

The House Special



Volume 30 Issue 7

Skyline House

July 2010



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Norman Baker

The Board of Directors met on Wednesday, June 23, 2010. During its meeting, the Board approved a Management, Physical Plant and Operations Committee and Financial Management Committee recommendation to award a contract to Kone, Inc. to perform routine and emergency maintenance service on our buildings' elevators. This contract is discussed in greater detail in the Committee reports in this issue.

The Board also approved, during consideration of "Old Business", a recommendation by the Chairmen of the Security, Safety and Neighborhood Watch Committee to extend, during the summer months, the hours during which the Garage Exit Door remains locked open for cars to easily exit the garage. Prior locked-open hours were, weekdays, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The newly approved locked-open hours are, weekdays, 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

The Board will next meet on Wednesday, July 28, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Card Room.



MANAGEMENT

General Manager, Gusbey Silva

Balcony Concrete Repairs and Railing Replacement Project

The contractor completed the coating of all balcony and patio walls and ceilings and the installation of the seal coating of the balcony floors. The seal coating of the patio floors will be done after all the new rails are installed. The installation of the new rails started last week and should be completed by the end of the week, weather permitting. Immediately after, the tile repairs needed on all tiled balconies will be performed by the tile subcontractor.

The landscaping restoration needed in the south side of the West Building, as a result of the Balcony Project, was completed today.

This year's Balcony Project is estimated for completion by mid July. The demobilization is scheduled to be completed during the third week of July, weather permitting. The landscaping restoration needed on the front side of the West Building as a result of this project will be completed by fall 2010.

Asphalt Resurfacing

The resurfacing of the asphalt is scheduled for this year. Management is in the process of securing three bids for this job and will present this project for approval during the July meetings. The asphalt is in real need of repair in the West Building; the last resurfacing in this building was performed in 1994. The East building is in much better condition; however, there is an open area where the French Drain was installed in 2000. The bids will have a separated section for each building due to the balcony project scheduled for the East Building during 2011 and 2012 and the possibility of the large trucks entering the area damaging the asphalt. If that is the case, the East Building could be postponed until the summer of 2012.

Residents will be notified at least two weeks in advance. All cars will need to be removed from the outside lots while this project is taking place, approximately for a period of three days. Alternative parking will be provided.

Bird Feeders

Management has received several complaints regarding birds and pigeons on balconies located on the upper floors of the West Building, resulting in bird waste left on the balcony edges and new railings. Please refrain from placing bird feeders on your balconies to avoid attracting birds and pigeons to the building.

911 Emergency Calls

Management reminds residents NOT to call the front desk asking staff to call 911 for medical emergencies. 911 dispatchers ask many questions related specifically to the person requiring the medical attention and there is no way front desk staff can adequately answer those questions. As always, once you have contacted 911 for medical emergency assistance, you should, if at all possible, alert the front desk staff that you have done so. **ALWAYS CALL 911 FIRST.**



INFO FROM THE ENGINEER

Chief Engineer, Greg Grimm

Reasons to Schedule an Air Conditioner Check Up

There are two main reasons to schedule annual air conditioner maintenance with the Management Office or a local HVAC contractor, saving money and saving money (no, that isn't a typo). For starters, you greatly increase the chances that your A/C technician will catch small problems before they become big ones by scheduled regular check ups. Having the air conditioning drain clog up because there was no treatment added to the drain could cost thousands if the water leak traveled several floors. The other way an annual check up saves you money is by ensuring that your air conditioner unit is working at optimal efficiency. When your air conditioner is running well it uses less energy to cool your house, and lower energy use means bigger savings for you on your monthly utility bills.

Scheduling an Air Conditioner Check Up

An air conditioner check up is easy to schedule. All you have to do is call the Management Office or contact a local HVAC technician about coming out to perform basic air conditioner maintenance. The best time to do this is in the spring or early summer, but it's never too late.



COVENANTS

Chair, Joseph Livingston

The Covenants Committee did not meet in June. Its next meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2010 at 7:00 p.m., West Card Room. As always, all Unit Owners/residents are invited to attend the Committee's meeting.

A Gentle Reminder

(Submitted by Board Director and Treasurer Charles Roberts)

Aided by its committees and through the efforts of Management and staff, the Board of Directors directs the expenditure of condominium fees -- and, indirectly, paid rent that contributes to payment of those same condominium fees -- to assure the safety, comfort and beauty of our home. The Board welcomes your comments on how these goals are being accomplished and welcomes also your participation -- renters, too! -- at almost every level in our community life.

