



# Ballantrae Communicator Online

*From the Ballantrae Community Development District in Land O' Lakes, FL 34638*

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**Amazon moves thousands of packages a day through this “last mile” station next door in Lutz. See story on [page 4](#).**



## CDD, HOAs set board meetings

### CDD Board of Supervisors

It continues to hold its regular monthly meetings, usually on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. in the clubhouse.

Sept. 22 is the last meeting of this fiscal year.

Next fiscal year's meetings are Oct. 27, Nov. 17, Dec. 15, Jan. 26, Feb. 23, Mar. 23, Apr. 27, May 25, June 22, July 27, Aug. 24 and Sept. 28.

Residents are invited to comment on agenda items at the start of the meeting. Any CDD non-agenda items can be brought up after all agenda items have been discussed.

CDD meeting dates are also posted online at the CDD's website at [ballantraecdd.org](http://ballantraecdd.org) at the Board Meetings tab, on the CDD bulletin board at the clubhouse, and in all village entrance bulletin boards.

All meeting agendas are also posted to the CDD website one week in advance of each meeting.

### Ballantrae's master HOA

The Ballantrae Homeowner Association Board of Directors generally meets on the second Tuesday of the month, starting at 7 p.m. at the clubhouse.

Upcoming meeting dates at the clubhouse are Sept. 14 and Nov. 9, which is also its budget hearing and annual meeting.

Meeting dates and times are posted at each village entrance box.

To reach the HOA Board, go to its website at [ballantraehoa.com](http://ballantraehoa.com), or "Ballantrae HOA" on Facebook or email [president@ballantraehoa.com](mailto:president@ballantraehoa.com).

### Straiton Townhomes HOA

The Straiton Homeowner Association Board of Directors meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. at the clubhouse. All Straiton HOA members are invited to attend and participate in all meetings

The next meeting will be its Oct. 21 budget meeting.

Straiton manager Shannon Nasekos can be reached by email at [snasekos@rizzetta.com](mailto:snasekos@rizzetta.com).

Its homepage is accessible via [portal.rizzetta.com](http://portal.rizzetta.com).

## CDD Board of Supervisors

### *The Ballantrae Communicator*

The *Ballantrae Communicator* is posted online monthly by the Ballantrae Community Development District Board of Supervisors at its website: [ballantraecdd.org](http://ballantraecdd.org). Anyone can go to the site to sign up to receive, or stop getting, the newsletter.

All residents are welcome to suggest story ideas. Email them to the editor at [jfplateau@ballantraecdd.org](mailto:jfplateau@ballantraecdd.org).

Send all email to *The Communicator* to the editor or via "snail mail" to the editor at the clubhouse at 17611 Mentmore Blvd. in Land O' Lakes, FL 34638.

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# CDD Board, residents discuss new clubhouse

About 50 of Ballantrae's roughly 2,000 adults have – so far – taken the CDD Board up on its offer to consider their thoughts on if and where a new clubhouse should be built in the park, and what it should include.

For the record, the CDD has \$1,126,000 set aside at this point toward construction of a new clubhouse and conversion of the existing one to a fitness center for residents.

Suggestions by email or from residents attending the June through August CDD Board meetings have ranged from a multi-story gym or basketball court, to a wellness room for nursing mothers.

Residents also used face time to question the Board about the building process, and the cost of both a clubhouse and converting the current one to a fitness center.

At the Aug. 25 meeting, Board members decided to move ahead in planning while still inviting more opinions and comments from residents.

The Board decided to start ranking suggestions from the most desirable to those that are less so, and as to which suggestions make more sense than others.

A dozen residents submitted ideas

## What's your opinion? Tell us!

Where in Ballantrae Park should the new clubhouse be built, and what should it contain?

Let the CDD Board know your opinion via email: [ballantraeclubhouse@gmail.com](mailto:ballantraeclubhouse@gmail.com)

Because seating is still limited at meetings due to the pandemic, you can call in from the comfort of your home. Simple call-in instructions are included in the [agenda](#) posted on the [ballantraeccd.org](http://ballantraeccd.org) website a week before the meeting.

via [ballantraeclubhouse@gmail.com](mailto:ballantraeclubhouse@gmail.com).

