

## **Survey Results**

As mentioned in the Board article, a survey was conducted on the Parkwood Hill website a few months ago to get the opinions of our neighborhood on several topics, including the playground, social activities, HOA improvements and other suggestions. Below is summary of the survey and the **unedited** comments. After the results the board will address some of the common comments.

### **Playground**

Leave Empty – 1

Playset and Pavilion – 31

Playset Only – 30 (all 30 also selected Playset and Pavilion)

Pavilion – 17 (all 17 also selected Playset and Pavilion)

Comments:

1. adding interactive water features or slides
2. basketball court
3. Instead of removing the play equipment, the canvas awnings should be replaced with wooden roofs. This would keep them from being torn by vandals. The new cameras that were installed should also help cut down on vandalism. Several members of the community
4. Please leave the playgrounds. It is too dangerous for our children to cross Parkwood Hill Blvd.
5. Put in a basketball court
6. Replace both play sets with wood/modified plastic. Metal play sets are unusable in the Texas heat.
7. Replace w/ pavilion and tables I'm not sure what you mean by metal play set I do feel like some type of play structure is needed so children can play on it when they are at pool or other functions
8. Replace with a basketball court

### **Block Captain Volunteers**

6 homeowners have volunteered to be block captains.

Comments:

9. I do agree that having block captains is a good idea and a great way to increase community involvement. I also think that Face book would be

### **Social**

Comments:

10. 1 a yr that is kid friendly
11. any are good
12. Block parties; book clubs
13. We need to have more events for every body. Family, kid, and teen events, as well as adult only events.

### **HOA Improvements**

14. I do not want to be a yard nazi, but our community is not looking as good as it should. We can make the yards look better. The bushes look pretty wild in many yards. Scrap the maintenance of the playcenter and plant flowers at the enterances. Replace the trees that have died.
15. Basketball court
16. I feel like our dues are high compared to other neighborhoods, how many houses are in our HOA?

17. I would like to have responses to my emails! I wrote the ACC committee chair once, then the entire committee and have never received a reply. There are some serious issues that I believe have affected the integrity of our neighborhood. If we don't maintain our standards, this whole neighborhood will look like Summerfields in no time at all.
18. I would like to see a basketball court be built. When we purchased this house, we were told one would be built. There are many teenagers in this neighborhood that would use the basketball courts. Other than the initial cost, there is little upkeep.
19. I would like to see a basketball court.
20. I would like to see more patrols to control preteen and teen walking through the streets making cars have to move or stop I would like to see a patrol of some type for pool so adults could go and relax without teens acting up re: noise and their actions
21. I'd like to see some type of upgrade to the exterior fencing. It looks a little worn down as well as the Parkwood Hills sign near the community center...this could probably be fixed with a little black paint to replace the worn writing.
22. It would be great to increase the number of guest passes for the pool to four instead of two. The pool was a huge deciding factor for us when we moved to Parkwood Hill. We appreciated the decision to monitor pool access and it's definitely made a difference for the neighborhood, but we miss having the opportunity to invite another family to join us as guests. I can't see spending \$10 for 2 additional pool guests when we are already paying an annual fee.
23. The entrance signs on Redwood cleaned so they do not have foul language on them.
24. The exterior paint color options need to be updated. Darker colors will update to look of the neighborhood and give it a warmer feel.
25. We moved to this community because we have small children and in 2005 when we visited this community it was very kid friendly and the landscaping was beautiful and seasonally appropriate. Since moving into this community we have witnessed the deterioration of the playground. My husband has come up with several estimates, pictures, and ideas on how to make this area better. He gets little to no feedback on these ideas. I personally buy playground equipment for KISD and I have never paid what we were quoted to replace the equipment here. If I wanted to go to a communal playground instead of one in my neighborhood I would have moved closer to Bear Creek Parkway. I have noticed that we do not put the kind of effort into our playground equipment that we put into those soccer fields. I pay dues each and every year and I find it as an insult that we would even think of doing away with the playground all together in favor of using the playground that they put in for EVERYONE on parkwood hill. We have done away with the seasonal flowers, the events, and now we pay too much for the upkeep of the playground equipment. What exactly are our hoa dues going to pay??
26. We should not have to pay for pool guests when the security guards can let who ever in and not have to pay for there guests.
27. We would love for the pool to open at 6:00 instead of 7:00 in the mornings to allow those that work an opportunity to get their swimming workouts done before work instead of after when the kids are there. Swimming laps with all the children there is almost impossible. This wouldn't add any extra cost to just have the gates open an hour earlier because there isn't a guard there that early anyway. Also, we would love this year to be like most of the other years in the past, except last year, where the pool stays open until Oct 1st. My husband competes in triathlons and this would be very benifical to him. We are a family of 4 and we would love to invite our friends that are a family of 5 over without having to pay extra for another dog tag. I understand the problem in the past with kids letting in all their friends but because they misused it now we aren't allowed to have more than the # of family members to go with us to the pool. Now that we have the guard there, I don't see why one extra person is such a big deal.
28. Youth soccer goals for smaller soccer field. Thanks for purchasing large goals but it would be nice to have goals for the younger children especially since we have to pay to reserve soccer fields this year.

