

STERLING WOODS NEWSLETTER

The official publication of Sterling Woods Condominium, Ltd.

Your Social Committee is VERY Active!

The four members; Jeanne Wiemer, Marge Schaefer, Karen Wills and Colette Rodriguez have been busy with creating and carrying out events this year: A

“Let’s get together”

Wine and Cheese party, the Annual Holiday Light Event and the Food Drive.

Our annual “After Holiday Luncheon” which is scheduled for:

January 14th 2024

1:00-4:00 pm

Setauket Pastaria

In addition to planning events, the committee also sends a Welcome Basket to new owners. They will be planning more events in the coming new year.

Please feel free to contact Colette Rodriguez if you have an idea for an event or perhaps create a club.

Sterling Woods is always open to new ideas.

Always check the Sterling Woods website calendar, your email and lastly, the bulletin by the mailboxes for events.

President’s Message

As our community transitions to a new management company and we finalize the budgeting process your Board of managers are optimistic that we have laid the groundwork for financial stability, barring any unexpected major expenses. We will continue to maintain fiscal restraint as we head into what we hope is a replenishing period both financially and socially for our community.

There is much to do and consider. Community involvement can help us do more. Without your involvement, we can only accomplish so much. We encourage all homeowners to engage with your neighborhood management structure. Your time and talent would be valuable either on one of our established committees or allow us to expand some of our shared goals. Additionally, your participation in our upcoming elections is vital. Feel free to contact any Board member for further information.

As this holiday season continues, we wish all neighbors and their families good health, prosperity and happiness! Tony Wills, President

Connect with Colette

Dear Homeowner,

It’s always nice to hear about some good news in our neighborhood. To that end, I would like you, a Sterling Woods resident, to share any good news that you would like to let everyone know about. Be it the birth of a grandchild, an anniversary, whatever you want to shout out!

Send it to me Colette at: colrodriguez.swcondo@gmail.com and I will pass it on. It must come from you and your family, as I will not print anything that is a second party. Let’s keep in touch!

A good online source for information is: TBR News Media <https://tbrnewsmedia.com/>

TBR News Media serves the North Shore of Suffolk County on Long Island, from Cold Spring Harbor to Wading River. Follow them on Instagram too: @tbrnewsmedia. You can find out about what’s happening around our area.

If anyone has an event that would be good for the community to know about, let’s hear from you. I look forward to hearing from you!

Thanks, Colette Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary

August Wine & Cheese Get Together

We had such a great turn out, we want to thank everyone who participated in bringing wine, cheese, and other goodies! And of course we want to thank Joe Cumia #55 for entertaining us & assisting in the game Name That Tune. The winners won a raffle ticket.

Speaking of Raffle Tickets.... a big thank you for all those who purchased raffle tickets for our 50-50. We collected \$510, Karen Headley #50 WON! She graciously donated her winnings back to Sterling Woods, thank you Karen! The funds were deposited into our operating bank account. As usual Marie Kramp #43 took a bunch of pictures and shared them with us.



December Holiday Lighting and Thank you!

Sterling Woods would like to thank the Lighting Crew for doing a magnificent job on the lights this year. These Holiday Elves worked on the lights over the span of a week. The weather cooperated and allowed them to add some new additions like the lights in the evergreens near the mailboxes which we will enjoy throughout the Season.

Jimmy Rodriguez #12
Joe LaPietra #13
David Kunins #59
Charlie Haggist #8
Jim Dowd #52
Ralph Venturini #51
Chuck Shaefer #53

We also want to thank the Social Committee for putting the Lighting Event together.

The lights came on as the group listened to music and sipped on hot cocoa. It appeared that nobody wanted to leave.



Sterling Woods is a Giving Community!

On December 9th, the Social Committee held a Food Drive and thanks to your generous donations, **15 boxes** were filled to the top with nonperishable food items and donated to "Long Island Cares."



Our donations weighed in at
350 pounds of kindness!!

