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Cowell Homeowners Association

2009 Community Survey



*Walnut Country/Crossings Homeowners
& Residents Survey*

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CHOA Secretary

1/11/10

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CHOA 2009 Community Survey

Introduction

In August 2009, the Cowell Homeowners Association (CHOA) Board of Directors (BOD) conducted an informal survey of our facilities/services with the attendees of the Smokestack Celebration. While the results were informative, they did not fully represent the entire CHOA community.

In September, 2009, a homeowner approached the BOD with the idea of conducting a survey of the association for a research project, seeing the opportunity to expand on our earlier survey, the BOD worked with the homeowner to develop a survey around the facilities and services to gain opinions around their usage and importance.

The survey was conducted in October/November, 2009 using a customized Survey Monkey instrument to ask questions around:

- Demographics
- Facilities – Their importance and Usage
- Services – Their importance and Usage
- Projects – Past and Present

A comments option was added to many of the questions to gain further detailed responses.

Respondents/Demographics

The survey was publicized through the Signal newsletter, HOA dues bill inserts, e-mail and the CHOA website as well as word of mouth.

Over a three week period, we received 295 responses. Based on our 1,062 homes in our association, this represents a response rate of 28% which is considered good. The respondents were:

- Spread throughout the Association. High concentrations of responses were seen for several streets potentially indicating a high percentage of community interest in those areas (See Below):

<u>Street</u>	<u>Respondents</u>
Barberry Ct.	14
Leatherwood Ct.	11
Hock Maple Ct.	10
Black Walnut Ct.	9
Catalpa Ct.	9
Sugar Maple Ct.	9
Sugarland Ct.	9
Weeping Spruce Ct.	9

- Responses were over 99% from owners vs. renters.
- Residence size (number of people in home) was geared towards 2 person households (36%) indicating that we have a potential higher concentration of older, empty nest families.
- Number of children in households indicated that **almost 60% do not have children.**
 - **These two previous results are significant to note as it appears that we may have decreased in the number of younger children in the association and are skewed towards adult only households.**
- Over 60% of our households earn more than \$100K annually.

Summary Conclusions:

- Our association shows a good level of interest in how we operate based on the high response rate to the survey (28%).
- Our community is “maturing” and has fewer children than we once did.
- We are “solid” middle class based on income.
- We may need to reach out and communicate to renters more as we did not hear from them significantly.

Facilities

The respondents were asked to rate how important our facilities were to them and how often they used them. Additionally, we asked for input on possible additions to our facilities.

Comments were also given within these questions at a very high rate.



Facilities by Importance to Respondent

The results were, overall, not very surprising, validating what the BOD seems to hold as its priorities. The rank order (rated on a 1 to 5 “importance” scale) is presented below with the top being highest and bottom being lowest:

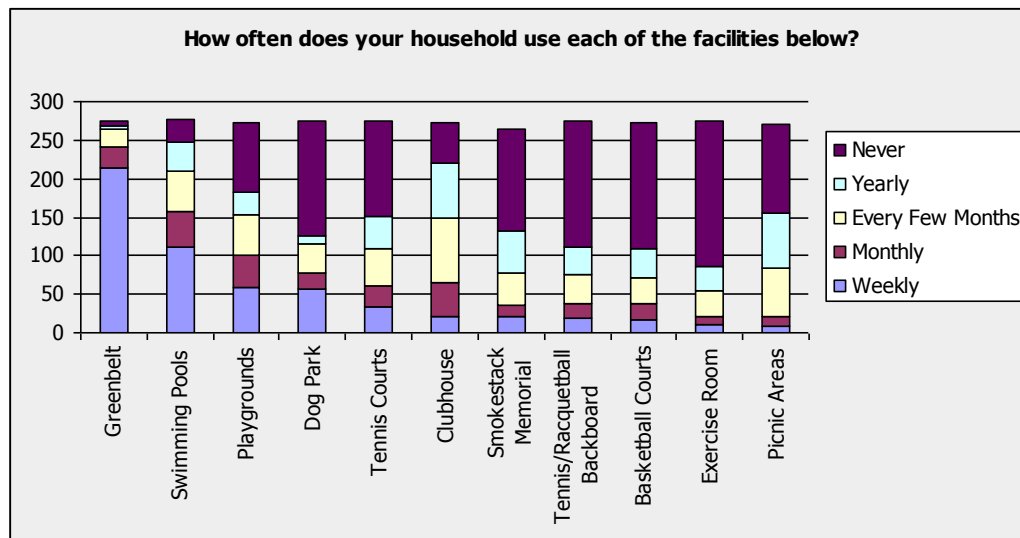
Facility	Rating Average
Greenbelt	4.48
Swimming Pools	4.16
Playgrounds	3.47
Clubhouse	3.39
Tennis Courts	3.06
Picnic Areas	3.00
Dog Park	2.70
Tennis/Racquetball Backboard	2.52
Smokestack Memorial	2.49
Basketball Courts	2.22
Exercise Room	2.19

