

**PARKFAIRFAX CONDOMINIUMS  
BUDGET TOWN HALL**

**February 15, 2024  
3360 Gunston Road:  
Alexandria, VA 22302**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Directors Present: Scott Buchanan, President; Peter Ferrell, Vice President; Peggy Clancy, Secretary  
Amanda Mullan, Treasurer; Dave Bush, Jeff Lisanick, Claire Eberwein, and Marieke Johnson, Directors.

Directors Absent: Matthew Larson, Director

Others Present: Dana Cross, Assistant General Manager; Donna Young, Recording Secretary.

Call to Order: President Buchanan called the Budget Hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

**EXPLANATION OF AGENDA:**

*Scott Buchanan, President of the Board: Welcome everyone, this is the Parkfairfax Budget Townhall. Just to give a little context of the agenda, for those who have dialed in, as well as those who are here. This is not a Board meeting; this is an opportunity for us to share with the community sort of the initial draft of where we are on the budget. The Budget is one of the most important things that the Association does to assess service standards and levels for all the amenities that we have, and also deals with setting aside sufficient money, making sure we protect our buildings and infrastructure, and, on the flip side, it also sets our condo fees, so there is the good and the bad in the balance that the Board is trying to achieve. Part of this is our multi-month process, and I want to emphasize that we had a budget workshop back in January and we had a lot of folks join us for that. It was a long and laborious process where we went through the budget with a fine-tooth comb looking for changes and updates, we could make, and that produced an initial draft budget with some requirements; then we have this meeting tonight, which is our opportunity to get feedback from the community. Amanda Mullan who is our Treasurer, will give a presentation walking us through high levels of the key considerations and sort of where that takes us, and then we will have a Q&A period and we will take questions from those of you who have dialed in online and those of you in the room. Dial in online as well as those who are in the room and answer them as best we can. We may not have all the answers depending on the level of detail. But hopefully, members of the board will be able to pipe in and address some of those questions that you might have.*

*Following this meeting, next week we have a Board meeting where we will vote on a draft budget; so, if there is feedback and/or changes between here and there we will take some of those under consideration and discuss them at the next Board meeting. And we'll vote on a preliminary budget (that's the first vote of 2) then we will have a draft budget and then we will have another month for continued community feedback before we vote on the final budget. At the March 2024 Board meeting, we will then set the operating budget for the next year and the reserve contributions, as well as the Condo fees going forward.*

*So that's sort of the purpose of this evening and the budget process for those who may not be familiar with it. We're looking forward to everyone's Q&A at the end. As we do with all these meetings, we do provide a residents forum, technically, since this is not a board meeting, so I'm not sure that we're required to do so, but we do provide that opportunity since most of the board is present here, I would ask that if there are*

*questions or comments, that they are related to the budget, and we are going to have a ton of time reserved for that at the end, so we would like to go through any items that are timely and necessary that you may need to raise before we launch into Q&A, and once everyone has heard Amanda's presentation, she may have answered a lot of your questions.*

*Is there anyone who would like to speak in the resident's forum before the Budget Presentation?*

*Then we'll move straight into the budget presentation. I will turn the floor over to our Treasurer, Amanda Mullan, who will walk everyone through a presentation.*

Resident's Forum: No comments were made from the community.

### **BUDGET TOWNHALL PRESENTATION:**

Amanda Mullan, Treasurer: Hello everyone, I have been the Treasurer of the Association for the past two years. As Scott Buchanan mentioned, we hold this panel every year to discuss the draft budget and to answer any questions and we do this before we vote on the final budget just to make sure that we factor in all questions and concerns before March 2024.

I am going to go through the presentation as Scott mentioned, which is an opportunity for the Board to provide a financial perspective of what are the major risks and concerns that the Board needs to keep in mind as we approve the final budget. Board members are fiduciaries of the Association for not only current owners but for future owners in mind as we go through this process.

Agenda: So, on the agenda for this evening, we will be going through the budget considerations and priorities, or as known as the bottom line up front. I will walk us through our current financial picture, where we are at, and provide an overview of the draft FY2025 Budget. I plan to highlight major maintenance projects that we have planned for FY2025 as well as other operating cost drivers that will have a substantial impact on the Association just so owners are aware, and then we will move into discussion and questions. **Next slide please.**

Budget Priorities and Considerations: So, the bottom line is the association is in a strong and healthy financial position today, however, we do continue to face significant impacts on our finances from inflation, and I will also touch on the fact that insurance rates have increased substantially over the past several years, these are 2 things that we cannot control internally as an association. We also have a maintenance backlog; I think everyone knows that the community is over eighty (80) years old and spans over 100 acres. We have a 2020 reserve study that has identified a need for continuing increases to our reserve contributions to ensure that maintenance can be completed and that special assessments can be avoided.

