



The Sierra View



President's Message by Brenda Dewey

I've had the privilege to work with a truly awesome team of board members and staff this past year, and I'd like to give them a huge thanks for their dedication and work ensuring Sierra is a well managed association and continues to be a great place to live.

I'd also like to thank the many other volunteers in the neighborhood for their contributions on committees and projects—see the list of these volunteers later in this issue. A couple of extra special shout-outs go to Christine Laing for her amazing work developing the Emergency Preparedness Team and Map your Neighborhood program, and to John McClaine and Gary McIntyre for creating and leading the new Emergency Communications Team.

We are looking forward to the January 25 gathering and annual meeting where the board will share what's been accomplished in 2019 and the priorities for 2020. Please be sure to read the information on the following pages related to the budget, reserve study, and other ballot items.

I'll be taking a break from board service after the annual meeting. It's been an honor serving Sierra and getting to know so many people in the community the last six years. Wishing you and yours a happy holiday season and new year!

Michelle Landis – Sierra's New Administrator & Secretary

The board is pleased to announce that we have hired Michelle Landis to fill the new role of Sierra Administrator & Secretary. As mentioned in the 3rd quarter newsletter, this new role includes the former Secretary responsibilities as well as additional numerous administrative functions previously performed by volunteers board members. Following is a little information about Michelle and her background, in her own words:



I've been a Sierra resident since the 80's when my parents, Mike and Pat Cozine, moved here. I've now returned and am excited to give back to the community where I grew up. I spent most of my professional career in administrative and support roles, and am looking forward to doing the same here! My interests include dogs, having worked at a dog daycare for four years (don't get me started) and raptors. I spent the last four years observing Bald Eagles in Skagit and Whatcom counties, doing a study on reproductive phenology (DEFINITELY do not get me started). I look forward to meeting you all and putting faces with the names, but please do not be offended if I refer to you as "You're Snuffles' owner, right?" for a little while.

REMINDER:

**Sierra Country Club
Annual Membership Meeting & Gathering
Saturday, January 25, 2020
See details on the following pages**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Available Mon-Fri
9am-5pm

President

Brenda Dewey
360-678-5666

Vice-President

Linda Rush
360-678-3582

Architecture Manager

Kristi Lovelady
360-914-4342

Buildings & Grounds Manager

Don Jaques
360-672-5447

Finance Manager

Richard Volk
360-678-0536

Reservations Manager

Kathleen Wayman
360-678-2277

Water Manager

Glen Kitzmann
360-914-4290

STAFF

Property Manager

George Rush
360-678-3582

Sierra Administrator & Secretary

Michelle Landis
360-305-2396

Questions? Change of contact info?
Please email: Sierra.mailbox@gmail.com
or contact the Sierra Administrator.

Water Report by Glen Kitmann

As reported in the last newsletter, we are working with our engineer to have the pressure reduction valve (PRV) at the top portion of Ft Ebey Road replaced. The design work is completed and the bids have been received. We are in the process of scheduling this project. During a portion of this work there will be a need to shut the water off. We will let you know as soon as we have a schedule and give advance notice of any water shut down.

During the fall flushing of our distribution lines I asked King Water to test and identify any of our main water shut off valves that were not working properly and in need of replacement. They identified 10 main valves that need replacing. These valves, when working properly, allow for sections of the water system to be shut off instead of shutting off the entire neighborhood when there is a leak or other repair needed. We will be working on a plan to start replacing these valves in 2020.

You may have noticed some large boulders by the water plant. The board determined that it would be a good idea to make this investment to help protect our water plant against any vehicles that might run off West Beach Road and damage the plant and equipment. An accident into our plant could have devastating effects on our ability to produce and supply water to the neighborhood.

We have many new residents in our neighborhood that may not be familiar with how our water system works. If you have any questions you can give me a call or e-mail me and I will try to explain it to you and answer your questions as best as I can. Remember, as Sierra members we all own our water system together.

