typically by placing them upon windshields of offending vehicles. The two notices are our *Courtesy Reminder* and our *Vehicle Violation* forms. (See copies of these forms below).

These may be taken to any printing company and printed as two-part “NCR” forms. Recording a violation on such a form will produce a copy for our records, necessary should an offense be repeated and warrant further action.

- **Courtesy Reminder notice**—for use by any association member as well as Parking and Vehicle Committee members, Board members and management. However, typically, most will be distributed by Parking and Vehicle Committee members. This form has these important benefits:

1. It provides a courteous way to inform a visitor or the first-time or infrequent offender about what our rules are. Normally, this is all that is necessary to prevent a recurrence.
2. Residents may become frustrated with certain types of vehicle rules violations, such as vehicles parked where they shouldn’t be. Providing residents (in addition to committee and Board members) with Courtesy Reminder forms has the benefit of relieving frustration by allowing residents to take positive steps themselves with the support of the association as well as the benefit of educating offenders about our rules.

Disciplinary hearings may be handled only by our Board. However, because Courtesy Reminders are simply notices about what our rules are, rather than real tickets with real fines, we can provide them to anyone.

3. Because the two-part NCR forms produce copies for our records, those copies will serve to document the offenses and strengthen our enforcement position.

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- **Vehicle Violation notice**—for use only by members of the Parking and Vehicles Committee, Board members and management, or others specifically authorized by the Board. We use this form under these circumstances:
 1. Typically, we will issue a Vehicle Violation notice for each offense occurring after we have issued three Courtesy Reminders documenting vehicle violations by the same offender. Should the offense happen a fourth time (or more), a Parking and Vehicles Committee member, Board member or the Community Association Manager or other party specifically authorized by the Board may be contacted either to place a Vehicle Violation notice upon a windshield or to send it to the responsible property owner according to notice requirements described in our governing documents.
 2. This form should be not used without previous Courtesy Reminder notices except in cases where a violation poses a risk to property or safety, for example, parking in a fire lane.

After a Vehicle Violation notice has been issued, the Board should have another form entitled *Notice of hearing* sent to the owner of the property in violation, pursuant to our Bylaws requirements for such notice, notifying the owner of a hearing for consideration of levying a fine. (That form and the disciplinary hearing are discussed in the *Directors' Handbook* under *Rules Creation and Enforcement*.)

Towing

Unless otherwise specifically authorized by the Board, the Parking and Vehicles Committee may not directly order the towing of a vehicle. That is because our Declaration authorize only our Board to enforce rules. However the Committee (or anyone else) may alert the Board should a condition arise requiring that a vehicle be towed.

A common misconception is that vehicles in violation of *any* vehicle rule may be towed. For example, a resident may wish to have a vehicle towed simply because it has been parked in the wrong place. However, towing should not be used as a *penalty* for a vehicle violation. It should be used only to *remedy* a hazardous or obstructive or prolonged nuisance condition and then only in accordance with Florida state law and local ordinances where no other recourse is practical or available. (The reason for the towing notice on the Courtesy Reminder and Vehicle Violation forms is to help protect our association should we have to have the vehicle towed for good reason—not necessarily to indicate that a vehicle will be towed for any violation.)

If a vehicle is parked in a fire lane, and the car owner cannot easily be located, then notifying our Board to have the vehicle towed may be justified inasmuch as obstruction by the vehicle may represent a threat to property or safety. If a vehicle is parked in an inappropriate space or if some other violation should occur that is not a threat to property or safety, or should some other vehicle violation occur, then notifying our Board to implement our rules enforcement process involving notices and fines is more appropriate.

Budget

The annual budget of the Parking and Vehicles Committee may include funds for printing the two-part NCR forms for Courtesy Reminder and Vehicle Violation notices,

software or other record-keeping tools for maintaining records of violations, and other allocations approved by the Board.

Keeping track of violations

Should enforcement be challenged and we be forced into court, we may be compelled to demonstrate fair and uniform enforcement. This necessitates keeping clear records of our enforcement activities.

The following example form may be used as a model. Note, the information has been entered using the word processor's table features and sorted using the word processor's sorting feature. These features enable convenient tracking of violation frequencies for each vehicle. Parking and Vehicle Committee members may use this or any other method or software program that enables similar or better tracking of violations.

