

**SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN OWNERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**SMOA – PO Box 707 – Datil, NM 87821**

**Newsletter – Fall 2025**

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting and Potluck has historically been held on Labor Day weekend. Because people may have plans for the holiday weekend that prevent them from attending, the Board of Directors decided to hold the 2025 Annual Meeting and Potluck on **Saturday September 6th** at 11:00am, at the Community Parcel. The main order of business will be the election of directors. Ballots are enclosed.

**NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING**

A Special Meeting will be held immediately after the conclusion of the Annual Meeting and before the Potluck. There will be two agenda items to be addressed; 1) a vote on a "quit claim deed" that will convey a portion of Metate Lane to Freddie "Wolf" Fuentes, and 2) a non-binding vote on the purchase of a road grader. A summary of each agenda item is presented on the ballot and additional information is available on our website ([sugarloafmtoa.org](http://sugarloafmtoa.org)) on the COMMUNITY DOCUMENTS page.

**BALLOTS**

The ballot for the election of directors and the special meeting items is included with this Newsletter. Your Association dues must be current for your votes to be counted. You may bring your ballot/dues in person to the meeting or mail your ballot/dues to the address listed above, postmarked no later than September 3, 2025. We hope everyone will attend for the announcement of the vote tallies for the 2025-26 Board of Directors and the special meeting proposals. Come on out to enjoy a traditional cookout and mingle with your neighbors!

**ROAD MAINTENANCE**

The 2025 Association budget (which can be found on the website on the COMMUNITY DOCUMENTS page) assumes annual dues income of \$20,560.00, of which \$15,500.00 is budgeted for road maintenance. The Board anticipates no significant change to these figures for the 2026 annual budget.

The current approach to maintaining the subdivision roads has been to contract locally to grade the roads and add material to sections of roadway as needed. Archival records indicate that the Association owns 16 miles of roadway in the lower subdivision and is responsible to maintain an additional 4 miles of "access road" from Green Gap to the cattle guard, for a total of 20 miles of roadway. Bear Track Trail is an additional 1.7 miles of roadway with challenging terrain that services properties in the higher elevations. **Long-term residents are aware that freshly-graded roadways only retain the benefit of grading for about two or three weeks, but not longer than one month, at the most.**

The current rates for road grading are \$250.00/mile (Mangas Construction) or \$175.00/hour (Austin Mc Cormick). The 2025 budget allocates \$11,050.00 of the \$15,500.00 budget for grading and periodic dragging of the access road with a "tire drag" built by one of our owners. The remaining \$4,450.00 is allocated for material and equipment purchases. The current budget allows for approximately 26 miles of grading each year and dragging the access road every two weeks. The main roads that the Association is responsible to maintain (access road, Northern Trail, Southern Trail and Sugarloaf Trail) are a little over 12 miles.

Using our current budget and assuming no increase in the cost of grading, the Association is able to grade the three main subdivision roads and the access road twice each year and drag the access road every two weeks. This does not allow for any maintenance of any of the "side roads", let alone the 1.7 miles of Bear Track Trail. Alternately, the Association could grade all roads in the lower subdivision once each year and drag the access road every two weeks. There are certainly other maintenance scenarios that involve other combinations and frequency of grading/dragging depending on the circumstances.

The Board of Directors has been discussing the best approach to maintaining the subdivision roadways and has concluded that the best option is to maintain the roads “in-house” with our own grader. With our own grader, the main roads could be graded monthly and the side roads could be graded as needed on a rotating basis. The Board has considered all of the expenses (fuel, routine maintenance, operator expense, and insurance) incurred with owning/operating our own grader and is confident that we can improve the roadways in the subdivision and maintain them in exceptional condition going forward.

We’ve located two Caterpillar graders that are within our means. Both graders have minimal operating hours on the meter and are in good repair. Including transportation costs, the Association can have either machine on property for approximately \$12,000.00 - \$15,000.00.

The purchase can be funded entirely from the Association’s savings account, which as of June 30, 2025 has a balance of \$20,563.37. The amount taken from the emergency fund can be replenished over a six-year period (\$2,000.00 - \$2,500.00/year). Additionally, the Association is taking steps to collect \$9,000.00 in delinquent annual assessments. That being said, the Association has adequate funds to make the purchase, fund ongoing operating expenses and retain sufficient funds for unforeseen events and future anticipated expenditures (e.g. access road lease).

A subdivision with well-maintained roads results in better access, enhanced safety, more desirable lots and will arguably increase property values.

In addition to maintaining the roads in better condition than our current circumstances allow, the Association intends to make the grader and an association operator, available to Sugarloaf property owners for projects on their property. Of course, the owner would be responsible for obtaining a quote for the project and paying the actual operating expenses.

An alternative to the grader purchase would be an increase in annual dues. An increase from \$80.00/lot to \$100.00/lot would increase the budget by \$5,140.00, which would only pay for an additional 20 miles of grading (assuming \$250.00/mile). If we were to grade the twelve miles of road in the lower subdivision each month, which would cost \$36,000.00, annual assessments would need to be north of \$140.00/lot.

That leaves our property owners with a decision to make; 1) continue to maintain the roads with the current budget, 2) approve a significant dues increase, or 3) purchase our own grader. Regardless of how the members decide to go forward, each choice has financial consequences and road impacts to consider.

The Board has two experienced operators that can carry out the proposal immediately, but we are also looking for additional people with heavy equipment operating and maintenance experience. We would also welcome additional input on the proposal or alternate proposals to improve the conditions of the roadways that the Association is responsible for maintaining.

### **NEWSLETTER MAILINGS**

In light of yet another increase in postage (stamps are now \$0.78 each) the Board has decided to post the newsletters on the website and email it to owners with an email address on file with the Association. Upon written request, we will mail any newsletters to owners without internet access. Please send your written request for a newsletter to be mailed to the Association address above. **ANNUAL BALLOTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE MAILED.** If you have not updated your contact information with the Association, we encourage you to send your email address and mailing address, with preferred phone number, to: **board@sugarloafmtoa.org**.

### **NOTICE OF ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS**

In accordance with section 3.1 of the CC&Rs, written notice of the annual assessment due date is hereby given. **Annual assessments of \$80.00/lot are due no later than January 31, 2026.** Payments received after that date are subject to late fees, as outlined in section 8.1 (FINE AND LIEN POLICY) of the 2024 Bylaws.