

The House Special



Volume 31 Issue 7

Skyline House

July 2011



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Maria Elena Schacknies

As I mentioned at the last Board meeting, I am repeating here for all Skyline House residents:

- We address problem solving and identification of opportunities in a mature and efficient manner.
- We care about our neighbors and our physical environment.
- As Board members, we owe a fiduciary duty to Skyline House home owners to manage and operate the Association using the care that an ordinarily prudent person would use under the same or similar circumstances. It means that, as a Board, we must exercise business judgment in making decisions while managing the affairs of the Association. In good faith and using business judgment we make rational and informed decisions.
- We must strictly follow the law and its governing documents and apply and enforce them in a fair and uniform manner.
- We must obtain and consider all the relevant facts and circumstances, identify the various options available to us, and carefully consider the best course of action for the Association and the owners as a whole. As Board members, we cannot act out of passion or prejudice, personal self-interest or gain, or through revenge or other negative motivations.
- Decisions must be rational and in the best interest of the Association consistent with its purposes.
- For divisive issues: the Board acts as judge, not as an advocate; staff conducts analyses; committees identify areas of agreement and disagreement; and the Board makes the choice that the process has generated, considering the community as a whole.
- For convergent issues: the Board is the conductor; eliciting and blending the best information and ideas that all have to offer, the Board strives to seek consensus.

During its June 22nd meeting, the Board:

approved a proposal submitted by the Elevator Consultant for the garage elevators modernization project in the amount of \$17,000. This proposal includes the design of the project specifications, bidding, and construction supervision.

approved a proposal for Management to obtain prices to build additional storage bins in the East Building G Level Storage Room. There is a waiting list for these bins, and this will provide a service to residents and increase income for the Association.

approved a proposal to tow cars from the garage if they are not removed on the day their garage space is scheduled to be power washed in the Spring of 2012. Notices will be posted at least 90 days in advance.

approved Policies and Procedures for the off-site, over-night guest parking at the Skyline 1, 2 & 3 Office Buildings' visitor's parking lot with the following caveats:

If a pass is not returned, a \$25 fee will be charged for its replacement, and the penalty will be that the offending unit will not have the off-site parking privilege for 6 months for the first offense, 12 months for a second offense, and a permanent loss of privilege for the third offense.

Non-resident unit owners will be responsible for charges incurred by tenants and Management will need their authorization to issue these passes to their tenants.

When reserving the passes for a party, the host will be charged a deposit of \$10 per pass. This deposit will not be refunded if the passes are not returned immediately after the party has ended. If a pass is lost, the \$10 deposit, plus the \$25 fee and the penalty, will be incurred by the resident.

did not approve a proposal to turn off the gallery area window box ceiling lights after 11:00 p.m..

Finally, on another topic, after serving as editor of our newsletter, The House Special, for the past five years, Norman Baker has informed me he would like to retire from that duty. Thus, we are seeking a volunteer to serve as Editor as soon as possible but, not later than the end of 2011.

VOLUNTEER EDITOR NEEDED

Skyline House is seeking a volunteer owner to serve as Editor of its very important monthly newsletter, The House Special.

If you would like to serve in that capacity, please contact:

Maria Elena Schacknies at meschacknies@shuoa.org or 703-820-1904



MANAGEMENT

General Manager, Gusbey Silva

East Building Balcony Concrete Repairs and Rail Replacement Project

The Consultant Engineer performed the final inspection of all balconies needed prior to the release of the balconies by the contractor on June 3rd, with the exception of the balconies located on the 16th and 17th floors which were released on June 22nd, after the equipment located on the roof was demobilized allowing the contractor to remove the short posts from these balconies.

Repairs and rail replacements on all Patios were completed June 21st. The Consultant Engineer inspected all patios the following day and released them immediately.

The contractor completed their demobilization by the end of June 2011.

The next and final phase of the Balcony Repair and Railing Replacement Project is scheduled to begin in March of 2012 on the South Side of the East Building.