In the Spring of 2023, the Association initiated a major stabilization project of Building #716, as well as many other tuckpointing projects across 20 buildings. These projects alone cost us over 1 million dollars, and they are funded through contributions to our reserves. This spring we need to initiate two more major stabilization projects for Buildings 110, and 111. The Board continues to discuss the review of the 80-year-old roofs and has directed management to initiate a pilot project, and by FY2024 collect data on 2 different approaches to replacing our roofs that will inform a replacement plan; I know there's a lot of discussion of roofs, just to clarify, we have not just voted on a replacement plan, however, the roofs are 80

years old and they need to be replaced at some point in time, and we would like to have a planned approach for that. I believe it to be prudent to start sooner rather than later and ramp up over time.

While the Association has made several capital improvements to the community, we also need to balance modernizing our amenities against the need to fund our reserve contributions and avoid special assessments.

**Next slide please.**

Current Financial Picture: So, walking us through our current financial picture, our auditor this year has completed a review and found that we are well within our recommendations of being at 10 to 20% in owner's equity, so we are looking at having 1.4 million in unreserved equity, which is owners' equity which is 12% of the annual budget, the auditor did make a recommendation that we increase it and get to 15% owner's equity. We also have \$5 million in our reserves as of December 2023 of this year for contracts, and for FY2024/FY2025, we're looking at \$12.6 Million in our Operating Budget.

So based on our calculations, we are within best practices for equity and reserve levels, and we also have been able to offset some inflationary pressure by investing our reserves in CDs, which are a safe investment option using the waterfall approach, and this has yielded in interest over the past several years at a higher rate, however, if the fed decides that interest rates need to come down, then we will yield less.

**Next slide please.**

Draft FY2025 Budget Overview: So, this is an overview of this version of the draft budget, this includes funding for our renegotiated landscaping contract, and it also includes an estimated cost of obtaining insurance based on recommendations from our broker. We don't lock in our premium rate until after we pass the budget; last year we had to go back as a board and readjust based on what the broker was able to get us. So, this year we are being a little bit more conservative, but I will go into that in detail later, I do think it's the right approach for this year. This drafted budget, which the Board has not voted on yet, proposes increases to alternative sources of income to help offset the assessment. This includes selling two units owned by the Association in FY2025 with the net of the income going directly into Reserves, which is approximately \$500,000. Without selling the condo fee units, and if we decided as a Board to contribute to the Reserves at the rate the Reserve Study recommends, this could mean that fees could potentially rise as high as 12%.

We have also proposed increasing some fees based on inflation, we also incorporated some income projections that show that the renovations for our community room and reopening it have yielded a little bit more tax flow through that. Lastly, there are a couple of ideas that were brought up at the February meeting, such as potentially reducing the number of days of trash pickup or charging movement fees for units that are sold. The Board has not incorporated either of those ideas into the draft budget, those can be discussed at our February 2024 meeting when we vote on the draft. **Next slide please.**

Draft FY2025 Budget Overview (Cont.): This slide includes an overview just to get a flavor of our budget. So, 37% of the draft budget currently is going into reserve contributions to maintain the property. Also, a large amount of the budget is costs that we do not have a lot of control over such as utilities, taxes, insurance, personnel, operating repairs, and maintenance, which include things like maintaining our vehicle fleet, and equipment. There are not a lot of places that are ultimately discretionary that we can cut without enacting some painful cuts to the budget. **Next slide please.**

The Key Benefits of Reserve Contributions in Condo Associations: Before we get to the key drivers of the proposed assessment increase. It is beneficial for us to put money aside for the maintenance and repair of

the Association, without contributing to reserves we run the risk of having to levy a special assessment, fund major repairs and replacements, etc. I think we all can agree that this is detrimental to property values, we have seen this happen to properties in the neighboring areas, so the Board is taking this fact seriously, and we seek to avoid that at all costs. The Virginia Condominium Act and the Virginia Property Owners Association Act require associations to undertake a reserve study at least once every 5 years, this is not something that we do just for fun, it is something we are required to do, and it's a very important piece of information that we need to have as we make decisions. We can't just decide that we don't like what the contribution is in the reserve study and deviate from what the reserve study recommends.