Architecture Report by Kristi Lovelady

The Architecture Committee and the Board, which approves projects within the Sierra Country Club community, have had a busy year. Sierra is in the middle of a two-year build cycle which is due to conclude in December 2020. In our current build cycle, Sierra residents can expect to see five more homes in the community and welcome five new families. The first home site is located on Hacienda and the build is well underway. A second lot is located on El Cine and a third is located at the intersection of El Pozo and El Mar. Both lots were recently cleared and construction is expected to begin before the end of 2019. The final two builds are located on the west side of Fort Ebey. Construction for these builds is expected to commence in 2020. My sincere thanks to volunteer Pete White who is instrumental in helping the Board keep these builds moving forward pursuant to the Sierra WAF Policy.

To date, 20 fence applications were approved. Of those 20, three either expired or were withdrawn. Many of the remaining 17 fences have been completed and the remainder will be completed over the course of the coming months, weather permitting. In addition to the fence requests, two remodel requests were approved by the Board and both remodels are well underway. Finally, plans were approved for a greenhouse and a shed.

If you are interested in building either a fence, an addition to an existing house or any new out buildings on lots with an existing house, then please complete a Project Completion Agreement which is located on the Sierra website at: http://www.sierracountryclub.net/index.php/Governing_Documents. It is important to familiarize yourself with the policies pertaining to fences and outbuildings to ensure that your proposed project flies through the approval process. Project Completion Agreement forms can be emailed to me at kristi.sierrahoa@gmail.com.

Clubhouse Reservations by Kathleen Wayman

As the year ends I am reflecting on the many events held at our Clubhouse: birthday parties, potlucks, club meetings, exercise classes, class reunions and sometimes memorials. We've had emergency training, bible classes and weekly games. The Clubhouse belongs to all of the Sierra homeowners and is there for our use and participation.

I will be looking for folks to host Potlucks in 2020; it's easy and fun. Maybe a group of members could host together? There are always people to pitch in setting up and cleaning up; you just have to ask. Be proud of the asset that is the Clubhouse.

**Potluck
Hosts
needed
for
2020!**

Thanks to our Wonderful Volunteers!

In addition to Sierra's volunteer board of directors, we are lucky to have many other volunteers who contribute hundreds of hours a year making the neighborhood a great place to live.

- **Annual Meeting:** Brynn McIntyre and Diane McClaine helped with the check-in and voting processes.
- **Buildings & Grounds projects:** Larry Carlson and Pete White
- **Sierra Emergency Preparedness Team:** Christine Laing, Kristi Lovelady, Diane & John McClaine, Gary McIntyre, Linda Meehan, Loran Haworth, Barbara Halliday, Michelle Landis.
- **Sierra Emergency Communications Team:** John McClaine, Gary McIntyre, Paul Zaveruha, Steffan Soule, Brooke Burdick, Randy Hamblin.
- **Map Your Neighborhood Zone Captains:** Christine Laing, Bill & Brenda Cheaqui, Ella Mae Kurashige, Debbie Williams, Lynne & Tony Giammarinaro, Loran Haworth, Eddie & Martha Hollis, Nancy Luster, Mike & Marilyn Dessert, Gary & Brynn McIntyre, Fran Hand, Julie Engstrom, Barbara Halliday.
- **Fire Wise Committee:** Lynne Scapple, Diane McClaine, Fran Hand, Brenda Dewey
- **Internal Financial Review Participants:** Christine Bower, Tony Giammarinaro, Wayne Lucia.
- **Sierra email box and WAF:** Pete White manages our Sierra email box and helps manage the Water Availability (WAF) process.
- **Welcome Committee:** Linda Rush, Cheryl Carlson, Carole Dawes, Wendy Geyer, Tina Goodman, Fran Hand, Lori Kitzmann, Lynne Scapple.

Also, thanks to the numerous volunteers who showed up for our May 4 Spring Clean-up and Wildfire Prevention Day (listed in the 2nd quarter newsletter), and those who host our monthly potlucks.

Interested in volunteering? Our committees are always looking for new volunteers. Please email sierra.mailbox@gmail.com or contact any board member for more info.

We especially need volunteers to serve as alternate zone captains. It's a great way to get to know one's neighbors better, learn some new skills, and give back a little to the community.

