



MAKAHA VALLEY TOWERS

NEWSLETTER

Living and Working Together

February 2026

Board of Directors 2025

Jeffrey Berry - President
Kurt Freund - Vice President
Sue Chapman - Secretary
Nani Lavin - Treasurer
Directors:
Don Arakaki
Hallie Reiling
Rita Pond
Jeff Manson

Message from the President

Greetings Community!! I wanted to take this opportunity to ensure that all of you were up to date on our latest progress as it pertains to our budget for 2026, as well as some of the incredible upgrades to our included services that have been accomplished.

We all know that the last few years have been difficult. 2020-2024 saw record inflation and consequently near record increases across the board for goods and services. That relates to cost and expense increases that are beyond the control of management. Insurance premiums and the inexplicable mandates of the State of Hawaii being a primary cause of much of this. Supply costs and the increases that vendor and

maintenance services have incurred and pass on to meet their own expenses. That cycle hit us all very hard! Consequently, to meet these increases, our HOA fees increased to meet these demands. Here is a quick reference showing how this affected our increases over this period:

2022 – 5.56%

2023 – 8.69%

2024 – 10.17%

2025 – 11.3% (last year)

2026 – 1.99% (this year)

Even with the 11.3% increase for 2025, MVT still had one of the smallest increases in comparison with other condo facilities on the island. We certainly owe a huge thank you to Joanna Miranda, the MVT GM and her staff for keeping the controllable costs low. Her management of all controllable expenses was paramount in minimizing overall expenses. Again, most of the causes of the overall increases were directly related to the aforementioned uncontrollable expenses.

The Board of Directors approved the 2026 Budget, during their September Board Meeting. Due to increases in utilities, insurance and repair costs, homeowners will notice a change in

their monthly expenses related to the upkeep of the property. The Board found it necessary to implement a modest budget increase of 1.99% to address rising expenses.

This represents one of the lowest increases in many years.

Below is a comparison table between the current maintenance fee and 2026 maintenance fee:

Unit Type	2025 Maintenance Fee	2026 Maintenance Fee
Studio	\$939.56	\$958.21 (+\$18.65/mo)
1-Bedroom	\$1,186.99	\$1,210.55 (+\$23.56/mo)
2-Bedroom	\$1,403.91	\$1,431.78 (+\$27.87/mo)

All owners will receive a comprehensive packet that includes detailed information about the updated Budget and Reserves. This packet will provide transparency and clarity concerning the financial decisions made for the community.

To help control costs, the Board decided to postpone some major projects, such as painting the exterior of the building. The Board also determined to implement a minimal increase to the annual small storage room fee, increasing it to \$275.00 annually. This approach helps us in our mission to provide all essential maintenance without placing an undue financial burden on the community at this time. In more good

news, these figures include Monthly Reserve deposits that will remain fully funded, remaining the same for the current year.

Joanna and I became aware of the HUI organization. It is a collective of vendors that offer organization wide discounts to its members. It includes organizations that we have long term relationships with for goods, supplies and services. The membership is free to join for consumers like MVT. We immediately recognized the no risk benefits and enrolled MVT into this organization. Due to our management decision to join the HUI Organization, we have been able to renegotiate some of our vendor contracts for supplies and services, thereby substantially reducing costs in several areas. Most notably, Joanna was able to renegotiate our Spectrum Cable and internet contract. The results are phenomenal. Each apartment will continue to receive Spectrum cable and internet at a reduced cost, helping to contribute to our ability to have the very modest 1.99% increase in HOA fees. The new contract increases our Spectrum internet speed to 1 gig. and our Spectrum Cable will improve to now include multiple premium channels that were not previously included. This upgrade will be provided for a DECREASE in cost.

Our Board and Management are committed to continually providing high standards. This includes maintaining the facility with the

highest standards, while keeping our cost-of-living expenses to the minimum possible without compromising quality and simultaneously keeping our Monthly Reserves at sufficient levels to avoid costly assessments.

Finally, regarding the tragic fire that occurred, I wanted to let you all know that the cause of this fire is still unknown. The matter is still under investigation by the Fire Marshall's Office. The Investigators tell us to expect the investigation to be ongoing for approximately 2 more months. There have been numerous false narratives and rumors floating around as to the cause of the fire, but obviously, if the trained professionals have yet to determine the cause, then none of these scenarios are anything more than premature conjecture.