As I have already mentioned, with 3 building stabilization projects, we must have these funds available to avoid special assessments. Each building can range between \$600,000 to \$800,000 and possibly more; you might look at our reserves and say we have a lot of funding available. There's a reason why when those things happen and it becomes your building, we need to have funds available to address the situation. **Next slide please.**

Major Maintenance Projects in FY2025: This goes into major maintenance projects that we have talked to our General Manager about conducting in FY2025. For example, you will see here ongoing building settlement and stabilization projects for Buildings #716, 110, and 111. We are looking to expand our tuckpointing so that hopefully we can cut off some future stabilization by re-tuckpointing some of our other buildings sooner rather than later. We are planning the pilot for replacing 2 roofs. We also have general maintenance and repair of the roofs, which is a substantial portion of our reserve contribution expenditures. We also have domestic pipe replacement, stoop replacement, gas pipe repair, retaining wall replacement, sewer line repairs, and more; proposed spending is \$4 million from Reserves in the next fiscal year. **Next slide please.**

Major Maintenance Projects in FY2024: These are some pictures to highlight some of the ongoing work in the community so that you can get a sense of what your reserve contributions and expenditures go to. Martha Custis pool, there was a lot of maintenance work done to extend the life of the Martha Custis pool for several years; that was undertaken last fall, and then there was some ongoing work to stabilize some of our retaining walls; erosion is a massive issue on the community's property which we are taking steps to address some of those things as well. **Next slide please.**

Roof Maintenance in 2024: So, roofs, these photos are the state of our roofs, and it concerns me greatly, this is just from several roofs, in recent times, but you can see there are a lot of issues with them, we have broken tiles, we have missing tiles, we have a lot of things going on up there. Hopefully, this isn't news to anybody, but it's not a matter of if we are going to replace roofs, it's a matter of when we are going to replace roofs. Again, I just want to highlight that I think if we undertake a pilot and understand exactly what it entails to replace the roofs, we are not taking it lightly, getting started is the key, and keep in mind it's not conceptual; it is reality. **Next slide please.**

Annual Operating Expenses: This slide highlights our annual operating expenses since 2020. Last year I had a slide that showed that inflation was between 12% and 20% with regards to construction costs, while we in discussions have agreed that inflation has subsided somewhat, but still has an impact on our annual expenses relating to inflation. We have cut a lot of things in the past from the budget to try to head off some of these painful increases in operating expenses, however, I don't know if there's a whole lot left to cut without paying, for example, reducing the number of days of trash, it's not a popular idea for everyone, but it's something that potentially has to be on the table, as the Association faces increasing operating expenses.

Just wanted to pause here and see if Scott had anything else to add.

Scott Buchanan, President of the Board: I think that the problem with inflation, of course, is once it's happened, it doesn't go away and it never goes down again; the rate of growth just continuously slows. One of the things that are also built in is this is related inflation, but under our contract for employees, we had sort of fixed increases that happened year over year that were negotiated in Union contracts, so those are triggers regardless of what we do, so we have these organic sorts of growths in operating expenses that always putting pressure on things but one of the things that have been helpful to us is aggressively investing CD's and looking for opportunities to buy at the right time to get much higher interest rates and yields on all of our reserves which has helped but when interest rates fall, that will fall too, so that revenue stream will decline for us. We have a lot of things in our budget that are outside of our control. **Next slide please.**

Insurance Premiums Increased by 76% since 2021: I pulled our insurance premium since 2021 to illustrate that we are seeing alarming growth. Our insurance premiums have increased by over 76% over the last several years. This year we are budgeting on the high side so the final draft budget number may not ultimately be what we pay, but it could be higher, or it could be lower. We feel confident about this number, however, it is not final, until it is final. Last year we ultimately had to pay an amount over our budget, so we are trying to take a conservative approach this year. Things that we can do to try to negotiate with our insurance companies, we have taken steps proactive replace electrical panels over the past year as a way to mitigate against future increases but there is only so much that we can undertake to offset this kind of increase. There are just not as many insurance companies that like dealing with condo associations, so there is only so much that we can do. We will continue exploring things and talking to our Barken Management, to see if there's other stuff that we can try to head this off before it gets much worse. And not to alarm anybody, but if we were potentially pushed into a secondary market; talking with Barkan Management while developing this budget, a couple of their condo associations did get pushed into a secondary market and ended up paying a premium of \$2.1 million per year for their insurance premium. With that in mind, another reason why we want to be conservative with funding our reserve contributions this year is that if something like that were to occur, there are not a lot of options for us, so we may have to borrow against reserves. I am not saying that this is going to happen, but it is a potential and it's something that the Board needs to keep in mind as we talk about FY2025. **Next slide please.**

What Does This Mean for Me? You may be wondering, what does this all mean for me? We are currently sitting in front of a draft budget that would mean an assessment increase of %7.08, starting on June 1, 2024. This is about 30 to \$60 per month, depending on your type of unit and this would allow the board to continue to make decisions that provide contributions to reserve based on the 2020 Reserve Study which supports needed maintenance and future risks. I will add that the first draft of the budget was at 14%; we have been able to take some actions to get this number down, but if we take certain things off the table when we vote on it, the number can still fluctuate; this isn't locked in, as of February 15, 2024, this is where we are at. **Next slide please.**