Our Food Drive will help many Long Islanders who are food insecure, especially this time of year.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

From The Board: THANK YOU... STERLING WOODS VOLUNTEERS

The Board would like to say
THANK YOU to the many
volunteers who help keep
Sterling Woods Condominium
a great place to live in
Port Jefferson Station!

We have 4 active Committees
and in total, at any given time
we have more than
10 neighbors who regularly
volunteer their time and energy
to lead various initiatives and
activities that benefit all of our
Sterling Woods residents.





***Is it good to have
WILD TURKEYS
in your yard?***

On November 8th we had five wild turkeys visit Sterling Woods. Don't be alarmed, this may just be a good thing!

According to Wild Birds Unlimited, an adult turkey is one of the most voracious tick predators around, and an individual may eat 200 or more of these little critters in a given day. However, be aware, turkeys can be aggressive if provoked. During mating season (February-May), male turkeys may venture into neighborhoods looking for females to mate with. They may respond aggressively to reflective surfaces (such as windows, automobile mirrors, or polished car doors), thinking that their reflection is an intruding male turkey. In this case, temporarily cover the reflective surface if possible.

Please keep in mind, It is against the NYS and Brookhaven Law to harass any bird or wildlife that is on the property. Guess these guys won't be on your table come any holiday soon.

WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS!

Say hello to our new neighbors who moved in during this fall!

Virginia Pine and her daughter Skylar #45

Anne-Valerie Boisin #39

Mathew Kahn and Lauren Waldeck #17

May their new homes be filled with wonderful memories and great times in our community!

The Market is HOT! 

With high-demand, low-inventory and rising mortgage rates, the median sale price of a home in Suffolk County was \$600K last month, up 9.1% since last year. Sterling Woods had 3 homes sell for an average price of \$580,000. * Demonstrating not only are we in a competitive market but having well-maintained and updated properties is key to our investment.

*As per RedFin online

<https://www.redfin.com/county/1996/NY/Suffolk-County/housing-market>

What will happen to the Port Jeff Plaza?

Port Jefferson Station/Terryville is approaching a potentially community-defining transformation as the Brookhaven Town Board weighs the future redevelopment of the Jefferson Plaza shopping center, owned by Islandia-based Staller Associates.

You can read more about this at this website:

<https://tbrnewsmedia.com/category/port-jefferson-station-terryville/>

Sterling Woods Board Updates

Change

Sterling Woods Homeowners voted on July 17th 2023, for change. This can bring on the unknown and some stress. The Board believes Homeowners saw more benefits in a change of direction, more flexibility with options, opportunities and newfound motivation. In doing so the new Board embarked on sending out a survey to gain more insights. Some highlights of results of the 2023 SW Survey are listed below.

1. Financial stability and minimizing rate increases are overwhelmingly the most important results asked for by the community.
2. Maintain and enhance the beauty of our community understanding that financial conditions will need to be taken into account.
3. In terms of Communication - 53% of you said you would prefer email communication, 35% said text. And 65% said you would attend more Board Meetings if we had a Zoom Platform.
4. 85% of you answered you would support investing in your community to build a fund for future repair and replacement of major components.

Recent Board Decisions*

July 17, 2023

- The majority of Sterling Woods HomeOwners elected a new Board.

August 2023

- The board removed the house rule requiring Sterling Woods residents to live in the community for 36 months in order to run for the Board.
- Colette Rodriguez decided to step down as a Full Board Member and continue as Assistant Secretary. The Board appointed Tony Wills to fill in her place on the Board. The new Board is: President Tony Wills, Vice-President/Secretary Rafaelina Dowd, Treasurer Sussan Muller.
- The Board approved forming Committees for Homeowners to get involved.
- The Communications Committee was created. A House rules charter was approved and a Facility and Elections Committee was approved for initiation.
- A new website was approved for Sterling Woods Condominium. Work Order/Service tickets process was also approved by the Board.
- The Board approved use of the Zoom application so more homeowners can attend meetings.
- The new Board approved continuing legal action with a delinquent homeowner.
- Board places a HOLD on Discretionary Spending due to SW financial situation.
- The Board approved Survey Questions and distribution to the homeowners

August 2023 continued

- The Board approved to Increase the Monthly Common Charges to \$599 and an Assessment of \$3,000 for the FY 23/24 .
- The new Board approved holding a Community meeting on Sept 19th, 2023.
- The Board approved that when Homeowners request copies of documents, the board will also receive a copy. This motion was approved.

