

# Meadows Messenger

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MAY 2021

## Board requesting information from homeowners for master insurance purposes

This month the Meadows Board is seeking information about the age of some appliances in Meadows units in order to get more competitive quotes from more insurance companies for the condo association's master policy. This is a major expense in the Meadows operating budget. Because most insurance losses are related to heating and cooling (HVAC) systems, or water heater and plumbing-related leaks, insurance companies want to know the age of these systems in the aggregate across the Fairlington Meadows.

The Meadows Board is asking all unit owners to either fill out the online "In-unit Components Inventory survey" (at: <https://bit.ly/2RilFRX>) or return the form that was mailed to unit owners by May 31st by mail or to the Meadows maintenance office.

The more owners that supply this information, the better the chances that the Meadows will qualify for more competitive insurance quotes. Please note industry standards recommend two (2) HVAC system inspections per year (one each in the spring and fall) and at least one water heater and plumbing component inspection (normally in the spring) by a licensed professional. Taking these actions will reduce insurance loss expenditures, as most insurance losses are related to HVAC or water heater and plumbing related leaks.

### Fairlington Meadows Reserve Update

	<u>Operating Reserve</u>	<u>Capital Reserve</u>
Balance Jan 1, 2021	253,530.57	915,429.75
Contributions	2,500.00	111,438.00
Reserve Expenditures- 2021	0.00	(155,419.70)
Balance Mar 31, 2021	256,030.57	871,448.05
\$833.33 monthly contribution to the operating reserve		
\$37,146.00 monthly contribution to the capital reserve		

## Pool expected to open Memorial Day weekend and with warmer waters

This year, we anticipate that the pool will be able to open on time, i.e., over Memorial Day weekend. Over the winter, a heater (heat pump system) was installed, so the pool water will be warm from the start of the season, and it will help make swimming more enjoyable at the end of the season. The heat pumps automatically turn off when the temperature rises above the 80 degree F set temperature.

There will be special COVID rules in effect for the pool this season. The final rules will be decided before opening day, based on state and local health requirements. Residents should expect that mask wearing, for adults and children, will be required to enter the pool area, to check-in with lifeguards, and to use the bathroom facilities.

There will be no guests or pool parties permitted at the start of the season. At this time, the pool committee does not expect that we will require sign-ups for residents to use the pool. A current 2021 Recreation Card is required for ALL residents, every time they enter the pool area, without exception. Applications for 2021 Recreation Cards will be online again this year, on the Meadows web page, starting in the second week in May. The specific COVID restrictions will be made available at that time.

