

REVISED-Ridgefield Housing Authority (RHA) Meeting Minutes for September 28, 2016
(Approved)
Congregate Housing – 51 Prospect Street – 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners: Bob Hebert (Director), Frank Coyle, John Kukulka, and Cathleen Savery
Housing Officials: Philip Sfraga, Property Manager
Kimberly Henderson, Residential Service Coordinator
Guests: Vincent Liscio, prospective HA commissioner
Visitors: Soledad Di Turi, Flo Colletto, Marie Adams, Susan Proctor, Gene Kurka,
Marshall Ballou, and Sister Martha

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
 2. Approval of Minutes
 3. Treasurer's Report
 4. Tenant Commissioner Report
 5. Management Report
 6. New Business
 7. Old Business
 8. Public Session
 9. Executive Session: Individual Tenant Issues. (if required)
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1. Call to Order

Mr. Hebert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Hebert introduced the current four commissioners of the RHA as well as Mrs. Nancy Fields, the new recording secretary. Mr. Vincent Liscio was also introduced as interested in joining the RHA. Mr. Greg Smith resigned from the RHA on September 7, 2016, due to his moving to Norwalk.

2. Approval of Minutes

Copies of the June 22, 2016, July 27, 2016 and August 24, 2016 minutes were distributed to the RHA commissioners.

Ms. Savery moved and Mr. Kukulka seconded a motion to approve the June 22, 2016, July 27, 2016, and August 24, 2016 minutes. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 4-0. Motion passed.

3. Treasurer's Report

Mr. Coyle, Treasurer presented the September 2016 Financial Report.

A) The LP (Ballard Green, Congregate, General Affordable)

Mr. Coyle reported the LP had YTD revenue of \$694K, which was \$3K below budget and expenses were \$535K which was \$88K below budget due to utilities and maintenance. Mr. Coyle further stated net income was \$159K, which was \$85K above budget. Mr. Coyle said

the cash balance was \$386K, which was a \$126K increase this month, and that obligations remained to DECD of \$41K. Mr. Kukulka asked if some of the funds were used for the resident BBQ's. Mr. Coyle said he would take a look at that.

B) Meadows

Mr. Coyle reported for the Meadows, YTD revenue of \$197K which was \$3K above budget, and expenses of \$116K which was \$22K below budget. The difference was due to the \$9K replacement reserve not taken, \$6K pilot and \$5k maintenance not realized. Mr. Coyle reported net operating income was \$81K, which was \$24K above budget and the cash balance was \$75K which represented an increase of \$5K this month.

C) RHA

Mr. Coyle reported the balance in FCB RHA funds was \$72.8K (HTCC 72.2), with \$150K on deposit in a FCB CD. Mr. Coyle reported the balance in RHA Konover account was \$96.2K (\$16.4 Comcast).

Mr. Kukulka moved and Ms. Savery seconded a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 4-0. Motion passed.

4. Tenant Commissioner Report

Ms. Savery said there would be a 1:00 p.m. meeting on October 5, 2016, at Congregate Housing and a 3:00 p.m. meeting on October 5, 2016 at Ballard Green.

Mr. Coyle moved and Mr. Kukulka seconded a motion to approve the Tenant Commissioner Report. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 4-0. Motion passed.

5. Management Report

Mr. Sfraga reported the following verbally.

- A. Occupancy** - Mr. Sfraga didn't have exact numbers but stated that Ballard was approximately 96% occupied which translated into one occupancy. Mr. Hebert asked if that occupancy was spoken for. Mr. Sfraga confirmed it was, and that it was a subsidized unit. Mr. Sfraga also stated that Congregate Housing was approximately 87% to 88% occupied which translated into two units. Mr. Sfraga said that another two units were on notice and that the tenants were no longer living there. Mr. Hebert asked if all four units were committed. Mr. Sfraga confirmed they were committed and that the new tenants were ready to move in. Mr. Coyle said if one unit was taken off line, it was counted against occupancy. Mr. Sfraga said YTD, General occupancy was approximately 83-84%. Mr. Sfraga said they were looking to get filled and had one vacant now. Mr. Hebert asked the period of time these were empty. Mr. Sfraga said he didn't know. Mr. Sfraga stated that Meadows was approximately 99% occupied. Mr. Sfraga stated Prospect Ridge was currently 100% occupied, although there was one tenant in legal process. Mr. Sfraga said that unit should be open in approximately two months. Mr. Sfraga said there were issues that crept up this summer with a 3 bedroom unit. Mr. Sfraga said there were no further anticipated vacancies except for that unit. Mr. Hebert asked what was the impact on the budget as a result of the current vacancies. Mr. Coyle said the budget was looking good. Mr. Coyle said there would

be a catchup by the beginning of the month. Mr. Hebert stated he wanted to see where the budget stood.

