

Tales 'n' Trails

FEBRUARY 2025

P.O. Box 1388 • Rio Communities, New Mexico 87002 • 505 864-2345



TIERRA GRANDE

ASSOCIATION INC

SUPPORTING OUR

MEMBER COMMUNITY

Another Year Gone By - Working With and For Members in 2024

Dear Members,

During these past 18 years a lot of changes have taken place. One thing remains constant, it continues to be a pleasure working for and with you. The dues you pay have been put to good use to support the Tierra Grande community in 2024.

The TGIA Board of Directors, Ron Robbins, IT/Operations, and Sue Moran, Administrator, listen to your recommendations and are doing our best to implement your ideas. Nothing is ever as simple as it seems. There are many restrictions from entities such as the NM State HWY Department, the Valencia County Public Works Department, and a myriad of other hurdles. Some suggestions from the 2023 Member Survey are being developed.

Entrances, Roads

TGIA is about halfway through improving entrances to our Community. Most entrances have street lights – more will follow.

Manzanita has a new cattleguard – the plan is to improve other cattleguards in the future.

An experimental product was used to improve the longevity of Mallette Drive – this product was not a good fit for our community. While it improved the road somewhat – its long-term maintenance is cost prohibitive.

Another product has been recommended by Valencia County Public Works staff. The plan is to improve Manzanita Drive during 2025 as that road becomes flooded during periods of heavy rain.

Well Adds to Fire Protection

TGIA also purchased a lot with a well. This property is located centrally in TGIA. The lot has been fenced. The plan is to install a fire hydrant to help with wildland and residential fires. It is hoped that it will help with homeowner insurance rates.

Each of these projects was funded out of TGIA's discretionary account so as not to impact your dues. Dues received are used to pay for everyday operations of the Association.

Easements, Website

The SunZia and El Rio Transmission Line easements through Tierra Grande will be under construction through 2027. Approximately half of the construction has been completed.

The Tierra Grande website has been updated. Ron Robbins, IT/Operations, has done a great job overseeing this update. The website now has a banner announcing special notifications and a Zoom link so you can join TGIA meetings from your home.

The website also has a video which provides a step-by-step guide to paying your dues online using a debit or credit card. A search bar has been added and pages have been consolidated, making it

easier to find materials related to the Association. Ideas to improve the website are always welcome. Many changes made came directly from your suggestions.

Grants – Four grants totaling \$7,000 were approved and paid in 2024. One for Water Conservation helps keep the draw on our precious water to a minimum, The Energy Conservation Grant supports solar development which reduces electric power surges. The Road Improvement Grants resulted in improvements for 22 properties. Grants that pay for conservation and improvement will help the value of vacant lots. Grant policies and applications are on the TGIA web page: www.tierragrande.org.

Where Your Dues Go

• The TGIA Logo/Brand updating has been completed. New logo, letterhead, updated web site, newsletter banner, billboards, brochures, etc.

• Protect ownership/titles with the Valencia County and Socorro County Assessor's office. Our relationship with the County Assessors has helped reduce the number of ownership / title errors.

• Review approximately 5,000 Socorro and Valencia County property ownership records of TGIA landowners which resulted in updating approximately 25 address changes. This is about a 50% improvement from prior years. Again, the TGIA staff worked diligently to find property owners and inform the appropriate County of updated mailing addresses.

• Mail out more than 128 New Owner Packets and record over 264 ownership changes. In 2024 we collected over \$3,792 in HOA disclosure fees.

• Organize two community cleanups with dumpsters provided at no cost through the Keep New Mexico Beautiful program.

• Partner with the Valencia County Road Department to repair roads, cattle guards, and implement an erosion prevention plan for TGIA roads along the foothills.

• Work with the State Department of Transportation to improve broken fencing and signs along HWY 47.

• Pay for and install signs when applicable in the community.

• Work with Valencia County Code Enforcement to enforce County codes.

• Support efforts to protect Preservation Land by installing additional signs, locks, and gates and work with New Mexico Department of Game & Fish and the U.S. Forest Service to protect the wildlife and to enforce the "no hunting no trapping" restrictions,

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What You Need to Know About Your Board of Directors

- The Board is part of the leadership team of a corporation. TGIA is a corporation, and the Board is responsible for running this business. Investors are the association members, and the Board is responsible for using assessment dollars responsibly.