## Suggestions

29. I can volunteer to help out on the Social Committee if help is still needed.

30. I think having security at the pool is adequate to allow a family friendly atmosphere. I don't believe overcrowding has been our issue in the past. If we have security there to run off the unruly teenagers, then we should be able to have a couple of more friends over then 2 to 4.
31. I would also like to suggest an online directory of services and goods offered by Parkwood Hill residents. My neighbor happens to own a fencing business...I would prefer having him replace my fence when the time comes. I assume that he would have a vested interest in making sure my fencing is done correctly as it could also affect the value of his property. With the economy the way it is, it becomes very important for us to support our neighbors.
32. I would like to see our dues returned to their previous amount, HOA activities done away with, and the fees for swimming at the pool omitted. There are plenty of community and school activities to participate in. With a lack of volunteers, and costly events that are absorbed by the HOA, they should be done away with entirely. When our group is included in the PID, then we can start back with community activities where the costs are shared.
33. More patrols to control preteen and teens
34. Remind people of the forum on our website. It is a good way for people to stay in touch and get to know each other better. Thanks for all you do!
35. What are our hoa dues going for? To pay for the oil and gas lease people to use our clubhouse to buy our mineral rights? My understanding of an HOA is to help enforce uniformity standards within a community as well as to enhance the lives of those who pay dues to the HOA. This HOA has more work to do to gain the trust of this Parkwood Hill inhabitant. The increase in HOA fees is appalling and I don't understand why the HOA collects so much money and seems to get so little for it. Every day people have to shop for bargains so why isn't this HOA doing the same in regards to goods and services??

### **Board Comments**

There is really not a good way to address all of these comments so we will hit the highlights of the comments that had a common theme as best as we can.

Basketball courts – Six comments were made about installing a basketball court (comments 2, 5, 8, 15, 18 and 19). This topic has been discussed and debated many times over the last 7 or 8 years with many pros and cons addressed. The big hindrance to a basketball court is the initial cost. Concrete is very expensive and to install a court we not only have the cost of the court but also the cost of repairing the irrigation system. Currently, the Board feels there are more pressing issues, such as replacing the worn out playground equipment and at some point we will have to address the perimeter fence. As for comment 18, the Board is not aware of any promise or statement that a basketball court would be built. During the time of construction of our HOA, when the three builders (Engle Homes, Legacy Homes and Plantation Homes) maintained a presence in the neighborhood, the HOA was run by the developer. To be honest there is no way to know what all the builders told potential homeowners, but a basketball court was never in the original plans.

Playground equipment - Six comments were made about the playground equipment (comments 3, 4, 6, 7, 14 and 25). We all agree that the playground equipment has deteriorated over the years. That equipment has been in the playground since our HOA was established and is way past its prime. However, we disagree with comment 25 that stated we do not “put the kind of effort into our playground equipment that we put into those soccer fields.” The HOA has sunk on average \$5,000 a year for the last several years into the playground equipment to repair the normal wear-and-tear and the intentional destruction done by kids. The Board members have all witnessed kids sliding down the tarps, ripping boards off the sides, etc. We cannot continue to sink money into a problem that won't go away as that would be fiscally irresponsible for this Board to do. We also do not want to do away with the playground as this comment inferred, but as a Board we have to consider all of our options which is why we put the survey out. Clearly, the vast majority wants a playground and that is what we will pursue.

After much consideration, we agree that removing the existing equipment and installing a more durable product is the best long-term solution for our HOA, but the timing of the replacement is still in the works. What we know right now is this: The Board has agreed to sell the existing playground equipment in one of two ways. First, we will open an online auction up to our homeowners that will last a week, probably starting in mid-January. An advertisement will be placed on the Parkwood Hill website announcing the bidding process is open. The minimum bid for the small play set (closest to the clubhouse) will be \$150.00 and the minimum bid for the large play set (farthest from the clubhouse) will be \$200. You will be able to designate which play set you are bidding on or you can also bid on both. Second, if no one bids on a play set, the play set will be advertised in Craig's List for anyone to buy. All expenses to remove the play set(s) will be at the buyer's expense, a form must be signed by the buyer taking full liability of damages (not counting the holes in the ground that will be created when removing the play set) and there will be a timeframe established to have the play set(s) removed by. Please watch the PHE website ([www.parkwoodhill.net](http://www.parkwoodhill.net)) during January for this announcement for your opportunity to bid on a play set or both.