B. Maintenance Issues – Mr. Sfraga said there were repairs being made to the sidewalk and manholes in the in the Ballard Green driveway on Saturday, Oct 1, 2016 or later in the current week. Mr. Sfraga said reasonable accommodations were made for a ramp in Ballard Green so that there would be no step up. Mr. Sfraga said two residents would be able to benefit from that improvement. Mr. Sfraga further reported that there were six units that had no step up, but that the other units do have the step up. Mr. Sfraga stated that ramps helped, which he said was better for everyone. Mr. Sfraga said that hopefully by November, the current doors would be replaced by compliant doors by the community center and would be outfitted with a push button. Mr. Sfraga said they were hoping to have this happen prior to the inspection on November 3, 2016. Mr. Sfraga said that in the Dining Room, the old furniture would be replaced with new furniture, and that the table tops would be replaced and outfitted with new tablecloths. Mr. Sfraga said this work should be done within the next few weeks. Mr. Sfraga stated the hallways and exercise room would be painted as well. Mr. Sfraga said hopefully this work would be done by the second week in November 2016. Mr. Hebert said it would be nice to have this work done by the holidays. Mr. Sfraga said he asked for resident feedback as to the paint color. Mr. Sfraga said he received lots of good ideas and would be making a decision on Friday, 9/30/16. Mr. Sfraga said he got some feedback from residents and would be making a final decision with these in mind. Mr. Hebert said that it made sense to get everyone's input, but suggested that he consult with Polly Coyle, an interior decorator who volunteered her skill set. Ms. Savery asked if the mural was being taken into consideration. Mr. Sfraga said that the panel with the fountain would be kept. Mr. Kukulka had a concern with the casement window in need of repair. Mr. Hebert stated the repair was completed in August. Mr. Sfraga stated that if the residents saw anything, they should advise property management. Ms. Adams asked what was going on with the pot holes/drains at Ballard Green. Mr. Hebert said he happen to be on site when the contractor was looking at the drain with Mr. Sfraga. Mr. Sfraga said that the drain would be fixed by the weekend, weather permitting. Mr. Hebert asked what caused the water damage behind the guard's desk and laundry room at Congregate. Mr. Sfraga said the elevator shaft had been constructed by blasting into the bedrock. As a consequence, when there was heavy rain, some water would stream down and flood that area. Mr. Sfraga said he didn't know of a solution and would probably have an engineer take a look. Mr. Sfraga said that currently, he was dealing with the situation as it occurred. Mr. Hebert asked if the leak could be sealed from the outside. Mr. Sfraga said that maintenance had addressed this issue previously. Mr. Sfraga said he would take pictures/videos to assist in identifying a solution before having anyone come out. Mr. Coyle asked if resident certifications had not been done. Mr. Sfraga said Alison was working on them. Mr. Sfraga said an audit was coming on November 3, 2016. Mr. Coyle asked if property management could catch up with repairs by then. Mr. Sfraga said they should be able to do so. Mr. Hebert asked about the washer/dryer maintenance at Ballard. Mr. Hebert said that the risers were supposed to have been put into two of them. Mr. Sfraga said one of the washers/dryers had been done. The order for the other had not been processed. Mr. Sfraga said he would get that done. Mr. Sfraga said there were ventilation issues. Mr. Sfraga said the contract stated the dryer vents should be maintained or the clothes would take an excessive time to dry.

Mr. Sfraga said machine service was an issue since the service office was stationed in Massachusetts, which was a three hour drive. Mr. Sfraga said there was an attitude when the service people appeared resulting from a resident's call. Mr. Sfraga said the current contract ends January 1, 2017 and they were thinking to change to another service agreement who would be more responsive. Mr. Kukulka asked if the dryers were hard piped outside and if booster fans were required. Mr. Sfraga said the pipe length was short. Mr. Kukulka said the pipe should be changed to hard pipe instead of having flexible pipe. Mr. Hebert asked about the drain out the front door at Congregate. Mr. Hebert said it appeared to get clogged easily and probably did so because of accumulated debris underneath. Mr. Hebert said the drain needed to be cleaned out and should be examined. Mr. Sfraga said the concrete was in good condition, but the metal grate in Congregate was being replaced in the next month weather permitting, or if not, then next year. Mr. Hebert said it would be optimal to have this work done in the next month. Ms. Savery asked about the painting of the laundry room at Ballard as well as the broken blind on the window. Mr. Sfraga said the paint was bought in June 2016 and the painting could be done. Mr. Kukulka suggested in order to minimize the cost, to ask for volunteer painters such as the Eagle Scouts, Lions Club or church organizations for their assistance. Ms. Savery said volunteers were generally available in the spring. Mr. Sfraga said that Habitat for Humanity had assisted them with staining in June 2016.