One effort in which all owners, residents and guests can share is preserving the appearance of our facility. We all drop things accidentally from time to time, but careless or deliberate discarding of cigarette butts, drink containers, food and candy wrappers needlessly detracts from the appearance of our facility. Cleanup consumes staff resources. The presence of litter also tells visitors that some Skyline House residents and guests do not respect their neighbors or hosts and do not care about the facility or their responsibilities as members or guests of this community.

If human beings were all of one mind, there would be no need for rules. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Fortunately, the Association has adopted a reasonable set of rules. The Association's rules are easy to find and easy to follow.

The Rules and Regulations for Skyline House can be found at www.shuoa.org. Once there, click on the "Condo Government" tab. The "Rules and Regulations" link is the fourth item down in the column at the right side of the page. A printed copy is available for residents in the Management Office.

Please Note Carefully These Excerpts From Rule 1:

F. Smoking is prohibited in the common areas with the exception of:

1. Unit balconies [but do not throw cigarettes from your balcony -- please see balcony etiquette item elsewhere in this issue.]
2. Outside areas (such as roof terraces and pool area sundeck)

G. No food or drink may be consumed in any of the following common areas of the Condominium, including but not limited to all corridors/hallways, stairways, lobbies, elevators and rest rooms.

H. Responsibility for Conduct of Children/Minors

1. Unit Owners/Residents are at all times responsible and accountable for the actions of their children, wards, minor guests or any other children under legal age whom they sponsor within the premises or who are on the premises at their own express or implied invitation. This stipulation includes financial and legal responsibility and accountability for the damages caused by, vandalism, misconduct or objectionable behavior within the premises by children or minors so sponsored.
2. Conduct of children and minor guests within the premises are governed by the same provisions in the By-Laws and Association rules as those pertaining to adult residents and guests.

Please do not litter. If you see litter, and can do so, please pick it up and dispose of it properly. If you encounter a messy situation you are unable to tackle, or feel uncomfortable about tackling yourself, please report the problem and its location to the Front Desk. If you see someone accidentally drop something, please politely call it to their attention. If you see someone deliberately littering, please do not confront the offender but do report the incident to the Front Desk right away. Management, staff, the Covenants Committee and the Board of Directors will deal with the problem.

For The Enjoyment of All

Residents and Guests

Please Do Your Part To Keep Skyline House Clean And Beautiful.

JULY GOOD NEIGHBORS

Good Neighbors assist residents in need of temporary help due to illness or emergency. Services provided are typically short term and in the local area. For example, picking up mail or prescriptions or making small grocery purchases.

Anyone experiencing a medical emergency should call 911 immediately.

NILDA VIQUEIRA 703-379-4239

MARYANNE SOLLAK 703-845-9325

Good Neighbors welcomes new members to assist those in need. If you are interested in serving your neighbors, call Coordinator Toska Prather or Virginia Fissmer. Their contact information is listed in the newsletter directory.

MAGAZINES FOR ALEXANDRIA HOSPITAL

Don't forget to bring your magazines to the front desk so Tony DiSalvo can deliver them to Alexandria Hospital. Please do not hold the magazines for long periods of time before doing so as they become outdated. The magazines are much appreciated by the Hospital's patients, visitors, and volunteers. Any questions call Tony at 703-824-1958.



SECURITY, SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Chair, Robert J. "Bob" De Mayo

The Security, Safety and Neighborhood Watch Committee (SS&NWC) did not meet in June. The next SS&NWC meeting scheduled for July 14, 2010 at 7:00 p.m., in the West Card Room.



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Chair, Wynfred Joshua

The Financial Management Committee (FMC) met June 22, 2010. Total income for the month of May was \$334,910 with expenditures of \$172,416. Total income less expenditures amounted to \$162,494. The monthly Reserve Contribution was \$107,446, leaving a net income before taxes of \$55,047. Our utility costs have decreased; while we expect these bills to increase during the summer, it won't be as much as in the winter months. Attorney fees remain high, partly because of costs incurred in trying to recover funds from owners who are behind in their condo fees.

Arrears by owners who failed to pay their condo fees are climbing. The delinquency amount at the end of May stood at roughly \$45,500 compared to slightly less than \$40,000 for April. Fourteen owners were some \$6,000 behind for about a month; 3 owners were delinquent for up to 60 days for about \$3,500; and 7 owners owed almost \$34,000 for more than 60 days. The over 60 days delinquents are the ones that drive up our legal bills as do the three owners who owe almost \$2,000 in covenant's violation of the and owe.

