

PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION OF HILLTOP LAKES, INC.
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
October 23, 2025
COMMUNITY CENTER
OPEN SESSION @ APPROX. 6:00 P.M.

Minutes

In Attendance: President Raymond Escoto, Vice President Don Ritchey,
Treasurer/Secretary Tiffani McKinney, Directors- Farrell Butler, Kyle Beale, Doug
Johnson, Sadie Kline, Tommy Raymond
Absent: Biff Adam

- I. The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00 pm by President Raymond Escoto.
- II. The Invocation & Pledges were led by Swen Crone.
- III. President Escoto asked for approval of the October 23, 2025, Agenda. A Motion was made to approve the agenda by Tommy Raymond and seconded by Don Ritchey, unanimously approved.
- IV. President Escoto asked for approval of the September 4, 2025, Minutes. A motion was made by Tiffani McKinney, Doug Johnson asked for an amendment to the minutes, Don Ritchey made a motion to approve September 4, 2025, minutes with changes, seconded by Tommy Raymond, unanimously approved.
- V. Recap of Closed Session – September 4, 2025 – Discussion and potential action
 - a. Property Owner Matters – None to discuss
 - b. Potential Contracts – Spoke to Spectrum, and internet provider regarding a potential proposal to bring services to Hilltop Lakes.
 - c. Personnel – Discussed Employee Insurance and bundling with the ADP payroll system. Discussed Amending the hiring policy requires both background checks and drug testing before new employees are officially hired.
 - d. Legal – Director Kyle Beale reported that both parties are currently in negotiation and working to resolve the issues in the pending lawsuit.
 - e. Other – Treasurer Tiffani McKinney stated that the draft of the 2024 annual audit is one year behind schedule, and the POA is asking for an accelerated timeline to complete the audit by January 2026
- VI. Recap of Decisions Taken Since Last Meeting (if any) –

- a. The board approved switching both Human Resources (HR) and payroll functions to ADP, a decision projected to create cost savings compared to using in-house personnel for these tasks. Treasurer Tiffani McKinney noted that ADP also offers hiring benefits, including job advertisement and interview process assistance, which will further save Hilltop Lakes money.

VII. Operational Reports

- a. Financial Report - Treasure Tiffani McKinney
 - i. August had been financially sound, with more income than planned and less expenses than expected.
 - ii. September saw the reverse, with expenses rising above budget. Treasurer Tiffani McKinney detailed several categories currently over budget, as well as Attorney's fees related to the ongoing lawsuit, building maintenance which is more than \$10,000 over budget, and heavy equipment related cost that are \$33,000 over budget. Treasurer McKinney clarified that while grounds expenses are currently over budget by \$29,000, this is simply a timing issue, and the category remains in the black year-to-date.
 - iii. Treasurer McKinney assured the board that they are actively addressing these shortfalls. They are not ignoring the budget overages but are instead examining each expense category and asking critical questions about the underlying causes, which will help them make necessary adjustments for the next year.
 - iv. Treasurer McKinney offered an example by asking the board, "Why didn't we look at the cost of oil changes for the motor grader? It is very expensive, and this should have been part of the budget as it is costly."
- b. Maintenance Report – Tommy Raymond on behalf of Randy Weaver & Raymond Escoto on behalf of Chase Wilkerson
 - i. Tommy Raymond – Discussed sweeping changes coming to the maintenance departments. Announced the transition to the SMART system (Service Management and Resource Tracking). This move shifts the focus to asset management: every piece of owned equipment will have a dedicated folder containing all records, manuals and maintenance schedules.
 - ii. Buildings – updated lights in lodge
 - iii. Grounds – Repairing retaining wall at villa & repairing banks at Mirror Lake
 - iv. Roads – Working on repairing Warrior, Trail Ride, Lakefront & Hickory Ridge, these roads are being patched. Nassau is on the schedule and Ranch Road is being moved up on the schedule. Will be getting oil sand from the County
- c. Golf Course Maintenance Report – Kyle Beale on behalf of Bryan Pace
 - i. Reported that the installation of the golf course irrigation system is progressing. Noted that a completion date for the project has not yet been announced.