- C. **Resident Services Coordinator Report** – Ms. Henderson said she continued to do resident assessments, as the resident schedules permitted. Ms. Henderson said she was done with most of these assessments in Prospect Ridge with the majority of the assessments still to do at Ballard. Ms. Henderson read aloud two upcoming events that were happening at Ballard Green's community room on October 4th and October 5th, respectively. Ms. Savery asked if transportation had been arranged for the residents. Mr. Sfraga said transportation had been posted with a sign-up deadline of 9/23/16. However, Mr. Sfraga said there had been no response from the residents. Mr. Sfraga said this deadline was a requirement with the Hart bus. Ms. Henderson stated a "Community Initiative" effort was being presented to the residents of both Ballard and Prospect Ridge. Ms. Henderson said the effort was not looking to push friendships but rather to build common respect. Ms. Henderson said she was looking forward to positive results and ideas to make a better community for the residents.

Ms. Savery moved and Mr. Coyle seconded a motion to approve the Management Report. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 4-0. Motion passed.

6. New Business

No new business was identified.

7. Old Business

- A. **Pump House at Ballard Green** – Mr. Hebert said it has been over a year now with no results. Mr. Hebert said the Historical Society informed him that they would be putting together funding to restore the building. Mr. Hebert advised both the Historical Society and the Town on multiple occasions that the property needed to be secured in the interim as it represents a potential safety hazard and liability to the Town. As of this date, nothing has been done to secure the property or the necessary funding to restore it. Ms. Savery said

that there should be a firm deadline given. Mr. Hebert said a firm date had already been given, and that RHA should follow through with the demolition plan. Mr. Coyle said the Historical Society should be given one more deadline. Ms. Savery said it had been a while and they had taken too long for a credible response. Mr. Kukulka said he favored giving the Historical Society a final notice. Mr. Hebert asked for a date. Mr. Coyle suggested December 15, 2016. Mr. Hebert said he would advise the Board of Selectman and the Historical Society of this Board's approval to move forward with the demolition plan, absent a definitive and credible alternative.

Mr. Coyle moved and Ms. Savery seconded a motion to apply for a permit to demolish the Pump House at Ballard Green on December 15, 2016. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 4-0. Motion passed.

- B. **Food Truck Situation at Ballard Green** - Mr. Kukulka asked what was going on with the Food Truck situation at Ballard Green. Mr. Hebert said generally, the residents liked the idea of having the food trucks during the CHIRP concert. The issue was certain vending trucks were given approval to by park on private property without approval of RHA. The vendors damaged the grass by parking their trucks near the park fence, and left the area littered with paper containers, napkins, soda cans, etc. Mr. Hebert said there should be a policy developed to approve the vendors who go to the summer concert events at Ballard Green. Currently there are two vendors who attend the CHIRP concerts. The policy should state specifically that the vendors have specific parking spots and prohibit parking on the grass. There have been discussions where the Town will cut the grass between the parking lot and Ballard Green, and clean up after the concert, or Ballard Green will collect the vendor fee. Ideally, it would be preferable if the Town did the clean-up. During the summer season, there can be up to two concerts a week, for which the vendors pay a \$50 fee per event. Mr. Kukulka asked where the RHA stood on this. Mr. Hebert said this was what had been proposed but that Mr. Hebert still needed to talk to Paul Roche to find out if Parks & Recreation would be doing the clean-up.
- C. **Congregate Roof** -Mr. Coyle asked if the congregate roof had been done. Mr. Hebert confirmed that the work has been completed and signed off by Konover and by Goodyear.

