

# THE CASCADE

JANUARY-MARCH 2012

## Board Members

Brian Pearson  
(President)

Tim Lafferty  
(Treasurer)

Shane Adam  
(Director)

Jeff Mottle  
(Communications  
Director)

Heather Ogden  
(Landscaping)

Jason Horvath  
(Director)



Photograph by: Gary Wagner

## President's Message

By Brian Pearson

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The Cascades in Royal Oak Residents Association (CRORA)

### WEBSITE

[www.cascadesroyaloak.com](http://www.cascadesroyaloak.com)

### EMAIL

[contact@cascadesroyaloak.com](mailto:contact@cascadesroyaloak.com)

Hello again and welcome to the latest edition of The Cascades in Royal Oak Residents Association (CRORA) newsletter. The board is trying to produce this more frequently than once per year which is possible as long as we have something interesting to write about. This edition has a number of articles on the accomplishments and initiatives the board has made progress in over the last several months.

The AGM had a turnout of 29 people and there were a lot of issues covered and discussed. I think the organization of the board has improved since then as we got focused on several projects. At the AGM the new board that was voted in consisted of Brian Pearson, Jason Horvath, Bartek Jankowski, Shane Adam, Heather Ogden, Debbie Fedun, Jeff Mottle, and Tracy Loeffler.

On the board front we once again have lost a few volunteers due to their availability to volunteer time to support all this work. Bartek Jankowski, Debbie Fedun and Tracy Loeffler have all resigned since the

AGM. Many thanks to Bartek, Debbie and Tracy for all the support you gave us on the board. I invited Tim Lafferty, past President, to come back to the board and we voted him in as Treasurer.

**"This edition has a number of articles on the accomplishments and initiatives the board has made progress in over the last several months."**

If any of our residents feel up to supporting the board we welcome you to contact us via the web site <http://cascadesroyaloak.com/> or contact us via the e-mails on the website.

We are hoping to make many more achievements in the coming months and are also considering a social event (BBQ etc.) in the summer in one of the parks. I hope you all have a good Spring and see us sometime in the Summer.

# President's Message (continued)

By Brian Pearson

## The list of the initiatives is:

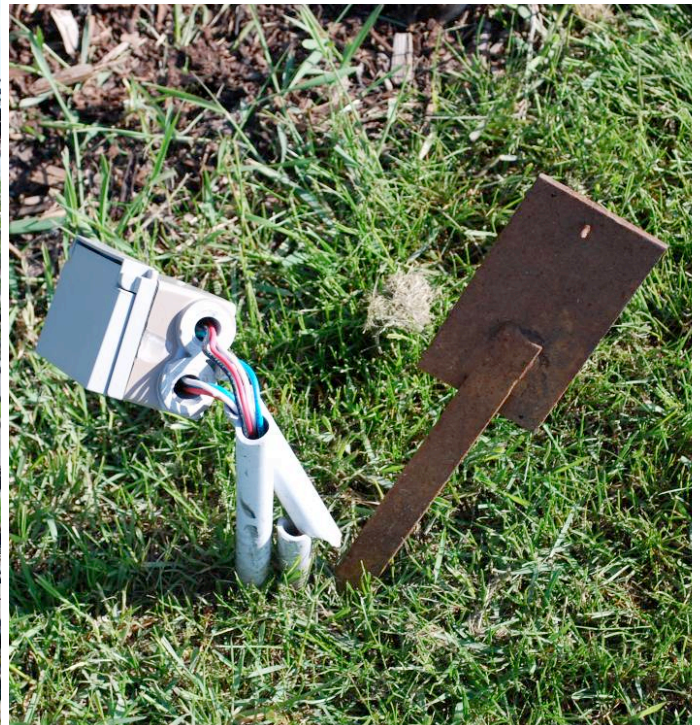
- a. Look further into the cost of enhanced care for City parks;
- b. Make electrical safety repairs to the lights and power outlets around the waterfall;
- c. Improve communications;
- d. Keep the website more up to date;
- e. Hold monthly meetings to improve the board functionality (versus quarterly);
- f. Investigate management companies to get competitive estimates for comparison to Small Business Accountants (for due diligence);
- g. Estimate the value of our properties to ensure we have the right level of insurance; and
- h. Get a Life Cycle Reserve Fund review performed by an engineering company.