Annual Assessments Increases: This will put that number into context, assessments have varied over time, I think this slide is gotten out at several different presentations, just showing it again to show that there have been some periods where assessments have increased by quite a bit, and then years of flat assessments. Ultimately an ideal situation would be more stable increases over time, but it is an annual budget process, so there is no locking in assessments or anything like that the Board can do. And since it's a new board every year, we vote on it year by year. **Next slide please.**

Update on Multi-Year Budgeting Initiatives: We have been working on a whole pay year budgeting initiative and I think that this is not something that locks in an assessment, but it is a tool that we can use to help make decisions across multiple years. A lot of our projects are multiyear projects, and it could help us with balancing and creating more stable predictable assessment increases rather than a lot of fluctuations. In July 2023, the Board held an additional 5-year budget workshop and discussed Reserve components and different strategies for addressing them. We also talked about prioritizing certain components in our reserve study to maintain the structural integrity of our buildings; there are a lot of components in the reserve study, that perhaps are nice to have, and some things that are integral for the structural integrity of our community, and those are the ones that need to be prioritized.

We are planning on continuing to work with management on ways that we can monitor and prioritize reserve spending so that we are implementing a proactive approach to maintenance in the community, as best we can, while accepting some level of risk but also monitoring components that can offset some need for all at once approaches, or just kind of following this is in the reserve study based on a kind of a life cycle approach. It is not like anything falls off the reserve study, it just gets put in the right place.

We have discussed throughout developing this year's budget that it's time to conduct a new reserve study and we are seeking the help of management to solicit proposals and start a new reserve study to be completed by the end of 2024. **Next slide please.**

Next Steps: Annual Budget Finalization: So almost done, wrapping up. The next steps we will vote on a draft budget in February 2024, we will most likely continue to discuss the comments that we receive tonight at the Budget Town Hall, which we will get to in a second and open it up to the floor. Then in March 2024, we will vote on the final budget, and then in June 2024, the final budget will go into effect; then, a new Reserve Study will be completed before the end of 2024. With that, I will take any questions or just comments, and the way that we will do this is to allow folks to ask a question or make a statement for about 3 minutes. Once you get your time on the floor, we'll try to get through everybody else, and if we have time at the end, we will circle back to people. Would anyone like to speak? **Next slide please.**

## **DISCUSSION & QUESTIONS:**

Allison Silverberg: – Thank you, that was a great presentation. I am Allison Silverberg, and I have lived here since 2011 and I love it here. You explained so much and obviously, we want to be careful and fiscally conservative so that you are not hit with a surprise event. There was a discussion that you alluded to regarding the roof replacement issue and what I was trying to encourage was a way that we address what needs attention; like my roof does not need as much attention as my neighbors, so you don't address it unless there is an issue and simultaneously, I was saying that I noticed that the fence line along Quaker Lane that I drive by every day (I love that fence line), that there are two little slots that need a minor amount of attention, Parkfairfax could probably fix it in 30 minutes; I was going to take a picture of it and show it to Francisco. As you look down the line on Quaker Lane as far as I can see is this fence line, but along this fence line, there are two slots that the Board needs to address. We would not replace the whole fence line – we would just address those two slots. *[Mr. Buchanan suggested emailing the pictures to Francisco or Dana for them to take a look at.]* Alright and thank you.

Ken Hedges: The issue of the retaining wall on Gunston Road where it's been replaced/refaced and they are putting some rebar on it, it's not only vertical, but also still leaning into the hill. There is a problem where there are 4 points of deliveries of concrete that 4 cracks have developed that need to be tuckpointed, I could do that for you by the way; but for some reason, someone has decided to rebuild it, and I am

wondering why. Is there an engineering study done before things like this are done or is it just cosmetic interior decorating? It's a question and I don't know anyone here really knows the answer.

***Scott Buchanan:*** *Management goes around and assesses these walls and determines whether it's now or later that it's going to require major structural work. The decision was made to go ahead and take care of it. So, in terms of cost, I think we did this in-house. I don't think contracted that out, that's part of the normal.*

***Claire Eberwein:*** *I went by there, it had some major structural cracks, not just tuckpointing. There were major cracks through the wall, and we are also pulled at the foundation and the footer for the retaining wall has started to shift. So that's why the wall was being repaired, it was made out of concrete block and that's why it was painted white. The brick is a facing that will cover up the major crack repairs, which I don't know if they're already covered, but when I went by most of the brick wall was not there, and there were there was material that I could see that was 2 to 3 inches wide, vertically up and down the wall, and two places that I saw, and I guess one of the third ones was probably covered by the time I got there, so I believe the facing (but not the repair of the wall itself) is being done by a contractor.*

