



# Ahwatukee Happenings

A NEWSLETTER FROM AHWATUKEE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT, Inc.

4700 East Warner Road, Phoenix AZ 85044

Winter 2018

## WELCOME to Ahwatukee...

### ABM INSTRUMENTAL IN OBTAINING LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS FROM CITY OF PHOENIX

- ABM
- BOARD MEMBERS

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- PRESIDENT
- Christopher Gentis
- VICE-PRESIDENT
- Cathy Bubnick
- SECRETARY
- Vernon Hancock
- TREASURER
- Karen Jones
- DIRECTORS
- Karin Gray
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Late this summer, a sight for sore eyes—trees appeared along 48th Street between Warner and Elliot Roads. A lot of trees! While the Ahwatukee Foothills News published a story about it, we feel it’s worthy of a repeat. Why? Because healthy, mature trees add vibrance and vital benefit to a community, especially in the desert. How? ABM staff contacted the city petitioning for replacement landscaping in Ahwatukee, and the city was able to secure the materials and funds to accommodate our request.

Those of you who have lived in Ahwatukee for some time know there had been mature pine, and other trees, lining 48th Street until they succumbed to a major landscape change on the city rights of way and their decades-old watering method was affected. The new trees, 44 in all, were installed in late July. They are comprised of Southern Oak, Pistache and Ironwood species. All are wonderful, indigenous shade trees known to be low maintenance and drought tolerant.

**Phase two** of ABM’s endeavor with the city is also coming to fruition: landscaping will be installed in the first two median entries into Ahwatukee on Warner and Elliot Roads. Revitalization at Ahwatukee’s “front doors” has been sorely needed as our *welcome* mats are looking worn out. ABM is pleased to announce installation of approximately 3 dozen new plants and 3 trees in the medians along Warner Road between I-10 and Wakail Loop. ABM staff selected the plant and tree species and created their layout design. The City of Phoenix Street Transportation Department is paying for the project and city staff will provide installation. The beautification of two medians nearest I-10 on Elliot Road will follow, with a larger number of trees at that location. The **final phase** of landscape reinstallation is replacement of 102 trees on the Warner-Elliot Loop, which have already been pinned for installation.

### PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Last August, the AFN published a story about my daughter, Sarah, becoming principal at Kyrene de la Estrella Elementary School. The story described how her life has come full circle in Ahwatukee, from attending Kyrene schools herself and now her children attending those same schools. Sarah became an educator, just like her late mother, Deborah. It’s said “*the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree*”. I think about friends and neighbors in Ahwatukee who have familial legacies like my family. There are *many*.

Children raised in Ahwatukee now have settled their families here, while their parents and grandparents remain in Ahwatukee. Their children are playing on the same baseball teams, dancing at the same studios, joining the same swim team and even working at the same businesses that their parents did. Because Ahwatukee is such a diverse community, from smaller “starter” homes to 55+ restricted residential neighborhoods, Ahwatukee truly has something for everyone. There are a large number of family owned businesses in Ahwatukee, deepening the roots and growing legacies. What a wonderful community to be a part of. *Christopher Gentis*

Same address, more information! **ABM has a new website with a new layout to keep YOU in the know.** Find answers to FAQs, meeting notices, budget, forms and information to help you learn more about ABM and its functions. You may also make online payments for assessments, RV storage and memberships conveniently and at *no charge* (if using e-check).

"Follow" us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ahwatukeeboardofmanagement](http://www.facebook.com/ahwatukeeboardofmanagement)



## Your Community Association Management and what they do...

From Dec. 2017 through Oct. 2018, ABM processed:

**3,850** Covenant Enforcement Letters including:

- 1,375 Yard Maintenance (general maintenance, lawn care, trimming, raking, dead plant removal, etc.)
- 521 House Maintenance (painting, repairs, gates, mailbox, fence)
- 389 Vehicles (inoperable, parking surface, RVs, oil stains)
- 673 Unscreened stored items (in view from street, neighboring lots or golf course)
- 892 Trees (trimming, removal of dead trees or stumps)

**645** Architectural Approval requests including:

- 278 Paint
- 112 Fences / Gates
- 174 Structural (patio covers, doors/windows, rebuilds)
- 81 Landscape / Yard (lighting, courtyards, walkways)



- 383 property (sale) transfers
- Management of 5 sub-associations totaling an additional 330 homes
- In-house maintenance of over 106 acres of common area

## WHO LET THE DOGS OUT ?!

It's fall, and we all enjoy finally opening our doors and windows. With the gentle breezes come ... *BARKING DOGS!*

**Nuisance barking** is one of the most frequent complaints ABM staff receives. It can be an extremely frustrating and divisive issue for neighbors and negatively impacts the enjoyment of one's property. CC&Rs do not contain a provision for the HOA to enforce barking dog complaints. However, ABM will send a courtesy letter to the property owner to advise of the reported barking.

