Lake of the Woods
Lake of the Woods Association, Inc.
Resolution 2019-3
An Administrative Resolution
LOWA Community Text Messaging Policy and Implementation

WHEREAS, the LOWA Board of Directors recognizes the need for rapid and reliable communications with LOW members, tenants, and their households, as stated in the LOWA Board’s ‘Overarching Goal 5’, which include a strategy to “Upgrade information exchange to achieve rapid and reliable communications with and between members.”

WHEREAS, At a time when smartphones and other devices are ubiquitous, community texting is the most obvious technology available to respond to the need for LOWA to communicate critical and timely information within the LOW community. Research shows that 90 percent of texts are received and read within three minutes, compared with an open rate for emails of only 30 percent. Unlike our email notifications which require the member to open his/her email messages, text messages have immediacy and, therefore, are less likely to be ignored or dumped into a spam folder. This policy defines the clear role of text messages for the Association.

- LOWA Text Messages are not a substitute for emergency communication from law enforcement, fire emergency services or National Weather Service.

- Text messages would allow LOWA to communicate about sudden, unexpected, critical and rapidly-changing situations which affect daily life at LOW, as LOWA becomes aware of such situations. Communications about situations at LOW, such as road closures, can be enhanced if members receive text messages.

- LOWA is not authorized in its Declarations nor does it want to create a duty of care and duty of diligence for emergency communications.

WHEREAS, Recognizing that community text messaging technology offers an unparalleled opportunity for LOWA to enhance communications which are timely and critical, the LOWA Communications Committee approved a resolution at its July 27, 2016 meeting recommending that the LOWA Board of Directors institute a text messaging system as part of LOWA’s comprehensive communications program in order to provide critical information to the community on a timely basis.

WHEREAS, The Communications Committee has thoroughly examined the potential for community text messaging. The Committee strongly believes it is time LOWA began using community text messaging. The Committee has studied community messaging systems, both free and fee-based, examined the services used by other HOAs and conferred with both LOWA’s General Manager and Communications Manager. The Committee recommends the Board adopt the policy.
THEREFORE, RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Lake of the Woods Association, Inc. adopts the following LOWA Community Text Messaging Policy.

1. Participation in LOWA’s community text messaging service will be voluntary. Members, Tenants and their households and others will receive instructions on how to opt-in (subscribe) to the service.

2. Community text messages will ONLY be used to notify subscribers of critical, timely and unscheduled information within Lake of the Woods which affects daily living with-in LOW, such as:
   a. LOW road blockages/closures
   b. Unexpected closure of an amenity
   c. Closure of lakes for any reason unrelated to weather

3. Community Text Messaging will NOT be used for or replace emergency communication. LOWA is not authorized in its Declarations, nor does it want to create a duty of care and duty of diligence for emergency communications. Emergency alerts, such as those shown below, sent by official agencies, may be forwarded as text messages— as the Association becomes aware of the incident (NOTE: LOWA does not have any 24 hour, on-call Staff).
   a. Orange County, Virginia, Alerts
   b. Amber Alerts / Silver Alerts
   c. Utility Outages
   d. Severe Weather Alerts

4. Community Text Messaging will NOT be used to communicate information which is not time-sensitive or critical, or otherwise announced on Facebook or email blasts, including but not limited to (i.e. no advertising or spam):
   a. Clubhouse menu changes
   b. Scheduled special events or meetings
   c. Amenity news or offerings
   d. Scheduled road maintenance or water outages

5. The LOWA Communications Committee and the LOWA Communications Manager have researched multiple texting services. Prices vary greatly from free (ad supported) to over $2,000 / month. Any service we use must meet the following requirements:
   a. Mobile phone text system scalable to 5,000 users
   b. Easy to administer by up to 5 administrators
   c. Affordable
   d. None or limited third-party marketing messages
   e. No resale to or re-use of phone information by third parties
   f. Solid security and privacy policy to ensure privacy of information
6. In order to ensure consistency of messaging and appropriate branding, the LOWA Communications Manager, or designated backup, will issue the text messages. (At least three Staff required.)

7. Community Text Messaging will NOT replace email notifications, but will augment them with a subset of notifications which are critical and timely. We recognize that some people will not opt-in to receive text messages and will continue to rely on emails.

8. The LOWA Communications Committee will work with the LOWA Communications Manager and Staff to promote sign up (voluntary opt-in) with members, tenants, their households and others for the text messaging service through articles in Lake Currents; outreach to committees, clubs and organizations; social media; and Channel 18.

**FURTHER, RESOLVED** the General Manager is directed to implement LOWA Community Text Messaging.

Effective: February 2, 2019

LAKE OF THE WOODS ASSOCIATION, INC.

By: **Clifton D. Wilks, President**

ATTEST:

I, as Secretary for Lake of the Woods Association, Inc., hereby attest that the foregoing Policy Resolution 2019-3 was adopted by the Board of Directors at a duly-held and noticed Board of Directors meeting held on the 2nd day of February 2019.

By: **Walter Diercks, Secretary**