

Highlands at Mechums River
Highlands Detached Home Owners Association, Inc.
PO Box 429 Crozet VA 22932-0429

<http://hdhoa.avenue.org/>

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is my dues amount?

The association collects dues from its members at the rate of \$4 per month (\$1 per month from owners of vacant lots).

2. When is my payment due?

In the past, rather than collect the dues each month, the amount for the entire year has been assessed at one time in the middle of the calendar year. We continue to follow this established practice. **Thus the total annual amount of \$48 (\$12 for owners of vacant lots) is due on the 30th of June every year.** Please remember to send in your payments by this date. **Checks should be made payable to “Highlands Detached Home Owners Association”.**

3. What are my dues used for?

The relevant information is contained in the annual financial statements, which have always been a part of the HOA disclosure packet. Existing residents may request a recent copy at any time from the HOA treasurer or secretary or review them when they are tabled at the general meetings. The “disbursements” section in these statements lists the items/services that our HOA spends its money on. This includes, but is not limited to, our share of the common front entrance maintenance including irrigation, office supplies, USPS PO Box rental, postage, any bank fees, liability insurance for private open areas within the detached home owners neighborhood (Highlands 1B), any federal taxes, any state fees etc. Revenues left over after all HOA commitments are met are deposited into a checking account as a “rainy day” fund for covering occasional charges such as common fence maintenance, tree pruning etc. Note that we also “indirectly” pay for our share of liability insurance along the common entrance/exit areas as well as for illumination of the Highlands subdivision sign on route 240 – these expenses are paid for by the Highlands (1A) Attached Home Owners Association up front and then accounted for in our reimbursement calculations.

The following table summarizes the cost per month per household (out of the \$4.00 monthly fee) incurred by the HOA to cover expenses related to the maintenance and upkeep of the common front entrance for the Highlands subdivision.

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
\$1.33	\$1.22	\$1.26	\$1.29	\$1.64	\$1.47	\$2.29	\$2.28	\$2.10

Table 1: Per month cost per household over the years for expenses related to the maintenance and upkeep of the common front entrance for the Highlands subdivision.

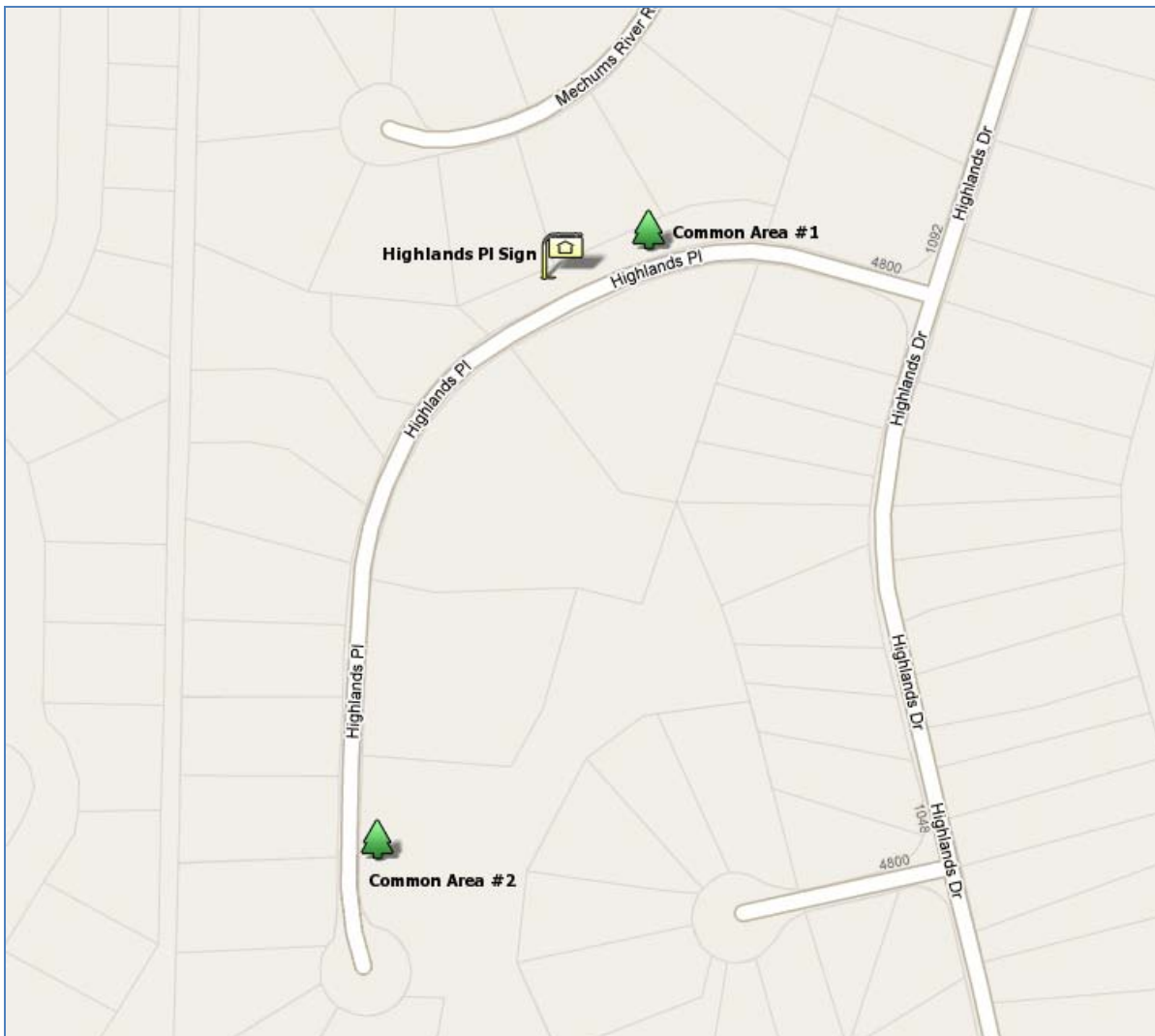
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4. Why is the grass on my cul-de-sac / nearby common area not mowed?

