

MYSTIC POINTE TOWER 500

Where Is Our Money Going?

THE SHORT VERSION

- **Our monthly fees went up about 85%** since 2022. A typical unit now pays about \$580 more every month than it did in 2022.
- **Owners paid about \$6.5 million more** in 2024–2026 than even a generous yearly increase would explain. That is about **\$13,400 per apartment**, on average.
- The Board now says it has **\$4.35 million in the bank**. The roof is **fully paid**. The concrete project needs only **\$2.9 million more**.
- The Board also revealed that **water & sewer bills were not paid for 3 years (over \$500,000)**, and that insurance was **over-budgeted by more than \$400,000**.
- Even so, the Board wants to **keep fees high for "future projects"**, and **refused to say what those projects are**.

1. How Much Have Our Fees Gone Up?

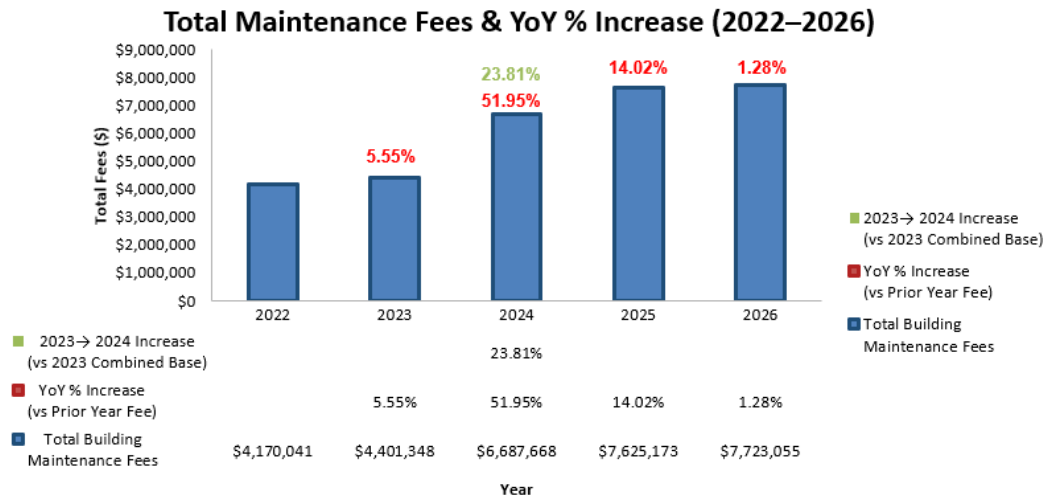
Every apartment pays a monthly maintenance fee to the Association. The amount depends on the unit type (A through F), which is mostly about size. Here is what each type paid per month in 2022 compared with today:

Unit Type	# of Units	2022 Monthly	2026 Monthly	Extra Per Month	Increase
A	65	\$590.76	\$1,094.10	+\$503.34	+85%
B	160	\$684.58	\$1,267.87	+\$583.29	+85%
C	66	\$708.91	\$1,312.92	+\$604.01	+85%
D	64	\$719.33	\$1,332.23	+\$612.90	+85%
E	62	\$778.41	\$1,441.64	+\$663.23	+85%
F	66	\$886.13	\$1,641.15	+\$755.02	+85%

Added up for the whole building (all 483 apartments), this is what owners paid each year:

Year	Total Paid by All Owners	Change From Year Before
2022	\$4.17 million	—
2023	\$4.40 million (+ \$1.0 million special assessment)	+5.5%
2024	\$6.69 million	+52% (the big jump)
2025	\$7.63 million	+14%
2026	\$7.72 million	+1.3%

In 2023, owners also paid a one-time **special assessment**—an extra charge, announced openly, for a specific purpose. **Then in 2024 the regular fee itself jumped 52%.** Even counting the 2023 special assessment, owners were paying about **24% more in 2024.** And unlike a special assessment, the higher fee never went away.



2. Was That a Normal Increase?

Costs go up every year, so some increase is expected. To be fair to the Board, we compared our fees to a very generous yardstick: each year's inflation rate plus an extra 5.5% on top. That is more than most well-run buildings need.

Year	What We Actually Paid	What a Generous Increase Would Be	Extra Paid
2024	\$6.69 million	\$4.77 million	\$1.92 million
2025	\$7.63 million	\$5.16 million	\$2.46 million
2026	\$7.72 million	\$5.62 million	\$2.10 million
Total 2024–2026			\$6.48 million

In other words, owners paid about **\$6.5 million more than a normal increase**, on top of the 2023 special assessment. (If we compare to the building's own 5.55% growth rate from 2022–2023 instead, the extra is even bigger: about **\$7.3 million.**) Here is roughly what that means for your own apartment:

Unit Type	Approx. Extra You Paid (2024–2026)	About This Much Extra Per Month
A	\$11,000	\$306
B	\$12,800	\$355
C	\$13,200	\$367
D	\$13,400	\$373
E	\$14,500	\$403
F	\$16,500	\$459

Estimates: each unit's share of the \$6.48 million building-wide extra, in proportion to its fee.

