

Presidents Council Meeting Minutes

November 27, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Cheryl Eastwold, Neill, called the Presidents Council Meeting to order on October 23, 2017 at 10:00 a.m., after which introductions were made.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Bob Knutson, PC/RPC Secretary, Ravoux, requested that if you come across any discrepancies in the Minutes, please address them at the next P.C. meeting. A Motion was made by Donna Walters, Seal, to accept the Minutes as they stand. It was seconded by David Owens, Mt. Airy, and the Motion carried.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Jana Gegen, Metro State, PHA Volunteer, She stated she's been working on developing and conducting a *Resident Satisfaction Survey*. They've also added health and wellness questions, working with subjects such as smoking, diabetes, etc., along with any health concerns residents may have. She'll be handing out the *Survey* at resident council meetings and explaining more then. There will also be a drawing of four \$25 gift cards, for those who take the time to fill out the survey. It should all be ready to go in four or five months.

Heidi Larson works with Ramsey County, to offer support to the American Lung Association on smoke-free policies in multi-unit housing throughout the county. With HUD's smoke-free rule taking effect next year, they don't know what that looks like yet; but since she does offer support for any property or building, she's able to include working with St. Paul Public Housing. She went on to introduce some of the partners they work with, who are in various communities throughout Ramsey County.

Jennifer Plum (jplum@wellshareinternational.org) is with WellShare International. They provide a variety of services for the refugee and immigrant communities; more specifically East African and Karen. She said the *East African Smoke-Free Program* has been going for several years in Minneapolis. They have both Somali and Karen health workers, who are well known in their communities for doing a lot of outreach and educational assistance. She handed out a flyer from the *Karen Tobacco-Free Program & East African Smoke-Free Program*, which contained more information. She also said smoking a Hookah water pipe, is part of the Somali culture here in America, but is also many times more dangerous than smoking cigarettes. Second-hand smoke is also damaging to those who are around a smoker. She said they're working on more cessation services. She'll make available flyers and cessation paraphernalia for Reps to take back with them.

Nicole Braun, Community Health Advocate for CLUES (Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio), which in English translates to, *Latino Communities United In Service*. She said her organization has been around for 36 years, and she's part of a group of community health workers and community health advocates.

GUEST SPEAKERS (continued)

They've been doing work with smoke-free housing for about ten years, along with offering smoking cessation services. Anyone who's ready to quit smoking will be guided to get services. She mainly works with landlords, or anyone who manages a building; to help them develop smoke-free policies, along with getting them information on how to implement them. Communication with the residents is also vital; getting them together to talk about smoking and second-hand smoke. There's also a third-hand smoke, which gets into walls, furniture and appliances, as well as the adverse effects smoking has on buildings. She handed out her business card.

Pa Xiong Vang, Tobacco Prevention Coordinator, HAP (Hmong American Partnership), said they have several locations throughout the Twin Cities, with their main location being in East St. Paul. She does a lot of education, especially among families and youth. She lets them know about the indirect effect of tobacco and second-hand smoke. She went on to discuss her program further. She handed out her business card, and encouraged anyone who wants to quit smoking, to contact her. They have many resources to help. Her phone number is **651-495-1641**.

Janelle Koscinski, American Lung Association, stressed that residents be aware of the HUD no-smoking rule that will be enforced next year, and also be aware of the resources that are available. She asked -- with the information that was shared today -- what is needed to get the information into the buildings?

TREASURER'S REPORT

Melissa Pappas, PC/RPC Treasurer, Seal, presented the Treasurer's Report for the month of October. The checkbook register balance is twenty-nine thousand, eight hundred forty-three dollars and eighteen cents (\$29,843.18). The ending balance is twenty-nine thousand, thirty-eight dollars and eighteen cents (\$29,038.18). The report will be filed for audit.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REPORT

John Cardoza, Commissioner, Cleveland, said one item at their meeting was working on the budget for the PHA. Anyone interested in the Budget can find it on the PHA website. The Board of Commissioners also sent a letter of congratulations to the new mayor-elect. In addition, he said a contract went out for boiler system repair services for Neill, Central & Cleveland.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

A report will be given at the next meeting.

PHA MANAGEMENT REPORT

Charisse Brown, Assistant Resident Services Senior Manager, stated *Flat Rents* will be increasing, and you can expect a notice in the mail about that. Another notice residents will receive, is regarding keeping all windows closed during the freezing months. Failing to do so will result in pipes bursting and causing a flood for you and any residents living below and around you. If you're found liable for causing the pipes to burst, you will be responsible for any damages. That's another reason why she encourages residents to get renters' insurance. It's inexpensive and will protect against losses. In closing, she said the plumbing renovation at Valley is underway and eventually all of the hi-rises will undergo plumbing renovation.

