

THE SACRAMENTO BEE [sacbee.com](http://www.sacbee.com)

This story is taken from [Sacbee](#) / Our Region

El Dorado Hills group to get \$367,000 refund for park fees

dlambert@sacbee.com

Published Thursday, Feb. 05, 2009

The Bass Lake Action Committee has been a force to be reckoned with in El Dorado Hills since the group formed seven years ago.

The grass-roots organization has successfully pushed for improvements to Bass Lake Road and fought a proposal for lights at a local sports park. Its 50 members also are a vocal presence at community meetings.

Now, the group has wrangled a \$367,000 refund of fees for residents of a local neighborhood.

The El Dorado Hills Community Services District board voted last week to reimburse the owners and past owners of the 294 houses in Woodridge Village a portion of the assessments collected from them since 2003.

The money had been used to maintain the entrance, street lights and common landscaping in the community and to partially fund operations and maintenance of Oak Knoll Park, said Wayne Lowery, the district's general manager, on Wednesday.

Woodridge Village residents, already unhappy that they were paying \$175 more than their neighbors in the Hills of El Dorado, were further agitated by a \$25 fee increase last year.

John Thomson, a Woodridge resident and president of the Bass Lake Action Committee, complained about the higher assessment in a letter to the district last month.

He asked district staff to research whether Oak Knoll Park belonged in the assessment district and to refund any money that had been wrongfully assessed.

Lowery said district staff were unable to find documentation that showed the board authorized the use of the assessment district's funds for the park.

"Without documentation, we don't have the ability to defend (the assessment)," Lowery told The Bee on Wednesday.

Thomson said he was pleased with the board's decision to refund the money.

"They have been very responsive," Thomson said. "They did this in a timely manner."

But checks aren't in the mail quite yet.

District staff will meet with the homeowners at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Rescue Union School District boardroom, 2390 Bass Lake Road, to answer questions about the refunds.

Lowery said property owners will have to send in a claim and that reimbursements would take about two weeks.

"I'm proud of the board and the staff in being as responsive as they were. ..." Lowery said. "I think the district is doing the right thing."

So, what's next for the Bass Lake Road Association? The group plans to meet with California Highway Patrol representatives in March to learn why a recent decision that increased patrols in much of El Dorado Hills excludes the Bass Lake Road area.

ShareThis

Call The Bee's Diana Lambert, (916) 478-2672.