



# Finance Committee: Trusted Advisors to the Board

Who watches the money? It's the Finance Committee- homeowner volunteers who have been appointed to serve. Per the charter, the primary responsibility of the Finance Committee is to advise the Board of Directors regarding budgetary and financial issues.

Currently, the committee is chaired by Susan Timmer. Tara Zimmerman and Aubrey Lara are the members. Each of them has a background in finance and business administration.

Susan G. Timmer, Ph.D., is the Director of Mental Health Research at the CAARE Diagnostic and Treatment Center at UC Davis Children's Hospital. She has been in this position since 2000, developing mental health interventions, conducting evaluations and managing large scale research and training projects. She also has experience serving on non-profit Boards such as the River City Food Bank. A graduate of Smith College, Susan obtained her Masters and PhD at University of Michigan. She has made her home in Nepenethe since 1996 and has served on the Fi-

nance Committee since 2000. She is also a certified Internal Auditor and a certified Project Management Professional. Her current role is Senior Manager for Finance and Planning with the UC Davis Health System. You can see that she likes numbers and to get into the details. Tara is mom to two adults- a daughter in Texas and her son who is on active duty with the Army. She is also "fur mom" to two German Shepherds and has lived in Nepenethe since 2016.

Aubrey Lara, a homeowner here since 2013, rounds out the committee. She has her MBA from Sac State, and has gained her knowledge of finances from her experiences working for the nonprofit sector and California Counties. She is the owner of The Social Changery, a local consulting firm that partners with non-profit, philanthropic, government and private organizations to advance educational, health and economic justice.

Most recently, the committee has been working with our Reserve Analyst, Browning Reserve Group to prepare a comprehensive and sustainable Reserve Study and funding plan to recommend to the Board for adoption. The Reserve Study is a tabulation of all the components the Association is obligated to maintain and replace. Browning calculates, with the committee's input, the useful life of these components and their replacement value. They are currently evaluating various the effect of landscape renovation costs on the reserve contributions.

Thank you all for your service!

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## March Cash Flow Report

Sources / Uses	Operations	Reserves
<b>Beginning Balance 1/1/2021</b>	<b>\$273,014</b>	<b>\$9,679,237</b>
<b>Plus</b> Income	<b>\$993,410</b>	
Accounts Payable	\$75,000	
Reserve Investment Income		\$22,906
Contributions to Reserve		\$545,063
<b>Less</b> Operating Expenses	(\$449,864)	
Reserve Funding	(\$545,063)	
Reserve Expenditures		(\$290,244)
<b>Ending Balance 3/31/2021</b>	<b>\$346,498</b>	<b>\$9,956,961</b>

## March Budget Report

Actual year-to-date income of \$1,016,316 versus year-to-date budgeted income of \$957,630 produced a positive variance of \$58,686

Actual year-to-date operating expenses and reserve contribution of \$1,017,832 versus year-to-date budgeted expenses of \$957,630 produced a negative variance of (\$60,202). The two combined variances produced a negative year-to-date variance of -\$1,516.



## Meet Your Neighbors!

Every month, the Outreach Committee hopes to introduce some of our neighbors. Whether you've been here for a month or 30 years, we'd love to feature you!

We'll begin with some of the fur babies on Adelphi Circle. You may see rescued German Shepherds Onyx (6) and Naya (8) walking around with their Mom Tara around the neighborhood, playing fetch, or sneakily stalking the neighborhood squirrels. They are pictured here with their human friends who brought out **their** fur brother Mochi (15). You might mistake him for a tiny fox or a mini coyote, but no, he's a Shiba Inu mix! □

Please email OutreachComm@NepentheHOA.com if you would like to be featured in an upcoming newsletter!

Stay tuned for the results of the Community Outreach Survey which will be featured next month.



# Board Approves Landscape Pilot

At Wednesday's Open Session, the Board approved a proposal from Carson Landscape Industries to renovate a portion of the landscape in Zone 6 for a fee of \$116,000.

The area chosen for this pilot project is a stretch of homes that run from Elmhurst Circle to University Avenue along an alley in the back and greenbelt in front. It was chosen because, while small, there are a number of "typical" scenarios that are seen throughout Nepenthe—heavy shrubbery, redwood trees, river rock cobble, alleys and greenbelts.

When Carson took over the landscape maintenance contract, they were asked to provide suggestions to help the Association better control maintenance costs. One of their most notable suggestions has already been implemented. By installing smart controllers, irrigation technicians can now check valves, isolate issues and temporarily shut off irrigation all from their smart phones, making tedious irrigation repairs in up to half of the time and with less manpower.