Control of Poison Hemlock – Risks of Pulling and Mowing

By Linda Rush

Pete White passed along an article telling the story of how some AmeriCorps volunteers had a scary experience while removing poison hemlock. They were pulling poison hemlock (the environmentally friendly thing to do) with protective clothing and equipment, but they ended up becoming ill. It is unclear exactly how the hemlock poisoning occurred, although it may have been due to poor air circulation in the wooded area. According to the article, "Poison-hemlock is an acute nerve toxin so symptoms usually appear soon after exposure, which mainly occurs through ingesting the plant but can happen through other means like 'breathing in particles or even through the skin in some cases. People respond differently, but dizziness and nausea are good indicators that you should take a break." The article went on to say that mowing hemlock can be another risky activity. Pulling or Mowing hemlock would be less risky in an open area such as Sierra, but the scary experience of these volunteers is worth being aware of if you are considering the options of dealing with poison hemlock on your property. In every case, getting ahead of hemlock when it is small and easier to dig out is the safest, greenest method. Just be sure to wear gloves! For more information about the risks and what happened to these volunteers, the link to the article is below.

<https://kingcountyweeds.com/2019/11/18/scary-moment-for-restoration-crew-serves-as-a-timely-reminder-about-risks-of-poison-hemlock/?fbclid=IwAR0BKs3YGFOK1crxfJnUyP9GbD2AwzIX3rwibvk7UCZVEbqXYTG2fu224o>

Poison Hemlock



All parts of poison hemlock (the roots, stems, flowers, seeds, leaves) are poisonous



Grows to 8+ feet tall; the entire plant is hairless; stems have purple/red splotches; bright green, fernlike leaves; has umbrella-shaped clusters of tiny white flowers that have five petals.

Senior Resources by Carole Dawes

Here in Sierra we are ahead of most neighborhoods in Whidbey. We were the first Firewise Community, and one of the first to learn about what to do in a disaster and to actually participate in a state-wide drill but what do we do and where do we turn when we, or someone in our family needs help?

Island County and our sister county Skagit have many programs to assist our senior residents when they need help but when problems arise, not many of us know what is available and how to access assistance.

Senior Resources is an invaluable place to turn for assistance. They have offices in Oak Harbor at the Senior Center and at the Senior Center in Bayview. There are also people who can help out at Cambey, the senior living facility in Coupeville. You can make an appointment with them by calling the numbers below.

- Oak Harbor Senior Resources 360-675-0311
- CamBey apartments 360-678-3373

With the assistance of Cindy Miller in Oak Harbor, I have put together a resource guide and will be happy to answer questions to get you started. I have requested 200 copies of a handbook that lists phone numbers of many important resources in Island and Skagit Counties and hopefully will have them to distribute at the annual meeting. Please feel free to call or email me if you have questions between the hours of 10a.m. to 7p.m. Carole Dawes 360.678-1450 caroledawes29@gmail.com

Finance Report by Richard Volk

In the recent issues of the Sierra View I have presented year to date financial information. Here are the results for January – November 2019:

CONDENSED FINANCIAL INFORMATION as of NOVEMBER 30, 2019				
	Buildings, Grounds		Water	
<u>Income</u>	<u>and General</u>	<u>Infrastructure</u>	<u>Operation</u>	<u>Total</u>
Dues and Late Fees	\$ 123,550	\$ 30,000		\$ 153,550
Water and Late Fees			156,059	156,059
Water Hookup Fees		83,200		83,200
Other Income	11,206	-	8,169	19,375
Total Income	\$ 134,756	\$ 113,200	\$ 164,228	\$ 412,184
Expenses				
Operating Exp	\$ 74,549	\$ 21,951	\$ 72,782	\$ 169,282
Administrative Exp	37,763			37,763
Total Expense	112,312	21,951	72,782	207,045
Net Income	\$ 22,444	\$ 91,249	\$ 91,446	\$ 205,139

2019 Internal Financial Review by Brenda Dewey

The 2019 Sierra Internal Finance Review (aka internal audit) was held on Saturday, October 5. Thanks to our volunteer members who participated in the review: Christine Bower, Tony Giammarinaro, and Wayne Lucia. The Sierra membership voted at the 2019 annual meeting to waive the external audit. However, to ensure the transparency of our financial records, practices, and controls, the board conducts these annual internal financial reviews with volunteer members of the Sierra community. The outcome of this year's audit was such that our participants believed we have the necessary practices and controls in place. See the participants' full report at: <http://sierracountryclub.net/index.php/Finance>.