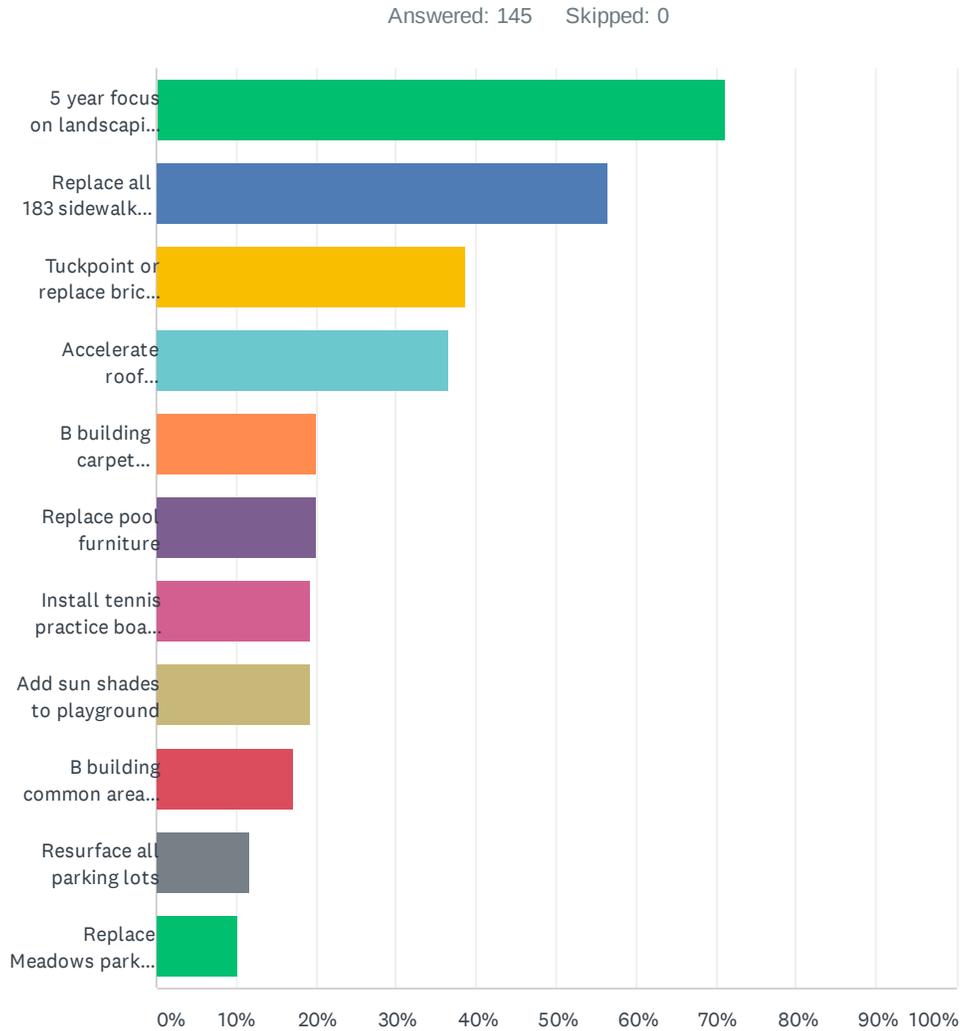
Come out and enjoy the pool without needing a wet suit for warmth in the evenings this spring!



## Survey Results: Major Capital Projects in the Meadows

The Meadows Board of Directors surveyed homeowners about their top priority capital projects in the HOA, and 145 residents responded. All survey comments will be posted on the Meadows website. The Board will review and evaluate the suggestions, and insights gained from the survey will influence future spending priorities. Thanks to everyone who participated in the survey.

Here is the ranking order of responses:



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
5 year focus on landscaping improvements	71.03% 103
Replace all 183 sidewalk lights with dark sky LED lights (approx \$35K)	56.55% 82
Tuckpoint or replace bricks on all front porches (approx \$350K - \$500K)	38.62% 56
Accelerate roof replacement	36.55% 53
B building carpet replacement, painting, door hardware refurbishment	20.00% 29
Replace pool furniture	20.00% 29
Install tennis practice board (approx \$10K)	19.31% 28
Add sun shades to playground	19.31% 28
B building common area lights replacement (approx \$15K)	17.24% 25
Resurface all parking lots	11.72% 17
Replace Meadows parking lot entry signs (approx \$15K)	10.34% 15
Total Respondents: 145	

The survey included projects already under consideration as well as new areas suggested by residents. Below is additional context for some of the questions.

### **Landscaping Improvements**

Landscaping and drainage issues are a clear priority for Meadows residents, with 25 comments submitted on the topic. The Buildings and Grounds (B&G) Committee has initiated a focused plan to refresh the landscaping in all 15 courts over the next three years, (i.e., a pace of five courts per year). The B&G hit-list of problems to remedy already includes several hot survey topics, including the brick walkway between courts 2 and 3 and multiple drainage issues.

To kick off this year's landscaping push, an initial walk through of the five courts being considered for this year occurred in April. Court residents met with the Lancaster Landscape president and landscape designer, the B&G chair and members, and Meadows Board members. Initial drawings from the landscape designer will be reviewed at future B&G meetings. All residents and owners are welcome to attend and can find meeting information on the Meadows website.

### **Sidewalk Lights**

The Board of Directors has already initiated replacement of the pool deck and tennis court sidewalk lights, a project which is sure to provide insights into options for replacing the lampposts in courts.

### **Porch Replacements**

The Meadows maintenance team identified four front porches in most dire need of replacement, with cracked mortar and loose bricks. An initial repointing of the four porches will help evaluate repointing practices and results to inform future efforts.

