

Vote could hike fees in El Dorado Hills neighborhood

By Roger Phelps, The Telegraph December 2, 2008

Services could suffer for residents of the Green Valley Hills neighborhood unless they vote effectively to double a per-parcel assessment.

Assessment amounts for other neighborhoods are under review, as well.

Landscaping and fence maintenance on the Green Valley Hills neighborhood borders is costing more than current annual assessments are bringing in, said Allison Hamaker, finance director for the El Dorado Hills Community Services District.

Services district officials plan to meet with Green Valley Hills residents on Dec. 9 at the Francisco Oaks Elementary School multipurpose room to discuss voter options for ending the deficit spending.

"We'll take a vote in January," Hamaker said.

One option is reduced services. The other is an assessment increase. The main expenses for the neighborhood are a lengthy fence, some 3,855 feet, and accompanying ornamental shrubbery stretching along Green Valley and Salmon Falls roads, Hamaker said.

"I back up to Salmon Falls, so I'd vote against reducing services," said Brad Withers.

Johanna Dugan said she needed more details, but was inclined toward an assessment increase.

"I'm for raising it," Dugan said. "I like the nice neighborhood."

The neighborhood's landscaping and lighting assessment district was formed in 1990. It comprises a total of 222 parcels.

"This was the first year that accounting showed Green Valley Hills as subsidized, (in the amount of) \$29,012," Hamaker said. "Right now, the assessment should be \$151.63, but they voted in a \$76.90 cap."

A consultant's study in 2006 recommended the services district should set aside a reserve for future repairs and charge for cost of time spent by employees as an overhead component.

Jeff Genovese said he believed not all that many residents of Green Valley Hills or the adjacent Winterhaven neighborhood entered or left the neighborhoods on the Salmon Falls-Green Valley route, instead using Village Center Drive.

"The last time I was down Salmon Falls Road was to get a Christmas tree last year," Genovese said. "We're going out that way today, to get another one."

All in all, around Green Valley Hills and other neighborhoods, the CSD has spent \$177,285 of its general fund money subsidizing landscape assessment district services, Hamaker said.

A Jan. 6, 2009 outreach meeting will be held by CSD officials for residents of the Bass Lake neighborhood, at Oak Knoll Community Center.

The Telegraph's Roger Phelps can be reached at rogerp@goldcountrymedia.com