

HOA responses to Comment and Questions from the Spring 2021 survey

1. We pay \$400 in dues - there should not be a large pothole on the main road that you have to travel over. There is always a car parked across the street from the pothole, so you have no choice but to drive over it. It is large enough to throw your car out of alignment. Corner of Hermitage and Waybridge.
 - *Response: Pothole was repaired last summer*
2. Yes, you dug up my front yard. You have not come back to fix it. (Hermitage Drive)
 - *Response: We will be doing more drainage work on Hermitage Drive this summer (2022)*
3. Need proper drainage systems installed on the sides of the roads to better manage runoff and stop the erosion of the roads.
 - *Response: We have done drainage work on Hermitage Drive, Westbourne Way, Waybridge Lane, High Cliff Drive, and Buckboard Lane. More will happen in the future.*
4. Is there a way to create a drainage system for all the rainwater? It's ruining our yards and streets.
 - *See Response to # 3.*
5. No more ATV's.
 - *Response: Since our streets have public access, all vehicles operating on our streets must be properly licensed. Any unlicensed vehicle operating on our streets is in violation of county and state laws. Because the HOA is not a law enforcement agency, you need to contact the JeffCo Sheriff's Department or Missouri Highway Patrol for violations.*
6. Streets are very unsafe to walk at night, way too dark.
 - *Response: See the survey questions. We are working to get more streetlights added, but not everyone wants them.*
7. Lots of dogs not on a leash running all over the place.
 - *Response: Animals running loose are a violation of JeffCo county ordinances. Any animals running loose need to be reported to JeffCo Animal Control or the Sheriff's Dept.*
8. When are all the potholes going to be fixed?
 - *Response: The potholes were repaired last summer and will be again this spring as soon as we have the funds.*
9. Where did the money go last year and the year before?
 - *Response: Our income and expense reports are normally included in the annual meeting presentations on the webpage. Since we were unable to have the meeting in 2020 and 2021, we will be posting them on the webpage soon and presenting the last 3 years information at the owners meeting.*

10. Need to find a better snow removal company, our streets were very unsafe to drive on. Had to miss work because of it.

- *Response: The current company has been very responsive to our needs. But sometimes the weather is too bad for them or any plow operators to keep up the roads completely clear, including the MoDOT and JeffCo snowplows.*

11. Speed limits need to be enforced, people fly through here and don't care.

- *Response: We will be reviewing our road signs and work on replacing damaged ones and adding speed limit signs. But since the HOA has no law enforcement powers, it will be up to the drivers to comply.*

12. Fish-eye mirror on intersection of High Cliff leading to Westbourne.

- *Response: We will be looking into this.*

13. Make the lake private again.

- *Response: When we signed up for the Dept of Conservation's program, we were obligated to be in the program for 5 years. The 5 years has expired, and we did not extend it.*

14. Our subdivision must be prepared for many unpaid assessments. Inflation and a downturn economy are inevitable.

Response: That's one of the reasons we offer payment plans to any owner who asks. The payment plan guidelines are posted on the webpage. If someone fails to make any payments, we start assessing a \$25 per month late fee. If their unpaid balance reaches a threshold of 2 years of unpaid assessments or a balance owed of over \$1000.00, we turn it over to our legal representative for collection actions up to and including civil suits.

15. Thank you for all your hard work of trying to improve the subdivision.

- *Response: Thank you for appreciating our work.*

16. Just wondering how long we have to keep paying the extra \$325 for roads I don't ever drive on. I understand having a fee but not this large amount.

- *Response: The road maintenance assessments are applied to properties where the owner/occupant needs to use the subdivision's roads to access the property. If someone feels that it should not apply to their property, they need to contact the HOA to discuss it.*

17. What street are going to be paved this year? What are all of the board members names and what are their positions?

- *Response: The streets are chosen each year based on which ones are in the worst shape and what the subdivision can afford to fix. The board members are listed on the webpage. John Linsenhardt was named the chairman for legal documentation purposes, there are no assigned position/roles for the other members.*

18. Please consider fighting algae on the lake.

- Response: We will be proactively treating the lake this year. It was missed or only sporadic the last couple of years.