After-Hours Off-Site Guest Parking at Skyline 1, 2 & 3 Office Building Lots

Effective July 1st, residents will have the opportunity for their guests to use after-hours, off-site guest parking at the Skyline 1, 2 & 3 Office Buildings' visitor parking lot. The passes for this are issued by Vornado Management and can be used for 24 hours on Saturday/Sunday but only after 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. All cars must be removed from the lots by no later than 6:00 a.m. on weekdays. Any car left after 6:00 a.m. on weekdays will be towed by Vornado Management at the owner's risk and expense. Management has developed, and the Board has approved, a Policy and Procedure for usage of this Off-Site Guest Parking. Notices have been posted on bulletin boards and sent to nonresident owners who will need to provide authorization for their tenants to use this privilege as all fees incurred due to lost passes will be charged to the unit owner.

This amenity will be implemented on a trial basis. Contact Management if you have questions.

Reminder to Residents – Swimming Pool Rules:

Management would like to remind residents about the following swimming pool rules, which have been ignored lately by some of our residents:

- Tuesdays and Thursdays after 5:00 p.m. is adult swim time. Kids are not allowed in the entire pool area on these days after 5:00 p.m.
- Children under 3 are not permitted in the main pool.
- There shall be one person 16 years or older responsible for every 2 children twelve (12) years of age or younger.
- Absolutely no food and/or drinks of any sort are allowed in the pool area, except water.

The Pool Operators/Management may evict violators from the pool area for not following the Swimming Pool Rules.



INFO FROM THE ENGINEER

Chief Engineer, Greg Grimm

SMOKE DETECTORS

TESTING The National Fire Protection Association recommends testing smoke detectors once a month to insure they are operational. To do so, push the test button and listen for the alarm. If you can't reach, stand under the alarm and push the test button with a broom handle. Test buttons differ on each brand. Usually the test button is a small clear button, but on some older models the button is in the center and is the same color as the rest of the detector housing

CLEANING Dust and cobwebs can interfere with the proper operation of a smoke detector. They can cause it to be less sensitive or, in some cases, more sensitive. Detectors should be cleaned regularly per the manufacturer's instructions and can often be cleaned with a standard vacuum hose and attachment brush. Do not remove the detector's cover when cleaning.

REPLACEMENT Based on statistical performance information, it is recommended that smoke detectors be replaced every 10 years or anytime monthly testing fails. If your detector is a Honeywell brand, then it is over thirty years old and should be replaced as soon as possible.



PHYSICAL PLANT & OPERATIONS

Chair, Al Lambert

Greetings! One definition of the word "power" is the ability to cause or modify change. Regarding governance, it is something every resident has and can exercise through participation in our Committees. Thus, on June 9, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Card Room the Physical Plant and Operations Committee (PPOC) and its visitors did consider and examine a series of initiatives having a direct impact on our home environment.

One initiative considered but not recommended to the Board by the Committee was an AT&T proposal to lease roof space over a twenty five year period to install communication antennas and other equipment (wires, cables, conduits) necessary for the transmission and reception of

Radio Frequency (RF) signals. There were two areas of concern raised during the Committee's consideration of this proposal. First, the contract, as written, seemed to give unlimited authority to AT&T to reconfigure or add supplemental equipment and antennas in the future and the committee had issues with some administrative aspects of the contract such as easement rights and the utility electrical sub-meter billing process on a monthly basis. It was suggested these issues could be resolved through the Association's Attorney drafting changes to the contract and AT&T agreeing to those contract modifications. The second area of concern raised during consideration was possible health issues associated with long-term exposure to RF signals emitted and received via these antennas. It was noted during discussion of these concerns that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has issued guidelines based on known science and studies and that the AT&T equipment would be in full compliance with existing (or future changes) to any government issued guidelines and that upon installation of the equipment the Association would conduct an independent analysis to ensure exposure to RF from the AT&T site is safe based on prevailing FCC guidelines. Others argued the FCC guidelines are not based on any long term studies and that many foreign countries have greater restrictions on levels of RF exposure considered a health hazard. That is to say, the U.S. measure of acceptable levels of RF exposure before acknowledging a health risk is much higher than in some other countries.