You should all be made aware that our staff's responses and performance of their duties during this extraordinary event was nothing short of stellar. I was personally in the office at the time helping to monitor the situation. Monitoring radio and telephone communications and visiting the parking lot staging area during this time, I was able to witness firsthand the incredible responses by our wonderful staff. Many written commendations have already been given to them for their actions. The Board and Management of MVT are monitoring the situation closely.

The last note on this is to hail the resident owner hero that rescued the tenant from her burning apartment. This person is Doug Carlson. He and he alone was the sole person who kept his cool and risked his own threat of serious injury to perform this truly heroic deed. I hope that anyone who sees him around our property will thank him for his above and beyond Kokua.

- Prior to the publishing of this message, our community suffered another devastating fire in Core 4, on Friday morning, January 30. The Inspectors are investigating and to date, the cause of this fire is still undetermined. Later that same day, another alarm was initiated, which was determined to have been caused by damage to the system, attributed to the fire earlier that day. This issue has been resolved, and the system is fully functional, as final repairs are being completed.
- I am pleased to report that there were no injuries that resulted from this fire and furthermore, that once again, our alarm system performed perfectly, and our evacuation and emergency procedures once again worked flawlessly. Our staff responded with efficiency and valor. Although we never want to use these procedures, we were pleased that all these procedures, when tested in real-life circumstances,

were 100% successful in their functions.

Best Regards,
Jeff Berry

Storage Locker Lease Rent Increase

Effective January 1, 2026, the storage locker lease rent will increase from **\$240** per year to **\$275** per year.

Houserule Revisions

The following revised house rules will be effective January 1, 2026.

6.01 Major Violations. When good reason exists to believe that a person has committed a major violation of these house rules, a citation will be issued and a **\$400** fine assessed against the person. A major violation is one that involves treatment of employees, HR 1.02; intentionally damaging MVT property, HR 1.12; feeding of birds or other animals, HR 1.14; altering official permits, HR 1.18; intentional misrepresentations to employees for unjust gain, HR 1:19; reckless, threatening, and harassing conduct toward others, HR 1.20; Smoking, HR 1.21; nuisance in common areas; receptacles for trash and recyclable items, HR 1.24; illegal activities/substances, HR 1.25; common area cleanliness, HR 3.01; tampering with fire coping equipment, HR 3.03; or bringing and keeping fireworks or unauthorized hazardous

materials on the property, HR 3.04.

6.02 Other Violations. A violation *notice* will be issued to a person when good reason exists to believe that the person is responsible for a non-major violation of these house rules. If the person has not been responsible for a same-type violation within the past year, no monetary penalty will be assessed against the person.

If the person has been responsible for a same-type violation (making the current violation the second such violation) within the past year, a *citation* will be issued assessing a penalty of **\$100** against the person.

Any subsequent same-type violation by the person within a year will result in another citation and additional penalty of **\$100** more than the previous citation. Thus, the cumulative penalties for successive same-type violations with no period of one year between them will be: 1st citation, **\$100**; 2nd, **\$200**; 3rd, **\$300** etc.

Research regarding November 6, 2025 and January 30, 2026 Fires

Although the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) had initially reported that the fire that occurred at the Towers on November 6, 2025, “occurred while charging a micro-mobility device.” According to the write-up on HFD’s website, the cause

of the fire has been classified as accidental. The ACTUAL cause of the fire is still under investigation and has not yet been determined. The Association plans to inform owners of the cause of the fire when this information is disclosed by the fire investigators.

Speculation that the fire was caused by an electric micro-mobility device has raised broader questions about the safety of charging batteries and battery powered appliances at Makaha Valley Towers and what residents and the Association may do to prevent fires.

The Board has consulted with an engineer licensed in the State of Hawaii with expertise in forensic engineering and root cause failure analysis, including risks related to lithium-ion and lithium iron phosphate batteries. The Board has also consulted with the Association's insurance professional who has researched the position of insurers regarding charging of batteries and battery powered appliances. The following briefly summarizes information obtained by the Association:

1. Although rechargeable battery powered devices and appliances have been around for decades, fire safety has become a greater concern only recently with the proliferation of battery powered electric vehicles, electric bikes, and electric scooters, as

well as higher capacity batteries in handheld devices and laptop computers.

2. There does not appear to be any state, federal or local statute, ordinance, rule or regulation that prohibits occupants of high-rise or any other residential buildings from charging batteries inside apartments or dwellings.