We also advise complainants that the City of Phoenix has a barking dog mediation program whereby, if complaints are received by two sources and city staff can confirm, the city may become involved. Action may range from a notification letter, mediation meetings, fines or prosecution by the city attorney's office. Most often, pet owners are not aware of the extent their dog may be barking. Please be a courteous neighbor and ensure that your dog does not unreasonably disturb others.

**Thank you for your consideration!** For tips and information on this subject, please visit the city's website at:

<https://www.phoenix.gov/law/prosecutor/barking-dogs/mediation> or call (602) 262 6466.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** On Wednesday, April 3, 2019 an election for 3 directors to the ABM Board will be held. Applications will be available between February 4th and 15th and must be received at ABM no later than February 15th. If you are interested in serving your community, you may request an application by emailing [info@ahwatukeehoa.com](mailto:info@ahwatukeehoa.com). Please call (480) 893 3502 ext. 3 with questions. *Thank you!*

**EXTENDED OFFICE HOURS**  
**December 1 through January 31**  
**ABM OFFICE HOURS**  
**7:00AM to 5:00PM**



**LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH....**

From time to time, ABM sends community alerts, surveys, ABM sponsored event notices and other HOA items of interest via email. If you have not provided *your* email address and would like to stay in the know, please email us at [info@ahwatukeehoa.com](mailto:info@ahwatukeehoa.com) and request we add you to our mailing list.

Thank you.

*\*Information you provide is for official ABM use only.*



**You've Got Questions?...Architectural & Painting Has Answers...**

Cooler temperatures generate more interest in home improvements and maintenance. From awnings to xeriscapes, we've compiled an architectural FAQ for your reference. However, meeting the criteria alone is not sufficient to proceed with a project; owners must submit an application, and receive written approval, for exterior work. **ABM processes all architectural submittals unless your property is subject to a sub-association.** Not sure? We can help!

- Q. I want to repaint the exterior of my home the same color that it currently is. Do I need to submit for approval?
- A. Yes. Most owners paint every 7-12 years. Colors are usually tied to trends, and trends change. Colors frequently seen in the '90s, pink tones and teal, are no longer current. Red doors have given way to other colors. Pastels have succumbed to earth tones and warm hues. Some colors are more "timeless" and may transcend decades, but an approved application is always required prior to painting.
- Q. I want to replace single pane with dual pane windows, same size and location. Do I need to submit for approval?
- A. No. However, reflective or mirrored glass windows are strictly prohibited.
- Q. I want to convert my front yard grass to gravel (or vice versa). Is that allowed?
- A. Yes. Owners may change live landscape materials. If removing grass to convert to xeriscape, make sure that you kill or completely remove all Bermuda grass prior to installing gravel. Failing to do so will create an ongoing weed issue. Live plants and trees may be added or removed but tree stumps must be ground to below grade or removed so as to not be visible. Be mindful of placement, especially trees, to provide ample room to canopy.
- Q. What types of landscape improvements require approval?
- A. All "hardscape": walkways and paths, exterior tile or other surface materials, driveway extensions, planters, courtyard walls, etc. must be applied for, and receive, written approval.
- Q. What other types of exterior projects require prior architectural committee approval?
- A. The short answer is *everything* - roofs, awnings, stuccoing homes or walls, adding pop outs, faux shutters, etc.

For more information regarding architectural or paint projects, please visit our website at [www.ahwatukeehoa.com](http://www.ahwatukeehoa.com) and select the *Architectural & Paint* tab or contact our office at (480) 893-3502. We are happy to help!

**LEASH AND PICK UP AFTER PETS—IT'S THE LAW!**

Love your dog *AND* your community. Please pick up after your dog(s). ABM supplies "mutt mitts" throughout the community for your convenience so please—be prepared and take a bag.

When walking your dog in the washes or throughout Ahwatukee, please keep your dog on a leash at all times. *It's the law*, and doing so protects you and your pet as well as your neighbors and their pets.



**Happy Tails!**

**Comments from our members....**

*"I have lived here since 1978 and the ABM has always worked with me as a homeowner, thank you."*

*"It took a while to get used to the procedures, but now it's all good."*

*"You really helped me with some troublesome neighbors."*

## **ABM FARES WELL IN HOMEOWNER SURVEY**

On September 18, ABM emailed an online survey to **3,552** homeowners who previously provided an email address.

