

Trumbull Housing Authority – June 20, 2016

Trumbull Housing Authority
June 20, 2016
4:00 pm
Community Room of Stern Village

Commissioners Present: Chairman, Janice Kopchik; Commissioners Susan Fatse and Suzanne Donofrio

Also Present: Executive Director Harriet Polansky

Commissioners Absent: Thelma Burr

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm by Chairman Kopchik. Roll call was conducted followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Past Minutes

Motion was made by Mrs. Kopchik to approve the minutes of May 23, 2016 as written. Seconded by Mrs. Fatse and approved unanimously.

Mrs. Kopchik noted that Mrs. Burr was in the hospital. Ms. Polansky spoke with her and she should be home today.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Polansky reported in the absence of Mrs. Burr. For the period ending May 31, 2016, Stern Village and Stern Center had an overall gain of \$1,893. All vendors have been paid. The current Accounts Payable amounts to \$36,825 which includes the PILOT payments accruing for the current year ending June 30, 2016. The cash position is healthy at the present time. The Village current cash position is approximately \$24,751 and the Center's cash position is \$1,444. Vacancies in the Village have stabilized and the Center has a few vacancies. There have been some minor capital expenditures this period such as new landscaping equipment, materials and labor for some flooring repairs and a new refrigerator for the kitchen in the Congregate.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Polansky reported the current reserve balance is over \$1,393.793 which is approximately \$6,278 for each unit in the entire complex. The overall cash position as of May 31, 2016 shows a balance of \$998,043 including the investment account. We always look at other projects to further improve the facility within the realm of affordability, need and security.

Ms. Polansky is waiting to hear back from DOH and CHFA on the revitalization and development program. First Selectman Herbst, our Senators and Representatives have written letters or contacted DOH to lend support to the project.

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The roof on the Congregate has been secured for the installation of the solar panels and she is waiting on UI approvals before it can be installed.

At last week's Tuesday Tea, Jeff, the Maintenance Manager, discussed maintenance processes, procedures and obtained residents' input in answer to questions raised at the last Board meeting. The following was reviewed:

1. Work orders – everyone must submit a work order unless it is an emergency. They discussed what constitutes an emergency and provided emergency contacts. If there is an emergency over the weekend, you can call the Congregate.
2. Kitchen appliances, sinks and toilets. Discussed cleaning and what not to flush down the drains. Discussed issues when residents purchase items to upgrade and what to do with them.

The outcome of the meeting was extremely positive. Several residents spoke very highly of the Maintenance Staff; there were no negative comments. Jeff, Bob and Ray received several rounds of applause.

The residents liked the idea of alternating sections for mowing and snow removal. They don't want robo calls as a reminder but when they hear the lawn mower, they will remove the furniture.

Ms. Polansky reviewed highlights in her six month recap which is available on the website. A copy is attached to these minutes for review. Among items Ms. Polansky reviewed, she noted that Daisy, the new Congregate Manager, met with Calvert Lock regarding the inner door in the Congregate as it is difficult to open. Also, Kim from TOVAH is working with the residents on a new duly elected and statutory compliant Stern Village Residents' Association. Kim has worked with the residents on adopting new bylaws and is presently working with the residents in preparation for the election of officers to the new association. The new name was voted on by the residents.

Unfinished Business

Mrs. Kopchik stated the minutes from the Special Board Meeting on May 9, 2016 will be approved next month when there is an appropriate quorum.

New Business

Discussion/Action for Hiring a Security Guard Service for the Congregate. Mrs. Kopchik noted they have been using a company called Investigative Consultants (IC) for security. Ms. Polansky introduced Mark Schachter and Nicholas Padilla, owners of the company. Ms. Polansky noted the Congregate must have an attendant/security guard 24/7, 365 days a year. Part-time people have been hired to cover various shifts. This has been difficult for multiple reasons. However, these people are not specifically trained in security for public housing nor are many of them computer literate. This does cause problems because there are many forms that need to be completed on a computer. Another security company has been used but Congregate had problems with this company's employees and they were expensive. She requested recommendations from various housing authorities and Investigative Consultants received

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excellent reviews with people noting they were professional, dependable and reliable. She noted there is an annual employee cost for 128 hours per week with 10 holidays per year. Total cost for IC would be \$99,985 which saves \$15,000 a year by not using part-timers. Mr. Schachter and Mr. Padilla spoke about their company's background and operations, respectively.

Daisy Torres and Ms. Polansky developed some notes that included:

1. CPR/AED/FA training for everyone
2. Uniformity
3. Check list for procedures
4. Adding additional information for the security of the residents
5. Documents stored and generated on the computer
6. High/low risk assessment for the residents in the Congregate
7. Training on the Life Line system
8. First Aid kit was ordered
9. Fire and evacuation drill will be done quarterly
10. Exterior lighting and additional cameras will be discussed

Mrs. Kopchik moved to approve the hiring of Investigative Consultants based on their service agreements with Stern Center. Seconded by Mrs. Donofrio and approved unanimously.