*As you can tell from where that wall is, somebody cut the toe off the slope to build a road that is holding up a major hillside with buildings above it in Ward 3, so it is not a wall we can afford to neglect to repair. I appreciate your concern, and your observations, and I think the questions are good, they keep us on our toes. But it was a decision made that was structurally necessary.*

***Amanda Mullan:*** *when you do speak, please state your name for the record.*

***Ken Hedges:*** *Just two last comments; level on the front of the facing of that wall, and that was just glancing, It's consistently 3 degrees leaning into the hill. It wasn't like one was 3 degrees and another was 10 degrees out, no wavering, you can see it just by eye. You don't need a laser down the face of that and it was still straight, and it was still vertical, and it was still a hole in that hill. I would have tuck-pointed it, next time call me.*

***Claire Eberwein:*** *Well, we may have some additional walls in the future that may need tuckpointing.*

***Amanda Mullan:*** *Yeah, we can add that to the management report for the next Board meeting*

***Claire Eberwein:*** *I do believe the general manager is going to put it in his management report because he did receive your email, it's public information when they give us the management report before the board meeting, so you can always have access to that.*

***Scott Buchanan:*** *Yes, if there are no more questions. I'll give a summary: this is the beginning of us taking comments, concerns, or suggestions that folks may want to share with the Board or the directors. I mean, listen, we are not the keepers of all wisdom here, definitely not about how to approach things and where we can find deficiencies, or things that we want to do differently, or things that we want to reprioritize, so we welcome your suggestions of things if you're looking through the budget or looking through the services that we offer in the community and say, Gosh! We could do with less of this or more of that. Please reach out to us. One of the challenges always for the Board is that we don't often get a lot of that feedback, so getting that is always very useful between here and next week you can certainly email any of us our emails are on the website, they're also in the newsletter that gets emailed*

*around and you can email us individually or as a whole, however, you would like to do it, and please do so because we want to have feedback because you know, we are owners here, too and we all pay this condo fee, we all live with the upsides and the downsides of how we handle building repairs things like that, but we want to try to represent the holistic queues of the community. We are just 9 people that sit on the Board, but we want to hear your feedback so that we can bring that to the Board and share that with the Board.*

Scott Kudson: Hi, Scott, thank you. I hope it's okay that I ask a couple of questions. My wife and I are not technically owners, but we are all but owners since my wife now has power of attorney over her parents, assets, and our apartment is one of their assets. I appreciate that the Board has taken the pains to bring down the assessment increase, that's wonderful. I have two questions basically, I hope that some of the money for different landscape projects was not cut too much, because I do personally feel that the landscape is a huge factor in determining the quality of life and the property values here in Parkfairfax. Our buildings, our units, are quaint, but they're constantly in need of updating, and the quality of life in Park Fairfax is part of living together in this lovely landscape that we call home. And that's my first question, and the second question is, I'm sorry I came into the meeting late. I don't know what the result of the discussion of the roof replacements is; are the roofs going to be replaced on an as-needed basis instead of all at once?

Amanda Mullan: *Oh, I can answer the roof question. I don't think there's any way, shape, or form that the Board could ever overnight replace over 200 roofs at one time, that's never been on the table. That's not even a feasible thing to discuss. What we have been exploring is the fact that the roofs are 80 years old, and I do want to say we patch replace, and repair our roofs, and we spend a lot of money to do so. However. We've been pulled by. the experts on this that can't be something that is done forever. So, we are planning to undertake a pilot project to take 2 priority roofs that are a similar style and test out various ways of replacing them in FY2025, and then the Board will at that time use that data to come up with a replacement plan. Also factoring in a new reserve study to see what is the best plan forward on this, but I do think it will be a base approach, and if we start somewhere, I think that's better than waiting another 10 years when the roofs are all 90 years old and even if they last 100 years. The idea of replacing over 200 at the same time seems impossible. So, the conversation about roofs is just identifying those that are the ones that need to be replaced. now, and the ones that we can continue to maintain and repair because at this point it will probably be a multi-decade effort and making sure we have reserve contributions to do that. And does anyone want to comment on landscaping?*

Scott Buchanan: *You have to think of our landscaping budget in multiple different ways, number one we have a contract that provides the basic mowing, mulching, and leaf-blowing sort of maintenance of the property and then we also have budget line items that are included for things like tree pruning and landscape enhancements to include plantings that may take place on the islands as well as enhanced services such as a better mulching schedule and treatments for the property; depending on what your landscaping priority is and if you look at what the Board has done in this budget, it has increased landscape spending by almost precisely \$20,000 across the property, and it's incrementally an investment that the Board is making to do more than what was done before. So that's where we are; does that answer your questions*

Scott Knudsen: Thank you for answering my question.

