

THE DOWNS OF HILLCREST Newsletter

November 2025

Financial Report -- by Larry James

October Year-to-Date Results

- Year-to-date through October, the Downs HOA OPERATING account shows a net positive profit of \$3.3K.
- Included in that gain is a \$12.9K settlement check received in April related to the damage caused in the August 2024 traffic accident on Churchill Way in front of the Gate House.
- Looking at expenses:
 - Legal Expenses continue to run significantly higher than historical levels. Year-to-date through October, legal expense was \$135.6K, with \$115.9K of that related to the Feldhendler matter. From 2021 through October 2025, the HOA net legal expenses for the Feldhendler matter total \$403.9K. The HOA has recouped legal expenses associated with this matter in the past, and we expect to recoup a portion of them in the future.
 - The Common Area, Landscape, and Irrigation Maintenance accounts are all favorable to budget through October.
- Turning to the HOA RESERVE account, \$88.4K has been contributed to the fund so far this year. That includes the planned \$40K year-to-date contribution from the operating account, as well as an additional \$48.4K resulting from the sale of eight Downs homes. (As a reminder - the Transfer Fee amendment was passed by a wide margin in December 2024. As a result, the HOA receives a payment equal to one-year's assessment, from the buyer, each time a Downs home sale takes place. Thus far in 2025, that's amounted to \$48.4K.)
- Due to the strong performance of the Reserve Account, year-to-date TOTAL HOA net income is \$92.2K. That number will be reduced in December when the HOA incurs a significant expense of approximately \$45K from dredging of the waterways along, and north of, Milford.
- Turning to the balance sheet, the HOA cash balance at the end of October was \$564.9K. Total Equity was \$400.7K, up \$72.5K from this time last year.

2026 BUDGET APPROVED

The board approved the 2026 budget and assessment level at the November meeting. Key points are:

- The budget is set at a breakeven, with total spending of \$1,033K. It includes a 3% increase in the semi-annual assessment, effective January 1, 2026, to reflect inflation.
- The budget includes increased spending levels in each of the maintenance accounts as well as a planned \$85.2K contribution to the Reserve Account. Included in that is a conservative assumption of four home sales resulting in Transfer Fee income of \$23.2K.
- Funding is also provided for the next phase of the “Rock Project”, the multi-year project begun in 2024 to rebuild the eroded banks and artificial rocks along certain Downs waterways.

COMMON PROPERTY MANAGEMENT – Report by SBB

Trees & Landscape Semi-annual heavy tree work on more than 230 Downs trees was completed in September. In addition, six new trees/shrubs will be planted at the north end of the Ryddington pond (one is done, now five to go), and several shrubs were replaced outside of the entry gate.

Walkways & Bridges Over the summer and fall, we’ve completed a round of pressure washing on walkways and the Downs Lake Circle bridge.

Ponds & Pumps Routine pond maintenance continues, but in addition, September saw 2 pond pumps repaired. In early December, a week of dredging will take place at ponds 5, 6 and 7 – an expensive project at \$43,500.

Streetlights & Gate Safety A streetlight outage on Downs Lake Circle was repaired by Oncor in September. New reflective strips are being installed on entry and exit gates. This new version is screwed into the gate and should last longer than the adhesive version we’ve tried.

Benches Four metal benches near the ponds have been freshly painted.

Long Range Rock Project This project has been on hold, but the 2026 budget includes it. Remember, this is a planned replacement for the broken large fiberglass “rocks” we’re all reminding children not to climb on.

Community Inspections and CCR Compliance SBB personnel do twice-monthly inspections in The Downs to note needed repairs and cleanups, and CCR violations. Recent focus areas have been removing dead foliage, trimming overgrown branches and ensuring that walkways are clear and safe.

Mosquito Fogging Has been ongoing through the warm months, but it is now suspended for the winter. This has been a once-weekly service operating since about May.

Holiday Decorations We trade American flags for holiday lights and wreaths just after Thanksgiving. Lights on the Downs Lake Circle bridge offer a welcome sparkle on dark nights.

Addition to New Resident Packet: LIVING WELL TOGETHER The Downs Board approved a one-page addition to the packet of information given to new residents, which highlights certain information available on the website and is otherwise provided to new residents at closing. It is a shorthand version of necessary information for newcomers – like accessing gate codes and getting ACC permission for exterior changes to your home. It will be posted with other newcomer-packet materials on the downsofhillcrest.com website.