Comments around the facilities fell into several “themes” including:

- While they may not be important to individuals, it is recognized that they are ALL important to the community and add value to it.
- Greenbelts are important to many and a reason for choosing to liver here.
- Choices as to what’s important change with time (age, kids, etc.)
- Would like to see:
 - Clubhouse fees lower
 - Pools (and other facilities) open more than current schedules

Facilities by Usage

Usage of the facilities followed closely the importance rankings for the most part above. Highest average usage starts on the left with lowest on the right:



The main comments “theme” on this question again reiterated that even if they rated it low as to usage doesn’t mean it is not important overall to the community.

New Facilities by Importance to Respondent

Respondents were asked their opinion around potential ideas for new facilities.

All scored 2.65 or under possibly indicating that there is not high interest in new facilities overall. The rank order (rated on a 1 to 5 “importance” scale) is presented below with the top being highest and bottom being lowest:

New Facility Idea	Rating Average
Spa at Main Pool	2.65
Bocce Ball	2.44
Volleyball Courts	2.24
Dog Park Lighting	2.12
Gazebo	1.92

Based on the comments for the new facilities questions, it would appear that there is some confusion from the homeowners on the fact that we may be considering getting rid of low used or low importance facilities in order to

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bring new ones in. **We need to insure that this is not the case when we communicate results to the homeowners.**

Summary Conclusions - Facilities:

- People are very satisfied with the current facilities.
- While someone may not have rated a facility high, they do understand the value ALL facilities bring to the association and do not wish to see any compromised.
- The community’s priorities and BOD’s seem well in line with our thinking (Greenbelts, Swimming Pools high, etc.)
- We need to let Homeowners know and make them understand that our reasoning for asking this and about facilities was not to replace or eliminate any.

Services

The respondents were asked to rate how important our services were to them and how often they used them. Additionally, we asked for input on possible additions to our services offered.

Comments were also given within these questions at a very high rate.

Services by Importance to Respondent

The intent of the questions here was to gauge satisfaction of the services and events we offer as a association. There was some confusion around services versus events and in future surveys we will separate these better.

The results were, overall, not very surprising, validating what the BOD seems to hold as its priorities. The rank order (rated on a 1 to 5 “importance” scale) is presented below with the top being highest and bottom being lowest:

Services/Events	Rating Average
Night Security Patrols	4.22
Landscaping Service	4.15
Signal Newsletter	3.70
Property Manager	3.59
Recreation Staff	3.23
CHOA Website	3.21
Swim Team	2.86
Swim Lessons	2.77

Preschool	2.76
T-Ball and Youth Sports	2.56
Clubhouse Game Area	2.44
Tennis Pro	2.33
Spring Egg Hunt	2.17
Haunted House	2.12

Comments around the facilities fell into several “themes” Including:

- While we may not use services regularly, it is recognized that they are ALL important to the community and add value to it.
- Even though we no longer have children, we did participate in many of these activities when we did.
- Many other various comments both positive and negative.

New Services by Importance to Respondent

Respondents were asked their opinion on the possible addition of new services to the association.