Of them, two-thirds pushed for a fitness center as their main choice.

On Facebook, respondents show strong support for construction of a dog park,

“Is all that (construction) going to impact our fees?” came one question from the first speaker at the July 28 Board meeting.

“That depends on what (residents) want built,” responded Chair Jim Fleteau.

If both projects are completed for less than \$1,126,000, and there won't be any impact on fees, he said.

One email writer scrapped the idea of a new clubhouse or fitness center. The couple preferred that the community be cleaned up and maintained in such ways as adding brick pavers in Ballantrae Blvd.,

restoring the roof on the playground, new and more umbrellas at the pool deck, and an outdoor community pavilion for public and/or private events.

A resident said low-costs would be doubtful because of the current scarcity and high price for building materials.

One resident suggested landowners visit new clubhouses in other communities to learn about their costs and benefits.

Another resident suggested visiting Wilderness Lake Preserve's new clubhouse.

Another resident said Ballantrae could get by with a larger but nicer meeting room with a better-equipped kitchen for events. And a reading/lounging area would be nice, she said.

A resident asked how far along the board was in speaking with engineers who would design the clubhouse. Board Vice Chair Richard Levy explained that “we've not gone to architects yet – on purpose. We decided we want to hear from residents first. We're not going to architects first and then have residents say ‘no, that's not what we want’.”

An emailer suggested moving the volleyball court to put the clubhouse there. Another suggested throwing out the existing children's play area for a new one meeting ADA standards.

Board Assistant Secretary Christopher Milano said, “We want to gauge resident feedback. If we do it right, we get a new clubhouse and a fitness center that's free for resident's use. That combination really kicks up the value of your home.”

Mr. Milano said in his discussions with neighbors, he has heard requests for, among other things, a two-story clubhouse and a gym, a full bar, a larger and better-equipped kitchen, coffee stations, a movie screen equipped with surround sound, board games and lounging areas, sewing machines, gaming table, a dance floor with a DJ booth, a book/library reading area, meeting rooms with TVs, and a wellness room for mothers.

*Continued on page 5*

## Next Garage Sale Oct. 9

The Ballantrae HOA Board has set the second Saturdays of April and October as the permanent dates for the semi-annual community garage sales. That allows residents to plan for them far in advance.

[HOA president Ed Holloway](#) said that means the next community garage sale will be held this Oct. 9. The next will be in 2022 on April 9 and Oct. 8. Hours for all will be from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

After each garage sale, the HOA hopes to have a Goodwill Industries truck parked at the clubhouse parking lot to accept certain unsold and unwanted items. [Goodwill does not](#), for example, accept bedding (box springs, mattresses or frames).

Do not leave items at the park unless the truck is present! Otherwise, your CDD taxes must pay for maintenance staff to haul dumped items to the county landfill and pay dumping fees. In the meantime, CDD maintenance staff isn't performing the duties you pay them for.

# Amazon's 'last mile' begins a mile west of Ballantrae

By Jim Flateau

Communicator Editor & CDD Chair

Amazon's newest "last mile" delivery station is in Lutz at the intersection of Mentmore Blvd. and Bexley Village Drive.

That's less than a mile west of the Ballantrae clubhouse.

The station is designed to serve an increasingly wider range of Amazon's customers in Pasco County and beyond, for years to come.

In simplest terms, the proverbial "last mile" designation acknowledges that stations like Lutz are the last place Amazon has custody of packages. It is from there it wants to expedite delivery of an ever-increasing volume of packages and be as competitive as possible.

"Last mile" stations are the engine behind Amazon's increasing ability to ship and deliver packages on its own. It is now **reportedly** delivering 67 percent of its own packages to customers and expects to hit 85 percent in two years.

