

SCHOA Board Meeting – September 10, 2025

Board Members present: Denae Bastian, Tom Sweeney, and Rachel Edmon
Members present: Via google meet, Amanda joined us for a quick minute. In person we had Marv Holland, Ralph Porter, Jeanne Thomas, Kathy Burk, Anthony Rudolph, Sybrena Miles, Kelvin Miles, and Kyle Brumbaugh.

The meeting took place in the Totem Falls Elementary School Library. Members were welcomed and asked to sign in. **Meeting called to order** by Denae at: 7:01 PM.

Minutes from the July 2025 meeting were distributed and read by our attendees. Tom motioned to approve the minutes and Denae seconded the motion. Minutes were approved 3:0. These minutes will be posted to the website for The Falls.

A **Financial Summary** was provided to all members in attendance. It included the 2025 Operating Budget and the expenditures as of September 4, 2025. Information was given on the bank balance for checking and for reserves and the dollar amount of outstanding dues (past due 90 days or more).

Old Business

a. Management Company Search Update: We interviewed 3 companies: Port Gardner, McLarin, and TSquare. Port Gardner was underwhelming. TSquare was structured to include a Schedule A with items that would incur additional charges on top of their base price of \$2500 per month, \$8.06 per household plus additional fees for Schedule A items. McLarin Management did not have a Schedule A. McLarin's pricing was all inclusive making it predictable each month as to what our expenditures would be. McLarin Management charges \$2,945 per month, \$9.50 per household. TSquare has 150 associations they manage and are still growing. McLarin has 28 associations they manage and want to stay local and small. Neither of these two companies use Quickbooks, but have different systems that they use with good results. Both of these companies gave good presentations showing us their online portals and board access points and methods of communicating with boards and with members.

The board is working with the school district scheduler hoping to reserve **October 1st for an additional board meeting** to vote on the company we will contract with for management services (this meeting date of October 1st has since been secured). Following this single-item October board meeting, we will onboard the management company and work with them to draft a 2026 budget. That budget will be shared with members and then voted on by the board. After board adoption of the budget, members will get a chance to ratify or reject the budget. This budget ratification meeting will most likely be in December, separate from the Annual Member meeting, per recommendations from our HOA attorney as there is no quorum requirement for a budget ratification meeting of the members. The budget will be ratified unless a majority of the members reject it (156 votes to reject). 14 days' notice will be given before each of these planned meetings.

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b. Mailbox Replacement Update: We budgeted for the replacement of 4 mailboxes this year and 2 per year moving forward. We have a list of all 24 mailboxes ranked in order of their condition. One mailbox fell victim to a firework attack back in January 2025, leaving us budget funds to only replace 3 this year. We are seeking vendors to move forward with the purchase and replacement. One of our attendees reported that the package delivery slot of her mailbox will not stay closed and therefore, needs repair. We have noted that in our list of mailboxes to be replaced.

c. Update on removal of invasive ivy in the greenbelt: Armer Tree Care has provided us with a quote to remove the ivy. Work on this will take place soon.

d. Waterfall repair update: Blackfish Aquarium has been working on the waterfall repair. The pump that is currently installed has a leak that floods the vault (large in-ground hole) every time it is turned on. Our current pump and its replacement parts are no longer sold. We are moving forward with a full replacement of the pump. The cost of the pump part is \$6,636. The labor cost is additional. Moving forward, a contract for regular maintenance of the waterfall is important to secure, but we plan to wait and work on this with a new management company and their connections.

e. Common Fence repair, cleaning, and staining update. Our landscapers have finished trimming the foliage away from the fence to make room for the fence contractors. Nice View Fence will begin work next Wednesday, September 17th. Repair work will come first, then cleaning, then staining. Cleaning will be done with stiff brushes, not pressure washers. The work will start at the waterfall end on the west side of Snohomish Cascade Drive.

f. 2024 Audit is underway. Our CPA is still working on the 2024 audit. We are not yet sure if audit results will be posted to our website or in a management company's portal. More to come on that.

g. Repair of Footbridges on Trails: It was previously reported that there was a board broken on each of our 2 footbridges but after later inspection, only the southern footbridge was in need of repair. States Construction (owned by one of our members) repaired 3 boards for us on the southern footbridge for the cost of materials only, which was really kind of him. THANK YOU!