Residents' Comments

Paul Littlefield read this statement – “Be it spread on the record, that the Stern Village Tenants’ Association, Inc. is seriously considering all of its options, including injunctive or other relief in United States District Court to ensure its survival as the duly organized primary tenants’ representative organization, if the THA and TOVAH do not cease and desist from pursuing their latest co-operative activity of severely undermining and interfering with the mission of the Stern Village Tenants’ Association, Inc. of serving the best interests of all tenants in Stern Village, by forming a competing association and continuing to deny the SVTA members their Constitutional right to freely meet and to hold meetings, as they see fit, without interference and intimidation by the THA and its management staff.”

Ms. Polansky spoke through the chair noting that it is her understanding from Kim at TOVAH, who is working directly with the residents, that there will be an election and every resident can be a part of the slate. Mr. Littlefield responded “as in the statement, that if you continue”. So what the Executive Director has just said is that you plan to continue your divisive approaches setting up a competitive resident group.” He advised that they have an attorney engaged to take care of this matter and they will be hearing further on this.

Judy Restieri – commented to Mr. Littlefield noting they are in the process of duly electing a committee for the Stern Village Residents’ Association and are in the process of voting. We have nominees going into the ballot box and it is absolutely legal because the one that is standing now is illegal. You cannot

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charge residents any fees and any resident of Stern Village is part of the association at no cost. Everyone has input into nominating, electing and getting a group that represents every resident in Stern Village. It is not a selective group. She also thanked Harriet, Neil and the people running Stern Village for making her apartment safe. They listen and prioritize what is truly necessary.

Sandy Fisher – noted that Stern Village Residents Association flyers went out to all residents and those that responded approved a new resident association to have individual voices. All meetings are publicized, everyone is invited, information is shared and everyone has a voice. Kim has properly set up a resident association. They will be productive in getting things done in the Village and all information will be available to everyone. This will benefit every resident and to continue conflict is unnecessary. The new association will be open to all and wishes there could be peace so that individuals would just go with what is right for everyone here.

Gloria – agreed with Sandy and Judy. She noted the residents need to ask nominees if they would like to be considered for a position. A thank you was extended to the Board for letting the work get done.

Adjournment

There being no further business, motion was made by Mrs. Kopchik to adjourn the meeting at 4:42pm. Seconded by Mrs. Fatse and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk

These minutes are considered a draft until approved at the next meeting of the Trumbull Housing Authority.



THA RECAP

PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2016

From Harriet Polansky, Executive Director

To include, but not limited to the following:

Resident Appreciation Breakfast

My Third Annual Resident Appreciation Breakfast was held on January 19, 2016.

Brueggers' Bagels and Stop & Shop provided us with breakfast foods and First Selectman Tim Herbst proclaimed January 19, 2016 as Stern Village Volunteer Day.

New Truck

We purchased a new truck and plow for our maintenance staff. The new plow proved to be a time-saver during our last snow storm.

Electricity for Common Areas

A 3rd party supplier is providing us with a lower rate than UI for the Common Areas. We are paying \$0.027 less per KWH.

Transitional Employment Unlimited:

Thanks to Transitional Employment Unlimited and an additional state grant:

-Steve Fians and his Job Coach, Ann Ramos were placed at Stern Village to work with the residents. Steve has helped with Bingo, coordinated and held special events and activities, as well as drove the golf cart.

-Romy Ganser and her job coach, Lea Garcia, were placed at the Congregate to work with the residents. Romy is a well-ness coach and she conducted weekly chair-exercises, holistic programs and stress-relief exercises. She also met with residents individually to help with stress. Romy will be back this week to continue working with our residents.

Harriet's Monthly Resident Meetings

My Tuesday's Teas continues to provide informative information to the residents and acts as a forum to discuss issues, concerns and ideate with the residents.

Arts & Crafts Instructor

Allison works with our residents of the Congregate and Stern Village twice a month in the Congregate. Our “crafty” ladies have decorated hats, made planters, plaques, inspirational boards, jewelry, and lots more fun, beautiful and useful items.

Redevelopment and Revitalization of Stern Village

Earlier this year, CHFA & DOH requested that we bifurcate the property into 2 phases in order to get FAF funding. The Development Team had several conference calls with CHFA & DOH, worked on several financial and planning scenarios and provided many documents to CHFA & DOH for this particular funding. We also met with CHFA & DOH to discuss. Based on review of our documentation, CHFA & DOH requested that we do not bifurcate the property and enter into the April 2016 funding round.

April 2016 Application

In order to fulfill the requirements of the application, the Development Team worked on additional financial and planning scenarios, as well as updating information provided in 2015. We met with the Town to discuss our storm water management plans and we reconfigured locations for ADA units. We were able to lower the overall cost of our redevelopment project and eliminate debt on the property. We also lowered the cost for RAP. Bruce and Frank from Millennium and I have conducted resident meetings, I have worked with our Development Advisory Committee and updated all the residents of Stern Village on our plans and processes. Our First Selectman Tim Herbst, State Senators Marilyn Moore and Tony Hwang, and State Representatives Dave Rutigliano and Laura Devlin are extremely supportive of our project.