8. Public Session

Ms. Proctor expressed concern that she had not signed a new rental agreement. Mr. Sfraga said there was no lease-type agreement to sign. Ms. Proctor asked if there would be a notice of an adjustment. Mr. Sfraga said all tenants would be getting a notice in November 2016. Ms. Proctor also expressed concern regarding a clogged drain at Ballard by the alternative high school. Ms. Proctor said she could not get to her car without getting drenched. Ms. Adams showed pictures of a clogged storm drain. Mr. Sfraga said that particular drain was going to be cleaned by being 'jetted out'. Mr. Sfraga clarified that 'jetting out' meant cleaning out the sediment. Mr. Hebert said that the responsibility should be with the Town as that drain was at the Alternative School. Regardless, Mr. Hebert said the drain would be taken care of.

Ms. Adams said there were two buildings/sheds covered by greenery located by CVS. Ms. Adams said it just needed to have the bushes cut and the vines taken off. Ms. Adams said she would do

it herself but was told that she was renting the inside and couldn't touch the outside. Ms. Adams believed it was a safety hazard. Ms. Proctor said the tree warden was taking a dead tree out in that area. Mr. Sfraga said he would go to see the sheds.

Ms. Adams commented on the sign at the entry of Ballard Green. She said it was hard to see the driveway. Mr. Coyle said a consultant designed a plan for a new sign and entry a few years ago but the proposed design was prohibitively expensive. Subsequently, the board considered more affordable alternative plans. Mr. Hebert asked if there was funding available to move forward on a more affordable design that will address the residents' concerns. Mr. Coyle said it would be a capital expense. Mr. Sfraga said there was money put in the budget for the following year. Mr. Sfraga had spoken to the electrician to put lighting to illuminate the sign. Mr. Hebert asked if this was sent out for bid and if the project could be started. Mr. Sfraga said there was money still available and it could be done. Mr. Coyle said he would like to get it done.

Ms. Proctor requested when parking at Building D, that residents not park backing in. Ms. Proctor said when residents back into the parking spaces, it directs exhaust fumes towards your face. Mr. Kukulka agreed the signs were a good idea. Mr. Sfraga said he could get a sign that stated "No backing in", and could order it right away. Mr. Hebert said he would speak to Mr. Roche regarding replacing schools signs that were rusted and dented. Mr. Hebert said that request should also be put on the list.

Ms. Ballou said the benches in front of the Grotto at Congregate were broken and asked if there were any plans to fix them. Mr. Sfraga said they could do so. Ms. Ballou said Congregate needed a lot of help and upkeep, and these improvements she believed would raise the energy level of the residents. Mr. Hebert said there were many expenses such as the roof and the kitchen that RHA had been resolving. Mr. Hebert also said they could work on some of the cosmetic improvement now, and were beginning to make progress. Mr. Hebert agreed to replace the bench by the grotto.

Ms. Ballou asked if Congregate and Ballard were separate. Mr. Hebert said they were, and added that Meadows is a separate entity as well. Mr. Coyle said each property had different funding and was covered under different state programs. Mr. Coyle said that despite that, the properties are not treated different intentionally, nor knowingly. Mr. Coyle said they were always looking for suggestions for improvements that could be done over time.

Sister Martha said that earlier that week, a 101 year old resident who lived on the 4th floor went to her doctor's office and when the resident returned, could not return to her apartment due to an elevator malfunction. The resident was not inconvenienced as she was able to watch TV until 7pm, which was when the elevator was fixed, but Sister Martha said she felt there should be an alternate plan to assist residents to their apartments when the elevator is out of service for an extended period of time. Mr. Coyle said the alternate plan is to call 911, who would have called the Fire Department to assist. Mr. Hebert said in this situation, a 101 year old resident out of her apartment for a number of hours, warranted a call to the Fire Department to help. Mr. Hebert said the Fire Department would be glad to assist a resident back to their apartment under such conditions. Ms. Henderson said the residents should be made aware of this resource. Mr.

Hebert said he would contact the Fire Department to make them aware of the situation. Sister Martha said she would tell the resident the solution the next day.

Sister Martha asked if someone could be placed at the reception desk during the daylight hours. Mr. Hebert said they could not go back to the paid security person right now. Mr. Hebert asked Mr. Sfraga to consider establishing a program that would use volunteers from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm. He noted that the staff personnel are on the property during business hours.

Mr. Hebert asked if there were any other issues, concerns or compliments. Ms. Ballou said she liked the new red bench and cushions outside Congregate, although some cushions were already missing.

9. Executive Session

The meeting moved to Executive session to discuss individual tenant issues.

Mr. Hebert stated the next meeting of the Ridgefield Housing Authority would be on October 26, 2016 at 7:00 p.m., located at Ballard Green. As there was no further business, Mr. Hebert adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Fields
Recording Secretary