3. Although rechargeable batteries, along with cooking, electrical work and electrical cords, are known causes of fires in Honolulu, HFD has not recommended that condominium associations prohibit occupants from charging batteries or battery powered appliances inside apartments. The HFD website contains the following information on batteries and charging:

Lithium-ion Batteries

Handle batteries carefully, and only use the battery designed for the device.

§ Keep lithium-ion batteries at room temperature.

§ Avoid excessive charging, direct sunlight, and a hot/humid environment.

§ Store separately; away from anything that can catch fire, including other lithium-ion batteries.

§ Discontinue use if the battery exhibits the following:

- odor
- drop damage
- leaking

- change in color or shape
- too much heat
- odd noises

Charging

§ Use charging cords and blocks approved by the manufacturer for the specific device model.

§ Replace cords that are damaged, frayed, or sticky to the touch.

§ Charge devices, especially cell phones, on a hard, nonflammable surface.

- Never charge devices on beds, couches, or cloth.
- Charge in a cool, ventilated area. Avoid direct sunlight and heat.

§ Avoid excessive charging.

§ Contact the manufacturer for more information.

Discarding

§ Avoid putting rechargeable batteries in the trash or in piles. Recycling is the best option.

§ If you are unsure of how and where to safely discard batteries, visit opala.org.

4. We often look to the insurance industry for guidance on safety issues as insurance companies have a vested interest in condominium associations operating in a safe and prudent manner. According to our insurance agent, Sue Savio, the insurance industry has not issued any guidelines or restrictions on charging batteries or

battery powered appliances inside apartments.

5. The HFD describes the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) as the “leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards.” NFPA has not taken the position that condominium associations should prohibit charging of batteries or battery powered appliances inside high-rise apartments. Instead, it provides tips similar to those provided by HFD.

See:

<https://www.nfpa.org/downloadable-resources/safety-tip-sheets/lithium-ion-battery-safety-for-consumers-tip-sheet>

6. The Association has no intention to prevent handicapped or disabled persons with mobility issues from using battery powered wheelchairs, carts, scooters or other mobility aids on the project. The Board will at all times comply with both the federal and state the Fair Housing Acts.

Based, in part, on the above, the Association does not, at present, believe that there is sufficient justification to prohibit residents from charging batteries (or appliances containing batteries) inside apartments. Nevertheless, it is important that the users of appliances containing rechargeable batteries carefully follow the instructions in manuals and manufacturers’ guidelines.

The Association will continue to monitor changes in federal, state and local statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations, developments in the insurance industry and changes in the practices of community associations locally and nationally. If things change in the future, for example, if insurance companies advise condominium associations to restrict charging of batteries in apartments, if the HFD advises condominium associations to do the same, or if there are other changes that justify measures to stop residents from charging batteries inside apartments, the Association will take appropriate action, including but not limited to the adoption of rules and regulations.

In the interim, the Association plans to do whatever it can to collect and disseminate information on fire safety to include not only safe practices for charging and using batteries and battery powered appliances, but also other safe practices to minimize the risk of fires.

The fires on November 6, 2025, and January 30, 2026, showed us that the Association's new fire alarm system worked flawlessly. Residents helped each other, one resident risking his life to save another resident, and the Association's employees were well trained and served us well. The safety of the Towers depends on all residents cooperating and working together.



There are Recycle Containers in the Upper Lobby trash room in every elevator core to recycle your aluminum cans and plastic bottles. So, if you have the above-mentioned items, please do not leave them in the upper floor trash rooms. Take them to the recycling containers located in the Upper Lobbies. Please remember that the proceeds from plastic bottles and aluminum cans that are dropped off in the recycling containers goes into MVT's Association account. To date we collected \$2,472.89.



Smoking is not allowed at any time in your apartment, your car, your lanai, or any MVT public area. The only authorized place to smoke on MVT property is the area designated for smoking in Parking Lot 7 near the bicycle racks. If you violate this rule, you will be assessed a \$200 fine. The NO Smoking rule includes vaping and smoking of medicinal marijuana as

well. We are getting complaints from residents about smoke in apartments as the smoke tends to enter your neighbors' units. Please be respectful to your neighbors.



Reminders

House Rule 1.29 Security, surveillance and/or video cameras.

Security, surveillance and/or video cameras or any other electronic devices capable of recording visual images shall not be (1) placed, installed or otherwise attached to any surface of the common elements, including limited common element entryways, or to the exterior surfaces of apartment doors or windows; (2) mounted on or installed so as to protrude through exterior doors or windows; or (3) placed or installed anywhere inside apartments to capture images outside the apartments on the adjacent walkways.