SAFETY & SECURITY REPORT

Kent Cleveland, Sargent, St. Paul Police Department – ACOP, wanted to make it clear that the police will not respond to calls regarding smoking violations, which may ensue after the new HUD no-smoking rule goes into effect. Those complaints should be made to your manager. He also stressed, that now that the weather is turning colder, residents should be vigilant about non-residents coming into the buildings. If a non-resident follows you into the building, don't confront them. Instead, give the day and time to your manager, who'll be able to access the video footage. Also, *always know who you're buzzing into the building!*

Regarding criminal activity, he said they're still getting a fair amount of auto thefts from Mt. Airy and the Roosevelt Family Homes, and they're working with the Auto Theft Unit to address that. He stressed not to leave your keys in your car, or leave your car unlocked. Be especially careful during the holiday season, and never leave items in plain sight in your car; it only invites theft.

He said earlier in the year they had a guy doing a lot of burglaries at PHA sites, targeting management offices and maintenance areas. He's out of jail now and is targeting PHA sites again, and the police are aggressively looking for him. His hours of criminal operation seem to be between 9:30 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. He's a slender Caucasian male, around 30, who is occasionally with a black female, and either of them may be wearing a backpack. The male always wears a hoodie. If you see suspicious people lingering around or near the management office or other areas, call the police.

He spoke about the new marked crosswalks near Ravoux, which were placed at two different locations on Marion St. But he cautioned, that even with the marked crosswalks, don't ever assume a car is going to stop, and make sure you can be seen. He said they'll be doing more crosswalk enforcement in the spring.

OLD BUSINESS

Melissa Pappas, PC/RPC Treasurer, called for a final P.C. approval of the Budget, which had been posted on the P.C. webpage for thirty days, as required. There were no further discussions or changes to it, and John Cardoza, Cleveland, made a Motion that the Budget be approved and accepted as it stands. It was seconded by David Owens, Mt. Airy, and the Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Julia Hupperts, Resident Council Coordinator, talked about resident council check-signers and updated us on a change of a ruling regarding signing checks. Resident councils should use checks whenever possible. As we proceed in finalizing the Protocol for the debit cards, resident councils will be given the choice of having a debit card or not. Councils are not *required* to have one. One of the parameters the auditors are looking at is that there would be two *approvers* who would sign the Disbursement Form, to approve the expenditure made using the debit card. In the past it was acceptable to have a resident who was not a council officer sign checks. But now, signers must be on the Board of their resident council. Ideally, there should be three officers who are listed on the bank account as check-signers.

RESIDENT INITIATIVES REPORT

Alicia Huckleby, Resident Initiatives Director & Interim Human Resource Director, will give us an update at our next meeting.

SECTION 3 UPDATE

Beth Pacunas, Section 3 Projects Coordinator/Youth Literacy, said she has been going around to hi-rises, to find out if there is anything in particular needed from her; which could be job training skills, leads on job training opportunities, or answering questions about moving forward in employment or education. She also thanked the councils for allowing her to attend their meetings. She stated it's important to be engaged and to spread the word to residents. If you know of any residents who are seeking jobs, job skills, or both; along with education, get in touch with Beth at **651-228-3204**. Coming up at the beginning of the year they're probably going to be doing a small business course again, and from what she's hearing about the fifteen or so residents who have gone through this course, they find it very helpful and useful.

ROSS TEAM

Ed Petsche & Val Wolf: ROSS Employment & Educational Coordinators. Ed Petsche said they are winding down, but he and Val Wolff will be working until February. One of the things they've been doing, is documenting what's been accomplished over this time. Val Wolff stated they will be helping with a *Job Fair* at Mt. Airy on January 17th, and it's open to all PHA residents. They will be putting up flyers at all hi-rises. They're expecting many employers to attend the Fair; so if you, or someone you know, needs help finding a job or getting education, or both, have them give Ed or Val a call. Ed Petsche can be reached at **651-298-4931**, and Val Wolf at **651-298-4933**.

COMPUTER UPDATE

Aaron Smothers, IT Digital Literacy Coordinator, said his job is winding down, but he's creating a Manual, regarding everything that's been done or created, prior to him leaving. He also spoke about the computer training classes he wants to conduct starting in December. Each class would be on Sunday for three hours. One suggestion was that councils provide sign-up sheets for residents who are committed to attending.