Claire Eberwein: *Yeah, I'll touch on landscaping briefly. We are undertaking a new approach, we are going to a more native approach toward enhancing our soils and our plant materials, Robin and I held a*



*meeting with CLS and staff this past week and talked about much more coordination between our staff and the landscape contractor and how we can start replacing our grass with more plants that do not require mowing, and that enhance the richness of our soil. If everyone joins together with this effort we will have a much more beautiful landscape, and it is a positive approach. It will take a lot of work. Phasing on the roofs is a given, we have 284 buildings and there is no way this condo has the fees to raise, or the money to borrow, or the money in reserves, to do that project. If they are 80 years old most other communities with roofs of similar age did it 20 years ago; they started and some of them are finished. I suggest you look at the video on the blast very closely because the contractor gives very detailed information about how all of our tiles failed the breakage test. He also talks about the rock that is most likely underneath a lot of our roofs, whether you see it or not. I believe the community needs to educate itself by looking at that video because it explains what's going on with a contractor who supplies terracotta tiles. We will have a similar meeting about composite tiles for the buildings that we have repaired already. About the roofs, we have repaired 51% of the 284 buildings in Parkfairfax and have had from 1 to 6 repairs already done on the roofs. In 2022 we spent \$230,000 on roof repairs, in the current budget we have 143,000 set aside for roof repairs, and those are only the ones we know about, not the ones where we have a leak, where someone calls us up, and they've got water running down their walls. We have spent these funds similarly for probably about the last 10 years, you can calculate it as being hundreds, thousands of dollars we have spent on repairing these roofs. For every person who says they don't have a problem, great, I don't have a building settlement problem, and I am very happy that I don't, but I empathize with anyone who has a building settlement problem. and I empathize with anyone that has a roof leak, and I've had many and it's not just the expense of repairing the roof, you have to go in and rip out the plaster and our people go in, and they have to repair the whole inside of the interiors of these structures which also cost the association money and that's not even a line item connected to the roofs; it should be it really should be, thank goodness, we have a new manager and we hope to get him tracking that kind of thing, but when you repair a roof you often have to repair the inside of the unit, and sometimes we have to tear it down to the studs or the brick walls. Nobody wants to undertake this project, but nobody likes to drive a car with ball tires.*

*I believe the board has taken a very positive, proactive, and careful approach and we have gone out and got professional advice, and that's what you need. If your foot hurts you, don't go to the dentist; if you need brain surgery, don't go to the eye doctor. Someone may have a certain expertise in a certain area, say electrician or plumbing or bricklaying but they are not the ones that should be advising us on our roofs, and that's why we seek professional advice, and no one on this board should be disparaged for seeking that professional advice, because we do it to keep your investment safe, and it is the most expensive thing most of us own. So I urge the community to educate itself, and I am very proud to serve on a board that has combed this budget over and over to try to keep these fees reasonable but understand, we were put in a bit of a hole during the 6 year period where we had 0.00%, 1.44%, 2.5%, and 1.99% condo fee increases, that put us in a maintenance hole.*

*I'm proud to serve on a board that has realized that we need to keep these fees stable and do what the schools and city have done for years. The city does not have a flat budget, they proactively repair things on a life cycle basis before they fall apart and they constantly work on trying to keep a 10-year cap improvement budget with a 5-year right there, budget that gets modified every year. We're trying to do that in part, Fairfax, and I'm proud to serve on a board that's done this. I appreciate the work that Amanda and Scott put into leading us in that direction right there, a budget that gets modified every year. We're trying to do that in part, Fairfax, and I'm proud to serve on a board that's done this. I appreciate all of the work that Amanda and Scott had put into leading us in that direction, it's something I've pushed for. I think it will benefit this community, and I think it's high time that this community became a lot more professional in how we approach maintaining your investment.*

***Scott Buchanan: All right. Well, I have a different view that you know governments tend to tax constantly and you will never get it back and they raise those taxes constantly. I think we should only raise taxes on people when we have to.***

***Scott Knudson:*** Thank you all, especially Claire for that comprehensive answer, I think it's good and I enjoyed listening to it and I think it's good for everyone else to hear that thoughtful response. I thought of a third question unrelated to the other two questions which is -- Oh my it was Amanda who was talking about it when I logged on, and it was about insurance rates, and our insurance rates are being affected by people who have not upgraded their electrical panels in their units. And I was wondering 2 questions: What percentage of people have not done that? and what is the Board's plan to get more people to do that

***Amanda Mullan:*** I do not have the number off the top of my head, but the management report addressed it in a prior report.