- d. Pro Shop – Kyle Beale on behalf of Candyce Pace
 - i. \$23,333 income for October and \$232,029 year-to date.
 - ii. 2,101 rounds of golf were played, and 19,885 rounds were played year-to-date
- e. Business Office Report –
 - i. None to Report
- f. Post Office Report – Heather Weaver
 - i. 46 PO Boxes available for rent
 - ii. 5,372 incoming packages for month of August
 - iii. Post Office will be open until 6pm on Tuesdays for package pick up only during the holiday season only.

VIII. Committee Reports –

- a. Architectural Control Committee Report – Randy Patro
 - i. See Report for Architectural Control Committee
- b. Activities Report – Rita Russ
 - i. Upcoming Events –
 - 1. Freaky Friday Haunted house – October 31st
 - 2. Fall Fest – November 8th
 - 3. HLEA Barn Dance – November 22nd
 - 4. Breakfast with Santa – December 6th
- c. Beautification Report – Farrell Butler
 - i. None to Report
 - ii. We are still looking for volunteers to help with beautifying the area behind the Lodge.
- d. Lakes Committee Report – Dewain Knight
 - i. None to Report
- e. HLEA Committee – Lisa Harvey
 - i. Pumpkin decorating contest for October
 - ii. Reminded everyone of the Barn Street Dance on November 22 from 5pm-9pm with live music and food truck
 - iii. Tickets go on sale this week - \$10 for adults & \$5 for kids aged 3 yrs. And up, bring your own chairs.
 - iv. Horse barn now has new lighting, and the new roof coating is going to be installed in the next two to three weeks.
- f. Election Committee – Don Ritchey
 - i. Meet the Candidates Forum was successfully held last week. The Elections Committee has prepared and is ready to mail ballots to all Property Owners who have requested them.
- g. Dog Kennel – Zillah Gomez
 - i. Thanked the community for all the donations and gifts to the kennel.
 - ii. Invited Property Owners to come by anytime to the dogs or even take one for a walk.

IX. Members to be Heard – October 23, 2025, Agenda Topics-

a. None to be Heard

X. Old Business –

a. Golf Course Sprayer –

- i. Director Tommy Raymond reported that the chemical sprayer currently used on the golf course is wearing out. Director Raymond informed the board that rebuilding the current unit would cost 75%-80% of a new sprayer, and that estimate does not account for potential complications. He stated that it would be wiser to invest in a new sprayer, which he anticipates will be 10-20% more efficient in chemical usage, leading to significant cost savings. The decision to purchase a new sprayer was tabled until the January 2026 board meeting.

b. Vehicle Stickers –

- i. Board discussed a proposal for resident vehicle stickers at Hilltop Lakes. Director Sadie Kline questioned the necessity, asking “What will this do for us?” She expressed a concern that the stickers might lead to the harassment of property owners’ guests who drive vehicles without the resident identifier.
- ii. Treasure Tiffani McKinney suggested the board take time to meet with security personnel to determine if the stickers would truly aid their operations. She also stressed the importance of gathering resident feedback before a final decision is made. The estimate cost for stickers is \$13,000 for 2,500 stickers, with each additional 500 costing \$100.
- iii. Tina Daigle with HTL Security weighed in, stating the stickers would be beneficial for handling situations involving juveniles. Daigle explained, “issues like pranks, speeding, wrapping houses, it lets us know who they are so security can talk to the parents.”
- iv. Property Owner Hank Dembosky also supported the idea, noting that the upcoming solar farm installation will bring up to 600 workers per day into the area, making the resident stickers a useful tool for security to quickly identify property owner vehicles.
- v. A property owner inquired about a potential fee for the stickers. President Raymond Escoto responded that the board was “not even to that point yet.” The issue was ultimately tabled pending further research and input. Tabled for November POA Board Meeting.