## The accomplishments list is as follows:

- a. The Proposal is ready to go out to bid early March;
- b. First set of electrical repairs have been done and more to follow in the spring;
- c. We are working on communications improvements (this newsletter and other ideas);
- d. Jeff Mottle is doing a great job with the website but we need more people to visit and register their names and e-mail addresses. Go to <http://cascadesroyaloak.com/>.
- e. We meet monthly and produce minutes, when there is a quorum, that are put into the Minute Book;
- f. We have quotes from a number of management companies and have chosen CA Management as our new association management company;
- g. We increased our insurance to a level our insurance company would expect for the property and structure we own; and
- h. We have quotes from a number of companies to perform a survey of our properties for a life cycle reserve fund.



First set of electrical repairs have been done and more to follow in the spring.



Photographs by: Gary Wagner



**LATE BREAKING NEWS**  
 Kaiser has announced that there will be no work carried out at the site until the Review Request is concluded.



Photograph by: Colleen De Neve, Calgary Herald

## Oil Well Opposition Review Request Lodged by RRROCA

**By Brian Pearson**

There was a public meeting organized by the Rocky Ridge Royal Oak Community Association (RRROCA) and the Rocky Ridge Ranch Homeowners Association (RRRHA) on the 11<sup>th</sup> February. The intent of the meeting was to allow residents to hear more about the Oil Well, its location near our communities, and for people to ask questions.

On the panel there were representatives from Kaiser Ltd, the ERCB, the provincial government, the city, the RRROCA and a concerned residents group. After 45 minutes of presentations there were 3 hours of questions from the packed audience. While most people came with an open mind to this Oil Well / Pump Jack presentation, the questions asked, especially by those people actually in the oil and gas exploration business, raised many concerns including safety, odours, traffic, and house prices.

The impact of fracking, flaring, sour gas content, blow-outs, and the lack of an Emergency Response Plan were also

discussed at length. The responses from Kaiser Ltd, and the ERCB were barely useful. It was revealed that the ERCB had only paid lip service to public consultation since their rules did not require it with a community outside their so-called impact zone.

The RRROCA have filed an Objection and Review Request to open the application to further discussion. The ERCB had “high-handedly” approved the application from Kaiser in December when RRROCA had been told they had a few more months to get the public involved. The fight isn’t over yet!

If you want a more complete report on the Public Meeting please go the Cascades website at <http://cascadesroyaloak.com/> to view the full report. RRROCA urge that we should send e-mails to the Premier and the Minister of Energy to “not grant a surface license” to Kaiser.

# Beautification of City Parks

## Taking over City Park Maintenance?

By Brian Pearson

As you all know the Cascades in Royal Oak Residents Association (CRORA) already have a contractor who takes care of the Cascades parcels of land, which consist of the areas at the west end of Royal Oak Way, a strip on Rocky Ridge Road and the Royal Oak Point park. There are no pieces of land that we own at the eastern end of our area, so the board has struggled for the last few years trying to figure out how to make some improvements to the whole area to make it more attractive.

The board of directors also has frequent complaints from our residents about the condition of the parks in our area, but they belong to the city so we've been unable to do anything to improve those. At least that's what we believed until some board members did some research last summer and invited a parks department representative to come out and tell us what we could do.

The parks department told us we could take over care of all the parks into the future and would help us do a Request For Proposal (RFP) to get the ball rolling. The board has been trying to get an idea of the total cost of care of our own areas plus the city parks to ensure we can afford this with our current fees. Gleaning information for other communities and getting a rough estimate from a couple of contractors, we were able to come up with some very "ball-park" numbers that indicated this initiative could be possible to afford.

To gauge affordability we have been engaged with the parks department and the city's purchasing department to draw up a Request For Proposal based on a template that the Royal Oak Estates used last year. To fill in the details of grassed areas, shrub and tree areas, and pathways that would get snow removal, the board put in many weeks over the

Christmas period measuring our own and city park areas, making maps, and counting trees. The completed RFP was shared with the city for review early in January and, after some revisions to various clauses, it was sent to a list of city approved landscape maintenance contractor for their estimates.

We received only 3 bids from city approved landscape contractors. As of first review of the bids they are very wide ranging prices and even the lowest price is a little beyond our means. We are in the process of scoring the bids. We are now considering what in the scope of work we can decrease to bring the price down. This seems feasible and would still provide better care of the parks than the City has done in the past. We are not yet certain if the contractor will accept a reduced contract price. More information will be posted on the website as we progress.