The number/percentage of rental units has not changed (125 apartments or 22% rented).

Our current financial outlook looks somewhat better than it did a few months ago when greatly increased utility bills and legal fees threatened to create another deficit for 2010. Our Committee was concerned that we might have to raise the condo fee in the middle of the year to prevent such a development. This does not seem necessary now.

At this point, the deficit is about \$24,000. It is reasonable to assume, however, that we have already encountered the largest charges for utilities and legal fees. We have the most expensive months for electricity behind us. The lawyer's bill for the property damage settlement has been

paid and will not recur, and we may be able to recover some of the legal expenses incurred in trying to get delinquent owners to pay their condo bills.

On the income side, we note that in-house maintenance has thus far achieved roughly a \$5,000 surplus. As a point of interest, this surplus would have been greater had we charged for installation of the new toilets, but the Association felt that not charging for installation was the appropriate course of action with the goal of reducing water consumption. This bodes well for the fall when we restart the new toilet program.

We also looked at other possible actions for reducing expenses for the remainder of 2010. Our Committee unanimously recommended to the Board that we postpone until next year certain activities costing up to \$12,000 in the non-contract landscaping account to offset possible deficits. Elements that would be postponed involve replacing the trees we lost this past winter and upgrading the landscape; none of the regularly mandated landscaping activities would be affected. Financial requirements for the newly formed Skyline House Garden Club also remain intact. If we still have a deficit at the end of the year, we should be able to cover this from the Working Capital Fund.

The FMC unanimously supported the PPOC recommendation to award a five-year contract for elevator maintenance to KONE Inc. to begin in August 2010. KONE has an excellent reputation and came in as the lowest bidder. In addition, this new contract will cost us less for the remainder of this year than our original contract. Again, this may help to compensate for a possible deficit at the end of the year. If necessary, we can terminate the contract with KONE with a 30 day notice. Funds are available in the budget.

The next meeting of the FMC will be on Monday, July 26, 2010. We strongly urge members of the Skyline House Community to join us. We welcome your comments.



PHYSICAL PLANT & OPERATIONS

Chair, Al Lambert

Greetings! At the mid-point of the year, the PPOC committee met on June 10, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Card Room to address both new and old business.

New Business consisted of reviewing four contractor bids to perform maintenance service on all the elevators in our buildings. (Do you know how many and where they are? The answer is at the bottom of this article). The bidders were required to use the maintenance specifications provided to us by the Lerch Bates Elevator Consultants. The current agreement with Thyssenkrupp Elevators expired on February 28, 2010 and we have been on a month-to-month continuation of the service with them until now. Kone, Inc. was selected and recommended by the PPOC. In addition to being the lowest bidder, and offering an option to cancel the agreement with a thirty day notice, Kone, Inc. also had excellent references, with one customer having a business relationship dating back to 1975 when the company operated under a different name.

As you may recall, the PPOC has started to explore options to control our rising utility expenditures (electricity and water) through conservation and investigating the retrofitting or replacement of our HVAC legacy systems. One of the previously discussed courses of action was to conduct an Energy Management Analysis Study by an independent firm not associated with Honeywell (provider of the hardware and software that controls the temperature settings throughout the Common Areas). It was decided that the PPOC will first develop a Statement of Work (SOW) and then forward it to the Board in July with a recommendation for the hiring of a consultant. If any owner has expertise in this type of an initiative and wishes to participate, please contact me by email or telephone (see directory on calendar page of this issue.).

Another Old Business item was the annual Garage Power Washing issue created when residents did not relocate their cars on the scheduled day of cleaning. The PPOC decided that since power washing was essential to preserving the concrete decks, there should be a requirement that residents relocate their cars, and that failure to do so will justify towing the automobile. The Committee also developed a list of initiatives that may be taken in the future to give residents ample notification of the need to relocate their cars. For example: a) each year wash the garage flooring during either March or April (depending on the winter season), b) attach a flyer to the car windshield, c) display signs in the mail alcoves, and d) put a notification in the newsletter.

We also can help each other by volunteering our parking space when we know it will be empty (away at work or on vacation) on the day of washing. It is each resident's responsibility to relocate their car on the scheduled day of garage deck washing to avoid having their car towed at their expense. Forewarned is forearmed!

