

Ridgefield Housing Authority  
Ridgefield, CT 06877

RHA Approved Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 16, 2023  
In-person meeting at Ballard Green  
25 Gilbert Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877  
Dial In Available, but not utilized by anyone for this meeting

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**Commissioners Present:** Vincent Liscio, Paul Janerico, Jan Hebert, John Burke, Ed Baird

**REM Staff:** Wade Rockwood, Monica Stromwall

**RHA Residents:** Nancy Higgins, Krisann Benson, Barbara Beaulieu, Isette Brendza, Susan Proctor, Nancy Nuzzo, JoAnn Lynch

**Non-Resident:** Kurt Carr

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**A motion to approve RHA Meeting Minutes** from July 19, with change in Financial, was made by Ms. Hebert and seconded by Mr. Janerico-all present approved.

**A motion to approve Management Report** was made by Mr. Janerico and seconded by Mr. Burke-all present approved.

**A motion to approve the Financial Report** was made by Ms. Hebert and seconded by Mr. Liscio – Mr. Liscio, Ms. Hebert, Mr. Janerico approved. Mr. Baird abstained; Mr. Burke opposed.

**A motion to move into Executive Session** was made by Ms. Hebert and seconded by Mr. Janerico – all present approved.

**A motion to move out of Executive Session and return to Public Session** was made by Mr. Janerico and seconded by Ms. Hebert, all present approved.

**A motion was made to adjourn the RHA meeting** by Ms. Hebert and seconded by Mr. Burke-all present approved.

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Mr. Liscio called to order the in-person meeting of the Ridgefield Housing Authority @ 7:01pm. He read the mission statement of the RHA aloud. He then requested a motion to approve the minutes of July 19, 2023. A question was raised about a statement in the financial report from last meeting concerning clarification of a date. This has been updated.

**Management Report (Property Update)**

**Vacancies:** We've had a very successful month for vacancies, we currently have only one vacancy at Ballard Green which will be occupied later this month, and then we will be at 100% at Ballard Green with no upcoming vacancies for the development. We are currently 100% occupied at Congregate but will have one vacancy opening at the end of August. We have three vacancies in General Apartments with one move in schedule for September 1st, another is pending verification, and the 3rd unit we are actively showing the unit. We currently have no vacancies at Meadows. We are currently at 98% occupied for all developments.

**Delinquencies:** We continue to focus on our delinquencies, there was a slight increase in the overall aging for Ballard Green by 5.5%, General Apartments by 14.8%, Congregate by 35.1%. Statements of account for those residents with debit balances were mailed on August 11, 2023. Those residents with outstanding balances over 60 days received collection letters requesting that payment be submitted. The entire 90- day balance for Meadows totaling \$5,867 is in legal.

**Maintenance:** had a very busy month as they completed 69 work orders in addition to completing several units turns quickly. Last week maintenance began the process of cleaning the gutters at Ballard Green and plan to complete the rest of the buildings by the end of the month.

**Hiring:** We have been actively interviewing to fill the property management role with a few candidates that we are setting up second interviews. We hope to have the position filled by the beginning of September.

**Safety:** This month has been safety guided as much of property management efforts have gone towards ensuring our residents and developments are safe. Property Management has been working with our landscaping company to ensure that the front beds are manicured and that the shrubs and trees have been pruned at Ballard Green. In addition, we identified several trees at Congregate that posed a risk to our residents from a safety standpoint, so we secured services to have several dead trees removed. To address

the overgrown shrubbery in the back of Congregate, we had the landscaping company remove much of the overgrown shrubs and other plants to provide more sunlight and air flow to the back of the development to help eliminate and prevent mildew.

**Alarm System:** Property management has been tackling another issue with the alarm system at Ballard Green. We recently had the alarm company out to replace the power supply, and CO2 and other sensors in several buildings.

**Sprinkler System:** Property management has been resolving another issue with the sprinkler system at Prospect Ridge. 41 of the side wall mounted sprinkler heads have been recalled. We had the fire protection company out this week to replace all 41-side wall mounted sprinkler heads located in buildings A-wing, and Buildings 1 to 5. This was all coordinated with our Town Fire Marshal to make sure that we received the appropriate permits and are compliant.

**CO2 Devices:** Our next project is to replace CO2 devices at the developments at Prospect Ridge. Residents will be receiving information via notices once the proper permits have been received, coordinated with the fire marshal, and schedule with the fire alarm company.