September 2023

- The Board approved a motion that Dryer Vents should be serviced by the Homeowners.
- The Board approved a motion to sign with Alexander Wolf management Companies and terminate Camco.
- September 19th slides and Zoom Meeting was emailed to Homeowners. This is the link to the presentation:<https://zoom.us/rec/share/PRgdviw2UpVYj7XjHrSDOnwuh6-yQhbFE2I0UrRLs-2BXEuwpUizDYrcEltHc.MfPUnSHOrGFGGeCFA> Passcode: QfPv.K9W
- The Board introduces the Sterling Woods website. The address is <https://www.sterlingwoodscondo.org>

October 2023

- House Rules, Social Committee Charter shared with Homeowners.
- The Board approved Briscoe to schedule Fire Alarm Inspection the week of 10-23-23.
- The Board approved the recommendation from the Rules Committee to suspend the Parking Sticker requirement house rule.
- November 13th Budget Meeting was scheduled at the Comsewogue Library.
- The Board approved a motion to keep the budget for FY 23/24 at \$438,468.
- The Board approved the Motion to approve the Snow Removal and Landscaping Contracts. The Snow Removal contract was renewed for \$35,46.25 for 3 years (The previous contract was \$ 29,328.76 for 3 years). The landscaping contract was renewed for \$ 58,657.50 for 4 years (The previous contract was \$ 54,308 for 3 years).
- The Board approved the motion to not terminate Briscoe Contract given it's a SEVEN (7) Year contract and it would be too costly to fight any potential ligation.
- The Board approved a new Legal Council, Schneider & Buchel .
- The Board approved replacing one of the two pumps and upgrading a new electrical conduit.

November 2023

- The Board approved the roof repair work for the following units (51, 24, 13, 44) for a total of \$6,300.25.
- The Board approved replacing the hardcopy Newsletter with a Digital Newsletter.
- The Board approved an estimate by Morin to clean all Sterling Woods gutters for approximately \$1,900.
- On November 13th at the annual budget meeting, a Powerpoint presentation was presented to meeting attendees (31 units were represented in person & 9 homeowners attended by Zoom). The Board presented the 23/24 operating budget, which was set at \$438,462. The board has anticipated that Reserve Funds will grow mainly from the assessment revenue from each homeowner. Barring any withdrawal for capital expenditures it is projected it will be at \$183,000. In addition our contributions from our common charges will contribute another \$40,000 into the reserve fund to a projected \$223,000.
- A 2023 vs 2024 Budget slide was discussed in depth with highlights of the top 6 increases. Highlights from FY 22/23; Continued increases from the vendors (Liability, Alarm, and Trash), Roof leak expense \$96,000 YTD and the \$45,000 loan repayment from Reserves was not budgeted making it difficult to pay our bills and maintain our community. FY 23/24 Highlights: Common Charges to start December 1st at \$599, Assessment fee \$3,000, New management company, watchful eye on some problem areas(Roof, Pond, Sewage Pump/generator & Fire Alarms).