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Redwood Acres Vehicle Courtesy/Violation Notices**Violation Types**

SL=Speed limit
 FL=Fire lane
 GP=Guest parking
 TR=Trespassing
 CV=Conventional vehicle
 SW=Sidewalk parking
 RV=Recreational vehicle
 NV=Nuisance vehicle
 AL=Vehicle alarm

Notice types

C=Courtesy Notice
 V=Violation Notice

License	Viol. type	Notice type	Date	Time	Location	Notes
2XWR087	GP	C	12/5/22	7:50 PM	Maple St.	
1GPE154	GP	C	12/4/22	11:15 PM	Walnut St.	
1NE9PT3	GP	C	12/4/22	11:15 PM	Maple St.	
2NH4N6	GP	C	12/4/22	11:20 PM	Oak St.	
1NE9PT3	GP	C	11/27/22	12 MDNT	Maple St.	
1NE9PT3	GP	C	11/25/22	11:50 PM	Maple St.	
2NH4N6	FL	C	11/24/22	9:40 PM	Walnut St.	
2NH4N6	GP	C	11/24/22	6:40 PM	Oak St.	
2CP28PY	GP	C	11/22/22	3:00 PM	Walnut St.	
2NH4N6	GP	C	11/22/22	10:15 PM	Walnut St.	
2NH4N6	GP	V	11/22/22	2:15 PM	Oak St.	
2SHS909	GP	V	11/22/22	2:15 PM	Oak St.	
2CP28PY	GP	C	11/20/22	6:09 PM	Walnut St.	
2NH4N6	GP	C	11/20/22	9:05 PM	Walnut St.	
2REV791	GP	C	11/18/22	11:40 PM	Oak St.	
2SHS909	GP	C	11/18/22	11:40 PM	Oak St.	
2REV791	GP	C	11/17/22	8:55 PM	Walnut St.	
298R21	GP	C	11/5/22	11:30 PM	Maple St.	
129MNW	GP	C	11/1/22	9:08 PM	Oak St.	
129MNW	GP	C	10/26/22	9:50 PM	Oak St.	
298R21	GP,FL	C	10/20/22	10:00 PM	Maple St.	
1HWH713	GP	C	10/15/22	11:40 PM	Walnut St.	
1NRM340	FL	C	10/15/22	11:48 PM	Maple St.	
1P397PC	FL	C	10/15/22	11:48 PM	Maple St.	
2NH4N6	GP	C	10/15/22	11:40 PM	Oak St.	
2RXL891	GP	C	10/15/22	11:45 PM	Maple St.	

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The forms

Our *Courtesy Reminder* and *Vehicle Violation* forms follow. They are printed as two identical 5 1/2" x 8 1/2" forms per page. This enables the printing company to “shoot” them two at a time and then cut them apart.

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Courtesy Reminder

Date/Time: _____ License: _____

Location: _____

If you are a visitor to Redwood Acres, welcome. Whether you are a visitor or a resident, we would appreciate your helping us to maintain the safety and pleasant environment we work hard to protect in our neighborhood by observing the following checked items:

- ☐ No vehicle shall travel faster than 15 miles per hour on the property.
- ☐ Residents should park only in their carports or assigned parking spaces. Residents should inform visitors to park only in open, unreserved parking spaces.

- ☐ To protect our homes and families, no parking is allowed in a fire lane.
- ☐ Only "conventional passenger vehicles" are permitted to park within Redwood Acres, except vehicles of contractors actively providing services to residents.
- ☐ No motorcycle, motorbike or other motorized vehicle may be parked on a sidewalk. The owner of a condominium whose occupant, visitor or contractor does this shall be responsible for the removal of any oil, stains, tire marks or other substances left by the vehicle.
- ☐ No noisy or smoky vehicles, off-road or unlicensed vehicles shall be operated on the property.
- ☐ Vehicle alarm systems are prohibited that are prone to false alarms or which emit audible signals to indicate status other than violation.

- ☐ No vehicle in disrepair for more than two weeks may be parked on the property. No vehicle may be dismantled, rebuilt, repaired, or serviced if such activity is both visible and takes more than 24 hours to complete.
- ☐ Residents shall ensure that noise from engines, vehicle entertainment devices, tires and horns shall be kept below nuisance levels. Residents shall be responsible to ensure their guests comply with this.

NOTICE: A vehicle parked in violation of these regulations may be towed away at owner's expense in accordance with Florida Vehicle Code. The owner of a condominium whose occupant or visitor is in violation of the above is subject to a fine.

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Courtesy Reminder

Date/Time: _____ License: _____

Location: _____

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Vehicle Violation

Date/Time: _____ License: _____

Location: _____ Date to be towed: _____

Signed: _____

If you have questions regarding this notice, call 987-456-7890.

