

# Town Hall Meeting Report

**Date:** March 26, 2026

**Purpose:** Discussion of Proposed Amended and Restated Covenants and Voting Process

## Introduction

The Members Town Hall meeting was held on March 26, 2026, at the River North Country Club. The primary purpose was to address ongoing concerns, provide updates on amended covenants, discuss HOA assessments, clarify board procedures, and inform members about upcoming community decisions. This report summarizes the meeting's proceedings for the benefit of all River North HOA members.

## Recurring Issues: Comparison with March 12 Meeting

Several topics from the previous town hall on March 12 were revisited, most notably the rental cap restrictions outlined in the amended covenants. Members raised questions about the limitations on rental properties, reflecting a continued focus on balancing homeowner interests and preserving community standards.

## Rental Property Restrictions

- Rental caps were discussed in both meetings; this topic was overlooked and not reported in the written summary of the first meeting.
- The primary question was whether the 5% rental cap has been reached in River North. Currently, there are 32 rental homes, which equals 5%.
- Existing leases will be allowed to continue. However, month-to-month leases must be converted to a minimum six-month lease.
- It was asked whether the Architectural Control Committee could inspect rental homes before leasing. This was noted as difficult to implement. All properties—rental or owner-occupied—are already subject to covenant compliance reviews.
- Ownership Requirements: The amended covenants require owners seeking to rent their properties to obtain prior approval from the HOA board. This aims to ensure rentals align with community values and standards.
- Board Approval: All rental applications must be reviewed and authorized by the board. The approval process considers the current cap on rental units and the applicant's compliance with HOA guidelines.
- Lease Terms: Lease agreements must meet minimum duration requirements—short-term rentals are prohibited. The board emphasized that leases must be at least 6 months, with no subleasing allowed.

- Exceptions: Exceptions to the rental cap include hardship cases (such as job relocation, illness, or financial distress), subject to board evaluation. Existing rentals granted prior to the covenant amendment may also be grandfathered in.
- Current Cap Status: The HOA maintains a strict limit on the percentage of homes permitted for rental at any given time. Members debated whether this cap should be revised to accommodate market conditions, but the board confirmed that the current cap is what was considered reasonable by the Covenants Committee.

## Assessment Types

A member asked for a breakdown of the various assessments provided in the amended covenants.

- General Assessment: These are the monthly assessment that apply to every lot in the community. They are sometimes referred to as HOA dues that are collected from all members to cover routine maintenance and operations.
- Special Assessment: is a one-time lump sum assessment levied for unexpected expenses or major projects. Special assessments must be approved by the vote of the membership before they can be assessed. The last time a special assessment occurred was back before 1994.
- Specific Assessment: These are charges targeted at certain specific properties and usually are in the form of fees or fines pertaining to that specific property.
- Capital Reserve Fee: This is new to the covenants for River North. It was again an issue debated at length at this meeting. Some members questioned the necessity and amount of the capital reserve fee, suggesting the possibility of a grandfather clause to exempt current owners. The board responded that the fee is essential for long-term financial stability and will continue to review exemption options. The fee does apply to condominiums and cannot be increased unless the covenants are further amended at a later date.
- Grandfathering the fee was discussed. The board's position is:
  - If the fee is appropriate, it should take effect immediately.
  - Grandfathering could delay any revenue generation for 5 or 10 years.
  - If the fee is not appropriate, it should not be implemented at all. It was acknowledged that if the fee was not applied to current homeowners, the amendment may be more likely to be approved by the residents. However, the board's feeling is if the fee is bad, it will be bad now as much as it would be bad 5 to 10 years from now.

## Bridge Maintenance and Reserve Funds

- **Inspection Schedule:** The bridge receives regular inspections to ensure safety and structural integrity.
- **Funding Commitments:** the board is committed to have the Reserve funds allocated for bridge maintenance.

## Board Procedures

- If the amendment passes, there will be one board; board member terms will remain one year.
- Board meetings typically have 5–7 observers. Members are encouraged to attend board meetings to stay informed and voice concerns. They are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 in the back gate office.
- Executive sessions are scheduled for each meeting but only held if needed. Any resulting action items are reported afterward.
- Recording meetings was discussed; Town hall and board meeting minutes are posted to the HOA webpage promptly to ensure transparency. It was suggested that audio recordings be made available. There are some technical issues with this as a lengthy audio recording would be a very large file and difficult to download and review.

## Voting Methods

- **Budget Approval:** Budgets will be presented for member review, with voting conducted in person or by proxy.
- **Proxy Voting:** Proxy voting procedures were explained, allowing members unable to attend to designate representatives.
- **Amended Covenants Voting:** The upcoming vote on May 7, 2026, will determine whether the proposed amendments to the covenants are adopted. Members were urged to participate, as the outcome will shape community policies for the foreseeable future.

## Club Contribution

- **Club's Assessment:** The River North Country Club contributes its share of HOA assessments, supporting maintenance and improvement projects.
- **Cooperation with HOA:** The Club and HOA continue to collaborate, and the board is discussing a written agreement to be entered between the HOA and the Club to fostering a positive relationship.

## Townhome Proposal

- **Development Plans:** The proposal to build new townhomes behind the condominiums is still under evaluation by the developer.
- **Issue to be resolved;** The impact on water, sewer, road access, and Architectural Control Committee approval would all be required before construction can begin.
- **Approval Process:** The proposal must undergo review by the board and we may seek member input before moving forward.
- **Impact Fees:** Developers will be required to pay impact fees to offset for the use of our infrastructure and services during construction.

## Impact of Merging Covenants

- **Neighborhood Covenants:** The merging of existing neighborhood covenants into a unified association structure was discussed. This amendment relates to the covenants for River North Association and River Communities Association and the other individual covenants will remain in effect but should not complicate the governance of the homeowner's association.
- **New Association Structure:** The board assured members that the new structure would streamline governance and enhance community cohesion.

## Conclusion: Upcoming Vote and Member Participation

The next major decision for the community is the vote on amended covenants scheduled for May 7, 2026. All River North HOA members are encouraged to review the proposals, and participate in the vote, either in person or by proxy. The board emphasized that member involvement is critical to the future direction and success of the community.