Comparison of FY22/23 vs FY 23/24 Budgets

Expense Categories	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	% +/- from 2023 Budget
Landscaping	54,309.00	58,657.50	8%
General Liability	30,000.00	46,560.09	55%
STP/Sewers	40,000.00	41,000.00	3%
Reserves	40,000.00	40,000.00	0%
Snow Removal	29,329.00	36,000.00	23%
Management Fees	18,600.00	24,000.00	29%
Water	22,000.00	23,000.00	5%
Trash Removal	15,500.00	20,737.20	34%
Building Maint	19,000.00	20,000.00	5%
Electric	16,000.00	16,805.33	5%
Alarm Monitor/ Insp	13,379.00	14,424.28	8%
Landscaping- Chem/fert	11,000.00	12,972.00	18%
Landscaping Other	12,000.00	11,000.00	-8%
Security/Alarm Maint	2,000.00	10,000.00	400%
Irrigation	12,000.00	9,000.00	-25%
STP (R&M) Waste	6,500.00	8,500.00	31%
Pond	5,592.00	8,000.00	43%
Legal Fees	1,000.00	7,524.00	652%
STP Contingency		6,000.00	
Contingency	5,206.00	5,000.00	-4%
Electrical R&M	2,000.00	4,258.32	113%
Accounting Fees	3,800.00	4,000.00	5%
Umbrella Liability	1,800.00	2,420.00	34%
Officers Policy	2,000.00	2,166.00	8%
Misc Office	2,700.00	2,000.00	-26%
Pest Control	1,000.00	2,000.00	100%
State Taxes	250.00	675.00	170%
Postage	-	650.00	
Gas Natl Grid	500.00	500.00	0%
Dues	365.00	350.00	-4%
Bank Fees	-	-	
Engineering Fees		-	
Plumbing	-	-	
	367,830.00	438,199.72	19%

December 2023

- Wolf Assessment Letter Motion was approved unanimously.
- The Board approved to move forward with a violation letter for unit # XX for non-compliance with Fire inspection.
- The Board approved #44 work order for roof repair.
- The Board approved roof repair work for unit #51 (2nd leak in 2 months) & #29 is pending . The estimate for roof #51 is \$2,009.56.

*Please note not all decisions are posted here

Treasurer's Report

Regarding our Community, it has been a very hectic couple of months for all of us here at Sterling Woods. A new board, a new property management company and of course the issues with our finances.

December 1st starts Sterling Woods new fiscal year. We hope this year to change our fiscal year so it runs Jan 1- Dec 31, this would make things a bit easier for us and our vendors.

We have pretty much finalized the 2023-2024 budget. With our new monthly common charge of \$ 599, the final budget comes in at \$438,468. This increase will help facilitate the paying of our bills. The assessment of \$3,000 to be paid in 2024, will help grow our Reserves. You have 2 options to pay this assessment. Starting in January you can pay whichever works best for you. Pay the entire amount in January or \$750 a month for each of the 4 months January thru April. These charges will be shown on your monthly invoice.

With the transition to the new property management company, Alexander Wolf, we have already begun working with them. Wolf has assisted us by finding new vendors and we are confident that Wolf will guide us to help restore our finances to a healthy outcome.

The contracts with Discover for our Landscaping and Snow Removal have been finalized and we have a few more contracts/agreements to attend to.

December 1st starts a new fiscal year, this will be a new year for all of us at Sterling Woods. Thank you for your support and patience as we transition to all things good. Susan Muller, Treasurer

Board Elections

Our annual Election Meeting will be held in February 2024, exact date to be determined.

The board is discussing and reviewing with our attorneys all three interim positions and we will share with Sterling Woods Homeowners the election procedures.



Resident Reminders

House rules - Ugh! Not a favorite topic of the Boards but a necessity to mention and remind our neighbors the importance of enforcing. The primary purpose of having community rules and standards is to protect your investment as a homeowner and provide a common framework for all of us. Some specific benefits are that it enhances home values, it preserves the aesthetics of the community, and it keeps us in compliance with our by-laws, our governing documents . We would like to stress a big one:

Modification of Property

If you are thinking of changing the front door, adding an Egress window or adding some new flowers to the front yard , please review the house rules. Before you begin any project please go to our website <https://www.sterlingwoodscondo.org/> to access helpful information regarding which projects require approval by the Board and the applications you will need to move forward. There is also a Responsibility chart for Owners that clearly defines whether homeowners or the HOA is responsible. Completed applications must be submitted no later than every First Monday of the month in order to be reviewed at that month's meeting. Please forward your completed application to Alexander Wolf Management.