The second initiative considered by the committee was a garage elevator modernization proposal drafted by a consultant to provide project specifications and oversight of contract implementation. Committee members raised procedural concerns [subsequently tabled] related to the consultant selection. During discussion it was noted that the Association has a policy that any contract greater than \$5K requires three bids but it was also noted that historically, the policy has not applied when requesting a consultant to write contract specifications for a proposal. The specifications developed for the elevator project by this consultant were thorough and comprehensive. The issue was whether there should be a restriction or finite period of time when we revisit the relationship with any existing consultants. That is, at some point in time to solicit bids from other consultants who could perform the same task of writing specifications and quality control at a lesser price.

During the June walk-around the committee visited the East Building storage room area to conduct an assessment of the feasibility of constructing additional storage bins for rental to Association members. No structural issues such as pipes, vents, fuse boxes were identified and it was agreed it made sense to build additional storage areas to accommodate residents' needs and as a source of income to the Association. Hence, under new business the committee agreed to recommend to the Board that it direct Management to solicit proposals for the construction of additional storage bins in the East Building for rental by the Association members.

Having concluded new business the PPOC turned to old business. As mentioned in previous PPOC reports, the Association has encountered unwillingness of some residents to relocate their cars from about 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the once-a-year power washing of the garage decks. This recalcitrant behavior by a few poses a great financial threat to everyone because, if salt particles brought into the garage by cars from street treatments during the winter season are not properly and fully washed away, they will penetrate and deteriorate and the concrete deck which will lead to corrosion of the embedded steel tension cables which will cost the Association immense amounts of money to remediate. The PPOC recommended the Board consider and approve a motion to, beginning with the 2012 power washing, immediately tow any cars not moved on the scheduled day of deck washing. The committee recommended announcements be placed on bulletin boards and elsewhere approximately ninety days in advance of the washing. The PPOC believes it is an Owner's responsibility to contact Management and learn of any initiatives or issues which might correspond with a planned absence from their Unit.

Last but not least, the PPOC began, after several prior discussions, to recommend implementation of energy saving initiatives. The initiatives are small in nature but will have an impact over many months and years to save money and hence decrease the need to raise the condominium fee. The two initiatives recommended for approval by the Board were turning off the ceiling window accent lights in the east and west corridors after 11:00 p.m. each evening. Second, to turn-off the two lamps adjacent to the sofas in the front lobby during the day or, at the least, install energy efficient light bulbs. It is highly likely that next month the PPOC will approve and recommend additional energy savings initiatives. Please plan to join us and participate in consideration of these.

When speaking about savings initiatives and big payoffs one cannot help but mention the Garden Club and its work around our property. Under Howard Haymes' leadership the Garden Club has substantially beautified our landscape and made it a rewarding experience as we enjoy the visual appearance of flowers and shrubs. It was a pleasure to read, during the PPOC meeting, a complementary letter from a long-time resident who described the Garden Club's efforts as "a magnificent garden display and a source of great pride for all of us." A picture collage of the Garden Club's initiatives was recently posted on the bulletin boards. At the July PPOC meeting, Howard will discuss a Garden Club project relating to the barren area to the right as you exit the garage. Plan to attend the meeting and learn about and exchange ideas related to that initiative.

The next PPOC walk-around will be conducted on Thursday, July 7th at 7:00 p.m. when everyone will gather in the main lobby and then visit the swimming pool and mezzanine area. This is a repeat visit with a goal to continue the discussion and view improvements based on the last inspection in May 2011. Management has completed and repaired the discrepancies noted in the shower rooms and around the pool. During the last walk-around it was suggested we purchase additional umbrellas for the pool area and participants will be selecting the type, size and color to be purchased as soon as possible. If you have ideas or opinions then plan to attend the walk-around. Furthermore, participants will be discussing procurement of new wash basins and countertops for the shower/changing rooms.

Well, are you convinced? Active members of the Association's Committees do have the ability to exercise power to cause and modify change.

As always, I welcome your feedback on any matter pertaining to the PPOC. This is your home! The PPOC's next meeting will be Thursday, July 14, 2011. We welcome you to join us.



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Chair, Wynfred Joshua

The Financial Management Committee (FMC) met on June 20th. For the month of May, total income was \$336,521, expenditures were \$200,027. Income less expenditures equaled \$136,494. The monthly Reserve Contribution was \$111,744, leaving a surplus of \$24,750 before taxes.

