

Ridgefield Housing Authority
Ridgefield, CT 06877

Approved Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 7:00PM
In Person at Ballard Green Community Room at
25 Gilbert Street
and
On Conference Call
805 706 5480

Commissioners Present: Vincent Liscio, Paul Janerico, Jan Hebert

Commissioner Absent: John Burke

REM Staff: Wade Rockwood, Monica Stromwall

RHA Residents: Krisann Benson, Coco Barron, Susan Proctor, Georgette Colletto, Nancy Nuzzo, Isette Brenda, Said Ahmar, JoAnn R. Lynch, Nancy Higgins, Barb Beaulieu

A Motion to Approve RHA Meeting Minutes from March 29, as written, was made by Ms. Hebert and was seconded by Mr. Janerico - all present approved.

A Motion to Approve Management Report - made by Ms. Hebert and seconded by Mr. Janerico - all present approved.

A Motion to Approve Financial Report - was made by Ms. Hebert and seconded by Mr. Liscio, all present approved.

A Motion to Adjourn was made by Ms. Hebert and seconded by Mr. Janerico - all present approved

Mr. Liscio began the meeting by welcoming all... those on line and those, for the first time since Covid, in person at Ballard Greens. A few adjustments will be made going forward, but overall, a very successful event.

Management Report - Mr. Rockwood made the following comments in regard to his report.

Property Update

Vacant Units - we have (2) vacancy in Congregate. We are currently processing a with move-in anticipated for May 1st and the 2nd unit for May 8th. We have a vacancy that opened in Congregate that will not be available until April 30, 2023. We have (1) one vacancy in Ballard Green we are processing with anticipated move in date of Mid-May. We have a vacancy that is opening up at the end of April in Ballard Green. We have (4) vacancies in General Apartments, one of which is a market rate unit, which we are processing with a move in of May 18th, and we have another unit filled with move-in on April 28, 2023. The other 2 maintenance is performing unit turns. There are no vacancies in Meadows.

Delinquency - We continue to send out collection notices and perform phone outreach. We have several residents on payments plans to bring their balance current.

Legal - We have 1 Notice to quit, and 1 court ordered stipulation agreement.

Annual Recertification - We have been receiving packets back from residents. We had requested that all packets be provided to property management by April 7, 2023. We received 74% of Ballard Green packets and 47% of Congregate. We are sending 2nd notices and calling residents for the recert packets. For congregare, we will be reaching out to the point of contact or family member.

Resident Coordinator Report - While almost impossible to list all the accomplishments of our new RSC, Monica Stromwall, who has received numerous accolades and compliments from our residents, the following is an arial snapshot: Second visit from Exceptional Sidekicks Therapy Dog Stanley who demonstrated his exceptional ability to assist with tasks and support. There are between 20 and 22 programs now being offered to residents at Prospect Ridge and Ballard Green during the month to include, health and wellness, fitness, arts and crafts, coffee and conversation, book club, culinary club, games, movie nights, outings to local museums,

Ridgefield Symphony, and other points of interest. Plans also include Earth Day events with generous donations from local organizations and the Ridgefield Garden Club will partner with residents to provide instructional gardening and the building of a vegetable garden on the property at Ballard. A bi-monthly newsletter is planned to keep residents engaged and informed and plans include highlighting a resident in each publication.

Financial Report- While Mr. Janerico is still working with REM towards creating a comprehensive monthly report, he shared the following information: Waiting for Audit Report to be complete. Delivery of the Audit Report is required ASAP to Boston Financial. Jason at the Audit Firm has indicated that he is aiming to have the draft Audit report and tax return delivered by the end of April and will do his best to meet this target given the late delivery of information to his team. Paul just received the February Report from REM today and March is pending some additional work by REM. The audit is the highest priority and then Paul will work with REM to get current on all the analytics from year end 2022 through current. Paul believes all of this seems reasonable and properly prioritized given the transition in the fourth quarter of 2022 from Konover to REM. He will continue to monitor, evaluate, and report as information becomes available.

Tenant Commissioner Report – Mr. Burke out of town. No report at this time.

Old Business

Ballard Green Walkways -Mr. Liscio noted that the Town of Ridgefield will be beginning their first of two stages of repaving in the Town, could you reach out again to Jake Muller in Purchasing for the Town to see if there is an opportunity for us to piggy back on their paving to secure a time and possibly the same pricing as the Town pays? Mr. Rockwood will pursue.

Food Rescue – No updates at this time.

Emergency Plan – Meetings are being held weekly with Ms. Hebert and Ms. Stromwall to review/update/validate current emergency plan.

BG Camera - No Update at this time.