Their other recommendation has been to remove old, bulky shrubs that require almost constant hedge trimming to maintain their shapes, especially the ones against house and fence elevations where they provide hiding places for burglars or other trouble makers. Many shrubs are planted against sides of homes that have no walkways or are not visible from other homes or inside the home. The value of this use of maintenance dollars is questionable.

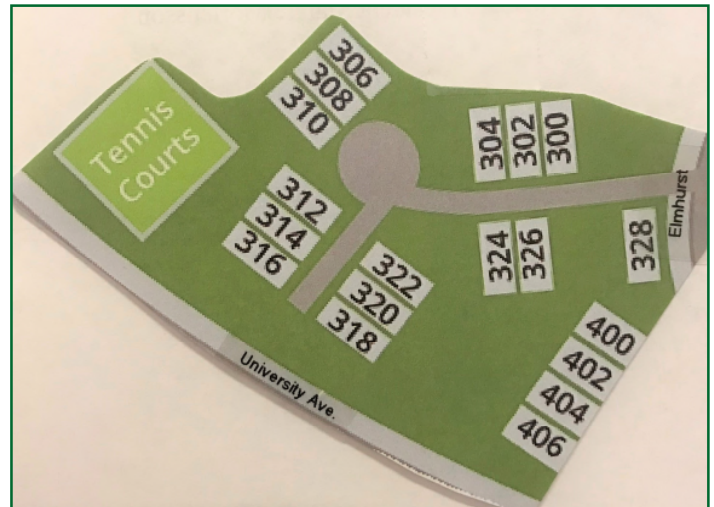
This has been a community goal for many years—more on that later in this article.

Early this year, Frank Carson provided the Association with cost estimates to renovate the entire community. He based his costs on the amount of time and equipment needed to remove and haul away the old shrubbery and leave the sites clean and neat. The estimate for this work was \$810,000. Then he created another estimate on the time, equipment and materials needed to renovate the entire property, \$2,508,000. He also provided cost estimates of some necessary annual items such as bark replenishments.

All of these figures have been provided to Browning Reserve Group and the Finance Committee is evaluating the impact of these expenditures on the reserve contribution. The committee will make a recommendation to the Board to adopt a Reserve Study that will be feasible and sustainable and still allow the community to achieve its

landscaping goals. They are still reviewing the data and will be making their recommendations to the Board soon.

In the meantime, this pilot project was conceived to provide a visual of what the result of these changes would look like in a variety of scenarios that could later be reproduced throughout Nepenthe.



It was agreed that the area needed to be large enough to get a real feel of the changes in a diversity of settings, but not so big that it would cost a large amount to fine tune if the initial results were not to the community's liking.

## HISTORY

Reducing/controlling maintenance costs has been a goal of the Association's for some time. Initially, knowing that water meters were mandated by the State, the Board contracted with respected landscape architects, Wood Rodgers in 2009 for a of approximately **\$58,000**, to identify landscape and irrigation improvements that would help the Association strategically prepare for the installation of water meters.

This, from the Introduction of their final report (available for view at the Clubhouse):

"Nepenthe was built in the 1970's, prior to the development of modern irrigation conservation guidelines and the technological advances of irrigation components and watering systems. With California's growing population and in conjunction with several years of drought, the thirsty landscape found within the Nepenthe communi-

*(Continued on page 6)*



## Welcome, Monique!

On April 30th we welcomed a new employee to the Nepenthe office staff. Please come by and meet Monique Smith. She will be our part-time receptionist here in clubhouse. You will see her primarily on the weekends.

Monique is a talented songwriter and singer who is known professionally as Miss MouthPeace. She is also an experienced behavioral therapist working in education. She has three adult children and two tiny grandchildren.

This is a woman who has an interesting and diverse background and boy, does she keep herself busy! We are thrilled to have her on the team.

Please note that the Clubhouse will be closed on Monday, May 31st in observance of Memorial Day.

As always, if you have an urgent matter or need immediate assistance, please contact our 24 hours Customer Care Center at 800-428-5588.

Be sure to take a moment on May 31st to remember our service men & women



**Memorial  
Day**  
*Never Forget  
Ever Honor*

### APPROVED ARC APPLICATIONS

1035 Commons ~ Pet Access Door  
1334 Commons ~ Windows / Sliders  
719 Dunbarton ~ Emergency HVAC  
805 Dunbarton ~ Windows/Slider  
903 Dunbarton ~ Skylight  
818 Elmhurst ~ Handrail  
2272 Swarthmore ~ HVAC  
2318 Swarthmore ~ HVAC  
2328 Swarthmore ~ Security Video Camera  
1219 Vanderbilt ~ Solar Tube

### DO YOU NEED AN APPLICATION FOR THAT?

With the warmer weather headed our way, you may wonder if you need approval for a replacement HVAC unit. The answer is Yes, you do need approval; however, if this is an emergency, such as extreme heat and the unit has completely stopped working, you can obtain emergency approval from the Committee—no matter the circumstance, you need to submit the application for review and approval.