2020 Budget By Brenda Dewey

The 2020 budget was approved by the board at the December 9 board meeting. The revenue includes an 9.8% increase in dues, small increases in water rates, and funding from reserves to help cover required expenses and capital improvements. The budget will be reviewed and voted on at the January 25 annual meeting in order to ratify it. A summary and detailed budget report will be posted on the Sierra website prior to the annual meeting.

	B&G/			Total
	General	Infrastr	Water	
Income				
Dues, Ops & Investmt	\$143,760	\$33,000		\$176,760
Ops & Investment			\$171,350	\$171,350
Total Income	\$143,760	\$33,000	\$171,350	\$348,110
Funding from Reserves		\$169,500	\$106,147	\$275,647
Expenses				
Operations	\$59,419		\$277,497	\$336,916
Infrastructure		\$202,500		\$202,500
General & Admin	\$71,365			\$71,365
Projects Accrual	\$12,976			\$12,976
Total Expense	\$143,760	\$202,500	\$277,497	\$623,757
Net After Reserve Funding	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

2020 Reserve Study by Brenda Dewey

Thanks to Gary McIntyre for leading the third year of our state-mandated reserve study. He has been the interface between the board and our reserve study company, providing input on revenue and expenses and adjusting funding levels per the board's direction.

As noted last year, this study allows us to plan for current and future revenue requirements. We consider capital investments to date, the remaining life of assets, and expected costs to maintain and replace those assets over the next 30 years. We have been growing our reserves knowing that we have an aging infrastructure and the need for an additional well, which is a top priority for Sierra. A reasonable objective is to have reserves that cover at least 70%, but the closer to 100% the better. This summary reflects our current reserve status through 2040.

2020 RESERVE STUDY

		B&G	Piping/ Infrastructure	Water
Year	Initial Balance	\$64,802	\$305,426	\$619,402
2020	% Funded	71%	138%	70%
	Ending Reserves	\$72,449	\$223,846	\$529,400
2030	% Funded	32%	170%	91%
	Ending Reserves	\$28,671	\$310,171	\$570,675
2040	% Funded	72%	(393%)	130%
	Ending Reserves	\$139,899	(\$965,597)	\$1,194,602

2020 Water Rates by Brenda Dewey and Glen Kitmann

The board analyzed the water rates to ensure proper funding of water plant operations, production of water, and necessary water projects--including securing a new water source. We also continue to focus on water conservation. For 2020, the quarterly base water rate is being increased by 3.33% to \$155. The Tier 2 and Tier 3 rates have been increased by 5%. The usage thresholds have also been adjusted. Based on this past year's usage, it is expected that the majority (72%) of water users will see an increase of only \$20 for the year. About 25% of water users fall into the 2nd tier of usage and 3% fall into the 3rd tier of usage. For the Tier 2 and Tier 3 users, they will see the \$20 increase for the year plus the applicable per gallon rate based on their actual usage in the 2nd and 3rd tiers.

		2019 USAGE TIERS	2020 USAGE TIERS	2019 RATE	2020 RATE	\$ INCREASE	% INCREASE
Tier 1	Base rate per quarter	1 - 8,500 gallons	0 - 8,200 gallons	\$150	\$155	\$5	3.33%
Tier 2	Plus per gallon charge	8,501 - 17,500	8,201 - 16,000	\$0.026980	\$0.028329	\$0.001349	5.00%
Tier 3	Plus per gallon charge	17,501 or higher	16,001 or higher	\$0.069292	\$0.072756	\$0.003465	5.00%

**2020 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES =
\$280 PER LOT**

**Payment is due no later than April 1, 2019 to avoid
the 10% late fee, and any legal/collections activity and costs.**

Dues Q&A

1. Who pays annual membership dues?

All members of Sierra pay dues for each lot owned. Dues are assessed per lot, regardless if lots are legally combined or if they are a vacant or developed lot.

2. What do the dues go towards and why is this important?

Dues pay for association management and operations including the clubhouse and pool, grounds upkeep, paid staff, billing and bookkeeping agency fees, tax accountant, and other general or administrative expenses. The board members are not paid employees, but are volunteers. Dues also fund the infrastructure for our water system which the HOA owns and operates. Infrastructure includes all the piping and components (meters, etc.) that transport water from the plant to our meters. Infrastructure also includes our fire hydrants which are vital for our safety and protection of our homes. We have been building our reserves to repair and upgrade our buildings, aging infrastructure, and water system. Adequate reserves help prevent the need for any special assessments. Neglecting our infrastructure and not having properly funded reserves could impact our property values and lead to costly, unanticipated repairs.