The last item of Old Business concerned our newly created Garden Club: the Committee approved two administrative procedures: 1) to designate individuals allowed to purchase plants and garden supplies on behalf of the Garden Club and 2) the maximum monetary limit per expenditure. For those who enjoy working the soil and planting flowers this is the Club to join! Membership is free; participants receive a complementary pair of garden gloves, and hand tools, and other supplies, are available. Participants decide on the flowers for planting. Contact Mr. Howard Haymes for more information @ 703-347-7918.

As always, I welcome your feedback on this article or any matter pertaining to the PPOC. This is your home! We welcome you to join us. Thank You!

Answer: 3 Lobby, 2 garage and 1 Freight elevator in each building.



Skyline House Garden Club

Purpose: To allow residents the opportunity to plant flowers or shrubs on the association grounds thus improving the beauty of the landscape and avoiding the contractor labor cost and hence saving money.

Eligibility: All residents (Owners & Renters) can participate by joining the Garden Club.

Time Period: All year the opportunity exists for planting shrubs and flowers.

Reasons to join:

- a. Friendship and camaraderie with those sharing your enthusiasm.
- b. Chance to improve our community and your home.
- c. Offer enlightening ideas to improve our home landscape.



Rules:

- a. All members must sign an agreement releasing the Association from liability.
- b. Plantings shall be undertaken by club member consensus: by majority if necessary.
- c. Plantings will be undertaken as a group activity.
- d. No power tools shall be used.
- e. Meetings shall be held each month, except for January and February.
- f. Tools will be supplied by Management and any other equipment purchased shall belong to the Association and stored by Management.
- g. Funds for plants and shrubs shall be disbursed by Management to Vendors.
- h. Chairperson (Mr. Howard Haymes) will be liaison with Management for necessary purchases of flowers and shrubs.



How to join the Garden Club:

Contact Howard Haymes by telephone (703) 347-7918 (preferred)
or via email hankee1@gmail.com.





SKYLINE HOUSE CALENDAR

JULY 2010

(WWW.SHUOA.ORG)



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5 Library CLOSED	6	7	8 Physical Plant and Operations Committee 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	9	10
11	12 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	13	14 Security, Safety and Neighborhood Watch Comm. 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	15	16	17
18	19 Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	20	21 Covenants Committee 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room	22	23	24
25	26 Financial Management Committee 7:00 p.m. W. Card Room Library Open 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. East Penthouse	27	28 BOARD MEETING 7:00 PM W. Card Room	29	30	31

GOOD NEIGHBORS: MARYANNE SOLLAK 703-845-9325 and NILDA VIQUEIRA 703-379-4239

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Norman Baker 1114W 671-6759 nbaker@fjc.gov
 Vice President, Maria Elena Schacknies 1302W 820-2239 cultura@att.net
 Treasurer, Charles Roberts 914E 998-6080 charley.roberts@prodigy.net
 Secretary, Barbara Thode 404E 888-3569 bthode@culpeppergarden.org
 Director, Jean Orben 205E 845-0119 rorben@msn.com
 Director, Al Lambert 709W 931-7314 myongal@verizon.net
 Director, Robert De Mayo 1213E 575-4464 jusbob2u@verizon.net

MANAGEMENT OFFICE (Central # 703-578-4855)

General Manager, Gusbey Silva gusbey@shuoa.org
 Deputy General Manager, Tycia Haight tycia@shuoa.org
 Chief Engineer, Greg Grimm greg@shuoa.org
 Accountant, Lincoln O'Gilvey lincoln@shuoa.org
 Administrative Assist., Alice Rodrigues alice@shuoa.org
 Resident Services Coor., Noemi Najera noemi@shuoa.org
 Chief Web Developer, Al Lambert myongal@verizon.net

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Financial Management Wynfred Joshua 1414W 820-4471 diawin@metronets.com
 Physical Plant/Operations Al Lambert 709W 931-7314 myongal@verizon.net
 Covenants Joseph Livingston 814W 931-6923 joeandsonya@aol.com
 Security, Safety, & Neighborhood Watch Robert De Mayo 1213E 575-4464 jusbob2u@verizon.net

GOOD NEIGHBORS COORDINATORS

Toska Prather 1003W 379-7849 t_pra@verizon.net
 Virginia Fissmer 601W 379-2901

EDITOR --- Norman Baker 1114W nbaker@fjc.gov 671-6759

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**Skyline House Unit Owners' Association, Inc.,
3711 South George Mason Drive
Falls Church VA 22041-3711**