***Scott Buchanan:*** It's slightly less than one-third because it's moving target. We have got to do better; another notice is going out to owners. Some of them may have upgraded their panels and did not notify us or they didn't apply what they were supposed to through the Covenant process to tell us. The Board is exploring Board decisions about that and how we want to proceed for those who are not responsive to this because obviously this is an issue where an individual owner to their lack of action could impose an enormous cost on the community and so you know, we are looking at all options. Some of those options are discounts for people to do it themselves, this is a unit owner's responsibility. We have made unit owners aware if they don't act, these boxes are potential hazards and the negligence is their responsibility to the Association so we're going to consider all of that and we hope that most people will be willing to make this change, not only because of benefits to the community, but it's their safety.

***The Board has not planned how we're going to proceed, but we are going to be moving forward I think I can't speak for the Board's action, but I think there is interest from many in proceeding aggressively so that we do not get ourselves into a position of losing our current insurance strata and going into the secondary market. I think the Board will act decisively to prevent that from happening; that would be a very problematic outcome, even if that requires creating some pressure or mandating some things from owners that they might not be willing to do organically for the greater good of the Association. I'm not speaking for the board, I am just saying I think the Board agrees as Amanda spoke about in the beginning, our duty is not to an individual owner, our duty is to the entire association.***

***Scott Knudson:*** Let's say we get up to 95 conversions, or something that the insurance company likes, you're saying we would not receive any savings we would just prevent any dramatic increase in our insurance rates, is that what you're saying, Scott?

***Scott Buchanan:*** I think it's fair to say that given the insurance market today, most major insurance carriers do not want to be in the business of insuring major condo associations like us they view it as nonprofitable and highly risky, and those things are interchangeable, in the insurance business. But I think what we're talking about here is slowing the rate and more importantly, trying to control the growth.

***Claire Eberwein:*** We should know that the reason we're replacing electrical panels is they are a known fire hazard and that's why the insurance company said to get them out of there; they are old and outdated and a lot of people, the majority of our units, who have done any renovations have switched them up and put new ones in and that is why the insurance company is concerned because they are a panel that was put in a

*lot of buildings all at the same time and many of them were in New York and they are not up to code. So that's the reason.*

**Amanda Mullan:** *I just want to clarify that the increases are not a result of the electrical panel issue, It's just us trying to be proactive, and if we talk to our broker and find other things that we can do to lessen the risk of our association we are going to do that because just looking at the potential increases of insurance premiums just since 2021, I was shocked when I ran the numbers, 76% increase and we do not want that to continue to increase. If there are things that we can do, we are going to do them, but it's not a direct one-for-one necessarily.*

**Jeff Lisanick:** *Amanda you covered part of what I was gonna say, which was not that the standardized rise in the insurance, but proactively looking to address it, to keep it from being a cause. But one more thing I didn't get to say about the roofs, Clair touched on some of it, the test that we sent out except for one outline was very encouraging. I know she mentioned the*

*(inaudible) and legal (inaudible) which doesn't affect their performance of the roofs unless a tree falls on it or someone walks on it, but much more important is the permeability? How much does the roof stop moisture from getting in, again, except for one outliner, all our tiles performed fabulously, they were well within specs, and besides the outliner, all but one was better than coming off the assembly line today. So that's very encouraging. Mary made a good analogy, you repair as necessary. Claire mentioned that half the rooms have had at least one to 6 repairs, what was that, was it, some flashing that caused leaking in a unit when it was repaired, and now it's done, or are there shingles on the roofs? So, it matters what type of repair that is you're talking about the amount of roofs that have had to be repaired paints a picture that may be more dire than actuality, and I think that the Board, (channel Scott for a minute) I think there's been a consensus that the roofs are not as in bad shape as at first they used to appear and I think even acknowledge that last meeting. So, we don't have to be as aggressive funding reserves for that particular issue as we might have once thought, I'll leave it there.*

**Scott Buchannan:** *Easy discussion to have, I think the pilot program will also give a lot of insight and Intel, and I think the Board, I don't know if unanimously, but by broad consensus agree that part of what we need to learn is more about what's going on since a lot of what we have right now is projections and getting underneath the hood and seeing how bad things are will educate us all to make a better decision about which direction we want to go, and timing, and all those sort of things.*

**Ann Guillette:** *I wanted to ask you a question. I'm just not sure that I understand the issue with the electrical panels, and I want to just understand, are you saying that we know, or we do not know, if our insurance premium would go down if we had 100% of the electrical panels changed out*