c. 10-year Plan for Airport

- i. On 2026 budget process
- ii. Tabled till January POA Board Meeting

d. Pickleball lines & existing lines for tennis court

- i. Tabled until January 2026 POA Board Meeting

XI. New Business – Discussion & Potential Action

a. Campground Host Suggestions –

- i. Discussed several suggestions, but ultimately only one item was brought to vote.
 - ii. Motion made by Doug Johnson for the installation of new signage, choosing between a 10 MPH speed limit sign or slow children at play signage within the campground area. Seconded by Kyle Beale. Unanimously approved.
- b. Hilltop Lakes Disc Golf Course Redevelopment Proposal –
 - i. Tabled until November 13, 2025, POA Board Meeting.
- c. Updates needed to the Use of Facilities Policy -
 - i. Tabled until November 13, 2025, POA Board Meeting.
- d. Golf Course Trail Fee for Extend Seniors –
 - i. Board discussed a proposal for a Golf Course Trail Fee for Extend Seniors from the previous POA Board Meeting.
 - ii. Questions were raised amongst the Property Owners' such as "what even is an extended senior?"
 - iii. Treasurer Tiffani McKinney pointed out the difficulty this would present for staff to define and monitor. She also noted that the POA currently has no fee structure for property owners who only play golf a few times a year. Treasurer McKinney suggested the concept of a "Day Trail Fee" for infrequent players who might only play once a quarter, like systems used at other courses.
 - 1. Randy Schiamara commented on the complexity, stating, "You'll have to change the colors of the stickers every day."
 - 2. Marsha Griffis asked if the fee would be limited to seniors. Treasurer McKinney responded that it should be open to all ages, viewing it as "another way for the Pro Shop to make extra revenue."
 - 3. Joyce Perkins recalled that a similar pay-by-day system existed in 2024 for \$5.00 but was later discontinued.
 - 4. Jack Miller, who was the original property owner who first suggested the idea, spoke up to clarify his original intent. He noted the current fee is \$125 for six months but expressed his dislike for the per-day concept, mentioning his son, niece, and daughter-in-law who also play golf at Hilltop.
 - 5. A Property Owner suggested developing three tiered rates: for a day, week and a month.
 - iv. Treasurer McKinney confirmed that due to inflation, the fee would be "more than \$5/per day" and to research the cost of implementation of such a policy.
 - v. Tabled until further research can be done.
- e. 2026 POA Meeting Calendar –
 - i. Board discussed changing the regular POA meeting day following a suggestion from Dene Huettel.
 - ii. President Escoto noted the current schedule is the second Thursday of each month.

- iii. Director Kline proposed holding one meeting per quarter on a Saturday to improve attendance for residents unavailable on weekdays.
- iv. Treasurer McKinney suggested Monday evenings. Property Owners did not like that suggestion asking, "what about Monday Night Football?"
 - 1. Randy Schiamara voiced opposition, stating the schedule shouldn't be changed, "just because a few people can't attend."
 - 2. Dene Huettel then addressed the board, clarifying that her initial suggestion had been misinterpreted. She explained that her intention was not to change the day of the week, but to address the fact that the board had recently failed to adhere to the established schedule of the second Thursday. As a member of the HTL Lions Club, which meets on the first and third Thursday, the schedule deviation has negatively impacted the club. With a smile, she advised "Don't step on the Lions – of you can't have the POA meeting on the second Thursday, don't have one."
- v. President Escoto confirmed the board would keep the current Thursday schedule but agreed to implement the quarterly Saturday meeting. He attributed the recent deviation from the schedule to conflicts among board members. The board agreed on the path forward and moved on without a formal vote.

XII. Members to be Heard – Other Topics

- a. Tina Daigle addressed the board with several concerns. She asked for clarification on who manages the mini golf course, reporting that the previous day, three carloads of people were hitting balls into the horse pasture and then going into the pastures to retrieve them. Mrs. Daigle then asked for an update on the recurring dog control issue on Tonkawa Drive.
 - i. President Escoto responded that neither the POA nor Leon County has a dog control policy. Treasurer McKinney asked if the property owner had received a formal letter regarding their dogs chasing residents, to which a board member confirmed that a letter had been sent.
 - ii. Mrs. Daigle stressed the severity of the problem, stating that children cannot ride bikes past the house without being chased, and that the dogs even chased a security vehicle today. She concluded by expressing her fear for the trick-or-treaters the following week due to the aggressive dogs.
- b. Sylvia Guzman addressed the board regarding a significant threat to the local aquifers that supply water to Hilltop Lakes. She explained that Hilltop currently draws from the Sparta and Queen City aquifers, which are hydraulically connected to the larger Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer. Guzman stated that while current East Texas permits target the Carrizo-Wilcox, pumping from it will significantly affect the connected Sparta and Queen

City aquifers. She noted that while a moratorium is currently in place, operators have already received approval to pump billions of gallons from the Carrizo in Bexar County. She stressed that Hilltop's aquifers are "smaller and more fragile." She urged the Hilltop Water Supply and the PO's who have private wells to register their wells. Guzman has been attending public comment meetings regarding the well permits for these aquifers and expressed concern, stating that "the frightening thing to me is that no one at these meetings is mentioning our aquifers, Sparta and Queen City. We need to make a loud noise and be heard."