Part of this is explained by new Florida laws passed after the 2021 Surfside collapse, which require buildings to save more for major repairs. The share of our fees labeled "reserves" rose from \$1.21 million (2024) to \$2.37 million (2026). But that is about \$1.16 million—it **does not explain \$6.5 million**.

3. What the Board Told Us on September 22, 2026

At the Board meeting on Tuesday, September 22nd, the Board confirmed the following:

- **\$4.35 million in the bank.** This is the total of the SIRS account (the legally required safety-repair savings) and the general reserve account.
- **Concrete restoration: \$3.9 million total.** About \$1 million has already been paid, so about **\$2.9 million is left to pay**.
- **New roof: completed and fully paid for.**
- **No special assessment—on purpose.** The Board said it chose not to use a special assessment so it would have "flexibility" in how the money is used. That is exactly what the new Florida law tries to prevent: money collected for safety repairs is supposed to be set aside and used for those repairs, not moved around.
- **Water & sewer bills not paid for 3 years.** Out of nowhere, the Board said Miami-Dade Water & Sewer bills went unpaid for three years—**more than \$500,000**. Water is in the budget every year. So where did that money go?
- **Insurance was over-budgeted by more than 20%.** The extra is more than **\$400,000** and should be credited to the 2027 budget. The Board would not, or could not, say the exact amount.
- **Fees must stay high for "future projects."** When asked what those projects are, the Board **refused to answer**, saying it is the Board's authority to decide.

Let's do the simple math:

	Amount
Money in the bank today (Board's own number)	\$4.35 million
Minus: what is left to pay on the concrete project	– \$2.90 million
Minus: roof	\$0 (already paid)
Plus: insurance over-budget to be credited back	+ \$0.40 million or more
Minus: overdue water & sewer bills	– \$0.50 million or more
Left over, with NO project named	About \$1.35 million

And that is not the whole picture. The \$4.35 million comes from the financial statements as of the **end of August**. About **\$80,000 a month** from our regular budget goes into reserves automatically, no matter what. So by year-end, reserves should be about **\$240,000 higher—roughly \$4.59 million**.

That means that even after finishing the concrete work and paying the overdue water bills, there should be about **\$1.6 million left over by year-end**, with **no project named**—while owners are **still paying about \$2 million a year more than normal**. Yet the Board will not tell us what this money is for.

4. If It Looks Like a Duck...

If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck—it's probably a duck.

Look at the pattern:

- Fees jumped 85% in four years.
- The roof is paid. Most of the concrete money is already in the bank.
- Insurance was over-collected by \$400,000+, and the exact amount is not disclosed.
- Water bills went unpaid for three years—and we found out by surprise.
- The Board admits it avoided a special assessment to keep "flexibility."
- The Board wants fees to stay high for projects it will not name.
- **Why was the Treasurer not allowed to answer a single financial question?** Instead, the Board President **tried to steer the discussion to other matters**. The Treasurer is the one Board member whose job is to explain our finances. If the numbers were clean, why not let the Treasurer speak?

Under Florida law, a special assessment must state its specific purpose in writing, and the money may be used only for that purpose. By collecting the same money through higher monthly fees instead, the Board avoided those rules. **That is a special assessment in everything but name—a hidden special assessment. It's a duck.**

We are not accusing anyone of taking money. We are saying owners have a right to know exactly where their money is and what it is for—and so far, the Board has not told us.

5. What We Are Asking the Board

1. **Show us the money.** Give owners a written account of how the extra \$6.5 million collected since 2024 has been used, and a current statement of every bank account.
2. **Name the projects.** List every "future project" the higher fees are supposed to pay for, with its cost and timing, and share the current reserve study (SIRS).
3. **Explain the water bills.** Why were water & sewer bills not paid for three years? Where did the money budgeted for them go? Is the amount owed nominal (the original bills only), or does it include penalties due to non-payment?
4. **Give the exact insurance surplus** and confirm, in writing, that it will be credited to the 2027 budget.
5. **Lower the 2027 fees.** With the roof paid and the concrete project funded, fees should go back to a normal level. Lower insurance premiums across Florida (expected to drop about 17–23%) should also reduce our costs.
6. **Stop the hidden special assessment.** If more money is truly needed for a specific project, use a proper, written special assessment that says what the money is for.

6. What You Can Do

- **Attend the 2027 budget meeting** and ask these questions out loud.
- **Send a written records request.** Florida law gives every owner the right to inspect the Association's official records, including bank statements, invoices, and contracts.
- **Share this document** with your neighbors. The more owners ask, the harder it is to ignore.

Simple Definitions

Word	What It Means
Maintenance fee	The monthly amount every owner pays to run the building.
Special assessment	An extra charge on top of the monthly fee, for a specific, stated purpose. The money can only be used for that purpose.
Reserves	Savings the building keeps for big future repairs (roof, concrete, elevators).
SIRS	The state-required inspection of safety-related parts of the building, and the savings account that must fund those repairs.
Surplus	Money left over when the building collected more than it spent.