Total delinquent condo fees declined in May to roughly \$56,000, but the amount delinquent more than 60 days increased to more than \$50,000. Our attorney is trying to get satisfaction from those owners. 10 owners were delinquent less than 60 days but owed almost \$5,000.

427 owner occupied units constituted 77% of our condominium. 130 units were renter occupied.

Our electricity bill was lower than expected; some \$15,500 below the budgeted amount, but now we are facing the hot summer months, so we expect the next several bills to be much higher. The water and sewer account continued to run a deficit. The bill for legal services was \$1,143 – all for collections, none for general matters. The year-to-date figure for collections alone was more than 60% over budget. This shows the double impact of owners delinquent in their condo fees.

A subcommittee of the FMC met to begin the process of reviewing position salaries and benefits and to determine how Skyline House compares with other Associations. The group looked at current job descriptions and recommended to the FMC that, in the coming months, they be updated by Management and reviewed with the employees. Over the next few months, the Subcommittee members will retrieve the information needed to present a proposal to the Board of Directors about future salary increases and salary caps if or when needed.

The FMC discussed the proposed PPOC recommendation to turn off the smaller gallery, window box lights at night (possibly after 11 p.m.). While FMC members appreciate the PPOC's efforts to seek possible reductions in expenses and will continue to work with the PPOC to find areas for savings, the consensus of the FMC was to leave the lights in the lobby corridors unchanged. Savings – about \$150 annually – would be too little to offset possible related impacts such as the cost of a durable and dependable timer, the tendency of residents to leave trash, and the important requirement of sufficient light for the security cameras to function effectively.

The FMC considered the proposal to hire a consultant to support the garage elevators renovation project. Management reviewed the references of the consulting company, Michael Blades and Associates, and its Vice President Stephen Fox who would serve as consultant for the

modernization project and the references were excellent. Although there is a requirement to obtain a minimum of three bids for repair/replacement projects over a certain amount, those same rules and regulations enable the Association to contract for the services of consultants to support our efforts to obtain the best contractor. The unanimous recommendation of the FMC to the Board was to contract for consulting services with Michael Blades and Associates for the amount of \$19,000 [subsequently reduced to \$17,000]. Services would include: preparation of documents for invitation to bid, support with the bidding process and selection of the contractor, review of the modernization process, and final installation review.

FMC members subsequently reviewed the financial and administrative aspects of the AT&T proposal for placing antennas on the roof. The general view was that the financial aspects were positive although further discussion of financial remuneration should be pursued. Members were concerned with many of the technical parts of the contract some of which also fall within the purview of other Association committees and our attorney. The committee recommended that our attorney revise the contract to protect Skyline House interests after which the Committee would like to review the contract once more before making a final recommendation to the Board.

The FMC's next meeting will be on Monday, July 25, 2011. We welcome residents to join us.



SECURITY, SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Chair, Robert J. "Bob" De Mayo

The Security, Safety and Neighborhood Watch Committee (SS&NWC) met on June 8th. A report on that meeting was not available for this publication. The next meeting of the SS&NWC is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 13, 2011. **Watch the bulletin boards for information on the "National Night Out" activities on the evening of Tuesday, August 2, 2011.**



COVENANTS

Chair, Joseph Livingston

The Covenants Committee was not scheduled to meet in the month of June. The Committee was scheduled to meet on July 20th (Wednesday) but, because of a conflict in schedules, the meeting has been rescheduled for July 19th (Tuesday) at 7:00 p.m. in the West Card Room.

The Committee will discuss among other things:

1. Possible revision of Rule 18 C 2 pertaining to unit owner/resident use of guest parking spaces.
2. The continuing concern of the potential damage to the garage concrete decks caused by a large number of owners and residents who do not comply with management's written and posted requests to temporarily remove their vehicles to permit the scheduled power washing.

Unit owners are cordially invited to attend the July 19th meeting. Please be prepared to ask questions and offer suggestions.

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.

TAHERA SHAIRZAY 703-347-7688

NILDA VIQUEIRA 703-379-4239

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.



SKYLINE HOUSE CALENDAR

JULY 2011

(WWW.SHUOA.ORG)



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

GOOD NEIGHBORS: NILDA VIQUEIRA 703-379-4239 and TAHERA SHAIRZAY 703-347-7688

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