19. People who don't keep their yards and property up, cutting grass, weeds etc. I can name a few places that look horrible, both corners on Waybridge and Pine Haven look horrible, parked cars, used car lot?

- Response: We will investigate any complaint made to the board. If there is some violation of the indentures the board will take action. But if we don't receive a complaint about something we must assume it's not a problem to people.

20. We need to fix the drainage on the roads.

- Response: We are working on it. In 2021 we spent \$30K on drainage work and more will continue.

21. We should discuss a time limit on fireworks for days other than the 4th of July and pick one Saturday with no restrictions when the 4th falls on a workday.

- Response: That rule can be suggested to all the owners, but there is no way to enforce it because fireworks are legal in Jefferson County.

22. Something needs to be done with all these dogs running loose and anyone with pets roaming the neighborhood needs to make sure they are neutered.

- Response: Animals running loose are a violation of JeffCo county ordinances. Any animals running loose need to be reported to JeffCo Animal Control or the Sheriff's Dept.

23. In addition: There needs to be more subdivision rules in place for disturbances/dogs barking. More people work from home now & people need to be more respectful leaving their dogs out to annoy everyone.

- See response # 22.

24. Not just on the street, but if your vehicle isn't running or licensed & sitting even in your driveway, it is an eyesore for everyone who tries to make their house/yard look nice. No derelict should be allowed in the subdivision (We call that a junkyard). They should get a notice of removal, then fined \$\$.

- Response: The HOA will investigate derelict vehicles if we are notified of them. After investigating and allowing the owner sufficient time to resolve the issue, derelict vehicles parked on the street are tagged with an orange sticker warning that it will be towed if not removed. Derelict vehicles parked on private property will be reported to the JeffCo Solid Waste Division, which enforces Jefferson County's Solid Waste Ordinance which forbids derelict vehicles being kept on private property. We also suggest that if the vehicle is not going to be repaired that they donate it to a charity.

25. Having better rules/restrictions keeps out derelicts, keeps out problematic issues from same people, enforces rules/restrictions (must) makes a better place to live for everyone, increase subdivision worth -more desirable subdivision to live in, causes less conflict between neighbors.
- *Response: The HOA is always trying to make the subdivision a better place to live. But at the same time, we try to limit the anything that restricts people from living here how they want to. One issue is that with each additional rule added, someone (the HOA) is expected to somehow to enforce it.*
26. Main goal to make your subdivision better/quality homeowners that care about home ownership.
- *Response: That is our main goal, and we hope that the improvements we are making (street paving, common ground improvements) will encourage owners to do the same for their properties.*
27. The same homeowner that: has derelict vehicle, trashy yard, barking dogs, doesn't care, kids running street times of night, don't care, stealing out of cars in subdivision, are probably not paying their HOA bill. Nobody wants those neighbors.
- *Response: The majority of owners pay their assessments without issues. For those who don't pay we add late fees and will eventually take legal action is they remain unpaid.*
28. Better rules/regulations that are enforced lead to quality homeowners and with 300+ houses in this subdivision, it's a must.
- *Response: We will research any additional rules or regulations the owners may want to add.*
29. Also, better rules with rental houses in subdivision because it's a 50/50 shot it they care (It's a rental).
- *Response: The indentures hold landlord responsible for their tenant's actions that violate the indentures. We have contacted multiple landlords over the last few years about their tenant's actions and all but a small minority of them have worked with us to resolve any issues. Most of them thanked us because they may only visit their property a few times a year and this lets them know what is going on at the property.*
30. Do we have a leash law? There are SO many dogs constantly running loose and as someone who walks their dogs frequently it is a bit scary to figure out how to break up a dog fight by myself. I really want everyone to feel safe walking around the neighborhood and most times I do not.
- *Response: Animals running loose are a violation of JeffCo county ordinances. Any animals running loose need to be reported to JeffCo Animal Control or the Sheriff's Dept.*

