

## **Irrigation Committee**

### **SUMMARY AND FINDINGS**

On March 19<sup>th</sup> 2013, the RLPOA Board President formed the Irrigation Committee. Open meetings were held weekly on Mondays from March 19<sup>th</sup> thru August 15<sup>th</sup>. All residents were invited to attend.

The purpose of this committee:

- Gather concerns and other information relative to watering from the lake and other tributaries within the confines of Raintree Lake.
- Address concerns that have been expressed in the past from residents regarding watering from the lake.
- Pull together those concerns along with new ones as they arose during meetings.
- Present the concerns as objectively as possible to the Board and Raintree residents in a fact based and unemotional report.
- Provide the following details to allow the Board and residents information to make a group decision concerning this issue.

Concerns Addressed:

- DEPLETION OF LAKE WATER
- FAIRNESS
- AESTHETICS
- HEALTH CONCERNS
- WATERSCAPES
- CONSTRUCTION GUIDLINES
- ENFORCEMENT / FEES / FINES
- POSSIBLE VIOLATION OF COVENANTS
- BENEFITS

Concerns Addressed Individually:

#### **DEPLETION OF LAKE WATER**

After studying eight years of lake level history (see attached chart), the Irrigation committee agrees that 9 inches is the maximum depletion level to be allowed.

To prevent exceeding a 9 inch limit to water draw down, the committee explored a sliding scale as well as a fixed shut-off elevation.

Noted Point: According to our historical measurements, we have seen that we have a very resilient lake that responds well to rain events. Single rain events have proven to restore the lake to full pool on nearly every occasion. See the attached lake level charts since 2005 for reference.

In summary, the committee believes one of two options should be used for determining shut off. The below measurements are based on the gauge placed at the clubhouse in September of 2004. This is the same gauge from which all of the calculations of this and accompanying documents are based.

- Fixed value
  - At any time: Maximum of 9 inches down
- Sliding Scale
  - June: Maximum of 3 inches down
  - July: Maximum of 6 inches down
  - August: Maximum of 9 inches down

### **FAIRNESS**

This was the most volatile of all the concerns, and was the most commonly voiced concern. Most of these discussions were purely emotional such as: “If I can’t have it then they can’t have it” and were not based on facts. Most of these residents felt an unfair benefit would be gained by those allowed to pump from the lake. Most discussions were about fairness which is an emotional negative response. Others felt that the privilege to enjoy an amenity should have some positive impact for the community and suggested that fees charged to participants that are collected should be directed to the general fund thus benefiting the entire community.

### **AESTHETICS**

All committee members were in agreement that draw lines should not conflict with the aesthetics of the lake or be plainly visible. All affected areas should be maintained by the homeowner at their expense, and be properly landscaped. Additionally, pumps previously installed by the association should be brought into compliance with this standard.

### **HEALTH CONCERNS**

The committee has heard differing opinions relative to safety when pumping from the lake when indicator organisms are present. The committee agrees that this matter that should be researched independently of this committee and if Blue Valley or some other disinterested authoritative party deems so, the association would note “Red Flag” events as non pumping periods and members having systems would cease to pump.

### **WATERSCAPES**

There was no interest brought forward regarding utilizing water from waterscapes. The same guidelines would need to be established if residents request to do so. Each waterscape would need to be evaluated to determine an allowable level drop and a level gauge would need to be installed.

### **CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES**

Installation of draw lines are only to be performed by a licensed and bonded contractor. Homeowner assumes all responsibility for necessary repairs & maintenance to their system as well as to the common ground impacted by the draw lines. This includes future settling that may arise from any disturbed ground.

Discussion related to limiting access to one lot per pump revealed that allowing multiple lots to share a pump would result in fewer pipes into the lake, less work for the association to manage, and if lake levels are managed, would not matter how much water is drawn in a given period.

Additional Guideline Considerations are listed in Section 3 – Installation Guidelines of the recommended “Rules & Regulations for Irrigation Systems Pumping From Waterways” document.

### **ENFORCEMENT / FEES / FINES**

In order to enforce compliance of established lake watering guidelines, a fee structure that more than offsets the association’s labor spent monitoring this amenity should be required and the fine structure should discourage non-compliance by making it such that the benefit of use is less than the fee for non-compliance.

Enforcement mechanisms will include:

- An “Hours” meter placed near the pump to monitor usage will be easily accessible to association personnel in order to monitor compliance.
- Participants will be required to report their meter reading monthly and upon announcement to stop using lake water.
- Participants will grant a right of access to Raintree staff and their designees to monitor and or disable systems during a “no watering” period.
- As a courtesy, Raintree will notify the membership via eNews that pumping from the lake should cease. Members pumping from the lake should sign up for eNews to receive these notifications, however, it will be the responsibility of the participant to check the Raintree website for postings of no watering prior to activating their system each time.
- Irrigation systems should be turned off within 72 hours of notice where notice is the time of delivery of the eNews announcing the event at which time readings should also be reported.

Fees for use:

- The committee agreed that the fee should be tied to the annual assessment of the Class A annual dues.
- Pumping fees will increase annually at the same rate of the assessment increase.
- The committee was divided on the percentage of the Class A dues 50% vs 100% and as a result compromised at 75% of Class A dues per year per draw line.

Additional Fees and Fines are listed in Section 5 – Fines and Penalties when above rules are not followed of the recommended “Rules & Regulations for Irrigation Systems Pumping From Waterways” document.

### **POSSIBLE VIOLATION OF COVENANTS**

After review of the bylaws and covenants, the committee has been unable to find where the board has authority to restrict (neither allow nor disallow) residents’ access to lake water, but that the association can have rules governing the maintenance of the common ground.

### **BENEFITS**

- The City of Lee’s Summit has encouraged the use of alternative water sources for watering lawns.
- Fees charged to participants that are collected should be directed to the general fund thus benefiting the entire community.

- A portion of Common ground may be maintained by members using lake water which would lessen the burden of upkeep on the association and add to the overall attractiveness of our neighborhood.
- Frequently watered areas, both lawns and common ground, help chemicals absorb and not run off during a rainstorm.
- Watered and maintained common area is less susceptible to erosion.
- Lake water is healthier for lawns than chlorinated city water.

## **SUMMARY**

In summary, the Irrigation Committee, like the people who attended these meetings and previous sessions hosted by this and previous boards, is split on this matter.

The committee did agree that this is a matter best decided by the membership. As such, we recommend this goes before the membership for a vote in an attempt to address all the matters brought before the Irrigation Committee and minimize the board's time on this matter.

In the event that the board wants to take this to the membership, we have included a proposed fine & fee structure and installation guidelines.