3. What are the dues increases each year?

Our bylaws allow for up to a 10% increase per year. Dues increase each year to cover increases in operations and management costs, and for building our reserves, as described above. For 2020, the rates are increasing 9.8% from \$255 to \$280 per lot. The \$25 per lot increase equates to an extra \$2.08 per month.

4. When are dues billed and when are payments due?

Dues bills will be mailed out by February 1 with a deadline of April 1, 2020. As a courtesy, there will be reminder bills for those who haven't paid yet by March 1.

5. When are dues payments considered late?

Per our Bylaws, dues are considered delinquent if payment has not been **received** by our billing agent, King Water, by April 1. If payment is not received by April 1, a 10% late fee is applied and the account is considered delinquent. Liens will be filed on delinquent accounts. The legal and associated fees related to lien filing or other collections activity will be charged to the delinquent owner, and could amount to many hundreds of dollars in addition to the original dues amount and late fees.

6. What if I don't receive a bill?

It is each property owner's responsibility to ensure we and King Water has your correct mailing address. If you don't receive your bill by around 2nd week of February, please contact King Water at 360-678-5336.

7. How do I ensure my dues payment is received on time by King Water?

- Checks must be made **payable to Sierra Country Club**. Checks made out otherwise will be returned to be corrected. If the corrected check is not received by April 1, late fees will apply.
- If you use online banking bill-pay services, be sure the payment will be delivered to King Water by April 1. Banks handle online bill-pay payments differently. In some cases, the date the bank issues the check and deducts it from your account is NOT the same as when King Water actually receives the payment.
- Payments should be mailed to PO Box 915, Coupeville, WA 98239; or made in person at King Water Company, 107 South Main Street, Suite A203, Coupeville.

2020 Membership Cards

2020 membership cards will be mailed along with the annual dues bills by February 1.

If you do not receive your membership card, please email us at Sierra.mailbox@gmail.com.

Also, please remember each year property owners who wish for their tenants to have pool access must notify the board of such, and may need to transfer their pool privileges to those tenants.



ANNUAL MEETING & GATHERING!
Saturday, January 25, 2020
Sierra Clubhouse – 2685 San Juan Street

Check-in and snack potluck start at 12:00PM
Meeting starts at 1:00PM

Join us starting at 12:00PM at the clubhouse to check-in and get your ballots. Then enjoy snacks and drinks while visiting with your neighbors until the meeting starts at 1:00PM.

Please bring your favorite finger foods or snacks to share. The board will provide some snacks, plates, napkins, cups and a variety of drinks (coffee, tea, water).

AGENDA

- Welcome – Brenda Dewey
- Reading of 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes
- 2019 Review / 2020 Priorities – Brenda Dewey & Linda Rush
- Director Reports
 - Architecture – Kristi Lovelady
 - Buildings and Grounds – Don Jaques
 - Clubhouse Reservations – Kathleen Wayman
 - Water – Glen Kitzmann
 - Finance – Rich Volk
- Q&A / New Business – Brenda Dewey / Board
- Ballot Review – Brenda Dewey
- Voting
- Adjourn

Not Able to Attend the Annual Meeting?
Make Your Vote Count by Proxy Voting



If you are not able to attend the annual meeting but wish to have your votes cast, you can do so by designating a proxy. Follow these simple steps:

1. Cut out or print the proxy form included in this newsletter.
2. Fill out the proxy form including who you designate as your proxy (e.g., someone you know will attend the meeting or the Sierra board), and how you want your votes cast.
3. Sign and date the form.
4. Provide the form to your proxy or to any board member, or mail it to the Sierra Secretary at P.O. Box 561, Coupeville, WA 98239.



1. 2020 Board Election – Two Positions

We have two vacancies to fill, and two excellent candidates. See their information below.



