

Fees – and What Do They Cover?

From time to time, there have been some questions raised about what do the fees cover that each lot owner pays. Each type of fee is governed by the By-laws and thus these fees are mandated to cover some items and not others. For instance, the fees that are collected from the Town Home lot owners can only be used for certain things.

The General Fee that all lot owners pay covers several things besides lawn care and snow removal. This includes every lot owner both single family homes and town homes, including builders. Currently, the General Fee is paid annually by all lot owners. The General Fee covers - but is not limited to - the following items:

- Lawn mowing of grassy common areas and snow removal of common area sidewalks (All roads in the HOA are adopted and maintained by Dover Township, including snow removal)
- Maintenance of common areas, including "natural" areas
- Property taxes on common areas (this is 17 acres)
- Tax preparations and an annual audit as is required by the By-laws
- Legal fees and other various legal costs
- Insurance on the board and the common grounds as is required by the By-laws
- Maintenance of the walking path
- Maintenance of storm sewer pipes that are located on either common grounds or single family lots as is required by both the HOA By-laws and Dover Township law.
- Post Office Box rental fee
- Half payment to the bookkeeper - *The Town Home account covers the other half payment to the bookkeeper
- Miscellaneous office supplies - copying, printer ink, paper, envelopes, postage stamps, etc.
- Other miscellaneous items as deemed necessary by the Executive Board

Town Home Account

Currently the lot owners in the town homes pay the fee amount in quarterly billing. The Town Home account covers - but may not be limited to - the following items:

- Lawn mowing of town home lots and snow removal of overflow parking areas, town home driveways and sidewalks (all roads in the HOA are adopted and maintained by Dover Township, including snow removal)
- Half payment to the bookkeeper - *as explained above
- A share in the office supplies
- A share in the cost in the audit of HOA books.
- Other miscellaneous items as deemed necessary by the Executive Board

Contrary to the opinion of some lot owners, the Town Home fee does NOT include or cover:

- Insurance of any kind on town homes (lot owners must maintain their own insurance on the structure and personal belongings)
- Repair of siding, decks, or roofs
- Repair of sidewalks or the concrete edge along the road bed
- Maintenance of driveways
- Weed and feed of grass on town home lots

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- Replacing any shrubs or flowers in town home flower gardens

All of the above listed items are the responsibility of each town home lot owner and not the HOA.

The HOA Executive Board is charged by the HOA By-laws to be responsible with the money that is entrusted to the different accounts. Each time money has to be spent, the Executive Board endeavors to get the most value. The treasurer and the bookkeeper work to keep the monies accurately accounted for, and that the HOA is billed appropriately for services provided. The HOA By-laws also specifically give the Executive Board the authority to levy any special assessments to lot owners as might be necessary during any calendar year. The Executive Board does not take this authority lightly. Each year the budget is worked and reworked to make it as "lean" as possible and yet cover the anticipated expenses of the next calendar year. However, despite the best efforts of the Executive Board, this is not always possible and unanticipated needs arise and a special assessment could be necessary.