REPORT ON ZONING CHANGES – Report by Tory Agnich

SB 840 has changed the power relationship between neighborhoods, Council members and land-owners/developers. Now, any property presently zoned for a business use can also be developed into multifamily and retail.

The HEB request to upzone (to Regional Retail) its 10 acres at Hillcrest/LBJ, will have its final vote at City Council December 10. The new zoning allows any business use you can imagine (some you might not want to imagine), a 70-foot tall building, and greatly increased people and vehicle density. If the

Council votes yes, one certain outcome is greatly increased land value for the landowner, HEB. It is not guaranteed, however, that HEB will build and operate its business there. They could easily sell for a tidy profit. A new owner could build, almost literally, anything there, if Regional Retail is approved with no restrictions.

Nearby residents are either totally opposed to the HEB proposal or are working to get deed restrictions built into the deal, so that HEB could operate there as it has described in public meetings, but to limit the land's use to HEB's requirements, not allowing the open-ended Regional Retail permissions. The deed restriction idea is being discussed but has not reached a final version at this writing.

Residents who want to support or oppose any of what's outlined above are invited to write to every member of the City Council, starting now. Several letters are fine. Tory Agnich has Council members names and email addresses. Email her at tory@agnich.com for this information.

OTHER NEWS YOU'LL ENJOY

Flag displays this month remind us that, together, we celebrate our country, and the service of veterans and volunteers who weave us together in new ways all the time.

For many years, a number of Downs volunteers have planted these flags and retrieved them, also repairing and reviving them after pick-up, then storing them for use the next time (Veterans Day in November, Memorial Day in May and July 4th).

Bill Perry is the point of contact for the group today, which includes Bob Hudspeth and Hayden Pittman, Richard Verret, Larry James, Curt Welwood, Michael Harrison, Dolores Hardin, and Tom Schober. Gerry Shanholt has recently signed up. If you would like to join the crew, volunteers are very welcome.

Speaking of Service

New volunteers are always needed to make social get togethers happen throughout the year. We can use muscles (delivering ice chests) and brains (organizing details), introverts and extroverts, writers and walkers, game planners, idea people, whatever gift you have, we welcome your help. There's a name mentioned for every event listed here – call that person to offer to join in.

Well, **That was a good Halloween!** About 100 people came to the Trick or Treat-launching happy-pizza-hour at the Morchowers, then roved the neighborhood gathering oohs and ahs, and candy and prizes from many homes and also from three prize stations organized by nearest neighbors. It was so good we wore out even the big kids!



Second Sunday Social on November 9 gathered a crowd on the Braemore cul de sac at Harish and Rashmi Chinai's with lively music and delicious samosas. The chilly wind reminded a new season is arriving, but the music

and the company compensated for the chill. These Socials will resume in January, indoors. If you want to offer to host next year, contact tory@agnich.com

The Downs of Hillcrest Thanksgiving Turkey Trot (races start at 9am, (volunteers a little earlier) on November 27. This is a fun break for runners, walkers and watchers alike. Who wants to just watch a turkey get brown all day? A Punchbowl email has been sent and offers details, asks for RSVP's but there's no cost to participants, and we'll see you at the gazebo on Milford. Contact: DianneDoggett@aol.com

December 7 is the Holiday Dine Around. An annual favorite, we begin gathered for cocktails at 5:30pm, then disperse to about ten neighborhood homes for small group, catered dinners, featuring a chicken dinner, with vegetarian option. Punchbowl comes by email and brings details and instructions on making your reservation with a check for \$50 per person. Contact: DianneDoggett@aol.com

Book Clubs take December off as does **Second Sunday Social**. However, **Lunch Bunchers** are intrepid (women on December 4 at Royal China, men on December 18). As always, watch for an email from Punchbowl.

HOA website www.downsofhillcrest.com Can't find your paper directory? There's a short version of it online. The site also contains this month's calendar items and a few news stories. Also, all important documents defining The Downs of Hillcrest (the CCRs), and online access to forms you might need (new car or Tolltag? ACC permission form?). There's even a spot to report a found pet, and to help you return it to owner.

This newsletter is written following Downs Board meetings. The next Board meeting will be in February, 2026. Past copies of newsletters are archived on downsofillcrest.com.