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**Dear Neighbor,**

When I campaigned for the Board of Directors last spring, many of you were skeptical. You didn't think there was any way the Board could be turned around. Yet many of you voted for me, and I thank you.

And I apologize. You were right. One or two or even three people with good intentions can't change the Board.

But seven people can.

If you attended the September and October Board meetings, you saw the utter disrespect Board members have for homeowners, vendors, and fellow Board members. It was because of the September Board meeting that I resigned. It was clear that I wouldn't be able to make any meaningful contribution, and I was ashamed to be part of that Board.

It was only at the request of President Kim Edwards that I withdrew my resignation. That's another story, and I won't cover it here. At the last October Board meeting, my withdrawal was disallowed because it included some assumptions: the executive and open Board meetings would be held on different days, I would give up my officer position, and the Board would commit to professional management of Association resources.

### **A Major Business Run by Volunteers**

The current model doesn't work. Right now one community manager and seven part-time volunteer Board members are running a \$4.5 million dollar business with nearly 200 buildings spread out on 50-plus acres. Board members are researching vendors and requesting bids. Board members are making HR decisions without knowing labor laws. Board members are telling employees how to do their jobs. Board members are making one bad decision after another, and we the homeowners are paying for it.

We learned just how poorly our current model works when the bookkeeper resigned right before fiscal year-end, leaving us with no one to process payroll, accept checks, and pay bills. Oh, and no one to close out the books so we could have up-to-date financial statements, as required by law.

A couple of days later the community manager went on extended leave for several months, then the administrative assistant quit. All three of them left within days of each other. There was no office staff, none. If someone had been plotting to bring the Association to its knees, they couldn't have devised a better plan.

We weathered that crisis. Former Board member Darla Hagge (she resigned in August) and I helped out in the office until we were able to obtain temporary workers. We went with temps because we needed them NOW and also because hiring exposes us to liability if we don't know California labor laws. If we had been professionally managed, there would have been backup for our employees. The financials would be handled by an accounting team (and at half our current cost for a permanent full-time bookkeeper), and the other office positions could have been covered by shifting in experienced employees until additional staff were hired by the management company's personnel department. The three of us – Darla, Kim, and I – wouldn't have been left trying to do it all ourselves.

### **A Desperate Financial Situation**

When I ran for the Board, my primary concern was deferred maintenance. After working in the office, where I saw the poor recordkeeping, and after failing to get up-to-date financial information to learn just where the money is going, my primary concern became the viability of Woodside.

Concerned homeowners MUST step up if they want to keep Woodside alive. There's the possibility our insurance will be cancelled next year if certain repairs aren't made. If we don't have insurance, we homeowners have to pay for any losses, such as buildings damaged by fire or falling trees.

Additionally, the latest Reserve Study will be available soon, and according to new rules there will be more items included, like underground pipes. The Reserve Study is a preventative maintenance plan. It lists the major components of a property and estimates when they should be replaced and how much it will cost at that future time. We're supposed to be setting aside money in the Reserve Fund for maintenance over the next 30 years, like putting away money in a college fund so it's there when it's needed. *We don't have enough money in the Reserve Fund to cover all the maintenance that will be needed in the coming years.*

The Board seems happy to let the Association go broke and fall apart. It's almost as if they want investors to swoop in, buy us all out, bulldoze our homes, and redevelop this prime location.

### **A Plea to Save Woodside**

We have to recall the Board if we want to save Woodside.

At the October meeting, Kim Edwards was removed as president, and she resigned from the Board. Officers serve at the will of the Board and may be removed at any time, but it felt like Kim's biggest sin was partnering with property management consultant Lidia Velici to get a contractor on-site to work on long-needed maintenance. The way they removed Kim from office was shameful. Their conduct was unprofessional and ugly, and it explains in part why it's so hard to find people to run for the Board.

In case you need a further reminder, the Board has in open meetings tried to disregard rules they themselves passed, insulted vendors and homeowners, and appointed to a Board vacancy the person who received the fewest votes in the last election and who managed the Association during its decline.

The Board of Directors needs to be recalled. They are exposing Association members to liability through

- Disrepair of common areas and building exteriors
- Ignorance of California employment laws
- Lack of internal financial controls
- Noncompliance with CC&Rs and Bylaws

BUT.

A recall isn't enough. Recalled Board members can simply run for re-election, and if there aren't enough alternative candidates they'll be back on the Board.

### **Please Accept the Challenge**

We need at least seven candidates who can put aside self-interest to work for the good of all of us. We need seven people who will listen to their fellow Board members, who can consider issues impartially, and who will disagree respectfully. We need seven people who are committed to reversing Woodside's decline. We need seven people who live at Woodside and want to save their homes.

You don't need to be an expert in HOA law or property management or finance. You don't need previous board experience. You don't need to be a great public speaker.

What you need is to know the CC&Rs and Bylaws, to read the Board packets distributed before each meeting, to consider the facts and ask questions, and to make rational decisions for the good of the community. You need to maintain Board confidentiality. You need to be able to work cooperatively and to treat your fellow Board members, homeowners, and Association employees with respect. You need to be able to make tough choices for the community's well-being. You need integrity.

If you run for the board, you won't be going it alone. I will do whatever I can to help candidates succeed, first in being elected and then as a Board member. I will go door to

door speaking to homeowners, send out mailings, put out door hangers, do whatever is necessary to get you elected – IF at least seven qualified people are willing to step up as Board candidates.

If your personal situation won't let you run for the Board, perhaps you have neighbors who would be great Board members. Urge them to contact me for more information about being a board member.

### **We Can Do This**

We can still turn Woodside around. But we have to do it now, not next year or the year after.

If you are interested in running – even if you can't make a commitment at this time – let's talk. I'll set up a meeting where potential candidates can discuss board duties and responsibilities, and learn what to expect if elected.

Please call or text me at 916-598-6522 or email me at [sandrakwms@gmail.com](mailto:sandrakwms@gmail.com) by **December 15**.

Please.

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