This initiative was discussed at the AGM on the 28<sup>th</sup> September last year. While there were no objections to this, other than to check if it was affordable and sustainable without increasing fees, we would still like to hear from more than the 30 or so people who attended the meeting.

**A parks beautification survey questionnaire will be posted on the CRORA website to give you the opportunity to share your thoughts. The website is: <http://cascadesroyaloak.com/>.**

It will be necessary for you to register on the website to access the survey. Also, this gives us the opportunity to collect more e-mail information for important events like the AGM or spreading the word about oil well applications nearby.

### City Parks

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Photographs by: Jeff Mottle

# New Management Company CRORA Welcomes CA Management

**By Jeff Mottle**

During the last AGM, a review of association expenses brought into question the amount of money that was being spent on administration fees. A motion was made to look into this further to ensure that these costs were in line with the services being offered and the requirements of the association.

Currently the Cascades in Royal Oak Residents Association (CRORA) employ Small Business Accountants (SBA) to handle all association management tasks. They have been working with CRORA for over ten years and charge the association \$1,833.33 per month (\$21,999.96 per year). For this fee the following tasks are performed for the association:

## Administration Management

- Arrange and assist with the yearly AGM
- Answer all phone calls and emails from the community and forward to the board as required
- Basic website updates
- Maintenance of association files and records
- Coordinate printing and sending of newsletters and resident communications
- Assist board members with miscellaneous administration tasks

## Financial Management

- Perform all bookkeeping and financial reports for the association
- Coordinate with accountants and auditors to complete year end financials and tax filings
- Manage association bank accounts and investments (based on board instruction)
- Payment of all invoices
- Send area fee invoices to all residents
- Perform all collection activities for area fees (including delinquent accounts)

The board sent a preliminary request for proposal to five different companies, including SBA, that specialize in resident's association management. After a detailed review of the proposals it was determined that the price we are paying to SBA was in line with the industry average, however SBA did not have as much experience with association management as the others as they are first and foremost a bookkeeping company. The quotes ranged from \$20,000-\$33,000 per year.

Although SBA has performed adequately during their time with CRORA the board determined a new company would be better able to support and

manage the association moving forward.

Due to the large turn over in the board from year to year and throughout each year, and the desire to ensure we have consistent maintenance and oversight of the community, the board unanimously

voted to bring CA



Management Services Ltd. on as our new management company. They have significant experience (35 years) managing residents associations and currently look after Panorama Hills, Evergreen, Cougar Ridge, and Lakes of Muirfield Homeowners Associations to name just a few. In addition to the tasks outlined above, CA Management will also perform all inspections and management of our landscape and snow removal companies. The cost for their services will be \$24,000 per year. Our contract with SBA expires on March 31, 2012 at which point CA Management will be handling all association management functions including fee collection. Contact numbers and addresses will be updated on our website at <http://cascadesroyaloak.com/> once the transition is complete.

### New Management

The board unanimously voted to bring CA Management Services Ltd. on as our new management company. They have significant experience (35 years) managing residents associations and currently look after Panorama Hills, Evergreen, Cougar Ridge, and Lakes of Muirfield Homeowners Associations to name just a few.



Photographs by: Jeff Mottle

## Reserve Fund Study Budgeting for the next 25 years

By Jeff Mottle

One of the duties of the association is to ensure all Cascades in Royal Oak Residents Association (CRORA) properties are properly maintained. In addition to yearly routine maintenance, CRORA is also responsible for ensuring that there is budget and funds to cover larger maintenance, repair and upgrading costs over the lifespan of items like lighting, waterfalls, fencing, retaining walls, pathways etc. This year the board will be hiring a company that specializes in Reserve Fund Studies. The study reviews all properties and provides an expected yearly budget and reserve fund for maintenance for the next 25 years. For example, every 20 years we may need to re-pave the walkways, or every 5 years replace pumps for the waterfall at the West entrance. We are currently in the process of obtaining the final quotes and will be selecting the final company during the next monthly board meeting. The

average cost for these studies is around \$5,000, but are an essential maintenance tool for associations to ensure there are always funds sufficiently budgeted for long term maintenance.