Your vehicle is in violation of one or more of the following checked items. Please correct the infraction immediately:

- ☐ No vehicle shall travel faster than 15 miles per hour on the property.
- ☐ Residents should park only in their carports or assigned parking spaces. Residents should inform visitors to park only in open, unreserved parking spaces.
- ☐ To protect our homes and families, no parking is allowed in a fire lane.
- ☐ Only "conventional passenger vehicles" are permitted to park within Redwood Acres, except vehicles of

contractors actively providing services to residents.

- ☐ No motorcycle, motorbike or other motorized vehicle may be parked on a sidewalk. The owner of a condominium whose occupant, visitor or contractor does this shall be responsible for the removal of any oil, stains, tire marks or other substances left by the vehicle.
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Vehicle Violation

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Location: _____ Date to be towed: _____

Signed: _____

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Rules Committee—standing or ad hoc

Function

The Rules Committee assists our Board of Directors in proposing, developing and/or evaluating rules and changes to rules.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This may be either a standing or an ad-hoc committee.

Background

In addition to restrictions specifically described in our Declaration, that document also provides for the creation of other rules by our Board of Directors.

Why have rules?

Most of us would like to believe that we can live without rules—and we can, *mostly*. However, over time it becomes apparent that a high-density living environment is vulnerable to certain kinds of problems, some of which can seriously affect the quality of life and the value of our investments. A carefully crafted set of rules, tuned to the needs of our community and without being overly burdensome, is necessary to prevent problems as well as to resolve them.

Most of the value of having rules is in their prevention of problems. Knowing what our rules are helps to sensitize us to each others' rights and interests and helps to prevent problems from occurring in the first place.

Should problems occur, having rules allows us to resolve them. Rules provide objective standards that, under the authority of our Declaration and Bylaws and the laws of the State of Florida, are legally enforceable.

Creating rules

In order to ensure fairness, first we must agree on a process for rules creation, consistent with our Bylaws and ensuring member participation. The process we use is described in our policy entitled *Guidelines for Rules Creation/Modification*, located in the *Policies* section of this Directors' binder. When assisting our Board in creating or changing a rule, ask the Association President or Secretary for a copy of that policy. Objectives of the policy are

- to ensure openness and member participation.

- to subject proposed rules to a hearing to solicit comments by members to ensure they provide the best protections for our interests and have the support of our community.
- to ensure rules are reasonable, that is, they should not be unnecessarily restrictive and there should be a good reason for their existence.
- to help ensure rules are consistent with laws and local ordinances.
- to ensure publicity for new rules. First, to have the benefit of prevention, we must know what the rules are and, second, to be legally enforceable, they must be published. Every member should have a copy of our rules. It also helps to remind members periodically in the newsletter and on the website about rules that relate to problems that tend to reoccur.

Suggested activities

The Rules Committee may

- evaluate proposed rules or policies or changes to rules or policies and develop language for adoption by the Board.
- evaluate and make recommendations to the Board concerning proposed changes in enforcement procedures.
- make recommendations concerning implementation of procedures and rules enforcement.

Additionally, from time to time, one or more committee members may be asked to assist in informal efforts to resolve rules violations and conflicts among neighbors.

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Social Committee—standing

Function

This important committee assists us in getting more members to come to Board and committee meetings and in getting members together socially.

Authority

This committee draws its authority from the Bylaws and Declaration of Condominium of Redwood Acres Homeowners Association that provide for appointment of committees by the Board of Directors.

Appointment

This is a standing committee.

Background

The two primary functions of this important committee are

- to get members together socially, enabling them to develop relationships that enhance the harmony and pleasure of living at Redwood Acres.
- to interest members in increasing their participation in their community.

This is important because

- At social events, neighbors get to know each other as people, without the barriers sometimes present at business meetings.
- Homeowners tend to feel more responsible to neighbors they have met and know personally. This may mean fewer conflicts and more cooperation—neighbor-to-neighbor and neighbor-to-association.
- Knowing each other also helps us to be aware of good candidates to tap for future Boards, committees and special projects. So our future is impacted by the success of the Social Committee in attracting our members to social events.
- Putting faces with names of Board and committee volunteers enhances the association-to-member relationship and makes more apparent that our association is really an *us* rather than a *them*.
- By visiting with Board and committee volunteers, members learn how their association works—that their input is invited and valued and that everyone has an important role in our management. Feeling part of our management can prevent problems that occur when members feel they are being excluded, controlled, restricted or treated unfairly by some remote administration.
- members that we get to attend Board and committee meetings often make valuable contributions and suggestions. They also represent a valuable pool from which to appoint ad hoc committees for projects and tasks.