### **Roof Replacements**

Two roofs were replaced this year (one each in courts 8 and 10). In a 2020 evaluation of all Meadows roofs, eight stood out as in need of replacement. One high priority roof has asbestos shingles, an especially expensive replacement due to required safety precautions during removal and disposal. Six were identified as only needing flashing and snow bird replacement. With additional maintenance, the remaining buildings should last until replacement funds are available. One roof is a ceramic tile that is not made anymore. The maintenance team has enough extra tiles to keep the roof maintained until it can be replaced. The cost of building construction materials is astronomical at present and availability is scarce. The maintenance team and Board will monitor material prices and availability to determine appropriate times to initiate increased roof replacement.

### **B Buildings**

With about a third of Meadows residents living in B buildings, the upkeep of common element features in those buildings is important. The B&G Committee will be heavily involved in selecting carpet replacement and paint colors when the times come to refresh the B building common areas. In the meantime, the carpets are cleaned annually every spring.

### **Parking Lots**

The asphalt in the parking lots is reaching the end of its expected life, approximately 20 years old. The lots were sealed in 2020 and can probably be sealed again in two or three years. However, waiting too long to replace/resurface the asphalt can cause damage to the substrate and cost much more to repair than just resurfacing. The Meadows court signs have been refreshed recently and can last a few more years. They are made of wood and eventually will need replacing.

### **Gutter Maintenance**

Improving gutter maintenance and replacement was mentioned three times in survey comments. Currently, gutters are being replaced with the roofs with a larger size that captures the water better. Problem gutters are replaced as identified by homeowners. Gutters with recurring clogging issues get more frequent cleaning.

### **Sewer line replacements**

The Meadows has installed clean-out access to all sewer lines and has initiated a routine inspection and cleaning of the sewer lines. Replacing them is frequently \$50,000 - \$100,000 per sewer line. With 57 buildings in the Meadows, it is cost prohibitive to "just replace" all the lines as suggested. One resident expressed interest in the HOA installing sewage backwater prevention valves in all sewer lines.

### **Other Ideas**

Residents had many other ideas. Check out the full survey results on the Meadows webpage.

## Be a considerate neighbor!

Our collective experiment in quarantining began more than a year ago. And what a year it's been! We have all been working and living in close proximity for the past year, a terrible strain on all of us for a variety of reasons. Adults working from their homes seek quiet time to complete their work responsibilities. Families with young kids seek ways to keep their young ones safe and occupied when not doing school work.

Life in a condominium community requires cooperation and consideration. And the arrival of spring weather means more and more Meadows residents will be using our common areas for recreation. Please be a thoughtful neighbor and keep these rules and tips in mind:

- Loud talking and cell phone conversations, playing, or shouting will be overheard by many neighbors around you.
- Personal property like bikes, lawn chairs, toys, strollers, etc. should be stored in a patio or indoors when not in use, and not left in common areas.
- Tree climbing can damage Meadows trees. Please stay on the ground.
- Pet waste must be picked up, and all pets must be leashed. (Dogs can run free at the Utah St. dog park.)
- Be mindful of outdoor play close to neighboring windows. We live in close quarters, and you may be just a few feet outside of someone's dining room or bedroom.

On the flip side, please talk to your neighbors if their activities are disturbing the peace. They may not realize the impact of their actions. Email, Facebook and texting may seem easier than actually communicating in person, but in person is usually the best way to handle a disagreement. Sometimes all that's needed is a non-confrontational face-to-face chat to solve the problems.

The reality is that living as part of a condominium community means living in close proximity and sharing common spaces with others. We all have to remain aware of these facts and adjust our behavior accordingly.

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## Court Chairs are Integral for Community Communication

Court chairs are an important communication channel here in the Meadows, sharing information with owners, renters, and non-resident owners. Court chairs have the closest contact with residents and the goings on in the neighborhood. The Meadows Board of Directors relies on the court chairs to pass on information through email, and the pool committee relies on the court chairs to distribute pool passes. The court chair is frequently the first contact for new residents, providing them with basic information about the Meadows (primarily the Meadows website link).