If you are not sure if an application is needed for an upcoming project you have planned, please feel free to reach out to the office for assistance.

### APPROVED PROPOSALS

The Grove ~ Zone 4  
Selected Tree Mitigation—\$5,305  
Carson Landscape ~ Zone 6  
Landscape Renovation \$116,000

# LIVING WITH URBAN WILDLIFE

Recently, a coyote was sighted in Nepenthe. This is not uncommon given the proximity of our community to the American River. With the “word” getting around, the office was overwhelmed with concerned residents calling to ask staff what was going to be done to remove the coyote.

This is what we were advised when asking for assistance from Sacramento City/County:

Effective January 1, 2010, the City of Sacramento Animal Care Services no longer responds to calls of trapped healthy wildlife. Specifically, we do not trap nor relocate healthy wildlife. Because relocation violates federal law and the only other option is extermination, we cannot in good conscience exterminate healthy, viable animals.

Sacramento’s Urban coyotes aren’t a safety concern as they have always been a part of the city life, both in Sacramento and urban areas across the county. The safety and concern comes about with people feeding them whether intentional or not. Their prey of choice are rodents and rabbit; however, if coyotes are given access to human food and garbage, their behavior changes. They lose caution and fear.

Coyotes have become too comfortable around humans and they do not scare as easily. They are by nature, fearful of humans; however, if they are not scared off or shown that they are not the Alpha in the situation, they will not budge and continue their hunt. People need to be big and loud to alert the coyote that they are not in a place where they are welcome. By turning around and walking away, a coyote gets comfortable in an area and do not scare as easily. They become more brazen and willing to try a new approach.

The coyote is not going away anytime soon. Let’s all take a stance and make sure that if we come across one in our daily routine, to be that Big and Loud Alpha. Always keep a walking stick or a few rocks with you, too. These can also assist if ever needed to keep your safe.



## Weed Abatement Schedule Reminder

Carson Landscape will be conducting weed abatement every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between the hours of 8am and 4pm. The application process will be performed by one certified specialist of Carson Landscape.

## Honoring Mothers...

We know there are lots of mothers and grandmothers in Nepenthe. Just among the management staff, we have Nana, Neema, Nani and Yaya—big kudos to you if you can figure out who is who!

Regardless of whether we are moms or grandmoms, we are ALL sons and daughters and May 9th is a lovely opportunity to remember the woman or women who raised us. If you know a mother who may be alone that day, won’t you give her a call and tell her how special she is?

# Landscape Pilot, continued

(Continued from page 3)

ty cannot continue in its present condition as a long-term and sustainable landscape.”

Wood Rodgers made a number of recommendations to the Board. Some of the recommendations were specific to irrigation, many were about the choice of planting materials.

***The Wood Rodgers Total Design Build Estimate for all work in their report was \$6.7M in 2010.***

The irrigation recommendations included automating the irrigation, equalizing the precipitation rates of the overhead spray and the installation of drip irrigation around the homes in the shrub beds. The Board began by automating the irrigation system. This work was completed from 2010-2013 for a total cost of **\$412,695+/-**. Beginning in 2015, the Board committed resources towards the installation of drip irrigation in the shrub beds around the units. For a total cost of \$371,959 minus \$161,578 in City rebates (**Final Cost: \$210,381**), this work was completed in 2020. In 2021, as noted above, the Board approved smart controllers for all seven zones for a fee of **\$72,133**.

The Wood Rodgers recommendations for landscaping renovation were never fully implemented. The Board instead commissioned the Grounds Vision Committee in October 2013. The Grounds Vision Document was prepared by this committee with significant input from the homeowners. Over the course of three in-person events, the community agreed upon four goals:

- **Enhance landscape beauty**
- **Reduce water use**
- **Reduce maintenance and replacement costs**
- **Improve safety**

The Grounds Vision Document was adopted by the Board in December 2014. It is available to view on the community website at <https://nepenthehoa.com/grounds-committee/> or at the office at the Clubhouse.

After its initial adoption, the Grounds Committee worked closely with GP Landscape owner George Procida to implement the actions in the report. Unsure of the total cost to completely remove and replace the aging shrubbery, they decided to hard prune many of the old shrubs to help them recover a natural shape so they could be maintained more easily without the constant “hedging”. Selective re-

movals were completed and new plants added. New plants were chosen for their ability to be maintained at a “right” size and their water needs.