Suggested activities

Specific activities of the Social Committee may include

- contacting a few of our members a couple of weeks before each Board meeting, and encouraging them to attend. The committee should try to contact every member this way at least once per year. (We'd like to have every member attend at least one regular Board meeting each year.)
- organizing post-Board meeting refreshments. By asking two-or-three members to bring refreshments, this helps to commit them to attend as well as provide a pleasant way for all to end the evening. Having refreshments for 15-30 minutes following each Board meeting, provides a relaxed, comfortable setting at which members can talk with and become familiar with Board members and each other, outside of the more formal proceedings.
- organizing a summer potluck picnic. A June picnic is a good way to start the summer, to see each other after the winter's hibernation. Or a July 4th potluck picnic can be a festive event with lots of decorations. Post announcements in the newsletter and on the website. The key to getting participation is personal contact—call everyone. Ask them to bring something potluck to share, such as a potato salad, casserole or dessert. They should also bring meat for their family to put on the grills. Arrange for some neighbors to bring their grills. The Association will compensate a member of the Social Committee for soft drinks, charcoal, paper plates, cups and plastic ware, so keep all receipts. Notes on organizing a picnic are included following this charter.
- Note, purely social events like this may not be the most appropriate occasions for soliciting volunteers or conducting other association business, at least not openly. Some members stay away from such events simply because they're afraid they will be solicited. So just make these occasions purely social and make sure everyone has a good time. Naturally, there may be a few inquiries by curious residents about what's happening with such-and-such, and comments that relate to business. But be careful about open drafting.
- arranging for the social that follows immediately after our Annual Meeting in September. This may include coffee, a modest assortment of munchies, and possibly a cake with "Thank you..." and the names of any retiring Board and committee members.
- organizing other social events as the committee feels would enhance our quality of life, and as approved by our Board.

Funds

Funds for this committee are provided for in our Association budget. Ensure you contact the Treasurer by July with the amount you are requesting for the Social Committee next year.

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Example planning notes for neighborhood picnic

If you've been asked to help organize a neighborhood picnic, this planning sheet describes a formula that has worked well in the past. Feel free to suggest changes as experience determines to help future volunteers.

(Put initial of person responsible for each item in parentheses.)

July 4th picnic

Plan for 60 attendees. (It's better to over-estimate—better safe than sorry!)

Kids games at 3 PM. Eat around 4 PM.

Arrange for:

- ☐ Get Board authorization and notify neighbors about closing the street.
- ☐ Divide-up list of residents to call and invite. (A phone call from a neighbor is much more effective in getting people to come than a mailed notice.) Try to call about 2 weeks before the picnic. Don't forget to remind that it's a potluck: bring something to share, and your own meat for your family. It's okay to invite friends, who also should bring something.
- ☐ Publicity: have published in the newsletter and on the website; have flyer to leave on doorsteps of folks we're unable to reach by phone.
- ☐ Arrange to borrow about 1 grill for every 12 people expected
- ☐ Get pylons or streamers to close street.
- ☐ Inflatable children's swimming pool boat can be used to ice soft drinks; bottom is inflatable as well and very effective at keeping ice insulated and cold.
- ☐ Need sheet to cover iced soft drinks in boat so sun doesn't melt ice.
- ☐ Decorations.
- ☐ Plan for children's games. Possibilities:
 - Sack races; can use recycling bags
 - Potatoes spoon races
 - Wheelbarrow races
 - Pin the ? on the ?
 - What else?
 - Bring a whistle!

Buy:

- ☐ Plastic decorative table covers to fit picnic tables
- ☐ Soft drinks in cans—at least 10, 6-packs
- ☐ Plasticware: 70 plastic forks, spoons, knives (people use more forks)
- ☐ 70 cups
- ☐ 100+ napkins
- ☐ charcoal
- ☐ lighter fluid

- ☐ decorations
- ☐ Prizes for children's games
- ☐ Barbecue sauce
- ☐ Extra hot dogs in case some folks forget to bring meat

On day of picnic, bring:

- ☐ Trash cans & extra 30 gal. trash bags
- ☐ 50 lb. of ice to ice soft drinks
- ☐ Matches
- ☐ Long barbecue forks
- ☐ Salt & pepper
- ☐ Recycling bag for aluminum cans w/soft drinks.
- ☐ Squirt guns
- ☐ Water balloons
- ☐ Frisbee or other *fun things*
- ☐ Decorations

Notes:

Let's get kids to get out and start decorating tables early in the day to ensure we will have them "reserved" for the picnic later.

Don't forget to warn residents at least a few days before that the street will be closed-off on the day of the picnic.

End of committee charters



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