**“The average cost for these studies is around \$5,000, but are an essential maintenance tool for associations to ensure there are always funds sufficiently budgeted for long term maintenance.”**

# Electrical Network Repairs Project

## More work continuing this Spring

By Shane Adam

In the fall of 2011 a number of items were addressed relating to the electrical network at the Cascades west entrance. The electrical services for the Cascades west entrance features are located inside the obelisk style entrance feature. The waterfall pumps and electrical panels are located inside the securely locked utility room.

A number of serious safety hazards were identified due to damaged lighting fixtures and electrical outlets. Circuit breakers were immediately switched off for these identified circuits until repairs were completed. Lighting and electrical issues relating to the security and safety in the entrance area and nearby parks owned by Cascades in Royal Oak Residents Association (CRORA) were discussed with potential contractors.

Adequate lighting not only enhances the appearance or the Cascades signature entrance features, but also is beneficial for security to discourage loitering and vandalism in these areas.

Westland Electric was contracted and completed the following:

- Isolation of all damaged electrical circuits leaving the waterfall pump house panel.
- Marking of the panel directory and test circuitry.
- Repaired existing outlets inside the lighthouse feeding mechanical equipment as per code/safety requirements.

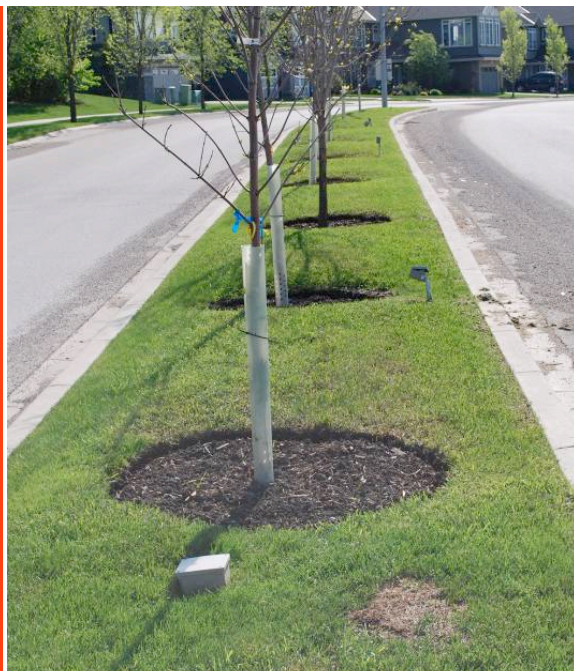
**“A number of serious safety hazards were identified due to damaged lighting fixtures and electrical outlets.”**

- Replaced insufficient lighting in the top of the obelisk entrance feature.  
(The original colored glass panels were destroyed by vandals and were replaced by stronger Plexiglas panels in 2009. The existing lighting inside the top of the obelisk was not capable of adequately illuminating the panels and was replaced.)
- Repairing ground/post mounted floodlights on light house and waterfall feature.
- Repairs to ground plugs for seasonal tree lighting around waterfall feature.
- Repairs to ground plugs for boulevard tree lighting.
- Damaged lighting fixtures on the south side of Royal Oak Way were removed and electrical circuits properly terminated.

All safety related items were addressed by Westland Electric to ensure our safety in the areas.

Additional items will be addressed in the spring relating to more permanent and better electrical and lighting fixture alternatives. This may include the relocation or replacement of certain electrical or lighting fixtures so that they are not as easily damaged due to vandalism, park maintenance activities or vehicular incidents.

**Repairs Underway**  
Adequate lighting not only enhances the appearance or the Cascades signature entrance features, but also is beneficial for security to discourage loitering and vandalism in these areas.



Photographs by: Gary Wagner

# CONTACT

## We've updated our contact information

Effective April 1, 2012 the contact information for the Cascades in Royal Oak Residents Association has changed. Please update your information and be sure to send any annual fee payments to our updated address. (Please note: payments sent to our old address will still be received, however there may be a slight delay in processing your payment)

**The Cascades in Royal Oak Residents Association**  
C/O Condominium First Management Services Ltd.  
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**Phone:** (403) 299-1810

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**E-mail:** [contact@cascadesroyaloak.com](mailto:contact@cascadesroyaloak.com)

PLEASE REGISTER ON OUR WEBSITE. Registering your email will allow us to communicate important and timely information to you. Just click on the "Resident Website Application" link in the main menu.

<http://cascadesroyaloak.com>