Sandi Bumpus

Sandi Bumpus worked in law enforcement for 30 years, starting out as a 9-1-1 operator and retiring in 2016 as a division commander in charge of the support services division of a municipal police department in California. This included managing personnel and budgets for the 9-1-1 center, property and evidence, crime prevention, and records units, as well as responsibility for department radio systems, technology, and infrastructure. Sandi has a BS in Education and in addition to her “day job,” spent many years as an instructor and curriculum developer for California’s Commission on Peace Officers Standards in Training (POST), and in emergency management for FEMA’s Center for Domestic Preparedness. Sandi and Dan, a retired firefighter, bought their home in Sierra in 2013, and have lived on the island since 2016. They have 6 children between them, and 9 grandchildren. They’ve visited 48 states since retirement, and have spent several months of the year traveling in their RV.



Don Jaques

Don and his wife Ann moved to Sierra June 2018. Don was the Pastor of Christ the King Community Church in Oak Harbor, and the international director for this multi-site church until 2015. Since then he's been working as a broker for Windermere Real Estate and guest preaching at various churches in the area. You'll see Don and Ann walking regularly around the neighborhood and you might see Don on his road or mountain bike as well. Don was appointed to the board in January 2019 to fill a one year vacancy, serving as the Buildings and Grounds Manager. The board is very pleased that Don has volunteered to continue to serve on the board. With his knowledge, insights, and skills, he's been a great addition to the team.

2. Waive 2020 Annual External Audit

The Revised Code of Washington, RCW 64.38.045 states “...associations with annual assessments of fifty thousand dollars or more shall be audited at least annually by an independent certified public accountant, but the audit may be waived if sixty-seven percent of the votes cast by owners at a meeting of the association vote each year to waive the audit.” The cost of an audit would be \$5,000 or more. A financial review was conducted October 5, 2019 by three Sierra members. The participants confirmed the board has multiple safeguards in place to ensure the integrity and transparency of Sierra’s financial records including requiring two signatures on checks; conducting a review of transaction details, balance sheet, and income statement at monthly board meetings; posting annual financial reports on the Sierra website; and publishing financial summaries in the quarterly Sierra newsletters. The board will continue to conduct internal financial reviews with member volunteers on an annual basis. **To save the expense of a costly external audit, please “AGREE” to waive the 2020 external audit.**

3. 2020 Budget Ratification

Your board has the fiduciary responsibility to adopt an annual budget that appropriately funds the association’s management and operations, repairs and improvements to our assets, and provides sufficient reserves for future capital expenditures, including for our most important asset--our water system. Having a properly funded budget and reserves are in every Sierra member’s best interest as it can impact property values. At the December 9 board meeting, the board approved the 2020 budget. RCW 64.90.525 states a budget approved by the board is considered ratified unless a majority of property owners reject the budget at the meeting in which that budget is reviewed. The budget summary is included in this newsletter, and we will review it with membership at the January 25 annual meeting. The detailed budget will be posted on the Sierra website prior to the annual meeting. **To help ensure we have sufficient funds to support the community’s operations and water system, please “AGREE” to ratify the 2020 annual budget.**



**PROXY
2020 SIERRA COUNTRY CLUB (SCC)
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Verified by: _____

of Votes Allotted:

Note: This document is used by SCC membership to appoint a proxy. A proxy is allowed to vote the lots of a Member, if a Member cannot attend a membership meeting.

I, _____, own _____ lots in SCC and hereby appoint
(Print Member Full Name) (# of lots)

and authorize _____
(Print Proxy Full Name or indicate SCC Board)

to act as my proxy and cast my votes as indicated below at the annual SCC Membership meeting to be held:

Date: January 25, 2020

Time: 1:00pm

Address: SCC Clubhouse, 2685 San Juan St., Coupeville, WA 98239

This proxy shall be void if I personally attend the said meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have executed this proxy on (Date) _____

Member Signature: _____

1. Board of Directors Nominations

The following nominees shall be elected to fill **two (2) vacancies** on the Sierra Country Club Board of Directors (**PLEASE VOTE FOR 2**):

Sandi Bumpus Write-in _____

Don Jaques Write-in _____

2. Waive Annual External Audit

The external financial audit requirement shall be waived for 2020.

Agree Oppose

3. Ratify the Budget

The 2020 budget approved by the Board of Directors shall be ratified.

Agree Oppose