Community House HVAC Cost Summary

Revised September 4, 2025 to Align with SCA Budget Ballot Proposal

This document provides a summary of the updated 2025 Community House HVAC proposal, which is being presented to Scientists' Cliff Association membership for consideration along with approval of the 2026 SCA Budget.

Background

In November of 2022, the SCA Board charged the Community House Committee (the committee) to advance the investigation of turning the building into a community house for all seasons. This mission was to:

- Investigate the options for such an upgrade
- Evaluate the different types of systems
- Recommend the best option based on our findings

Proposal

The committee concluded that the SCA Community House should be climate controlled by a ducted floor system within an encapsulated crawl space, to provide year-round heating, cooling, and humidity control of the Community House.

Estimated Costs

The committee has identified 5 components of the SCA Community House HVAC Project:

Capital Expense - $126,392:

- Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) system
- Encapsulation of the crawl space
- Stone veneer of the foundation exterior walls

Building Maintenance, to be covered by the Repair and Replacement (R&R) Fund - $7,800:

- Interior wall chinking
- Weather-stripping doors and windows

The capital expense of the project in the 2026 SCA Budget is $164,340. This budget provides a cushion for possible unforeseen costs of approximately 30% as a precautionary measure. It is much more complicated to go back to the Board and Membership for more money on a project that ends up costing over what was expected. Out of an abundance of caution, it was decided to include this cushion.

Based on these numbers, the maximum cost for the capital expense portion of the project, per SCA homesite (269 homesites) is approximately $611.

Fundraising

The committee has been actively collecting pledges to help fund a large portion of project costs. As of September 1, 2025, 48 pledges have been received totaling $62,750. These gifts offset the capital expense paid by each homesite by approximately $233. When these gifts are deducted from the cost of the capital expense, the maximum cost per SCA homesite would drop to around $378, and could be as low as $237 per homesite if the cushion is not needed.

Amortization

In the past, the SCA has financed capital expense projects, such as the water tower at the front of Gate B, to help keep the membership's annual dues at a more reasonable rate. At the August 9, 2025 SCA Board meeting, the Board of Directors voted to spread the cost of the project over two years by borrowing the portion of project funds to be collected in 2027 dues from the R&R fund.

Each homesite will be assessed half the maximum cost of the project in 2026, a total of $306.47. The remainder will be assessed in 2027, less contributions received, and will be based on the actual cost of the project. If the cost of the project aligns with the estimates and all pledges to-date are collected, each SCA homesite will actually receive a credit in their 2027 bill, bringing the total contribution to less than $300 per homesite.

Annual Cost

Projecting the running cost of the system is based on how often the building will be used throughout the year, as well as typical monthly weather conditions at Port Republic. The committee has high hopes of the Community House being used frequently during all seasons via rentals and community gatherings, but without a set schedule, cost projections are based on the estimated number of days each month the building will be in use. Based on an estimated prepared Cliffs homeowner Nate Macek, who prepares financial plans for infrastructure projects professionally, the estimated operating cost is around $4,000 annually. When added to an annual maintenance package ($450) and the annual R&R reimbursement payment based on two 5-ton units with a 15-year lifespan costing $24,891.94 ($1,659 per year for 15 years), the annual maintenance, operation and R&R cost is estimated to cost $6,109. The annual cost per SCA homesite would be around $24.

A memo documenting the operating cost estimate is posted at HVAC Annual Cost Estimate Memo.