Since its March 3 opening, the Lutz station is delivering 48-50,000 packages on a normal day. It delivers up to 70,000 packages on days Amazon is running Prime or other special sales, according to Lutz station manager Kyle Klebowski and Amazon corporate press spokesman [Owen Torres](#) in a joint interview with the *Communicator*.

[Amazon](#) is already planning to expand its services. It expects to open customer service at the Lutz site in 2022. Customers will in the future be able to come to the facility to



These customer service entrances aren't scheduled to go into use until next year.

pick up incoming packages or to drop off returns. Those drop off and pick up services are not offered yet in Lutz.

The Lutz station receives packages direct from Amazon fulfillment centers that have the products customers ordered, whether that fulfillment center is in Ruskin, Lakeland – or California.

Mr. Torres wrote in an email to the *Communicator* that "This delivery station has created hundreds of new jobs ... offering a variety of benefit packages since day one."

For example, Florida voters approved a constitutional amendment last year that raises minimum wages to \$10 an hour as of Sept. 30 this year. Amazon, by comparison, starts its employees at \$15 per hour.

Amazon's corporate press releases note its employee benefits include full medical, vision and dental insurance as well as a 401 (k) with 50 percent company match "starting on day one."

Mr. Torres added, "Delivery stations also offer entrepreneurs the opportunity to build their own business delivering Amazon packages, as well as independent contractors the flexibility to be their own boss and create their own schedule delivering for Amazon ..."

Anyone wishing to seek employment at the Lutz station should go to [amazondelivers.jobs](#).

According to the site in mid-August, Tampa-St. Pete is one of the locations where Amazon is looking to hire more workers.

Mr. Torres said the location of such stations is determined by the number of orders Amazon receives by ZIP code.

*Continued on next page*



Because it denies media access inside its sites due to the pandemic, Amazon provided this photo of a delivery station that it said is similar to the Lutz operation.

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There's hardly a truck bay to be had as Amazon unloads thousands of packages for delivery every day.

## Amazon ...

[Continued from previous page](#)

Those numbers led Amazon to spend \$8.75 million to purchase the 46.75-acre site from Hayman Fuentes and then lay out \$40 million to build the 110,866 square foot, single-story building.

It then hired approximately 200 on-site workers and contracted with outside vendors to provide about 200 drivers to deliver packages.

Many of those packages are delivered by employees in the [Amazon Flex program](#), which Amazon describes this way on its website:

"It's simple. You use your own vehicle to deliver packages for Amazon

as a way of earning extra money to move you closer to your goals."

Amazon station workers report to work by 1:20 a.m. each day and generally work until noon, sorting packages into roughly 178 driver routes. Drivers come in between 10 a.m. and noon. Most finish by 5 p.m. but some routes can take till 10 p.m. to finish, Mr. Klebowski said.

The off-hour traffic helps define Amazon as a good neighbor, several Bexley residents said.

Interviewed as they walked or biked along Mentmore Blvd., a half dozen Bexley residents – asking to remain anonymous – said they liked that most of the Amazon traffic is southbound and

away from their homes to the north.

Mr. Torres liked residents noticing Amazon's attempt to be good neighbors.

He said, "It's not just us coming into a community, we like to be partners, neighbors in the community. Some of our facilities like Lutz are adjacent to homes – so we want a positive face in the community."

Since the opening of the Amazon station, Pasco Administrator Dan Biles told the *Communicator* that "Pasco County is thrilled to welcome Amazon to Lutz. The new delivery station is bringing hundreds of jobs to Pasco County, and if you live or work in Pasco, this facility is expected to speed up deliveries to homes and businesses throughout the county.

"This project is another shining example of Pasco County government working hand-in-hand with the Pasco Economic Development Council to attract businesses to Florida's premier county," Mr. Biles said.

because of the pandemic, and the increased cost of those supplies that are available, Ms. Stewart said there are architects and builders available and looking for projects such as this one.

