

## Preserve Segment Assessment FAQs

**Q: This came as a big surprise, and suddenly. Why couldn't this increase be phased in over time, and why wasn't there a community discussion on this issue?**

A: We are very sorry about this, and wish there was a better answer. Once we identified the significant cost difference between the Preserve and the rest of the island, we concluded that in good conscience we could not look at a one bedroom villa owner (or any other owner) this January and tell them that they have to continue to subsidize a higher standard in the Preserve that they don't enjoy in their own neighborhoods.

This occurred in the middle of our budget process, and the timeline simply did not allow for more notice. Accordingly, we have extended the time frame to pay by several months, and will hold a neighborhood session next spring to discuss the matter in greater detail, including feedback on the maintenance standard going forward.

**Q: Can't irrigation be managed better? I see the sprinklers on when it is raining, and so much water is wasted.**

A: We're committed to continued improvement in the equipment and management practices related to the irrigation. Every sprinkler head in the Preserve is tied to a master controller which has a rain sensor. All controllers are set to shut down their sprinkler heads at ¼ inch of rain, the minimum setting the systems will permit. These sensors are recalibrated twice per year. KICA also uses moisture sensors, but they are less reliable than the rain sensors. As the weather cools, we back down the frequency to twice per week, then once per week. We will completely shut down drip systems in December and spray irrigation systems will be turned off when forecasted temperatures drop to freezing.

It's also significant that we rely on potable water for irrigation. KICA has experimented with well water in the past, and found that overspray on driveways and concrete surfaces, such as curbing, resulted in significant staining.

If you see sprinklers spraying in the street or broken, we encourage you to call or email member services (768-9194 or [memberservices@kica.us](mailto:memberservices@kica.us)) with an as accurate description of the location as possible.

**Q: Labor costs seem high to me. Please explain them.**

A: KICA spends about 4,000 hours per year maintaining the Preserve. About 70% of those hours are dedicated to maintaining the turf strip along the road, and include the following:

- Mowing weekly, 42 weeks and 672 hours per year.
- Hand edging of all the roads and landscape beds monthly, ten months and 1,600 hours per year.
- Turf chemicals, fertilizer and aeration semiannually, 192 hours total per year.
- Proactive irrigation checks occur six times per year to adjust heads, replace parts, etc., which results in 288 hours.
- Reactive repairs occur as needed, but average around 100 hours each year.
- The landscape beds are hand maintained monthly resulting in 864 hours.
- There are a handful of smaller miscellaneous costs. KICA Director of Operations Shannon White is happy to discuss any of these numbers in greater detail. She may be reached at [Shannon.white@kica.us](mailto:Shannon.white@kica.us) or 768-9194

**Q: The rest of the community enjoys the bike trails, the pavilion, the boat landing, and the viewing tower. Shouldn't they help pay for the Preserve?**

A: Those expenses are paid for by the entire KICA membership. The only items included in the increased segment assessment are related to landscaping. Further, the increased segment assessment still doesn't fully cover the costs of the added service in the Preserve, so the broader community is helping defray the costs.

**Q: Does any other neighborhood have a segment assessment?**

A: Yes. A segment assessment is being instituted for Ocean Park, and the V-gate assessment is a segment assessment. It is common in communities like Kiawah to have neighborhood or "segment" assessments, and they have been charged by KICA without objection for years, both in the Preserve and the V-gate. In other neighborhoods, like The Settlement, Inlet Cove, Indigo Park and the various regimes, a neighborhood HOA maintains the landscaping in these areas, not KICA. The HOA charges these owners directly for the expenses.

**Q: What gives KICA the authority to charge a segment assessment, particularly for funding operations rather than improvements?**

A: Article V, Section 5 of the Covenants describe the authority of the board to levy segment assessments for the benefit and/or *operation* of a particular segment of the island. The Preserve segment assessment has existed for many years, as has the Vanderhorst Gate segment assessment which funds the gate's operation. The intent of the covenant language is clear, and has never been questioned. KICA's attorney George Nowack, who specializes and practices exclusively in community association matters, is reviewing the legality of the assessment. However, we believe legal wrangling over this issue is a "lose-lose" proposition. At the end of the day, the additional services in the Preserve (and the V-Gate) need to be paid for by those who benefit from them, or those additional services need to be suspended.

**Q: What options do we have to reduce costs in the Preserve and reduce or eliminate this assessment?**

A: The overwhelming majority of added cost is related to maintenance of turf, including irrigation. The other expenses are not irrelevant, but to make a meaningful reduction in these costs will require a significant reduction in irrigation and turf maintenance. KICA is open to whatever the neighborhood would like to see happen.