31. Enforcement of the HOA rules. As a community we came together and democratically voted for the rules we have. We have a few neighbors who are not following the rules. Maybe they don't know what the rules are, maybe they don't agree with them. Doesn't matter. If we are going to continue with a democratic government, we all need to follow the rules. The difficult part is having neighbors speak (contact) other neighbors about violations I'm not in favor of punitive actions such as fines. Let's all work together, but sometimes fines may be the right answer. So how do we get everyone on board? Cities have paid inspectors to handle this. We have neighbors How about doing what some condominium associations do? - hire a manager. There are companies that offer a variety of services. I think we could find one that could handle rules enforcement. We have seen wonderful progress in our community of the last eight years. THANK YOU for the tireless work of our board members. The final piece that needs to be put in place to make us a truly great community is everyone following the rules - rules that were put in place to make this a great place to live.
- *Response: HOA management companies typically charge \$10-20 per home per month for their services. We have 345 separate properties that we bill assessment to. That would mean we have to pay them between \$3,450.00 and \$6,900.00 every month or between \$41,400.00 and \$82,800.00 per year. Our current entire administrative budget is \$31,870.00. Doing this would require the administrative assessment to be raised from its current \$75.00 per year to somewhere between \$195.00 (@\$10 per house per month) and \$315.00 (@\$20 per house per month) per year.*
32. When there is a possible opening on the board, I think it would be a good idea to send out an email/letter some months before the voting to invite everyone who is interested in serving on the board know. They can share a bio, and why they want to be on the board. These names would go out in a letter to elect someone. Of course, any name could be written in.
- *Response: When we have had previous board openings, we have announced them, asking for volunteers. The volunteer serves the remainder of the term of the person they are replacing then they are up for election. The board members serve 3-year terms so 2 members are up for election for 2 years in a row and the remaining member is up for election every 3rd year. If anyone wants to be added to the ballot to be elected, they must simply let the HOA know and they will be added and be allowed to speak at the owners meeting.*
33. To increase community involvement in the community I think it would be a good idea to let the community know when the board is going to meet and invite any interested parties to submit questions/comments and maybe attend the meeting.
- *Response: Anyone wishing to meet with the board needs to simply request it and it will be arranged. Since most of the HOA work is done via email, we don't meet on a regular scheduled basis. It would be difficult to just let anyone show up without notice as we hold our trustee meetings in our own private homes around a dining room table.*

34. To increase community involvement in the community, I think Association meeting should be held via Zoom. Members of the community could be invited to submit questions comments they wanted addressed at the meeting. People could also make comments during the meeting. I think meeting via Zoom will get the best turnout, but meetings could be held in-person and via zoom. Happy to help with that tech.
- *Response: The trustees are 5 simply 5 homeowners in the subdivision, and we feel the simpler, the better. The indentures require the trustees to meet with the owners at a site designated in the notice letter we are required to send out 30 days before the meeting. If someone has something that is important to them, they can attend the meeting or contact us via email.*
35. If the lake is going back to a private lake, I would suggest that we put up an appropriately sized (pretty large) sign right at the back of the parking area to announce that the lake is private and what the rules for the common area are. It would be nice if the lake was "catch and release". It would be nice, too, if there was a solar powered light on the sign.
- *Response: We will look into this.*
36. As I was completing this survey a school bus was backing up down the street because they couldn't get through. Vehicles were parked on both sides of the street. Our streets are narrow and maybe parking should only be allowed on one side of the street.
- *Response: According to our survey results, the majority of replies we received do not want additional parking rules.*
37. Need our road "paved" Lazy Oak!
- *Response: Once we have completed repaving all the roads in the subdivision, we will look into paving Lazy Oak and Timber Ridge.*
38. Block people on the Facebook group who are negative and never have anything good to say. They just want to spread hate, and I'd like to know if they can be removed or blocked from posting.
- *Response: The Facebook group for Hermitage Hills is not moderated or administered or endorsed by the HOA. We monitor it and occasionally add comments to clarify discussions, but it is not an official contact point to reach the trustees. Any suggestions for the Facebook page need to be directed to its administrators.*
39. To be blunt, 95% of the homes in our community are well maintained and kept. A few make our neighborhood look like crap. Tarps on roofs, tarps on carports, barb wire!?, old crappy cars. It would be nice if we had some commonsense beautification guidelines that didn't control our lives but protected our property values. PS, we appreciate you. :-)
- *Response: Unfortunately, there will always be a few owners who are that way. Some have limited income and struggle to maintain their property. We try not to interfere until it becomes necessary.*