After hiring Coast, momentum on the project was lost. Unable to keep up with the shrubbery, they left leaving the situation worse than before. Podocarpus are laying against rain gutters, camellias are as tall as the rooflines and azaleas have become massive. There are still multitudes of the old rectangular shrubs which today would never be planted with such abandon. In the 1970’s, the goal was to sell units and not about long-term sustainable maintenance.

Neither GP or Coast took the time to provide an estimate of costs to remediate all of the landscape issues. However, the Association did spend money from reserves in an attempt to comply with the Vision Document’s mandates to 1) Beautify, 2) Reduce maintenance costs and 3) increase safety. (The mandate to improve water efficiency has been, in many ways, met and will always be an area of focus.)

The Reserves spent for landscape renovations since the Grounds Vision Document’s adoption in December 2014 are:

Year	Money Spent
2015	\$203,615
2016	\$482,020
2017	\$440,315
2018	\$287,744
2019	\$133,304
2020	\$206,044
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,753,042</b>

All of this was spent without a cohesive community-wide plan, although some of it was spent with the Grounds Vision Document front of mind. These expenditures, when added to the irrigation improvements equal **\$2,448,251** over a six year period.

It is hoped that with this decision to try out the Carson recommendations, the community will then replicate the project throughout Nepenthe so that, finally, the goals identified in the Grounds Vision Document can be met.



Nepenthe Association  
1131 Commons Drive  
Sacramento Ca 95825

**Office Hours**

Monday—Friday ~ 9am-6pm  
Saturday & Sunday ~ 10am-5pm

Phone: 916-929-8380  
Nepenthe.HOA@FSResidential.com

NepentheHOA.com

**Management Staff:**

Bettsi Ledesma, General Manager, [Bettsi.Ledesma@fsresidential.com](mailto:Bettsi.Ledesma@fsresidential.com)  
Christina Romero, Assistant Community Manager, [Christina.Romero@fsresidential.com](mailto:Christina.Romero@fsresidential.com)  
Nirmal Dhesi, Assistant Community Manager, [Nirmal.Dhesi@fsresidential.com](mailto:Nirmal.Dhesi@fsresidential.com)  
Monique Smith, Administrative Assistant, [Monique.Smith@fsresidential.com](mailto:Monique.Smith@fsresidential.com)

**Other Important Contacts:**

After Hours Customer Care Center 1-800-428-5588  
Power Outage: 1-888-456-SMUD  
Nepenthe Insurance Questions? Call Management: 916-929-8380

**Board of Directors:**

President, Christina George, [President@NepentheHOA.com](mailto:President@NepentheHOA.com)  
Vice President, Linda Cook, [VicePresident@NepentheHOA.com](mailto:VicePresident@NepentheHOA.com)  
Secretary, Greg Beale, [Secretary@NepentheHOA.com](mailto:Secretary@NepentheHOA.com)  
Treasurer, Will Vizzard, [Treasurer@NepentheHOA.com](mailto:Treasurer@NepentheHOA.com)  
Member at Large, Mary Gray, [Director@NepentheHOA.com](mailto:Director@NepentheHOA.com)

**Board of Directors Open Session Meeting**

5:30pm on the  
1st Wednesday of every month.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85634570073?pwd=amdHbEtKK3dSaWk2Q3czK2xGTldhQT09>

1-669-900-6833

Meeting ID: 856 3457 0073

Passcode: 626558

# Committee Meetings

**Architectural Review Committee**

Chair: Jenny Smith  
[ARC@nepenthehoa.com](mailto:ARC@nepenthehoa.com)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday @ 5:30pm  
Meeting ID 611 216 1777  
Passcode 1234  
1-669-900-6833

**Finance Committee**

Chair: Susan Timmer  
[FinanceComm@nepenthehoa.com](mailto:FinanceComm@nepenthehoa.com)  
Last Monday of the  
month @ 4:30pm  
Meeting ID 992 2835 4764  
Passcode 392552  
1-669-900-6833

**Grounds Committee**

Chair: Steve Huffman  
[GroundsComm@nepenthehoa.com](mailto:GroundsComm@nepenthehoa.com)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday @ 3pm  
Meeting ID 851 1868 6545  
Passcode 240617  
1-669-900-6833

**Outreach Committee**

Chair: Ashley Tangeras  
[Outreach@nepenthehoa.com](mailto:Outreach@nepenthehoa.com)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Friday @ 3pm  
Meeting ID 813 6066 5631  
Passcode 648491  
1-669-900-6833

**Elections Committee**

Chair: Yvonne Del Biaggio

**Insurance, Legal and Safety Committee**

Chair: Nancy Arndofer  
[ILS@nepenthehoa.com](mailto:ILS@nepenthehoa.com)  
2nd Tuesday of each month @ 5pm

The May 11th I L S meeting will be held  
in the Clubhouse—this will not be a  
ZOOM meeting.