Small Cities Funding

The Town of Trumbull applied for a grant through Small Cities Funding on behalf of Stern Village for \$800,000. We worked with the Town and their consulting on fulfilling the lengthy application which was due April 11, 2016. If awarded, the funding will go towards Ductless split heat pumps for all the residents of Stern Village. These will make the apartments energy efficient, significantly lowering residents’ utility bills as well as, keeping residents warm in the winter and cool in the summer. It will also improve air quality when there are high allergens and will be ideal for those who have breathing issues.

Weatherization for Stern Village

We weatherized every apartment in Stern Village through an incentive program from United Illuminating. We also upgraded all the interior lighting in the units, outside porches and common areas. These incentives should have an impact on resident's current utility bills.

Fair Housing Action Plan

As part of the application for Small Cities, I worked with Pamela Kazlauskas, to create a Fair Housing Action Plan including an Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan. Pam is an expert in Fair Housing. We will need the plan as we move forward with DOH.

Improved Security for Congregate

We added additional security cameras to the Congregate. We also have a new monitor that has additional cameras if needed. The inner handicapped accessible door is extremely heavy and it must be locked at all times. Daisy Torres, Congregate Manager met with Calvert Locks on June 20, 2016 regarding a separate lock system for the inner door. We are in the process of establishing additional safety protocols for our residents.

Enhanced Dining Experience

The salad bar was purchased and the residents are very pleased with the healthy selections. We also purchased a convection oven that keeps food moist and enables our Chef to create many more dishes than with a traditional oven.

Kim from TOVAH

Kim is working with the residents on a brand new duly elected and statutory compliant Stern Village Residents' Association. Kim worked with the residents on adopting new bylaws and she is presently working with the residents in preparation for the election of officers to our new Stern Village Residents' Association. The new name was voted on by the residents.

Solar for Congregate

As part of our agreement with C-TEC Solar and the Green Bank, the roof has been prepared for the installation of solar panels.

New Windows for Congregate

We purchased 15 new energy-efficient windows for the Congregate and installation is scheduled before June 24.

Daisy Torres

Sadness overtook Trumbull Housing Authority with the passing of Madeline Smerglino, Congregate Manager. Daisy Torres is our new Congregate Manager. I encourage everyone to stop by and introduce yourself.

Presentations and Activities Including But Not Limited to:

We are extremely appreciative of the individuals and companies that partner with Stern Village.

Charter Cable - Representatives met with residents in January to hear issues and complaints. Charter representatives explained their systems and fixed some cable problems our residents' were having after the meeting.

Mother's Day Breakfast – Hosted by Jeff Shapiro of Creative Culinary

The Nichols Garden Club – Provided beautiful Valentine's Day flower arrangements for our residents over 90 years old.

Dance Workshop of Monroe – Tap dance performance thanks to resident Ralph Claudio for coordinating this event and for his granddaughter for performing.

Town of Trumbull: First Selectman Timothy Herbst provided a recap of his annual State of Trumbull address and held a Q&A for Stern Village residents.

Genesis Rehab Services: Crista Forstrom and Kelly Rees discussed fall prevention, occupational therapy, and durable equipment

Hancock Pharmacy – Over the past 6 months, representatives of Hancock Pharmacy called bingo and distributed prizes, they hosted a breakfast and held an ice cream social.

Judy Nighland –Several times this year, our laughing yoga coach provided laughing yoga sessions to include specific exercises combined with meditation.

Long Hill Garden Club – Since January, members of the Long Hill Garden Club helped our residents make bird feeders, dried flower arrangement, planters, boutonnières and provided wonderful breads and beverages made with garden fresh vegetables and herbs. They also provided explanations of all the flowers and herbs used for the crafts, food and beverages.

Mary J. Sherlach Counseling Center – continued one-on-one counseling with Victor/Robin and mental health group sessions with Victor and Paulette.

Metro Taxi - Rick Davis will discuss the Metro Taxi Freedom Fund Card Program before July 1st.

Musical Entertainment in the Congregate:

We've had: Paula Pettinella, Pasty Shore, Sophistication/Patrick Marino, Tony Castle, Pitchpipers, and Lynn Lewis

Patriot Bank -Christine Dellarocco and her assistant Dan, from Patriot's hosted a breakfast and a Father's Day luncheon.

Saint Joseph's Center – Provided a bus for residents to learn about diabetes a luncheon was included.

SWCAA - Lisa Alhabal from SWCAA discussed Medicare savings programs.

Teresa Cryan, RN of Trumbull Health Department- Presented a Healthy Lifestyle discussion with Anna Meltzer, Doctorate of Naturopathy student. Nurse Teresa discussed stroke prevention with our residents.

Trumbull Community Women's Club – Held a free shred day for Stern Village.

Vitas -Jim DeNicola hosted a breakfast and Veterans' Support Groups.

Webster Bank -Kadie Ortiz hosted safety awareness and elder abuse.