- c. Becky Lundell addressed the board three items:
 - 1. Beer and Wine permit – Mrs. Lundell asked for an update on the proposed Beer and Wine permit for the golf course. President Escoto responded that the issue remains stalled because the POA has not yet received the necessary insurance quotes for liquor liability.
 - 2. Takeback lots Inventory – Mrs. Lundell asked if the board planned to place a limit on the number of lots the POA holds in inventory from property owner "Takebacks." Treasurer McKinney stated that the current practice has not changed over the last two to three months.
 - 3. Hog Mitigation – Mrs. Lundell expressed concern about the ongoing hog problem, noting that the animals have targeted her home on Kingston five different times. She asked when the POA would resume the practice of using dogs to mitigate the hog population. President Escoto stated that the Board will follow up on the matter.
- d. Randy Shiamara referred to Troy Franks, the man who ran dogs for Hilltop in the past, "he's not going to do reports, he's a country boy. When he was running the dogs, the hogs were gone. We need to bring back Troy." The hill was paying Franks \$500 per month for dog food.
- e. Kathy Sullivan a member of the local CERT team (community Emergency Response Team), addressed the board following the recent incident involving a missing elderly man who was eventually found by volunteers. She emphasized the significant number of resources mobilized for the search and provided a list of all involved parties. Mrs. Sullivan expressed concern that she, and presumably others, did not receive an official alert from the Board of Directors during the incident, noting she is not on all of the Hilltop Lakes social media pages. She pointed out that while the local CERT chapter has 15 members, "well over 100 people" participated in the search. She concluded that the community needs a definitive plan for getting messages out to all people at Hilltop Lakes the next time an emergency occurs.
 - i. Treasurer McKinney responded by urging people to sign up for the alerts on the Hilltop Lakes website, noting that the link is red, on the right side of the page, and sends a text alert when a

- relevant event occurs. Director Kline added that updates were posted on the official social media page during the search.
- ii. Sullivan countered, "I don't know if that's the best way to send out communications. We could lose people at the campgrounds, people hiking for example."
 - iii. Treasurer McKinney reiterated that the alerts are delivered via text message and that anyone can sign up to receive them.
- f. Zillah Gomez raised a grievance regarding a deed restriction violation letter she received from the POA. The letter stated that she had filed for 503C business at her residence in the Ranchettes, which Gomez strongly refuted, asking, "what is defined as a commercial business? Where is the proof that I did this? The letter was not signed. I have not filed anything." She emphasized her background in law enforcement and stated, "there is no such thing as a 503C in Texas."
- i. President Escoto directed Randy Patro from the Architectural Control Committee (ACC) to address the letter. Patro explained that two board members had asked the ACC to send it as an FYI regarding the restrictions on establishing a dog kennel in the Ranchettes. As the discussion escalated, with a board member interjecting a question about a rental home; it was suggested my some in the audience that the matter be handled in private. President Escoto asked Gomez if she would discuss the issue with the board privately after the meeting, and she agreed.

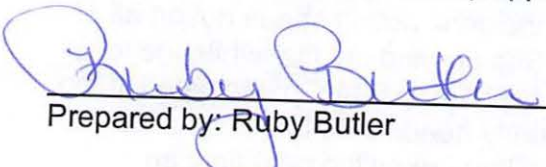
XIII. Approval of Takeback Lots –

- a. Tabled until further notice
- b. Treasurer McKinney clarified the board's process regarding Takeback lots. She explained the board's decisions involve two parts: first, determining whether to accept a lot from a property owner who is voluntarily giving it back (provided all takes and fees are current), and second setting a resale price for that lot.


XIV. Announcements –

- a. None to be made

XV. Adjourn – Motion to adjourn made by Kyle Beale, and seconded by Don Ritchey, unanimously approved at 7:46pm.


Prepared by: Ruby Butler

11-20-25
Date


Approved by: Raymond Escoto, President

11/20/2025
Date

NOTES:

- 1) Open Session and uploaded to the members' only area of the website the following business day.
- 2) Video recording/Livestreaming of the meeting was allowed and approved by the Board of Directors.