SHIP GRANT UPDATE

Betsy Christensen, PHA SHIP Coordinator, brought a gift bag for each hi-rise, containing various items, i.e., a set of 25 reflective strips, along with a poster which shows how and where to use them. The more visible you are at night, the safer you'll be. There will also be cross walk safety events starting up next year.

Ann Tranvik, St. Paul Public Health Nurse, stated that they're very excited to be able to work with the American Lung Association. She said some hi-rises were inquiring about smoking cessation support groups; and although Ann said there isn't anything in place presently, that's something they'd like to do. It's also important to have four or five – or as many residents as possible -- willing to commit and take advantage of the support groups before the HUD no-smoking rule takes effect next year. She also passed around posters – two per site - - which will be put in the hi-rise gift bag. They show the positive, physical changes that occur in your body, at different intervals, during the quitting process. They should be posted in very visible areas of your hi-rise.

She spoke about another opportunity called the *Living With Diabetes Workshop*, which was presented at Edgerton last year and had a great turnout. They would like to come back and educate others who are interested in learning about managing their diabetes. It's offered through an organization called Stratus Health, who received a grant from the federal Medicare/Medicaid Agencies.

SHIP GRANT UPDATE (continued)

They have funding to provide education, particularly to adults who are also on Medical Assistance and Medicare. Their aim is to figure out how to help people manage their diabetes, and enable them to live with the disease. She has sign-up sheets for the PHA sites that expressed interest, and the sites that have not had a class in the past, will be given the highest priority. They will try and do one every one or two months. Those sites are: Central, Dunedin, Mt. Airy and Exchange. The sites that have previously had a class, but who said they were interested in having another, were Montreal and Ravoux. It's a two and a half hour class every week, for six weeks, with a minimum of ten participants required; however, they'll take up to twenty. It's also open to those who have an interest in, or about diabetes, along with those who care for someone who has the disease. Contact Ann Tranvik if you have any questions. The subject of interpreters was also discussed.

The last thing Ann put in the gift bags were two water pitchers, as part of the *Re-think Your Drink* campaign. The pitchers also come with a guide that offers different flavored water suggestions.

GREEN INITIATIVES

Yen Tran, Green Initiatives Technician, will give an update at our next meeting. If you have questions for Yen, contact her at **651-298-5222**.

CLOSING

Julia Hupperts, Resident Council Coordinator, reminded everyone about the *Community Insider Newsletter*, a community newsletter that covers interesting things at all of the hi-rises. Please post this on the bulletin board in your building. She also asked that we all look over the Council Meeting Schedule for accuracy, making sure the dates or times are correct. Julia also said a few words on Yen Tran's behalf.

Yen has been going around to all the hi-rise resident council meetings, talking about a new contract with Eureka Recycling and the changes that were made. Eureka previously accepted plastic bags that contained recyclables; however, going forward they will no longer do that. If they find recycling put in plastic bags, or the plastic bags themselves, they will not take any of it, and Maintenance will have to discard it. That means your resident council will miss out on any recycling income. **She strongly urges hi-rises to keep their recycling free of unacceptable waste.** Yen has been working hard to make sure the recycling bins are clearly identified, and don't hesitate to ask if you have questions. It's not the responsibility of the hi-rise Recycling Coordinator to sort it all out.

Julia also brought up stipends. She said they have looked at the stipends for the Presidents Council; something every resident council also does yearly, to ensure they're up-to-date. Basically, all stipends include transportation, unless otherwise noted; so be sure to check that all information is correct. The P.C. stipend information will be posted on the Presidents Council website for thirty days, after which it will be voted on for approval. The P.C. Minutes are also posted on the site. Bob Knutson, Ravoux, made a Motion that the P.C. stipends listing be posted for thirty days. The Motion was seconded by Cheryl Eastwold, Neill, and was carried.

CLOSING (continued)

Comcast contracts were also talked about, and Julia stated the monthly cost will be \$69.00 plus tax, for a 25-megabit line, in addition to a longer contract. Presently, most resident councils do not have a contract with Comcast, and she suggested it be discussed at your resident council meetings. She also spoke about a T-Mobile presentation that will take place in January 2018, as well as a presentation by Internet Essentials, which is slated for February 2018.

Note: Julia also reminded everyone, that there will not be a Presidents Council meeting in December, as the meeting date is a PHA holiday and offices will be closed.

No further Presidents Council business was discussed or conducted, and the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Submitted by:



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Meeting Reminders:

Next Presidents Council Meeting:

Monday, January 22, 2018, 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Executive Committee: January 12, 2018 - 11:00 a.m. - 3rd floor.

Community Building: December 1, 2017 - 11:00 a.m. - 3rd floor.

Computer Team: December 21, 2017 - 1:30 p.m. – Board Room.