The lack of a court chair causes communication challenges and inconveniences for the entire court. The Board of Directors uses the U.S. Post Office for mandatory/official business, TownSq for information dissemination for the entire community, sandwich signs at the entrance of the parking lot and notes posted to doors to communicate. The face-to-face and personal contact is what is missing, which is where the court chair comes in. In a communication survey taken a couple of years ago, the court chair was selected by 80% of the respondents as the most favored and reliable way of receiving information about the Meadows.

If you haven't been a court chair, please consider volunteering for your court. Many have held this position for several years and some courts are without a chair. Please contact the Meadows President at [JoeS@fairlingtonmeadows.com](mailto:JoeS@fairlingtonmeadows.com) for more information or speak to your current court chair.

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## Two Meadows Board of Directors Positions up for Election at October Annual Meeting

At the 2021 Fairlington Meadows annual meeting in October there will be an election for two Board of Director positions. Now is the time to start thinking about being on the Meadows Board. If you are interested in running for this office, July is when personal profiles are needed for inclusion in the owner's packet, which is prepared in August in order to meet the September mailing for the October meeting!

Being on the Meadows Board of Directors is a rewarding experience and an opportunity to meet many Meadows residents. Being on the Board provides an opportunity to influence the character of the community and prioritize changes and improvements community wide. Board terms are for three years. Interested residents are encouraged to reach out to current Board Members with any questions or to get more details on the workload and responsibilities.

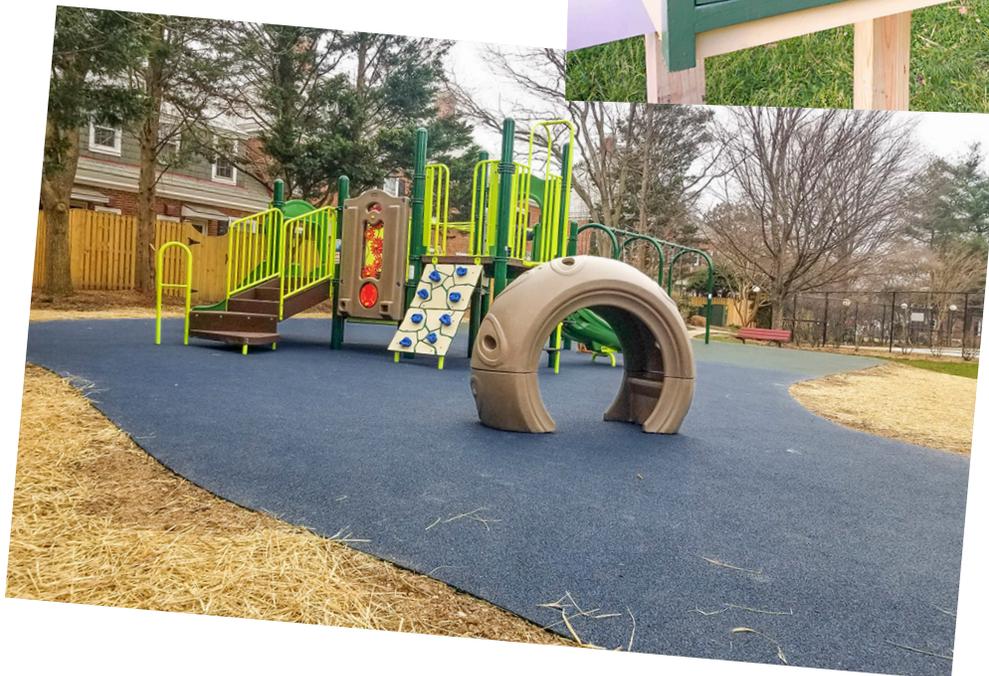
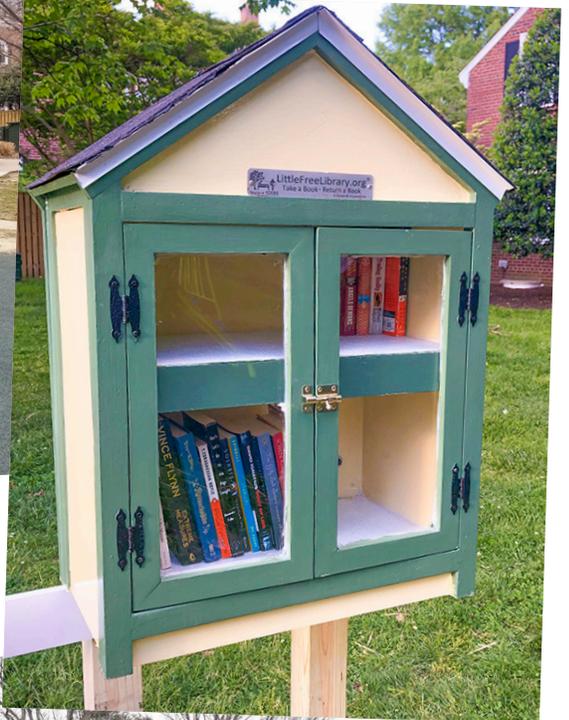