**Scott Buchannan:** *The possibility of the insurance premiums going down is not on the table, it's going to go up. That's going to happen, the question is, does it go up by \$50,000, \$100,000, or does it go up, literally this is what's happening with other condos by 400% if we fall into the secondary market? If we fall into the secondary market, we're not guaranteed anything, our insurance broker has spoken to our carrier, and the carrier has expressed concerns about the fact that these electrical panels remain here. We know that this carrier is one of the only carriers who will cover us, is trying to get out of the condo market and so they are looking for excuses to do that, and our goal is to try to give them no excuse to do that and keep us on their books at an acceptable premium. So, I guess the analogy here is we cannot guarantee that this will stop exorbitant growth, but it's the best thing we can do to try to mitigate that risk right now. I don't know if that's helpful, but the insurance carriers won't make any promises to*

*you, right; they say we think this is risky, we think that is risky, If you could address this issue we'd be more comfortable, but it doesn't guarantee us anything, but we think it's critical, and our insurance broker whose job it is to review these things, says, listen, you got to get on this. It's the thing that might point you into an untenable position and drop you because they view that as too material of a risk for them to take on.*

Ann Guillette: I would just like to say that I think this is of the utmost priority to ensure that we aren't put in a risky situation, to me this seems like it should come to the top of things because otherwise we could be thrown into that secondary market and pay so much more as Amanda mentioned. I don't know if everyone in my building has upgraded; I did this last year and the thought of someone in my building not having an updated panel, is scary to me; anyway, I just would like to ask you guys to push hard on this, a third of our units still have them and that's a lot.

Scott Buchannan: *And I do want to be clear about that number again we know for sure that two-thirds have been updated. The mix remaining we are not clear about that. A lot of people do upgrades and don't go through the process they're supposed to, so we may not be aware of it. So, we think it's much less than that. But that's the population of question mark. We spoke with legal counsel about this, and we are trying to take steps to encourage people to do it in a nudging way before we drop the hammer. We are already looking at options and the Board will explore those, but if we can get people to get this done sooner rather than later rather than telling people that they have to do this immediately out of their pocket, we have the authority to do, but we'd like to take softer steps first. I think we share your urgency, but I also want to say on the risk factor that these panels are known to be a much higher risk than other panels. That does not necessarily mean that they are just a firebox waiting to happen, I want to not panic people, although maybe we still want to panic people, so they'll get rid of them. But it is a much higher risk than anything that's on the market today, and it would behoove everyone who is listening who hasn't replaced your panels, please do so for all sorts of reasons, not only which would be resale value because you're going to have to do this when you sell your place, because any home inspector who comes in and sees this box is going to say, that box has to go, so you are going to have to do it at some point so you might as well do it right now, and the folks that don't do it, we may have to compel them to do it.*

Ann Guillette: My friend lives in a HOA and they had an inspector go into all of the unknown units and that was mandated. So, I just wanted to mention that might be a strategy. Anyway, thank you for your time.

Scott Buchannan: *No, thank you.*

Claire Eberwein: *I just wanted to say, that we are approaching the insurance issues in several ways, the planning board does specs, and I am the Liaison to that committee and they are starting to tighten up the specs so that those don't cause insurance problems, it may increase the cost of an installation for a homeowner for a washing machine or something like that, but it also decreases the insurance risk with flooding and not having it properly installed. But I wanted to ask either our Treasurer or our President, during the Budget workshop Barkin said he was going to go to a conference and meet with our insurance broker and talk to him about whether they would be willing to allow us to sit down with the insurance company and pre-select an ad hoc committee or ad hoc group, whatever it would be, from the board to work with them on other areas where we might be able to lower our risk, and he said he was going to talk about that and get back to us, And I'm just wondering whether the Barkan guy ever came back to you on that.*

Scott Buchannan: *I will check my emails, but I don't think he has.*

*Okay. Well, if there are no other questions. Again, we have a board meeting next week, feel free to tune in to that, it will be fun as usual, and we'll have our initial vote on this. But again, we have several meetings here, and suggestions like what Ann suggested having an inspector come in or things like that are welcomed, please, if you have questions about what's in the budget feel free to reach out to your Board member or reach out to Amanda, always when we have the budget come out, there's lots of nonsense that float around rather than what's actually in the budget; so rather than believing in speculation and idle chatter from people who don't understand the budget, reach out to your Board members, and we'll get you the answers.*

Jeff Lisanick: *Mr. President I think we should know more precisely what the numbers are then we can follow up more aggressively to find out, so I think there should be some very precise figures available to your Board members or eligible parties about how many need to be replaced.*

Scott Buchannan: *We will revisit this at a future meeting.*

*With that, I want to thank everyone for joining, we appreciate your engagement here. Please feel free to read through the budget documents, the presentation will be online as well as on our website. If you want to go and take a look at that and share it with your neighbors, and your friends, the more educated people are the better, and thanks everyone for joining. We appreciate it.*

*Thank You.*

**MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING:**

- R) WITHOUT OBJECTION Mr. Buchanan, MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.  
The motion passed unanimously (8-0-0).**

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:12 p.m.**