Dam Funding Referendum - FAQ

Important clarifications

- Social media is not, and never will be, POALH's official means of communication.
- This is a tax (Special Assessment): It carries the same obligations as your annual tax.
- Payment structure: Unfortunately, the Special Assessment cannot be split into installments due to legal constraints.
- Historical context: In 1963, POALH acquired ownership of the northern portion of the dam (it is in our Charter). While history is what it is, we are responsible for addressing it today.
- Relief option: The only flexibility we were able to offer is splitting the Annual Operating Tax into two payments. This required additional effort by our Tax Collector, Lynn Crisci, who has graciously agreed to accommodate this. We are very appreciative of her support.

If we use the $50,000 from Reserves, how much will remain?

- As of February 28, 2026, just prior to referendum ballots being mailed, POALH's total Capital Allocated Reserve Account was $114,089.58.
- The proposed $50,000 allocation toward the dam project would be drawn from the Capital Allocated Reserve Account. This would leave a remaining balance of $64,089.58 in that account.

Why a special assessment based on property value, rather than a flat fee?

The Board of Governors did initially explore a flat-fee approach, as it seemed like the simplest and most straightforward method. However, after careful consideration and consultation with our legal counsel, we were strongly advised against this structure.

Our community is unique. We have a wide range of property types, including homes with multiple lots, vacant parcels, and over 100 additional lots that are either buildable or unbuildable. Because of this, a flat fee would not be applied equitably across the membership.

More importantly, we cannot selectively determine which properties are assessed and which are not. Implementing a flat-fee in a community with this level of variation would likely expose the Association to legal challenges. Based on legal guidance, the risk of litigation under a flat-fee model is significant.

For these reasons, a Special Assessment was applied using the same methodology as our annual taxes, which is based on assessed property value. This ensures a more equitable distribution of the cost and aligns with established and legally sound practices.

We understood this was a significant undertaking, and we worked diligently to evaluate all options with fairness, transparency, and the long-term protection of the Association in mind.

Timing of the Referendum

The timeline was driven by several critical factors:

- Contractor bids are only valid for 90 days. Delays would likely result in significantly higher costs.
- Work must begin in the off-season and be completed before the ground freezes and prior to the start of the next season.
- This is a time-sensitive repair, and all of these constraints drove the current schedule.

Financial Hardship

If you are experiencing financial hardship due to the special assessment, we encourage you to reach out to our tax collector Lynn, to discuss your individual situation. taxcollector@lakehaywardct.com

Additional Questions

Thank you for your continued engagement and support of the POALH community. If you have any further questions, please reach out - president@lakehaywardct.com or a member of the board (contact us page)