## Playground Complete and Open for Business

The renovation of the nearly 25 year old playground was completed on 13 March. The new structure utilized the footprint of the old structure while adding several interactive features and climbing experiences. The swing set has a smaller footprint with an ADA compliant swing, and a climbing tire was added with small seats inside.

The poured-in-place surface meets playground standards for cushion from falls from the equipment and removes the habitat for mosquito breeding. The Small Lending Library has been renovated and is back in its place near the playground. The Building and Grounds committee will now determine what landscaping features are needed.

Reaction of the users has been overwhelmingly positive. There were many observers watching the renovations and anticipating getting to play on the new equipment. A few snuck on before the official opening to try things out. With the completion of the renovation of the playground, the landscaping in court 15 was finally fixed to address all the abuse it received over the past two years, i.e., two sewer lateral replacements, a partial parking lot resurfacing, fence construction, roof replacement and the playground construction.





## Humans should leave tree climbing to cicadas

After a long winter, there has been an infestation of tree climbers in the Meadows! No, not the 17-year cicada type, but the two-legged human type.

The Meadows trees are a resource of beauty, cooling shade in the heat of summer, sources of food and lodging for the birds and escape routes for squirrels to elude dogs. The refreshed Meadows playground offers climbing opportunities with a soft surface in case of any falls. Let's leave the tree climbing to the cicadas this year.

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## Vehicle Break-ins Reported in Neighboring Fairlington Communities

The Meadows Board has received reports of increased night time vehicle entry activity in the past month occurring in the neighboring Fairlington Associations. All vehicles entered were left unlocked overnight in the parking lots. The entries typically occur between one and four in the morning. It's only been observed to occur in fair weather (not during rain or snow). The Board has not received any recent reports of vehicle entry occurring in the Meadows. Please remember to lock your vehicle every time you park, even if it's in front of your home. If an unlawful entry has occurred, notify the Arlington Police non-emergency number 703-558-2222.

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## Community Directory

For the most up-to-date information:  
[fairlingtonmeadows.com](http://fairlingtonmeadows.com)

### Board of Directors

**Joseph Spytek**, President  
**Frona Adelson**, Vice President  
**Erica Brown**, Co-secretary  
**Caroline Trupp-Gil**, Co-secretary  
**Nick Slabinski**, Treasurer

Address Board Correspondence to Fairlington Meadows  
Board of Directors, c/o Community Management Corporation.

For Board meeting minutes, visit our website, see the bulletin board at the corner of the tennis court near the pool house, or contact Wee Abraham.

### Property Management

**Community Management Corporation**  
4840 Westfields Boulevard, Suite 300  
Chantilly, VA 20151  
(703) 631-7200

### Wee Abraham, Portfolio Manager

[wabraham@cmc-management.com](mailto:wabraham@cmc-management.com)  
(703) 230-8582

### On-site Maintenance

Craig Robbins, Maintenance Manager  
Ricky Henderson, Maintenance Assistant  
(703) 820-6799

### Towing Requests

A-1 Towing of Northern Virginia  
Tel: (703) 979-2110 or (703) 416-0710