PLEASE REFER TO THE STERLING WOODS WEBSITE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF HOUSE RULES



NEW MANAGEMENT COMPANY

As part of the Board's fiscal responsibilities, we voted to look for a new management company. We needed a partner where communication is easy, financial records follow standard accounting principles, access to a larger consortium of vendors that could bring us some savings. And also we needed to partner with a company that had experience with best practices in community associations. **Alexander Wolf Management ,Inc** was chosen for all the reasons listed.

Already they are on the ground strategically giving us best options on approaching our aging roofs. Charles J. Incandela is a Vice President & Director of Management, he and his team, Kristi Altieri-Assistant Manager and Thomas Benincase, Senior Property Manager are working with the Board to manage daily operational tasks. Alexander Wolf Management ,Inc's website is: <https://www.alexanderwolf.com>

Did You Know About *Time Of Day?*

PSE&G has begun a program to help save you money? What?

That's right, the new "Time Of Day" program gives you more control over how much you have to pay for your electric energy.

Starting September 15, 2023

How do the Time-of-Day Rates Work?

With TOD rates, you pay different rates for electricity based on the season (summer and non-summer) and time of day. **Peak hours will be from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays.** All other hours will be off-peak. Nights, weekends, and less than the 180 Flat Rate during 88% of the year. For more information, go to: pseqliny.com/timeofday to sign up. If you don't sign up, according to PSEG these rates will go into effect sometime in 2024 automatically. Read the information, then scroll all the way to the bottom and sign up to participate. Make sure you have your Account number available. While you're on the PSEG website, look for rebates for thermostats.

Important Contact Information

<p>Sterling Woods Condominium 62 Gettysburg Drive sterlingwoodscondo@gmail.com</p> <p>Tony Wills, President 646-528-2937 tonywills.swcondo@gmail.com 6 Gettysburg Drive</p> <p>Rafaelina Dowd, Vice President/Secretary 516-639-8907 rafaelinad.swcondo@gmail.com 52 Gettysburg Drive</p> <p>Susan Muller, Treasurer 631-476-3637, 516-885-5922 (cell) susanm.swcondo@gmail.com 56 Gettysburg Drive</p> <p>Colette Rodriguez, Assistant Secretary colrodriguez.swcondo@gmail.com 12 Gettysburg Drive</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DESIGNATED TEAM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ALEXANDER WOLF & COMPANY</p> <p>Charles Incandela, Vice President – Director of Management (516) 349-0540, ext. 244 Email: cincandela@alexanderwolf.com</p> <p>Kristi Altieri, Assistant Manager (516) 349-0540, ext. 253 Email: kaltieri@alexanderwolf.com</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">For Non-Emergent Calls</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mon- Fri 9AM to 5 PM Call 516-349-0540</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For payments Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Login clickpay.com/alexanderwolf. 2. Login https://www.alexanderwolf.com/ <p>For payments with remittance or for your online banking system: c/o Alexander Wolf & Company P.O. Box 61040 Newark, NJ 07101</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Industrial Coverage Mickey Romeo, 631-736-7500 Ext 115</p> <p>(Sterling Woods Master Insurance - if your mortgage company needs proof of the master insurance, fax request to 631-736-7619 or email CERTS@industrialcoverage.com)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MAGGIO Environmental, LLC 631-696-6300 for bulk item service</p>	<p>After Hours Emergency Number are handled by our 24-hour answering service (516-692-3731). (weeknights 5pm to 9am and 24 hours Saturday, Sunday, and holidays)</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Fire Department</p> <p style="text-align: center;">911 or 631-473-1224 non-emergency</p>
<p>If you see something wrong, call Alexander Wolf Services:</p> <p>After Hours Emergency Number: (516-692-3731). (weeknights 5pm to 9am and 24 hours Saturday, Sunday, and holidays)</p>	