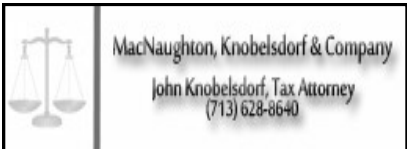


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By Chuck Miller

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The Importance of the Reserve Fund

By Gary Porter, RS, PRA

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Charlie’s Corner Robot Land Speed Record

Robotics technology continues to improve, but mobility without using wheels has been a sticking point. This lab created a “cheetah,” so named for being the fastest mobile robot ever created.



HOA Pulse has more full text cases than any other site in the industry. New cases this week include:

[Villano v. Strathmore Terrace HOA—New York](#)

[Villas West II of Willowridge v. McGlothlin—Indiana](#)

[Walton v. Claybridge Homeowners Association, Inc.—Indiana](#)



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Repairs—To Bid or Not to Bid?

By Chuck Miller

Repairs on homeowners' association common area property may range from almost inconsequential to major projects. The decision that management has to reach is who should perform the work. Many minor repairs can and should be performed by your on-site staff. Large and complex projects should generally never be performed by anyone other than competent licensed contractors with experience in the type of work being performed. It's those "in-between jobs" that actually cause the anguish in making the decision between on-site staff versus outside contractor.

General factors to consider are:

- state law
- governing documents
- experience of on-site staff
- warranty issues
- liability issues

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The Importance of the Reserve Fund

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Most of the reserve studies performed by our company occur in states that have adopted statutes establishing reserve study requirements. Since most Associations will try to comply with state statutes, it makes sense that more reserve studies are performed in states that have such statutes. However, acceptance of a reserve fund as being a good business practice is also widespread throughout the country, so it's reasonable to expect that a significant percentage of Associations would still opt to perform a reserve study for that reason alone.

A few weeks ago I was working in a state where there are no reserve study statutes. I had forgotten that in this particular state, the general consensus is that a reserve study is more of a nuisance than anything else. It's not that the Associations in this state don't budget for reserve projects; they do. They just don't have a formal reserve study prepared. This means they don't have a formal maintenance plan and really have no idea how well-prepared they are for future expenditures.

So what is the potential impact of the lack of a formal reserve study? It's a known fact that at least some level of inflation is still with us, costs are increasing, and common area components are deteriorating. My experience observing Associations trapped in this scenario is that they typically choose to simply defer major expenditures until funds can be accumulated. The danger of this approach is that the cost may grow exponentially until the deterioration reaches a tipping point, requiring complete replacement of components instead of simply performing major repairs. The deferral approach generally results in much higher costs overall.

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Articles on the Web

Article Title	Article Summary	State
Wild goose chase pits animal control officers against residents	Residents claim their pond has been designated as a wildlife sanctuary and are angry that city officials have removed some of the wild waterfowl from the area. The city claims officials of the homeowners association called and asked to have the birds removed.	Oklahoma
Understanding HOA Board President Job	The leadership of the Board President is discussed. Basic duties of the Board Presidents should be found in the Bylaws but the important thing to remember is they don't make all the decisions.	Nevada
Olney woman asks for \$1 million judgment against homeowners association	A woman who was originally charged an additional \$236 by her homeowners association, 10 years ago, has filed a \$1 million suit for damages against her association.	Maryland
A new beginning for hurricane-ravaged Camp Osborn in Brick	An association ravaged by Hurricane Sandy is being rebuilt into a more modern complex with a variety of homes. The traditional fishing village included bungalows that were completely destroyed by the storm.	New Jersey
Single mom beats back Creekwood association	A single mom is fighting her homeowners association to keep her childcare business in her home. A few board members claim the business goes against the CC&Rs but most board members believe it is a unenforced rule and they cannot discriminate since others have businesses out of their homes.	Virginia
Neighbors say feral cats taking over northwest community	An irresponsible pet owner is being targeted for allowing their cats to be destructive and dirty and for not cleaning up the neighborhood. Neighbors are complaining of the smell and destruction of their yards.	Nevada
Broward to sue no-pets condo after woman claims retaliation over service dog	A woman who purchased a dog and is paying to have it trained as a service dog for her elderly mother is suing her former condominium association for housing discrimination.	Florida
HOA wants to pay water bill to keep lawn looking good	Homeowner association wants water to stay on in homes when they are in between owners. They want the Water Company to allow ownership to transfer to association so they can pay water. Currently the landscaping is dying due to lack of water since water company won't allow a transfer of ownership.	Nevada
Canyon Lake dream home fills with mold, not memories	Soon after a woman moved into her home a dangerous mold starting consuming her home and her life. The woman is suing to get the builder to make good on the warranty and repair the outside leaks and the mold living inside the walls.	Texas
History repeating at Pecos North: Community to recall 3 HOA board members	A woman is using a rare Arizona law to recall several HOA board members. The law applies to communities with 1,000 members or less.	Arizona
Self-managing association may save money	In a small subdivision the builder recently turned over the homes to the new homeowners association. Unfortunately, the management company has informed the HOA that there is a budget deficit that was funded by the developer. The owner wants to know if this is legal.	New Jersey
Port Chester condo owners can't sell units Lifesavers building	A year long dispute over citations and permits are keeping people from being able to sell their homes.	New York
Couple sues homeowners' association	A couple is suing their homeowners association because their association has deposited various materials on the bank of a stream which changed the course of the water flow. This has caused the value of their property to diminish because the stream is now invading their property and eroding the soil around it.	Illinois
Satellite dish dispute lands Palatine Hill in HOA Hall of Shame	Residents who have had satellite dishes for years are now being targeted for having them installed. The board now wants to go against FCC rules and have the residents remove the dishes.	Nevada