There were **526** respondents (14%) who provided the following ratings:

1. How would you rate your overall experience living in a community association?  
**28% very good    36% good    22% average    8% bad    3% very bad**
2. Do you think members of the elected ABM governing board strive to serve the best interest of the community?  
**19% absolutely    36% mostly    22% neutral    14% somewhat    6% not at all**
3. If you have had direct interaction with ABM staff, was it generally a positive experience?  
**65% positive    17% no experience    16% not positive**
4. Thinking about the amount of the assessment that you pay to ABM for services provided by the master association, do you feel the amount of your assessment is too much, too little or just the right amount?  
**59% just the right amount    2% too little    37% too much**
5. What do you think your community association should do when residents neglect to pay their assessment?  
**91% pursue legally    8% curtail services and amenities such as reducing pool hours and landscape maintenance**
6. Governance of community associations is subject to differing state laws and regulations. Would you like to see more, or less, state governmental control of these associations, or would you prefer no change?  
**52% no change    21% more    26% less**
7. In your opinion, do the rules in your community harm property values, make no difference, or protect and enhance property values?  
**70% protect and enhance    24% makes no difference    5% harm**
8. Architectural Review Committee submittal and approval is required for exterior changes to residential properties within Ahwatukee. Do you agree that such community guidelines preserve the neighborhood aesthetics and ensure high community standards?  
**68% yes    16% not sure    15% no**
9. What do you feel are the BEST aspects of living in a community association? (choose all that apply)  
**78.2%    clean / attractive neighborhoods**  
**60%    maintains property values**  
**47.7%    responsible neighbors**  
**38.6%    amenities: swimming pools, tennis courts, organized activities**  
**27.1%    everybody knows the rules**  
**8.7%    nothing good**
10. What do you feel are the WORST aspects of living in a community association? (choose all that apply)  
**36.9%    restrictions on home exterior improvements**  
**29.7%    nothing bad**  
**28.6%    being subjected to architectural guidelines**  
**27.0%    paying assessments**  
**21.2%    dissatisfaction with the board**



## A MOMENT WITH THE MANAGER

In the fall of 2017, management submitted a plan to gradually lower the percentage of increase on annual assessments while raising reserves to 80% of the fully funded balance in five years. For several years the assessment increase has been 5%; in 2018 the increase was reduced to 3.5%. For 2019 the increase will be only 3%. The goal by the end of the five year plan is to build the reserve balance to exceed one million dollars. ABM has come a long way since the developer, 19 years after building Ahwatukee, left ABM with zero reserve funds. The 2018 year-end reserve balance will be \$600,000 - the highest in our history. Having adequate reserve funds lessens the risk of special assessments.

*Robert Blakesley, General Manager*

### JOIN US AT OUR NEXT ABM SEMI-ANNUAL SPEAKER

This year, ABM held 2 well attended informational Speaker Series events — and they were all about growing! Our most recent event, **“That Grows Here? From Avocados to Zinnias”** was a huge hit. Experts from our own Ahwatukee Community Garden gave tips on proper garden care, composting, edible wild desert foods and more! Last March we hosted an arborist from Tree Pros, LLC, who spoke about proper tree pruning, feeding and fertilization, storm damage prevention and watering methods.

Past series topics were *Living With Wildlife* and *Roof Rat Abatement*.

Don't miss our next event! We will be hosting **“Police Involvement with the Community”** presented by the Phoenix Police Department on **March 13, 2019**. Come and learn what police say you need to know to help prevent burglaries and other crime trends in Ahwatukee. As always, there will be literature and resources available, as well as a Q & A where you can obtain answers to your questions! Look for our invitation to this event via email next spring!

We welcome *your* ideas for future topics! Email us at [info@ahwatukeehoa.com](mailto:info@ahwatukeehoa.com)

## ABM COMMITTEES NEED YOU!

ABM has two standing committees: Architectural Review and Budget Review. We need additional volunteers on both committees. Committee members are appointed by the ABM Board President.

**Architectural Review:** meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 a.m. at ABM. Duties include:

- ◆ reviewing HOA member applications
- ◆ driving by applicants' property (small fuel stipend included)
- ◆ hearing decision appeals, suggesting alternatives, working toward member satisfaction
- ◆ working knowledge of architectural guidelines (we will teach you)
- ◆ background in construction, landscape, paint, design, or other related field recommended, but not required

**Budget Review:** meets the second Friday of each month at 7:30 a.m. at ABM. Duties include:

- ◆ reviewing monthly financial statements from ABM and the sub-associations it manages
- ◆ reviewing annual proposed budget and providing recommendations and input to the Board
- ◆ working knowledge of financial statements including budgets, P & L reports and how to read them



**To volunteer or learn more, please contact Robert Blakesley at (480) 893 3502 ext. 2**