Logically, if we remove the play sets then you are probably wondering what the HOA is going to do to replace it. We all agree it is important to maintain a nice play structure in our HOA for our children to play on. Since the vast majority of the survey respondents asked for a new play set and a covered pavilion, that is what we are leaning towards. We like the idea of having a covered pavilion with picnic tables where families can gather in the shade to have a picnic or just a covered place to sit while their children play. We have conducted some research on the cost of the play set and that alone can range anywhere from \$6,000 for a very small play set to \$20,000 for a moderate sized one. So far we haven't researched the cost of a covered pavilion, but we know it will not be inexpensive when you factor in the concrete. Timing of the replacement has not been worked out yet as it depends on a) how quickly we can get the existing play sets out and b) cost of the project. It may be that we have to do this project in phases starting with the play set replacement followed by the pavilion. If any of our homeowners do this sort of work we would love to hear from you.

Lastly, comment 25 indicates that suggestions/ideas have been thought up and that you (the writer of comment 25) have a better avenue to acquire playground equipment. Have you attended a Board meeting and brought this up to the Board? If not, then we welcome you to do that. Board meetings are generally on the third Monday of each month at 7:15PM. Please watch the PHE website for meeting notices.

Block Captains and Other Volunteers – In the main Board article we announced that we now have a Volunteer's Coordinator. For those of you who indicated in the survey you would like to volunteer, first, a great big THANK YOU to you. Second, we will be getting your information to our Volunteer Coordinator to contact you.

Social Events – Three comments were made about the playground equipment (comments 13, 25 and 32). Comment 13 indicates they would like to have more events, comment 25 indicates that events have been done away with and comment 32 indicates that they don't want HOA sponsored events. As Board members, this is one of the hardest things to deal with...not everyone agrees on everything. Finding the right balance is a very complicated thing. For comment 13, would also like to have more events, but more events take more volunteers and volunteers are hard to come by. Hopefully by having a Volunteer Coordinator this will get better. For comment 25, we have not done away with events, but we have scaled back due to the lack of volunteers. As an HOA we simply cannot rely on the same 2-3 people to put on every event. These 2-3 people work very hard and it is easy to get burned out. For comment 32, I must say this is the only time the Board has ever heard a comment about doing away with all events. I think it would be accurate to assume this would be a minority opinion. We understand your comments about lowering costs, but your comment about the PID (Public Improvement district) is not accurate. If the HOA went into the PID, the only thing the PID would control would be the landscaping. It is true that by going into the PID we could reduce our annual HOA fees, but you then would be assessed an annual PID fee that the City of Fort Worth would control so your total cost most likely would not go down.

Patrols – Comment 20 indicated they would like to see more patrols around the community and a patrol at the pool. Several years ago the Board instituted a “Citizens on Patrol” program. For several months interest was high, but quickly declined and the program was stopped. The Board cannot control how often the Fort Worth PD patrols our area, but we can speak to our Neighborhood Police Officer (NPO) and see what we can do. As a homeowner in the HOA, it is also within your right to contact the NPO and make the same request. You can find the NPO contact information on the PHE website. As for a patrol at the pool, for the last 3 if not 4 years, we have had a guard presence at the pool during the summer which has helped keep things in order. We acknowledge it hasn’t always been perfect, but it has been better. The pool is open from May 1<sup>st</sup> till September 30<sup>th</sup> from 7:00AM till 10:00PM and unfortunately, we cannot afford to keep a guard posted every day for the 15 hours per day the pool is open.

Perimeter Fence – Comment 21 pointed out that they would like to see an upgrade to the perimeter fencing and restoration to the monument by the clubhouse. First, the easy one -- All monuments have recently been restored so we can check that one off our list. As for the perimeter fencing, the comment is dead on. This HOA does need to address the perimeter fence and has had many discussions on the topic. As with any project, money has to be taken into consideration and we have to prioritize our projects based on need and funds. The two large projects that we are facing right now are a) dealing with the worn out playground equipment and b) the perimeter fence. For the last three years the Board has been setting aside funds into a replacement fund, which as of October 31<sup>st</sup> stood at \$66,793. Projects such as the play sets and perimeter fence will be funded by this replacement fund, but we can’t use all of the funds for these projects as we also have to keep funds there for emergencies such as pool pumps going out, structural damage to the pool or clubhouse, etc. When weighing the two major projects sitting before us, the Board agrees that replacing the playground equipment and providing our children with a safe place to play has a greater need than the fence, but the fence need will need to be addressed in the near future.