It should be. Our HOA has a separate contract for maintenance of the two common areas located within our HOA. (The contract for maintenance of the front entrance (described in answer to question 3 above) only covers the common access street and is paid for by all five neighborhood HOAs in the sub-division. It does not provide for maintenance of any common space located within any one of the five individual HOAs because of issues of cost sharing. Other HOAs also have separate contracts for maintenance of their common areas.)



Map showing the two “common areas” along Highlands Pl that are covered by the separate maintenance contract paid for by our HOA alone. The “Highlands Pl Sign” is only included to serve as a convenient reference point. It was removed in 2012 after it was deemed to be too weathered at the general meeting.

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A Historical Note: Earlier, our HOA did not have such a separate contract for maintenance of the common areas located within our HOA. The possibility of drawing up such a separate contract for our HOA was discussed at the general meeting on 08-June-2006. At that time, the general consensus was that given the fact that the scope of such a contract would be very limited, it would probably not be cost effective to enter into such a contract. All of the residents near the cul-de-sac (present at the general meeting) agreed to share the burden of maintaining the space.

This arrangement was subsequently considered unsatisfactory by some members, and the issue was reviewed at the annual meeting on 14-March-2007 where the vice president was requested to solicit bids for this contract. However, after reviewing the bids, it was agreed that the best course of action was to stay with the current arrangement of having the nearby home owners maintain these areas. The HOA was very appreciative of those who helped with the upkeep of these areas personally when they mowed their own yards.

Subsequently, it was agreed that the HOA should reimburse individual homeowners who employ their contractors to mow "Common Area #1" and/or "Common Area #2", particularly if the grass in these common areas was outgrown and had not been mowed by anyone for a while.

(As of this writing, there is also the issue of maintenance of trees in "Common Area #1", as they mature and pose a hazard to nearby houses and the street.)

5. How was the landscaping company which maintains the common entrance selected and awarded the contract for that work? What specific tasks are they responsible for?

**DISCONTINUED
(as of March 2013)**

Based on the bid specifications prepared in the year 2000 by the HOA office bearers at the time, bids were invited for the task of maintenance of the front entrance from various companies. The current contractor was selected after comparing all received responses.

The contract has subsequently been renewed each year. The current HOA vice-president as well as all other office bearers are in agreement that this is an acceptable and cost effective arrangement.

Any member/resident is welcome to review the terms of the contract with any HOA office bearer. A list describing the tasks that the maintenance contractor is responsible for is available for download on the HOA web-site.

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6. Is my account in good standing?

Call the HOA treasurer at 434-823-2713 (evenings only please) or email your questions to Kamaljeet.S.Saini@gmail.com

Last Updated on 07-August-2012