- The Board is made up of elected "officials" making your board similar to a town council which is responsible for ensuring that rules are appropriate and fairly applied. TGIA landowners are the "citizens" and the Board is responsible for maintaining and enhancing the quality of living.

- Ultimately, the role of the Board is to protect property value. This is accomplished by operating the association, maintaining the common property, and enforcing governing documents.

Why are Tierra Grande's Governing Documents Important?

- Governing documents provide the structure so the board can work effectively, guide board decision making, and support association operations. Their greatest value, however, may lie in the protections they provide to association members.

- They give the board the authority to govern by providing for the operation and regulation of the community.

Breaking Down the Governing Documents of Tierra Grande

NOTICE OF ASSOCIATION & TGIA PROTECTIVE COVENANTS - This recorded Notice of Association Declaration contains reference to the Protective Covenants that regulate landowner responsibilities within the properties described in the Notice of Association. The protective covenants bind all the owners to the association, establish association responsibilities, and define owners' rights and obligations.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION - Articles of Incorporation initially create the corporation under state law and define the association's basic purposes and powers. They may specify such things and the number of directors, terms of office, and other specifics about how the board functions.

BYLAWS - Bylaws contain provisions concerning actual association operations, such as meetings, procedures for electing the board members and officers, and general duties of the board. Sometimes the bylaws cover the same topics as the declaration / protective covenants.

RULES REGULATIONS & RESOLUTIONS - Boards adopt rules and regulations consistent with the declaration of proprietary lease, the bylaws and state law. Rules are usually recorded at a board meeting in the form of a motion called a policy resolution. Making and enforcing rules are important responsibilities for boards that must be undertaken with care. In addition to policy resolutions boards adopt administrative, special, and general resolutions. These resolutions specify how the association should operate. Board members should familiarize themselves with all association resolutions.

Board Director to be Elected

If you are **NOT** a resident of Tierra Grande and would like to serve on the TGIA board, please send your resume with a cover letter.

Your letter of interest must be received no later than April 15, 2025.

If you want to nominate someone, be sure they are willing to serve the full five-year term before sending a cover letter and resume. The election of the Director is held at the July annual meeting.

Death Certificates— Information & Changes

If you have filed a death certificate for a loved one and their name still appears on the property tax records, contact the Valencia County OR Socorro County Tax Assessor, (the County in which your Tierra Grande lot is located) and let them know the death certificate was filed with the County Clerk. There may be additional paperwork required. Don't assume that since the death certificate was filed that the property ownership records have been updated.

Pay Attention to Property Value Notice

Each early spring a Notice of Property Value is mailed to property owners from either the Valencia County Assessor or the Socorro County Assessor, depending on which County your Tierra Grande property is located.

For further information contact the County Assessor at the phone numbers provided at the bottom of this article.

A window of opportunity exists to protest the property value, which is the basis for the property tax. The protest period generally ends at the close of April. If you choose to protest your property value, protest forms can be found on the County sites or by contacting the applicable Assessor's Office:

Socorro County: 575 835-0714: www.SocorroCounty.net

Valencia County: 505 866-2417: www.Co.Valencia.nm

Unpaid Assessments Accrue Interest

Unpaid Tierra Grande Assessments for 2024 have begun to accrue interest at the rate of eight percent per annum. Accounts delinquent in the second year of nonpayment are sent to legal counsel to begin foreclosure proceedings. Payment in full for past due assessments plus fees and other charges must be recovered from owners who want to remove their lot from legal action.

Foreclosure Auction in 2025

We have been reporting that a foreclosure auction would take place over the past few years. Between Covid restrictions and new laws, foreclosures have been seriously delayed. We have been promised by our attorney that we will have a foreclosure sale in 2025. We will keep you posted.

For Sale By Owner Catalog

The For Sale By Owner Catalog has been updated. Properties in the catalog for over four years with no activity have been removed. Call for information 505 864-2345.