BG signs and MAP – Mr. Rockwood connected with person that provided aerial photographs of the development and secured the images of Ballard Green so that it can be resized and made into Ballard Green MAP for delivery personnel.

Chairs for Congregate - Chairs have been ordered and payment received. Shipment to go out on 05/08/23. Painting Dining Room in Congregate will also be started soon.

Capital Improvement Needs/CNA Date update - RFP was issued for Capital Needs Improvement with deadline of April 14th. We have reviewed the bids and will be seeking further information from AEI. The total cost as proposed is \$11,760 and will take 7 weeks from start to project management writeup and review. AEI has completed over 600 Capital needs assessment for housing authorities since 2014 with over 350 in the State of Connecticut. As discussed, we are looking for a CNA that would include a breakdown of all physical parts of the two campuses from heating units, to windows, to building facing's, appliances, etc., the life expectancy and the cost of replacement so that we may plan on how to accomplish the needs, the funding of those needs, the actual anticipated start dates, the Reserves necessary and also identify other items on our "Wish List" and the items already listed in our "OTHER" category listed below.

Dropbox a file on our drop box has been created for the Ridgefield Housing Authority. Accessing has been given to the commissioners.

Solarizing/Energy Project/tax credits – Mr. Janerico stated that he has received what appears to be a viable financial proposal from Pure Point for a solar array project at Ballard. He has subsequently provided the proposal to REM senior Mgmt. for their review and comments as well as former Commissioner Frank Coyle given his long history with RHA. Both considered the proposal interesting and worth evaluating further. In addition, he is arranging to meet with several Ridgefield residents who have Town support and extensive professional experience with local renewable energy projects. He will be forming an exploratory committee to guide further discussion on the opportunity that RHA residents would benefit from for an extended period with little to no upfront costs.

APRA Update (*Liscio) We, the RHA, have been blessed to receive a check last Friday. Mr. Liscio thanked everyone involved in making this possible. It will almost cover losses incurred as a result of Covid.

New Commissioner: Mr. Liscio working with the Selectman's office and social media to fill this position.

New Business

Alternative High School – Mr. Liscio has been contacted by the Superintendent, Susie DaSilva, to express her interest in increasing space for the High School. While this is very early in the process, Ms. Hebert strongly suggested that as opposed to expanding by enclosing the “deck”, that the school be advised that building up would be more acceptable to our Board/residents. Enclosing the deck would bring the school wall right to the edge of our new pavilion, blocking our residents feeling of openness. If the BOE Capital Plan IS approved, the next steps would be for her office to address our concerns. Mr. Liscio has invited them to come either to a Board meeting or a Special Meeting where they would present their plan.

In Person/On-Line hybrid Meetings Mr. Liscio stated that we obviously moved up our plans to have the hybrid meetings. By this time in the meeting, we will know if it is working or not and if we need to make adjustments to continue this style of meeting. If adjustments are necessary, we will ascertain the costs and feasibility.

Public Session

Mr. Liscio stated the criteria for residents participating before inviting them to speak.

Krisann Benson - Hire a grant writer for walkways. New Town street sidewalks will be concrete. Health issues. Resident shouldn't have to suffer. Ms. Benson felt that when Congregate elevator crashed. . . monies should have been taken out of different account so walkways could have been done at that time.

Coco Barron – Spoke in Spanish

Susan Proctor – Many thanks for the kindnesses shown to me recently. Meant a great deal to me. Susan also commented on the Alternate High School updates

Georgette Colletto Family member of Congregate resident. How lucky residents are to have Monica Stromwall as their RSC. Displays genuine caring, knocking on doors to remind residents of upcoming events. She's calming and just excellent. Wade is also so nice and personable. Thanks to Board and staff for all they do. Great to have rent box again.

NancyNuzzo Couldn't understand meeting due to echo.

Isette Brenda - Also spoke, but due to audio technical difficulties we were not able to transcribe what was said.

Said Ahmar – None at this time.

JoAnn R. Lynch – None at this time.

Nancy Higgins – None at this time.

Barb Beaulieu - Appreciate positive changes new staff making in their lives. Monica and Wade have been great. It's like a miracle. Thank you!

Mr. Liscio thanked everyone for their participation and flexibility during this transitional stage of RHA Hybrid Meetings.

Executive Session: Mr. Liscio cancelled the Executive Session and requested a Motion to Adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:50PM.

RHA Minutes Respectfully submitted by Patricia Harney, Recording Secretary.

Next Meeting May 3, 2023 at 8AM

Minutes available in Hardcopy at REM Office, Gilbert Street, or outside REM Office at Prospect Ridge, or with this link on Town site:

<https://www.ridgefieldct.org/housing-authority>

Audio/video link: <https://fccdl.in/k4zqWNRD48>