### **Resident Service Manager**

In August, we started with our signature “Ridge” and “Green”; programming, which includes various activities to encourage our residents to maintain ways to stay physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy. The month has 43 programs for the residents of Prospect Ridge and 42 programs for Ballard Green residents scheduled. Ballard Green residents enjoyed grilled hot dogs and all the fixings, and plans include doing the same at Prospect Ridge soon. This month residents began with a Rising Starr Horse Rescue visit. Army and Navy, the two ponies visited both properties, and residents could meet, pet, and walk around with them. It was a fantastic event, and many residents brought their families to enjoy this experience. Both locations welcomed Stanley, the Therapy Dog from Exceptional Sidekick Service Dog, last week, and as always, he is a big hit. We are incredibly grateful for our continued support of local organizations. All residents over 60 were invited to The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum Senior Tour today. We continue to build stronger bonds with our community partnerships with local organizations like NCL, which has participated in programming all summer at Prospect Ridge with their Mother and Daughter teams and delivering baked goods for residents at Ballard Green. We are developing programming events for the fall for residents to ensure continuity with NCL and Mother-Daughter teams once school resumes in a few weeks. Our raised planter bed at Ballard Green is in full bloom with the help of the Ridgefield Garden Club. The Garden Club planted more plants, tested the soil, and installed a hose wheel that Real Estate Masters provided to ensure the best outcome and maneuverability for residents to access the hose. The plants should yield a bountiful harvest for the residents participating in the garden club. As discussed in last month’s report, Lisa Flemming from RVNA Healthcare and I are planning new programming, which will take place in the fall. I am very excited to offer residents new opportunities to learn more about the benefits of health and their bodies. As we look ahead to September’s calendar, some highlights include the annual Knights of Columbus BBQ, a visit from Woodcock Nature Center at Prospect Ridge, and a farm trip to Henny Penny. I continue to work closely with the Commission on Aging, Ridgefield Social Services, the Municipal Agent, Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders, Adult Protective Services, Danbury and Norwalk Hospital, Davita Dialysis, Cassena Care, RVNA Healthcare, Ridgefield EMS, Meals on Wheels and the families and residents to provide exceptional care of our residents.

### **Financial Report**

Mr. Janerico started his report by saying that he has, just today, received the up-to-date financial reports. He needs to formally review YTD Actuals vs. Budget and plans to share with Board next week. All cash and revenue have been posted properly. Software changes to PHA Web system for GLs adjusted. All system work completed. Only manual work is pending for completion.

Robert of REM, who handles financials, is in hospital. Thru Renee of REM, Mr. Janerico has been given assurance of 98% accuracy in July Financial stats.

Mr. Burke challenged some posted management fees that will be checked and answered. He also questioned Congregate Operating Expenses. The financial reports can be found on PHA Web and the Commissioners have access.

Jason, who audits our financials, appeared to be comfortable with overall transition.

### **Tenant Commissioner**

Mr. Burke had no report.

### **Old Business**

**Ballard Green Walkways:** We are proposing that we put out a new bid for proposal to address the areas of the Ballard Green Walkway that pose a safety risk for the residents, and have the cracks, uneven and raised areas filled with asphalt product, until a permanent solution can be determined, and with viable funding sources. There are possible funds that may be available through our insurance carrier HAI group. Last year they gave several million to support several housing agencies for projects just like our walkway project.

**Emergency Plan:** We [Jan, Doug, Monica, and I] started meeting weekly to discuss the emergency plan. We have reviewed the original emergency plan document and are in the process of updating. We have identified tasks for each of us to complete. Next meeting, we will review where we all are with our individual tasks, and we will get updates and timeline for completion.

**Ballard Cameras:** Currently waiting for information from the IT vendor with regards to Ballard Green Cameras. They had an electrician come out the week before last to provide additional information on the project. Once we have this information, we can create a scope of work and request bids for this project.

**CNA Report:** We have been having a scheduling conflict in getting all members together to meet on the Capital Needs Assessment report. This week we are not available as we are having the sprinkler heads replaced in all of the units in the General Apartments, and someone from maintenance or property management needs to be in attendance, and next week Doug is on vacation. I will schedule a meeting in September to discuss this. Report is on PHA Web for Commissioners. Mr. Rockwood and Mr. Baird will schedule walkabout on each property and include Doug.

**Solarizing:** On hold for undetermined period of time. Some results of the CNA may influence how solarizing is approached.

**Hybrid Meetings:** Work in progress. Have to ensure all's working properly.

**Contracts, Leases, Insurance:** Mr. Rockwood gathering information to share with Ms. Hebert. 34 Catoonah Street maintains their own insurance.

**27 Abbott:** - Meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Alternative High School:** Susie DeSilva, Superintendent of the Schools, has had her department put together concept drawings for HS possible renovation. We are trying to schedule a Special Meeting on August 30 – 31, 2023 at 4:30PM. Notice will be posted for residents.

**Other:** Several items have the potential for being handled as a result of the CNA. Details forthcoming.

### **New Business**

No new business.

### **Public Session**

**Susan Proctor:** Questioned wetlands meeting and status. There is a meeting scheduled for August 24.

**Krisann Benson:-** nothing to mention

**Isette Brendza:** Broken steps between buildings E to C. Mr. Rockwood made note of same. Had problems with hot water and was told it's not an emergency at night. Heat qualifies as an emergency during the night; hot water problems are for during working hours. Asked about a car but told it's being addressed.

**Nancy Higgins:** Has much concern over present and long-term effects of proposed condos to be built. There will be parking lots created using coal tar, which is still permitted in Connecticut, despite its problematic issues. This can get into the stream in Ridgefield, continue to reservoirs and into NYC. Danger today and future generations.

**Barbara Beaulieu:** Heard that forced hot air would be new heating choice. Suggested that solar might be better choice. According to Mr. Janerico, we are not near making that decision as yet. Will look for efficiency but not for this winter.

**JoAnn Lynch:** Mentioned privacy and consideration for other residents should be practiced.

**Nancy Nuzzo:** No comment at this time.

**Kirk Carr:-**He wondered why the board is not concerned more about financials and challenged Mr. Janerico about when they would be available.

The meeting moved to Executive Session at 8:16PM.

The Board returned from Executive Session to Public Session at 9:31PM.

A Motion to adjourn the Meeting was made at 9:32PM.

RHA Minutes Respectfully submitted by Patricia Harney, Recording Secretary.

**Next Meeting September 6, 2023 at 7PM**

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/TuJqYsyHO8>