- Work with universities for student access to the Preservation Land.
 - Enforce the Protective Covenants by investigating, reporting, following up, and implementing a fee/fine policy for Covenant violations. During 2024 about \$6,215 in fees and fines were collected.
 - Market the For Sale By Owner catalog to help owners sell their lots.
 - Enforce a permit policy for those who wish access to Tierra Grande Preservation Land.
 - Enforce a Lien Policy for lots in arrears.
 - Board policies/practices/leases/easements, etc., for alternative revenue sources came to about \$3,950 in 2024.
 - Work to create a sense of community with members/residents through email information sharing, community involvement, and being responsive to TGIA members.
 - TGIA was recognized by the Valencia County Chamber of Commerce as November 2024 member of the month.
 - Fiscal Responsibility – The Board of Directors, as your representatives, acts in your best interest.
 - Update the Five-Year Plan available on the TGIA webpage.
 - Work with and attend meetings with area governments and County representatives, public works, planning & zoning, county commissioner, and sheriff on issues related to Tierra Grande.
 - With the support of the Tierra Grande Architectural Control Committee, the Association helped many people fulfill their construction desires within the Protective Covenants to make Tierra Grande a diverse and welcoming community.
 - Complete a successful Audit/Review for 2023 which can be found on the TGIA web site.
 - Celebrate the 10th anniversary of Little Free Library.
 - Work with cattle grazers, developers, and individuals with vested interests in Tierra Grande to keep the community beautiful.
 - On a day-to-day basis provide service to members such as maps, notary and fax services, obtain historical deeds, guide owners/family regarding changes of ownership, transfer upon death deeds, probate contact information, etc.
- Tierra Grande has almost 2,600 landowners. During 2024 we answered your calls, met with many of you directly, represented you when necessary, and, hopefully, responded to your issues and concerns professionally and as quickly as possible.

2025 TGIA Board Meeting Dates

Usually last Wednesday of the month at 4 p.m.

January 22 / February 26 / March 19

April 23 / May 21 / June 25

Saturday, July 19 - Annual meeting

Election of officers - July 23

August 27 / September 24 / October 22

November 19 / December 17

If you are interested in participating in a meeting, email info@tierragrande.org prior to the meeting date. we will have a chair ready for you or send a zoom link.

How Long Have You Been a TGIA Landowner?

The TGIA board continues to recognize those of you who have been owners for 50 years by awarding you with a \$50 credit to your account if you are in good standing (current on the payment of your assessments). We look forward to hearing from our faithful owners who purchased their TGIA lot in 1975 (or earlier if you haven't already received a \$50 credit). Many 1975 owners have sent in their story and we are holding those announcements for the June newsletter.

If you have not previously submitted your name along with a brief intro as to why you purchased in TG and why you continue to hold on to the property after all these years, we look forward to hearing from you. Please include the unit/block/lot you own, along with the approximate date you purchased the property. You can send us the information via email: info@tierragrande.org or call us at 505 864-2345.

Suspension of Membership Rights

The TGIA Board of Directors recorded a Resolution regarding the Association's right to suspend a member's rights to enjoy certain Association benefits in accordance with the Amended Articles of Incorporation. Per Section 3 – Suspension of Membership Rights as outlined in Article Five of the Amended Articles of Incorporation.

A. A member's rights, including, but not limited to, the right to vote, (see Article II of the Amended Bylaws for "membership" privileges) may be suspended by resolution of the Board of Directors under the following circumstances:

1. The member fails to pay any assessment or charge when first due according to the provisions of any recorded instrument relating to such assessment or charge;

2. The member, family, guests, tenants, (et al.) violate any rule or regulation adopted by the corporation regarding the use of any property within Tierra Grande;

3. The member or the members' family, guests, tenants, (et al.) use any property within Tierra Grande contrary to any protective covenant regarding the property.

B. The suspension of membership rights based upon the failure of the member to pay any assessment or charge when first due shall continue until five business days after the past due assessment, together with interest or other charge collectible with such assessment or charge is paid in full. The suspension of membership rights based upon the violation of a rule, regulation, or protective covenant shall continue for thirty days after the date the Board adopts a resolution suspending membership rights, or as long as the violation continues.

Comments / Suggestions / Concerns

We appreciate hearing from you.

How do you think TGIA is doing? Are we representing you fairly? Do you have questions?

Please feel free to be positive or constructively critical. We review all recommendations.