Pool Guest Passes - Three comments were made about the pool guest passes (comments 22, 26 and 27). Every home can have up to four guest passes. If you were only given two, you can get two more. However, the Board is going to re-evaluate the whole pool pass process so before you request extra guest passes, please wait till next summer as we may have a new process in place. We do welcome your suggestions on the pool pass process (just please don’t recommend a photo ID badge – that has been recommended before and is not a viable option). The Security guard should not be letting in any of “their” friends. If they do, it is your responsibility to report the guard to your board to correct the issue. We cannot correct the issue if we do not know about it. As for the restriction on the number of guest passes, the Board made the decision to limit the number of free guest passes to four to keep the number of guests in the pool lower. At times in the past we have had so many people in the pool that it was hard for our residents to enjoy their time there. The pool is there for our residents first, and then to guests.

Exterior Paint – Comment 24 suggested that exterior paint color options need to be updated. The Board has already been working on the establishment of an approved color palette for exterior paint. If you are the original owner of your home then you probably remember working with your builder to pick out an approved color scheme for your exterior paint. The approved color palette will help assure the beauty, uniformity and value of the surrounding community. We have worked with a designer and a local paint supplier to establish the color palette that contains popular colors in today’s housing market. Additionally, the paint supplier is willing to offer a discount on the paint to all PHE homeowners. We hope to have the approved color palette finalized by January 2012.

Online Directory – Comment 31 suggested an online directory of services and goods offered by Parkwood Hill residents. We think this is a great suggestion and we will explore ways with our website administrator on how we can make that happen.

We know the comments above do not address all of the comments/suggestions that were provided in the survey, but we hope we have hit the more common threads. Now, one last common comment and that has to do with our annual assessments (dues).

Comments 16, 25, 32 and 35 all addressed concerns/complaints about our annual assessments or dues and why they went up and what they pay for. There are 527 houses in our HOA that are assessed \$390 a year. That equates to \$205,530 a year. Are we higher than some HOAs? Yes. Are we lower than some HOAs? Yes. Some HOAs are in a PID and pay an assessment to both the PID and their HOA, so if you simply ask them what their HOA fee is and they come back and say \$200 a year, you also have to ask them if they are in a PID. They may also be paying \$200 a year to their PID making their total assessment \$400 a year. The biggest question in the fore mentioned comments was “What are we paying for?” We went back and grouped all of our expenses for 01/01/2011 through 11/22/2011 and have summarized them for you below so that you can see exactly what your HOA dues are paying for.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>Expense</b>
Attorney	Attorney Fees	\$12,939.10
Income Tax Prep	Income Tax Prep	\$1,549.00
Insurance	State mandated insurance	\$6,742.62
Maintenance/Repairs	Clubhouse Flooring	\$3,940.00
Maintenance/Repairs	Computer Repairs/Maintenance	\$43.19
Maintenance/Repairs	Electrical Light Installation/Repairs at Clubhouse	\$1,940.80
Maintenance/Repairs	Fence Repairs	\$2,200.00
Maintenance/Repairs	Landscaping	\$37,017.04
Maintenance/Repairs	Monument Light Repairs	\$11,409.83
Maintenance/Repairs	Monument Restoration	\$2,841.56
Maintenance/Repairs	Plumbing Repairs	\$940.46
Maintenance/Repairs	Pool and Porter Service	\$21,566.39
Maintenance/Repairs	Property Management Fees	\$30,864.83
Maintenance/Repairs	Roof Repairs to Clubhouse	\$3,385.00
Maintenance/Repairs	Security Guard for Pool	\$16,686.50
Maintenance/Repairs	Soccer Goals and Nets and Repairs	\$1,623.76
Pool Fee	Fort Worth Pool Fee	\$505.00
Social	Social Events	\$1,222.82
Utility	Electrical Provider	\$11,871.97
Utility	Internet/TV/Phone for Clubhouse	\$1,090.00
Utility	Natural Gas	\$323.06
Utility	State mandated emergency phone for pool	\$1,172.97
Utility	Water Bill	\$22,247.91
Website	Website Maintenance	\$100.02
		<b><u>\$194,223.83</u></b>

As you can clearly see, between 01/01/2011 and 11/22/2011 we have incurred exactly \$194,223.83 in expenses and our planned income for the year is \$205,530 leaving us a variance of \$11,306.17 to cover expenses between 11/23/2011 and 12/31/2011. Each year the Board evaluates our vendors and often collects new bids from current and prospective vendors to ensure the HOA is getting the best “bargain” for our money as comment 35 pointed out.

As always, the Board welcomes your feedback and encourages you to attend the monthly meetings so that you are aware of the things that are being discussed and what is happening around the Parkwood Hill Estates HOA.