HORIZON POINTE LACEY HOA
NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES
October 2026

Welcome to October, that season of the year when months and holidays blur one into the next!

TREASURER'S POSITION COMING OPEN Our Treasurer this past year, Abby Chavez, has been a real trooper and has been a humongous help in getting our finances and their reporting into better shape. (We didn't have a treasurer for four years before Abby - and it showed!) However, she will be stepping down in November due to job and family pressures. A treasurer doesn't DO our finances, but by keeping tabs on how the management company is handling them, a treasurer helps both the Board and management be sure that things are on the right track. If you have knowledge of accounting, PLEASE consider volunteering for this position on the Board! We can have you talk to Abby to get more information on what you'll be doing.

THE INLAY TOT LOT The new company started the repair/completion work Monday of this week and anticipates finishing by week's end. *It will be fully safety checked before we open it for use*. Watch for the announcement!

TREES 1. Persian Ironwood (*parrotia persica)* and Apollo Maple (*acer saccharum "Barrett Cole")* have been approved for replacing the trees removed for this year's sidewalk work. Both will add some wonderful Fall color, and both are considered much more appropriate street trees for the kind of space we have. It should mean that a Board twenty years down the road won't have to be doing this same thing again.
2. With the City of Lacey's approval, the Board has engaged Willard's Tree Care (the company that took out the first Terrible Twelve) to remove 111 more trees. 88 of those trees are planted too close to streetlight poles for current code (within 15') and 1 humongous tree is planted far too close to its twin; these 89 will not be replaced. Of the rest, 1 is dead and all the others have caused significant sidewalk lift. These **will** be replaced, though where sidewalk is involved, replacement won't happen until the City has taken care of the sidewalk. Flagging tape is being placed on the trees involved this week in preparation. The entire removal project will be finished in October, followed by stump grinding over the winter/spring. Plots where trees are removed and won't be replaced will be relandscaped in grass.

BUDGET The final 2027 budget will be presented for Board discussion and approval at the October Board meeting on the 15th, then sent out to all owners in the packet for the November Budget Ratification and Annual Members' Meeting. The Revised Code of Washington 64.90.525 states (referring to the Budget Ratification Meeting) "*(1)(a) … Unless at that meeting the unit owners of units to which a majority of the votes in the association are allocated or any larger percentage specified in the declaration reject the budget, the budget and the assessments against the units included in the budget are ratified, whether or not a quorum is present*." In other words, since we

have 844 units here, it would require 423 "no" votes by owners present or by proxy to prevent ratification of the budget. State law, not our choice. The Board is very aware of the heavy responsibility this law puts on us for crafting a budget that is justifiable. We have scrutinized every line item of the operating budget to be sure we are using realistic figures based on actual past or known future expenses and have worked with our reserve study specialist to be sure that we are setting the Association up to be ready for the expenses that we face as a community of mature landscaping.

RESERVES Our reserves have taken massive hits in the last several years. Some things, such as the stormwater system, the Tot Lot, and the alley sealing were planned for, but we've been playing "whack-a-mole" with tree issues for years – and getting whacked hard with it. Once this major removal project and canopy lifting is done, tree expenses – both removal/replacement costs from reserves and regular maintenance costs from operating – will go down. We will now be working on building our reserves back up to the level mandated by State law for an organization of our size.

HARD COSTS vs. SOFT COSTS "Hard costs" are administrative costs that VIS charges the Association for specific actions. These costs are then passed on to the homeowner involved so that the entire Association isn't footing the bill. Every letter VIS has to send a homeowner incurs a separate administrative fee (with the exception of courtesy notices.) NSF fees are also a hard cost. Hard costs cannot be waived by the Board as they are an actual cost to the Association. "Soft costs" are charges that the Association itself imposes as a consequence for repeated non-compliance or for paying assessments late. The Board *may* choose to waive these costs, depending on factors such as the owner's payment record (accurate as well as timely), how long the owner has allowed the issue to build up, or any particular mitigating circumstances involved. Compliance and account adjustment waiver forms may be found on your owner portal. The sooner you contact VIS about any issues, the better results are likely to be.

We still have room for three more people on the Board, in addition to the vacancy we'll have from Abby's departure. We could use a Secretary, too. If you care about this neighborhood, or just want to see how the sausage is made, and have time to keep up with between-meeting communication and are available the third Thursday evening each month, please give serious consideration to volunteering. The annual Members' Meeting will be here in November, and we'd love to have the ballot full!

Susie Aasen, President of the Board
Susie.hphoa@gmail.com
In service to the neighborhood