We have implemented some of your suggestions – such as celebrating years of ownership as well as responses received from the 2023 member survey.

TGIA Covenant Items Worth Mentioning

Annual Assessments / Dues are an automatic Lien on any Tierra Grande (TG) residential lot you may own.

If your TG property has been approved for a variance by TGIA, please remember the variance is not transferable to new owners.

All TGIA lots shall be used for:

- ONLY single-family residential purposes
- No building shall be erected, altered, placed or permitted to remain on any lot other than one (single-family dwelling, except as hereinafter provided, as well as a private garage, carport, servants' quarters or other related outbuildings all of which conform to the exterior design of the main residence
- No dwelling shall be used except as a single-family dwelling.
- Lots in excess of five acres in size may be re-subdivided, but not more than one for each five gross acres of the original lot. Such subdividing shall comply with the laws of the State of New Mexico or its political subdivision
- The lots so created shall be subject to the covenants and restrictions set forth herein
- ALL plans must be reviewed and approved by the TG Architectural Control Committee prior to starting construction.

Other Items of Interest

- Dumpsters from the Keep New Mexico Beautiful program may be awarded to TGIA in April 2025.
- Valencia County GIS Maps: If your Tierra Grande property lies in Valencia County you can find the GPS coordinates by clicking on the following link and filling in your owner info <https://arcgisce2.co.valencia.nm.us/parcelmap/>
- Valencia County Tax Bills / Importance of Keeping TGIA Informed of A Change of Address - Per the Valencia County Treasurer - tax bills are mailed out once a year and delinquent tax bills once a year. As for returned mail due to "No one at this address", "deceased", "undeliverable as addressed", the Treasurer's staff documents the reason, date and initials of the person entering the data into the system. In these cases the Treasurer will not mail future tax bills.
- TGIA purchased additional land that adjoins our Preservation Land to protect the Preservation Land and prevent development.

TGIA Preservation Land Access

The combination to gates to certain areas in Tierra Grande will be changed around April 1, 2025. Contact the TGIA office to obtain the new combination (505-864-2345 or info@tierragrande.org.) lease re-lock the gates as appropriate. If the locks are placed too low on the gate, it can make it difficult to open should rain, snow or mud pile up around the bottom of the gate. Don't forget to pick up a new Preservation Land pass if you have lost one by stopping into the Tierra Grande office.

Budget Information on TGIA Web Site

The Tierra Grande annual budget will be on the website (www.tierragrande.org) once the 2025 budget is approved by the Board of Directors.

Grant Updates

The TGIA Board reviewed an analysis of grant funds that have been paid out from 2021 - 2024. The most requested grant is for solar (energy conservation) then water conservation, followed by road improvements, then power line extensions. Based on recommendations of members from a July 2023 member survey, the grants have been amended accordingly:

Water Conservation

Increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Limits requests to one grant per developed lot.

The grant cannot be used to upgrade or maintain existing systems.

Requires applications be submitted prior to beginning the project.

Requires that a copy from the State Environmental Department be provided showing proof of approval for alternative toilets.

Road Assistance

Remove reference to the number of lots that will be improved - the grant is strictly based on cost/cap of \$2,500.

Requires that the applicant provide proof that the road is NOT on the County maintenance list.

The grant cannot be used for driveways or culverts.

Limits requests of owner/applicant to one grant per developed lot.

Requires that applications must be submitted prior to beginning the project.

Power Line Extensions

Set the grant at \$1,500 per pole with a cap of \$15,000 (10 poles).

Remove reference to the number of lots that will be improved - the grant is strictly based on per pole/cap.

Requires that applicant provide a signed contract with Socorro Electric Cooperative.

Limits requests of owner/applicant to one grant per developed lot.

Requires that applications must be submitted prior to beginning the project.

Requires that proof of completion from SEC be provided before payment is made directly to SEC.

Energy Conservation

Provides examples of energy conservation systems.

Grant increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Clarifies that it cannot be used for maintenance of such items,

Limits requests of owner/applicant to one grant per developed lot.

Requires application to be submitted prior to beginning.

Requires that a copy of the final inspection report be provided prior to reimbursement of the grant funds.

Grant changes/updates became effective January 1, 2025.

Grants can be found on the Tierra Grande website: www.tierragrande.org.