



**Hidden Lakes of St. Augustine Homeowners Association, Inc.
PO Box 860013, St. Augustine, Florida 32086**

Date of Notice: October 22, 2013

Meeting announcement to all owners in the Hidden Lakes Community:

Subject: General meeting of owners and HOA board
Date: Thursday, October 24, 2013
Time: General Meeting 6:45pm, ARB meeting 8:30pm
At: **The Record Building**
One News Place
St. Augustine, FL 32086
(904) 829-6562

AGENDA

Opening statement:

Lessons learned
Landon Homes update and letter
Board and ARB resignations

May Management Report and Q&A

Common Grounds report

Treasurer report

Updates on old business

Sidewalks

New Business

Entranceway fence
Establish online forum for member feedback
Request for candidates for the board vacancy
Appoint interim ARB Committee Chairperson

ARB

Statement from the Committee Chairperson

Closing

Next meeting Saturday, December 14, 10:30am at the SJC Library – Anastasia Island Branch

Presidents comments, October 24, 2013

Lessons Learned

The tree house incident taught us some lessons.

Study the documents

Our ruling documents need to be studied so there is better understanding of rules that relate to specific incidents. The docs may need some interpretation as they are not always clear. Sometimes the answer may be in another section. We encourage all members to check the rules before making a statement that the rules were or were not followed. We expect all board members, officers and committee members to check the rules before making a decision.

Make it clear to owners that all exterior changes require prior ARB approval.

In general, Maintenance, repair and cleaning does not require approval.

Gardens, plants/trees – planting or removal does. Trimming, weeding does not.

Fences, pools, buildings, sheds etc – any construction, painting, or removal does. Cleaning, stain removal, repair does not.

To avoid unnecessary expense or delay, send in an application or call the ARB to discuss your project to determine whether an application is needed.

Failure to get prior ARB approval.

If something gets built before approval, it becomes a C&R violation. It's out of the ARB approval process. The C&R rule states that the item must be removed. This is stated 3 times in the C&R doc.

There are no other options!

Online forum vs petition

Generally speaking, petitions are biased and not the best indication of opinion. We are looking at using an online forum to solicit your opinions. Petitions still have a role defined in FL720. Any owner can place an item on the agenda if they submit a petition with 20% of owners represented, (27 properties).

FL Statute 720

Section 3035 allows owners to enjoy their properties to the full extent allowed in the C&R. This covers items that are allowed. It does not include items that are not allowed. It is silent on items that are not specifically mentioned or covered in the C&R.

Changing Rules

C&R rules: The rules in place are the rules that will be followed in making a decision. The C&R is slow to change. We would be looking at an annual review with members voting on changes. 67% is required to change the C&R.

ARB Rules: ARB rules cannot overturn or conflict with the C&R – the C&R prevails. If an item is not specifically forbidden in the C&R - it becomes possible. The ARB may or may not rule favorably on such an item. However, all ARB rules are approved by the board so, the board may propose a change to the ARB rules that specifically allows an item subject to conditions. In doing this, board would employ some method to gauge community support for the item.

Once the change is made, any owner can submit a new application for ARB approval.

Public Meetings and Members' right to speak

All Board and ARB meetings must be public when a quorum is present. Public meetings require a posted sign and an agenda. All attending members may speak at these meetings subject to restrictions imposed by the board to complete the agenda in available time.

Dynamics of a public debate

Anyone who has been on jury duty has experienced this. A 5 to 2 vote can turn into a 2 to 5 vote during the discussion. The whole point of discussion is to increase understanding and change the terms until a consensus is reached. This has the effect of melting away preconceived ideas. The result is that some decisions may surprise, but as long as the process is fair and open, either decision can be valid.

Process for this meeting

For each item on the agenda:

Start the topic: Read committee report

Members' comments

Board motion

Board discussion

Board vote