All scored 3.13 or under indicating some support in certain new services. The rank order (rated on a 1 to 5 “importance” scale) is presented below with the top being highest and bottom being lowest:

New Services Ideas	Rating Average
Signal Newsletter by E-mail	3.13
On-line Requests to Office	3.04
Regular E-mail Comm. from CHOA	2.95
Fitness Classes	2.71
Hobby/Special Interest Classes	2.64
Adult Social Activities	2.52
Blog from your Board of Directors	2.06
Child Day Care for Residents	1.85

It would appear by this ranking of new services that our homeowners are asking for a more technologically advanced way of communicating and getting information from the association. This validates our new push towards looking at these technologies in 2010. However, based on comments, it also appears that some people want to make sure we have choice in this area (I want my “hardcopy” newsletter.)

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Activities and classes were also ranked well and given the interest in the survey in general, would help to promote a better sense of community and bring people together at little cost to us.

Based on the comments for the new services questions, it would appear that there is some confusion from the homeowners on the fact that we may be considering getting rid of low used or low importance services in order to bring new ones in. **We need to insure that this is not the case when we communicate results to the homeowners.**

Summary Conclusions - Services:

- People are very satisfied with the current services.
- Security and beauty (landscaping) are important to them.
- Homeowners want more information delivered to them in more convenient ways, (web, e-mail, etc.). Enhanced technology is a desire.
- While someone may not have rated a service high, they do understand the value ALL services bring to the association and do not wish to see any compromised.
- The community's priorities and BOD's seem well in line with our thinking (Security, Greenbelts high, etc.)
- We need to let Homeowners know and make them understand that our reasoning for asking this and about facilities was not to replace or eliminate any.

Projects

A few questions were asked of respondents on past and future "projects" to gain their view.

Smokestack

Overall, the community was pleased with the project.

- Over 93% agreed that it met its objectives
- Over 87% were pleased or higher

Greenbelt Update

Homeowners were asked as to whether they felt our greenbelts were maintained adequately.

- Over 96% agreed that they are maintained adequately or better.

Homeowners were asked as to whether they supported an update project for our greenbelts.

- Support was somewhat divided over the greenbelt update with 50% very supportive or better.

It is important to note that we received over 100 comments on this question. The main theme among these was that more information (what are the plans, costs, etc.) was needed before respondents could give good input. Furthermore, many other ideas were embedded in the comments.

Summary Conclusion – Greenbelt Update - We need to be clear on our objectives and goals for this project and communicate to the homeowners for input and concurrence.

Entrance Signs

Homeowners were asked as to whether they felt our current Entrance Signs were in good condition and representative of our community.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	39.9%	108
No	30.6%	83
Not Sure	29.5%	80

This is fairly divided but many are unsure.

Homeowners were asked as to whether they supported a replacement of our entrance signs.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Don't Support At All	23.2%	63
Somewhat Supportive	31.4%	85
Very Supportive	24.7%	67
Extremely Supportive	20.7%	56

Support on this seems much divided and was further illustrated in the over 80 comments received on this question. Many question the need. Some say we shouldn't do it cheap. Others are concerned with cost.

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Summary Conclusion – Entrance Signs - We need carefully consider whether this has the true support of the homeowners and whether this is necessary at this time. Cost seems like an important factor to many. Perhaps we need to come up with options and have a town hall for input to gain acceptance.

CONCLUSION

We received over 200 e-mail addresses that we can use in the future.

More than 100 general comments were received.

- The survey was valuable and has provided very good, detailed data for the BOD.
- The level of comments was very high indicating we have a good portion of our homeowners who are engaged and interested.
- Homeowners believe our mix of facilities and services is right for us and see the value in ALL of them. They don't want to see any eliminated necessarily.
- Our BOD priorities have been, for the most part validated.
- We should continue to engage and solicit our homeowners' feedback in future surveys and communications.
- We need to offer more thorough and frequent communication in a variety of methods for our homeowners.
- We need to structure the survey a little bit differently in the future and insure that categories are appropriate and intentions clear.