40. Thanks for filling the potholes on my street.
- *Response: You are welcome, and pothole patching will be happening again soon.*
41. There are many homes in this subdivision that completely look like crap/rundown. These properties need to be cleaned up!!!
- *Response: Any specific complaint the HOA receives will be investigated and action taken if needed.*
42. A drive through for yards that are not being cared for and junk laying in the front yard. Summerland Ct. children have been playing in these yards and could be hurt. It is also an eyesore.
- *Response: The HOA agrees that for lots with homes that the front yards need to be maintained. But we consider backyards are the owners choice. This is because there are a lot of properties that have a portion of their backyards that are too steep to mow and are overgrown with trees and brush. And we still have multiple lots on along Saline Rd and Lazy Oak that have no home on the property.*
43. Entry sign @ Walnut Ridge. Speed bumps or something to slow drivers down.
- *Response: We are looking into adding a 2nd subdivision sign when we replace the first one. But it would be installed down by the intersection of Saline and Timber Ridge (near the 3-way stop of Saline Rd and Diehl Rd) because that is the far west end of the subdivision, not Walnut Ridge. As for speed bumps we will include a question about that on this year's survey, if enough people want them, we will look into it.*
44. Since our roads are better after being forced to use one trash service, how much will dues go down for road repair? You also charge everyone for streetlights even though you don't pay for them. Any particular reason for that?
- *Response: Not all our roads are better, yet. But they are getting there as we continue to pave them. Once all the paving is completed and water runoff issues have been resolved we will review the road maintenance assessments. The HOA has taken over payment for multiple streetlights after we were requested to. This includes we took over several in Jan 2022. But the HOA can only take over streetlights directly connected to the electrical grid. We cannot take over yard lights where the wiring is connected to a properties home wiring.*
45. Could someone please call or stop by and talk with us about the lake? It is almost in our yard! The fishing people are in our yard. We had our yard surveyed. If someone get hurt, is it our responsibility or the subdivisions? Also, we have drainage questions.
- *Response: We will be taking care of this section of the lake shore when we get the lake dredged and make sure there is dry common ground all the way around the lake. And we will be doing additional drainage work on Hermitage Drive in 2022.*

46. There are multiple dogs who have run the streets more than 3X, it makes it difficult to have pets on leads outside or to walk them without fear of an unleashed dog running up - we need more strict rules to encourage some pet owners to be more prudent in keeping their dogs out of harm's way of others pr potentially hurting a non-suspecting person walking or unsuspecting dog tethered in their own yard.

- *Response: Animals running loose are a violation of JeffCo county ordinances. Any animals running loose need to be reported to JeffCo Animal Control or the Sheriff's Dept.*

47. There needs to be a speed limit sign @ each entrance coming into HHS & they all need to be the same - there are only 2 that I know of & one is 15 & the other is 20.

- *Response: We will be working on correcting this and adding additional speed limit signs in the near future.*

48. Thank you! for all the hard work, roads are improving, and kept nice and safe in winter.

- *Response: Thank you for appreciating our work.*

49. Thank you for serving our community.

- *Response: Thank you for appreciating our work.*

50. You guys are pretty awesome!

- *Response: Thank you for appreciating our work.*

51. How much longer will the HOA charge \$400? When we moved in it was \$175 and switched to \$400 with the idea it would last 5 years. 2021 makes that 5th year. So how much longer can we expect?

