

CALL FOR OLNEY CROSSING HOA BOARD MEMBERS

OCHOA needs you! Board elections will be held at the Olney Crossing Homeowners Annual Board meeting this fall. Homeowners are invited (and needed) to apply for all officer positions (President, Vice President, Secretary) and at-large positions. It is imperative for homeowners to step forward to serve on the Board. The Board President position has been vacant for several years, and several Board officers have served for two consecutive terms. To run for a Board position, please send a brief bio to webmaster@olneycrossingmd.org by Sept. 8, 2023. Nominees will be listed in the Fall/Oct newsletter.

NOTE: Volunteers are also needed to serve on the Architectural Review Committee, to review and approve homeowners' plans for exterior renovations. To join, send an email to webmaster@olneycrossingmd.org.

OVERDUE ACCOUNTS

Our HOA has been able to keep assessments at a modest level based on the timely payment of HOA dues by most homeowners. However, past due accounts in substantial amounts continue to negatively affect our ability to cover our annual budget.

OCHOA Bylaws state that the Board of Directors could place a lien on those properties or bring a lawsuit to collect any assessment that is overdue by more than 30 days. In addition, Article XIV of the Bylaws allow the Board to charge interest for all past due balances at 8% per annum – a measure that the Board has begun to implement.

The Board would prefer not to engage in such collection activities. However, our Treasurer has noted there are months where she has come very close to having to draw from a rainy-day fund because our margins are so tight. This is unacceptable.

If you are a homeowner unable to pay your assessment due to financial distress, please contact Krista Boteler, Treasurer, on 410-353-8923 or treasurer@olneycrossingmd.org to work out a payment plan.

Payments can now be made via **Zelle**. See <http://olneycrossingmd.org/pay-hoa-dues/>.

OCHOA Documents Now Searchable Online

You can go to the website at olneycrossingmd.org and under OCHOA Documents, you can see the Declaration of Covenants, and Bylaws, both in searchable PDF format. You can search it (or 'find') from within your browser when it opens, or download and search in a PDF viewer (or Preview on Mac).

TURNING DOWN THE VOLUME ON LAWN CARE

Olney Crossing has been a wonderful and quiet place to live. However, the peace and quiet has been increasingly replaced by the sounds of excessively loud lawn equipment. Sound is measured in decibels on a logarithmic scale with each 10-decibel increase sounding twice as loud.

Commercial lawn equipment is exponentially more powerful and louder than what is needed on most residential lawns. In recent years, I have noticed that eight lawn care contractors were running their equipment at exceedingly loud and disruptive volumes, far exceeding residential limits.

If you hire a lawn contractor:

- Please ask them to comply with Montgomery County's sound regulations which restrict noise in residential areas and can assess fines for contractors who exceed these limits. The regulations can be found at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DEP/contact/noise.html>.
- Please ask your contractor to run each piece of equipment at the lowest effective speed. Zero-turn mowers can be run at $\frac{3}{4}$ power without losing efficiency.
- Ideally, leaf blowers should only be used when necessary and never with another blower simultaneously to avoid an overlap of noise. (Note: weed whackers and leaf blowers are more efficient at half speed).

This spring I consulted some of my neighbors regarding these suggestions for reducing lawn equipment noise. In almost every case, when the homeowners spoke to their lawn contractors it resulted in a substantial reduction in the noise the contractors make during lawn maintenance.

A heartfelt "thank you" to our neighbors for their help.

Lee Chedester, Olney Crossing homeowner

NOTE: If you have a suggestion for a topic to be addressed in future newsletters, or if you wish to submit a brief article (300 words), send an email to webmaster@olneycrossingmd.org.