h. Landscaping Committee Update: In early March of this year, we planted 55 new laurels in the medians along the north end of SnoCascade and 11 small ferns on the bank just west of the new laurels. Typically, we would have had plenty of rain during March, April, May, and June to get the new plants well established. This year was not our norm. It was very dry. In July, the McKone family, on more than one occasion, used their truck and many 5 gallon buckets to water the new plants. THANK YOU! A watering truck was hired in August to water twice a week. Now in September, we are hoping for cooler and wetter weather to

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help our plants. Mulch will also help. One estimate for mulch has been obtained, but the cost was high. We are seeking two more bids. This Fall, if our budget allows, we would like to plant some heather along SnoCascade to provide a nice pop of color in the spring.

New Business

a. Late fees to be assessed: Dues were to be paid either all at once (due 3/18/2025) or in 2 installments (due 3/18/2025 and 8/18/2025). Most members are up to date with their dues payments, but there are some accounts with past due balances. We are working to resolve this. On 9/22, we will impose a late fee of \$25 to every homeowner that holds an unpaid balance unless they have previously made payment arrangements with the board.

b. Member suggestion to record history of our neighborhood: Following up on a member suggestion, we discussed the idea of recording the neighborhood history to potentially be kept on the HOA website (what our neighborhood looked like when we only had section 1 (we now have section 1, 2, 3, and 3A), how the totem poles came to be, history of the park's amenities, hiking trail info, waterfall projects over time, etc.). We opened the floor to see if anyone was willing to head this up. No one volunteered, but If you are reading this and are interested, please let us know!

c. Investing money from Reserves into a CD: We have a decent dollar amount sitting in our reserve account. After checking with our attorney, we decided we would like to open some CDs. A CD ladder was suggested - possibly diversified among two banks to ensure we still fit under the \$250,000 FDIC insurance protection.

d. Removal of arborvitae at the SE corner: Our landscapers trimmed the arborvitae along the common fence line which included the arborvitae at the SE corner of The Falls to ensure access for the fence repair and staining project. The arborvitae are tall and when trimmed, left an unsightly view to the members living in the homes behind the common fence in this area. Concerned about the appearance for the homeowners as well as the health of the shrubs, the board met with our arborist at the site to perform a tree checkup. He determined that the arborvitae are still alive and healthy and the back side will recover, so they do not need to be removed. He did mention that the Rhodies along that fence line are very crowded and recommended their removal. When asked about transplanting the Rhodies, he indicated they generally do not do well when this is done.

e. Additional discussion

1. Efforts are continuing to update our governing documents, which as you know, are out of date and in some places conflict with one another and even conflict with state statute. The governing statutes for our state continue to change with still more additions coming between now and January 1, 2028. There were provisions that were marked to become effective for all HOA's in January of 2028, but the date has moved to January of 2026 for a number of them. This is new information. We have 2 options - update our governing documents now and slowly amend them as new

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WUCIOA rules come into effect, or, wait until all WUCIOA is in place and then update our governing documents. We previously planned to do the latter but after speaking with our attorney, and learning of the new items that have to be adhered to by January 1 2026, he suggested updating them now with his template as the base, then he can waffle in little changes prior to WUCIOA becoming fully effective for all Condo and Homeowners Associations. This allows us to invest more time and money now and less later. We will also seek the help of the upcoming management company on these changes.

2. The lighting at the SE corner is still broken. We do understand this needs to be fixed, but the HOA's plate is currently full with waterfall repair, property management company onboarding, fence improvement project, and revisions to our governing documents. A management company will help lighten the load and allow progress on more projects that we want to tackle.
3. Anthony brought up the topic of signs in the common areas/medians that are advertisements. It was his understanding that they are not allowed. We have not recently looked at that and are not up-to-date on what WUCIOA says on this matter. We encouraged members with interest to check out our current governing documents on the website and also look at the HOA Act and WUCIOA. The board will do the same. We did remind members that signs cannot be placed on USPS mailboxes.
4. Anthony also suggested we record the HOA meetings for members to watch/listen to later. Meetings are currently livestreamed through Google Meet. The link to the meeting is the same every time so feel free to save it to your favorites! The board will discuss the idea of future recordings of meetings. Please know that whether we post them or not, there will be meeting minutes posted regularly and the board is available by email for those interested.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 PM. Thank you for reading!