- *Response: **The HOA never made a statement that the road maintenance assessment increase was going to be for only 5 years.** It was not stated on the 2016 ballot or the explanation letter that was included with the ballot (both are viewable on our website.) When the new indentures were originally passed in 2012, the both the Administrative and Road Maintenance assessments were set to the minimum estimated amount needed to run the subdivision (\$50 per lot) and clear snow and patch potholes (\$100 per lot) each year. Because the roads were deteriorating faster than we could patch them, the Road Assessment was increased to \$125 per lot in 2104. While this was going on, we had spent several years trying to get Jefferson County to help us organize a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) to repair our roads. We were finally told in 2016 that the county would never approve it, meaning the only way we could upgrade our roads was to pay for it ourselves. So the increases beginning in 2017 (\$75 Administrative and \$325 Road Maintenance) were voted on and approved by a majority of owners. There have been major paving projects for the last 4 years and 50% of the roads have been paved.*

52. We would really like to see the fireworks issue addressed. It is incredibly frustrating to have to listen to fireworks until midnight or later every night for weeks before and after July 4th. I don't understand it, but it makes it very difficult to get to sleep. We would like to see it restricted to the holiday/weekend and/or end it at 9:30-10:00pm. I see many others complain about this on the subdivision Facebook page and the Nextdoor app. Jefferson County Sheriff's Dept won't come out unless you want to press charges. JeffCo SD has much better things to do, and I don't want to start a feud in our neighborhood. I think the HOA is the place to address it.
- *Response: It's a suggestion that can be sent to all the owners, but there is no way to enforce it because fireworks are legal in Jefferson County.*
53. Thank you for everything that you have done over the last number of years. The neighborhood has improved immensely since the HOA board became active again. I'm sure it must seem like a thankless job, but we appreciate you!
- *Response: Thank you for appreciating our work.*
54. Yes- enforce dog leashes. I have had dogs run in my backyard and garage. You also know I have complained about excessive dog barking. I have asked my neighbors if it is bothersome, and they all agree it's annoying. Stiffen the fine.
- *Response: Animals running loose are a violation of JeffCo county ordinances. Any animals running loose need to be reported to JeffCo Animal Control or the Sheriff's Dept.*
55. Rent Dumpster Day. There are quite a few yards in neighborhood that needs to be cleaned up, i.e trash, long weeds, junk cars, etc.
- *Response: We discussed renting a dumpster several years ago. But because the subdivision would be held responsible for anything put in there that are no allowed in landfills (like yard waste, old tires, chemicals, etc.) it was decided not to attempt it.*
56. Snow removal has been great the last few years, thanks.
- *Response: Thank you for appreciating our work.*
57. Rental properties seem to be becoming a problem. Maybe rules & regs for those properties/landlords.
- *Response: Tenants have to abide by the indentures and the HOA holds the landlord responsible that they do abide by them.*
58. I think the trustees are doing a great job. Thank you for your hard work & dedication.
- *Response: Thank you for appreciating our work.*
59. Please again come to my house and walk into my backyard to see what I get to see every summer. The yard behind me hasn't been cut in 3 years. Please, please, please do something about it. I'm selling my house soon and it's a giant eyesore. Thank you!
- *Response: This house sold last summer despite the condition of the neighbor's back yard.*

60. Can we get a plan written into the subdivision meeting minutes for the lake? What is the long-term goal for the lake? How many years will it take to get to this goal?
- *Response: We are still working on the area that was cleared below the dam. Several dead trees will be cut down and removed soon and grass will be seeded. The next major project will be to get it dredged out. The western end is very shallow because silt has been filling it in for decades. There are areas that shoreline needs cleaned up and filled in. In one area the shoreline has eroded away so much that the lake is encroaching into the property of one lot. Also, the inlet stream needs dredged out and the culverts under Hermitage Drive and Turnbridge Drive needs work/replacing. Eventually we'd like to get a walking path around the lake with some park benches at different locations.*
61. We also need speed limit signs so JeffCo can enforce the subdivision speed limit. Too many people are going way too fast in the subdivision.
- *Response: The sheriff's department will not patrol our roads for speeders unless we can get them dedicated to the county (which is not the same thing as the county taking them over for maintenance)*
62. When are we going to have a meeting?
- *Response: Now that Covid restrictions are being lifted we are planning to have a meeting sometime in April 2022.*
63. When are we going to get a newsletter?
- *Response: The newsletter will be sent out in Spring of 2022, before the owners meeting.*
64. Where do stand on paving the streets?
- *Response: As of the end of 2021, right at 50% of the streets have been repaved.*