



The Grapevine



February 2025

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Jim Foley
VP	Michael Toback
Secretary	Laurel Smith
Treasurer	Pam Nomura
Director	Tom Schmidt
Director	Andrew Thrall
Director	Christian Felcyn

CINC: Owner Registration with Community Management Services

<https://cms.cincwebaxis.com>

Please register to get direct access to your account.

VINEYARDS WEBSITE :

www.vineyardsofsaratoga.com

Go to the website to view the Monthly newsletter, HOA forms & documents, Bylaws, CC&Rs, Operating Rules, HOA Board meeting minutes.

Community Management Services (CMS):

1935 Dry Creek Road, Suite 203
Campbell, CA 95008
Phone (408) 559-1977 Mon-Fri 8a-5p

Association Manager

Bill Oldfield

boldfield@communitymanagement.com


Contact the Association Manager if you have questions about rules, repairs, or other things related to the Vineyards. *Please include your name, address, email, phone and a description of your concern.*

Sheriff's Dept. (non-emergency)

(408) 299-2311

Annual Meeting 2024:

Thank you to all of the residents who came to the Clubhouse for our Annual Meeting on Thursday. Our president, Jim Foley, reviewed how we did meeting our **Goals for 2024:**

1. **FRONT GATE:** While the physical gate has been installed, our contractors are still completing the electronics needed for its activation. Once this is done, the Board will finalize which methods we will offer for gate activation. We will definitely distribute a device similar to a garage door **opener** for each unit. There will also be a **keypad** both for drivers and pedestrians. Please be assured that **YOU WILL NOT BE LOCKED OUT**. However, you can help us out by making sure that each of your **vehicles are registered** with CMS along with your **current contact information**. We will hold meetings to educate everyone and to answer ALL of your questions before we close the gates. 
2. **SB 326 COMPLIANCE:** After the Berkeley balcony collapse in 2019, the State passed a bill requiring inspection of HOA balconies for safety. We just had our inspections completed and no problems were detected.
3. **GOVERNING DOCUMENTS UPDATE:** The Board is in the process of reviewing a first draft (our documents were last updated in 2017).
4. **PILOT PROGRAM FOR LANDSCAPE LIGHTING:** Michael Toback continues to monitor and upgrade our solar-generated light system. Thank you to Michael for his ongoing, diligent research to benefit our community.
5. **WELL PROJECT:** With the cost of water soaring, we still want to look into a well project to provide water for our ponds and irrigation but not until we have resolved all issues with the new gate. Although digging the well is straight-forward, connecting the water to our irrigation system will be very complex and we want to make sure it will be cost-effective
6. **ROOFS:** It has been about 25 years since the first roofs were replaced. It will be an ongoing process to have roofs inspected and prioritizing for repairs/replacement. Luckily we have enough in Reserves to pay for all roof repairs.
7. **SARATOGA HOUSING ELEMENT:** To address the housing shortage, the State of California required Saratoga to have a plan to build 1,700 new housing units between 2023-2031. Since the pumpkin patch property is next door, we are watching to see if there are plans to develop it.

Our goals for 2025 are similar to those for 2024:

We expect to complete Projects #1-3.

Projects #4-7 are likely to be ongoing.

Project #8: We will inspect all wooden structures then repair/replace as needed before starting extensive repainting of The Vineyards.

Project #9: We want to assure that we maintain access to Cox Avenue via an easement running parallel to the creek.

****DUES INCREASE ON APRIL 1ST****

Unfortunately, as we warned last month, our dues will be increasing to **\$700 per month** (an 8% increase).

Here are the major drivers of this increase:

- **Water/sewer = \$7 more/month/unit**
- **Garbage = \$10 more/month/unit**
- **Electricity** (for landscape and clubhouse lighting, for pool and fountain pumps) = **\$4 more/month/unit** (I'm sure you have noticed your electricity bills soar!)
- **Maintenance** (gardeners, pest control, pools & fountains, street sweeping) = **\$10 more/month/unit**
- Due to rapid inflation and despite last year's dues increase, we also incurred an **Operating Deficit** (expenses greater than income) in 2024. **\$27/month/unit** is necessary to catch up on this shortfall.
- Thankfully, insurance rates have leveled off for us this year. However, we remain apprehensive about insurance rates rising dramatically again in 2026. The reality is that California has become too risky for many insurance companies due to fire risk. You may already know of homeowners in the Santa Cruz mountains who face either exorbitant rates or the inability to obtain adequate coverage, and the losses incurred after the catastrophic wild-fires in Southern California have yet to be factored in.
- As an HOA, we have something called a **Reserve Study** done every three years where our property is professionally evaluated to estimate the anticipated **capital improvements** for the next **30 years**. The goal is to avoid any **unexpected Assessments** (which could cost thousands of dollars per unit). In 2025, **\$239 (34%)** of your monthly dues will go into our Reserves. Our last Reserve Study in 2022 rated us as **86% funded**, which is very good. Lenders will be increasingly concerned about how well-funded HOA's are when buyers are looking for a mortgage.
- We did an informal survey of other HOA's in the area. Although other associations may appear to have lower monthly dues, remember that The Vineyards pays for water and garbage fees (which can cost \$150-175/month), which most others do not. Also, The Vineyards has one of the most beautiful grounds in the area and maintains a parklike atmosphere



VINEYARDS ELECTIONS: There were three candidates for three Board positions this year, so they were **appointed by Acclamation** by the Board last month. Many thanks to Jim Foley, Tom Schmidt, and Drew Thrall who all agreed to serve for another two-year term.

Please return your ballots to (1) accept last year's Annual Meeting minutes and (2) rollover excess funds to the following fiscal year. The ballots were mailed out to all owners in January and are **due back on March 13**. [If we don't receive enough ballots, we will need to repeat the process and incur more expense.]

NEXTDOOR: Please note that The Vineyards of Saratoga is no longer participating on the platform Nextdoor. The Board is working to maintain private WhatsApp groups as a way to communicate with Owners and Residents of The Vineyards. If you are willing to help implement this project, please contact Bill Oldfield.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING: Our Board meets on the second Thursday of every month. Our next Board meeting is on Thursday March 13, 2024 at 7:00 PM. We meet in person, upstairs in the Clubhouse (please contact Bill Oldfield if you require online access to the meeting). The agenda will be posted at the Clubhouse at least four days prior to the meeting. There is a 15-20 minute Open Forum session at the beginning of the meeting when you can bring up issues or questions to the Board and the Association Manager.

Following Open Forum, the **discussion is limited only to the issues posted on the agenda**. Homeowners are welcome and encouraged to stay and observe, but discussion at the meeting is closed to owner participation. Minutes of all meetings are posted on the website within 60 days after they are approved at the following month's Board meeting.

NEWSLETTER FEEDBACK: If there is an article you would like to submit, or topics you want to see covered, or if you have other feedback, please email pam.nomura@gmail.com. Thank you.