

The Estates at Turtle Run HOA Future Recommendations for Change



It's time for a change.

It's also time for the residents of the Estates at Turtle Run to take back control of their homeowner's association. **Homeowners are not happy**, and rightfully so. After 20 years of total control by a couple individuals, the HOA is no longer moving in a productive direction with its current board of directors.

Transparency & Decision Making

Select board members have made decisions independently from fellow board members and the well-being of homeowners living in the Estates at Turtle Run. Moving forward, transparency needs to be at the forefront.

Here's what transparency looks like:

Quarterly Meetings

- Holding quarterly meetings at a location in close proximity to the Estates at Turtle Run, at a time when more homeowners will have a better opportunity to be able to attend.
- Posting of meeting minutes on the HOA website for all homeowners to view.

A User-Friendly Website

- Updating our outdated Estates of Turtle Run website, rebuilding it to be user friendly and managing it appropriately should be a high priority. It should contain important information for homeowners to have easy access to.
- **Things this website should contain:**
 - All financials, income statements, etc. for homeowners to view, along with consistent updates.
 - Information on upcoming meetings, including when and where.
 - The posting of meeting minutes following every meeting, allowing all homeowners the ability to see and play an active role in the HOA, even if they can't make it to meetings.

- Documents & forms for homeowners available when they need them. HOA documents currently cost \$75 to obtain.

Law Firm Changes & Management Company Relations

Our current law firm, Kaye Bender Rembaum, P.L., has become quite expensive and not as responsive as they should be. It appears as though it's time to shop around for other law firms specializing in HOA's. Benchmark Properties is the management company for the Estates at Turtle Run. The newly elected Board of Directors will work closely with Benchmark Properties to ensure fairness to the homeowners, keeping the focus on the homeowner rather than the agenda of any one board member.

An Opportunity for Change (Now & Moving Forward)

Elections should be held every year in December, as posted in the documents, no exceptions. An election was not called for in December 2022, meaning there hasn't been an election in over 2 years. If homeowners are unhappy with the Board of Directors in place, they should have the opportunity yearly to make a change. We need to end the option of having a holdover election simply because a member fears losing.

Consistency, the creation of a grievance committee & how we can improve.

Favoritism & Consistency

- Currently, decisions affecting the community aren't always made to benefit everyone. Favoritism is seen when it comes to homeowner violations. The enforcement of rules should be the same across the board.
- Homeowner violations have become a "selective enforcement," rules shouldn't be enforced based on which homeowner is involved.
- These violations are inconsistent and the proper documentation of such is lacking. There have been many homeowners over the years who didn't realize they had violations on file until it came time to sell their home. This discovery has even led to a few homeowners losing the sale of their home due to this shortcoming. We need to go through every homeowners file to ensure that the violations listed are up to date and accurate.

The Creation of a Grievance Committee

A grievance committee consisting of five separate committee members should be put into place to serve the community. This will serve multiple purposes:

- A grievance committee will give the homeowners somewhere to go to discuss violations received.
- Committee members will help determine whether a violation is necessary and aid in explaining violations to homeowners.
- A grievance committee will act as a first line of defense before violations end up in the hands of the HOA attorneys. Fewer violations sent to the attorneys, means lower annual attorney fees, possibly even cutting these costs in half.
- Having five committee members, completely separate from the HOA board, will aid in preventing the favoritism we see today.

Improving How Homeowner Violations Are Handled

- The time provided to homeowners who have received a violation should be extended so they have more time to correct their violations prior to getting attorneys involved.
- Homeowner violations should be properly explained so the homeowner understands the violation.
- Homeowners should know they will be heard when issues arise.
- Creating a grievance committee, as mentioned previously, would help to improve enforcing homeowner violations.

Characteristics of a Board Member

Board members have a responsibility to the community when it comes to not only handling financial documents, but making decisions regarding taxpayer dollars. Because of this, it's important that the board consists of members who are business minded & financially accountable. While it's great to have ideas to better the community, it doesn't mean anything if finances aren't handled correctly.

What can I do as a homeowner?

- Homeowners are encouraged to attend meetings to voice any and all concerns.
- Vote for members based on qualifications, how they will better the community and the board, this isn't a popularity contest.