4.08 Loading Zones. Parking is permitted along the yellow curbs near the elevator entrances for the sole purpose of active loading and unloading of passengers or goods. Except for vehicles involved in moving-in or-out situations, parking in the loading zones is limited to fifteen minutes. After loading or unloading, a vehicle must be relocated to a proper parking area. Contractors must park in a parking stall, not along

the roadway. Parking is not permitted in the red curb area immediately in front of the walkways into each building.

Please be considerate when parking in the loading zones. Do not block the upper lobby entryway stairs and ramp ways. Mahalo.

Insurance Please remember to send in your certificate of proof of insurance coverage (HO6 Policy) for your condo on an annual basis to: HO6tracking@associahawaii.com.

Or mail to:

Associa Hawaii
Attn: Makaha Valley Towers
737 Bishop St. Ste 3100
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Or by fax at (888)608-4021.

Before you say Aloha...

How to Prepare...

Before the time comes for many of you to head back to another part of the world until your next visit with us, now is a good time to cover a few of the basics to help keep your apartments safe and secure while you are away.

1. Turn off the five water supply valves (angle stop valves) if your apartment is going to be vacant for more than a few days. There are two under your kitchen sink, two under your bathroom sink,

and one under the toilet tank. If the valves are hard to turn, or if they leak, consider having them replaced by a licensed plumber. Remember that replacing these valves requires a water shutdown to be scheduled with the office several days in advance.

2. AC Chill Valves - If you are gone for an extended time, we offer the option of turning off your AC chill water valves. This greatly minimizes the chance of an AC leak. Even if your AC is turned off at the thermostat, it can still create condensation if the chill water valves are open which can cause a leak. Prior to your return, contact our office and we will turn the chill water valves back on for you. There is no charge for this service but it is only done upon request. If you are a renter, we require permission in writing from your agent or owner of the apartment allowing the valves to be turned off.
3. Remove items from your lanai that could become airborne in heavy winds. Plants, furniture, and other items can easily become damage-causing missiles in high winds.
4. As a reminder, there are 92 storage stalls in Lot 8. They are all painted with green stripes along the edges. If you plan to be gone for more than two weeks, please let the office know the stall number your vehicle is stored in.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at 808-695-9568, or email office@makahavalleytowers.org.

Happenings Around Waianae

If you are looking for local community news or events, you can find them in the monthly Westside Stories newspaper. You can find this online at <https://www.wsshawaii.com> or follow Westside Stories on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/p/Westside-Stories-100063692015387>.

If you prefer a hard copy of this newspaper, you can call them at 808-696-6978 to subscribe. This newspaper is free for MVT residents. As a convenience, the MVT Office has some extra copies if you would like to stop by and get a copy.

Ways to Keep in Touch with MVT Happenings:

1. **Town Sq (for owners only)** - Owners can find all official communications from MVT Management Office and the Board of Directors. Agenda and meeting links/dial-in number for the regular Board meetings are posted here. Owners can also manage their monthly HOA fees online. To get an account set up, do the following:
 - a. Go to <https://app.townsq.io/login> on your browser.

- b. Click on “Sign up with account number”.
 - c. Enter your Associa account number and zip code for your unit. If you cannot remember your account number, call Associa Hawaii at 808-836-0911.
 - d. Click on “sign up”, enter your email and create a password.
2. **Spectrum cable TV channel 900 is now channel 2493.** This is the official MVT cable channel where updates on scheduled services, outages, any changes on the property and other important information are posted by the MVT Management Office.
3. **www.makahavalleytowers.org:** The official MVT web page where the public can view general information about MVT, view association documents and forms, and contact information to the MVT Management Office.
4. **On-Site Bulletin Boards:** The MVT Management Office will post updates and important information on the bulletin boards next to the elevators on the upper, lower, & mail room lobbies.

Annual Meeting Notice Makaha Valley Towers

The Makaha Valley Towers Annual Meeting for Homeowners is Scheduled for:

Friday, February 27, 2026

10:30 AM – Registration

11:30 AM – Call to Order

Our Lady of Kea’au

83-300 Farrington Highway

Waianae, HI 96792

IMPORTANT

Please remember to turn in your

PROXY FORM

No later than 4:30 pm on

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

So that a quorum to hold the meeting is established.

Until we meet again....

Aloha 