## Clubhouse future ...

[Continued from page 3](#)

The CDD Board had voted unanimously at its June 23 monthly meeting to seek the input and patience of all residents as it starts planning for the long-awaited new clubhouse, and conversion of the existing meeting room to a fitness center for residents

District engineer Tonja Stewart recommended the Board start by considering the pluses and minuses of the best sites for the community center.

In addition, she said, they should consider what it should house.

She said that would give architects a starting point in looking at construction design and options.

Even with the slowdown in production of construction supplies



A look inside the ubiquitous Prime vans seen combing our streets for long hours.

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## Information that's worth repeating ...

The Onliner repeats or updates this page in most postings for the benefit of new residents and those who missed them before. They provide information on some state laws and county ordinances, while supplying some HOA and CDD information as well. We hope you find these items useful!



## Avoid fines by irrigating right day, hours

Residents are reminded that [Pasco mandates](#) that lawns only be watered on one assigned day each week, and then only during allowed hours.

By confining your residential irrigation to your proscribed days and pre-set hours, you can avoid fines of \$100-\$500 that can be imposed by the county for residential irrigation outside of approved hours and days.

Routine residential lawn watering using sprinklers is restricted in Pasco County to midnight to 8 a.m. or from 6 p.m. to midnight – but not both – on these assigned watering days:

Addresses with house numbers ending in 0 or 1 irrigate on Monday.

- Those ending in 2 or 3, Tuesday.
- Those ending in 4 or 5, Wednesday.
- Those ending in 6 or 7, Thursday.
- Those ending in 8 or 9, Friday.
- No weekend watering is allowed.

The CDD Board has a variance that allows different parts of our community property to be irrigated on Mondays through Saturdays.

The [variance is posted](#) on the CDD website at [ballantraecdd.org](http://ballantraecdd.org) at the Important then Other Documents tab at #D3.



## Keep Ballantrae's street lights shining

Residents can report street light outages themselves directly to Duke Energy by phone or online.

It takes only a few minutes to report outages in your neighborhood to Duke, and to find out when they will be repaired, usually within a few days.

It helps to report both the pole number (on the street side

of the pole) as well as the address or intersection nearest the pole, especially for poles without numbers (such as those on Ballantrae and Mentmore blvds.).

You can report outages to Duke Energy by calling (800) 228-8485.

Or go to the CDD [ballantraecdd.org](http://ballantraecdd.org) website. Click on Important Documents, then Other Documents and scroll down to click on E2 to Duke's website. Fill out the form there and send it. The process takes just a minute. Normal repairs usually take just 2-3 days.

## Wi-Fi at the pools

You can connect your wireless device to the CDD's free WiFi network at the pools in Ballantrae Park and in Straiton.

In the park, search for connections and select the "Ballantrae" SSID.

At the Straiton pool, the SSID is "Straiton".

The password for both is "cypress1". The password is all lower case.

## Obey leash, scoop laws

Residents can be fined by the county each time their dog is unleashed outdoors or fail to "scoop the poop" their dogs drop on another's property

Owners can be fined if dogs are unleashed outside of an enclosed area – even if its in the owner's front yard or in the open garage. Leashing is still required, according to [Section 14-97](#).



## Put trash out at night for early a.m. pickup

Pasco County picks up regular trash every Tuesday and Friday, and recyclables each Wednesday.

Residents can put them out the night before because pickup can occur very early in the morning. There is no set time for pickups.

Residents can contact their trash hauler to order an optional recycling bin. Or use your own container with a recycle label.

Some residents seem unaware, so as a reminder: residents – not the CDD or HOA – pay for pickup.

For more recycling information, visit [bit.ly/PascoRecycling](http://bit.ly/PascoRecycling); call (727) 856-4539; or e-mail to [recycling@pascocountyfl.net](mailto:recycling@pascocountyfl.net).

It is illegal to scoop and drop dog waste into a neighbor's garbage bin at curbside. It is also illegal to toss scooped bags into street gutters that will pollute our ponds and waterways, according to [Section 14-98](#).

Report violators to Pasco Animal Services at (813) 929-1212.

