

**Ridgefield Housing Authority (RHA) Meeting Minutes for November 22, 2016  
(Revised & Approved)  
Congregate Housing – 51 Prospect Ridge – 7:00 p.m.**

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Commissioners: Bob Hebert (Chairman), Frank Coyle, and Cathleen Savery  
Absent: John Kukulka  
Housing Officials: Philip Sfraga, Property Manager  
Guests: Vincent Liscio, prospective HA Commissioner  
Visitors: Margo Bacon, Sister Martha, Mambi Nacholt, Carla Beeney, Flo Colletto,  
Jessie DiTuri, Marshall Ballou, Susan Proctor, Coco Barron, Nancy Higgins,  
and Laura Robinson

**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 7:03 p.m.

Mr. Hebert introduced Mr. Vincent Liscio who was approved by the Board of Selectmen and will officially be a Commissioner on Wednesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>. As such, Mr. Liscio could not vote at the November 22<sup>nd</sup> Board meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

Copies of the November 9, 2016 minutes were previously distributed to the RHA commissioners.

**Ms. Savery moved and Mr. Coyle seconded a motion to approve the November 9, 2016 minutes. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 3-0. Motion passed.**

3. Treasurer's Report

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

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

Mr. Coyle reported the LP had YTD revenue of \$866K, which was \$9K below budget and expenses were \$655K which was \$104K below budget due primarily to utilities and maintenance. Mr. Coyle further stated net income was \$211K, which was \$95K above

budget. Mr. Coyle said the cash balance was \$475K, which was a \$50K increase this month, and that obligations remained to DECD of \$41K.

**B) Meadows**

Mr. Coyle reported for the Meadows, YTD revenue of \$247K which was \$2K above budget, and expenses of \$144K which was \$31K below budget due to \$8K capital improvements, \$9K pilot and \$6k maintenance not realized. Mr. Coyle reported net operating income was \$102K, which was \$34K above budget and the cash balance was \$77K which was an increase of \$2K from last month.

**C) RHA**

Mr. Coyle reported the balance in FCB RHA funds was \$72.6K, with \$150.2K on deposit in a FCB CD. Mr. Coyle reported the balance in RHA Konover account was \$96.2K (\$16.4 Comcast).

Mr. Hebert asked if the Meadows NOI \$2K was applied to the reserves. Mr. Coyle said there was not a separate reserve account but he agreed that it should be done and will ask Konover to set it up.

**Ms. Savery moved and Mr. Hebert seconded a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 3-0. Motion passed.**

**2017 Budget** - Mr. Coyle stated that the overall financial condition has continued to improve over the last couple of years. Mr. Coyle noted that rents would generally increase anywhere from \$0 to \$50, with a max of \$100 in some instances. Individual increases depend on allowable rents based on the property and each individual's situation. Meadows rent increase would be 2% over the prior year with state approval and support. In 2016, there were numerous significant capital expenditures such as heating, appliance replacement, tree trimming, picnic tables, and improvements to the Ballard Green and Congregate Housing common spaces.

The Konover contract officially expired at the end of October. The new 3 year contract requested a management fee increase from 6% to 7% of revenue. Mr. Coyle checked with the auditor and recommends the Board approve the new proposed contract. Mr. Coyle stated Konover had done a tremendous job of managing the vacancies, reduced expenses as well as done more to improve the tenant's quality of life at all of the properties.

Mr. Hebert said 2016 was very challenging in cutting expenses and protecting assets. Mr. Hebert said he was very happy with the job Konover had done. Mr. Hebert stated that this is the most complicated property in Konover's portfolio with the different overlay of funding programs and subsidies. Despite the complexities, Konover had done a tremendous job. In the past, Ridgefield Housing was in a dire financial situation and Konover agreed to a below market rate and worked with the RHA. They found creative ways of cutting expenses such as a \$16K savings in identifying a program which offered residents competitive rates on cable plus a \$16K payment. The savings were put into a separate account which will be used specifically for the benefit of the residents. Mr. Hebert said the last three years weren't perfect but Konover stabilized the situation. Mr. Hebert said he wanted to discuss with the lawyer the technical points in the contract, but once

resolved, would strongly recommend the board renew Konover's contract for the next three years.

**Mr. Coyle moved and Ms. Savery seconded a motion to approve the Konover management fee from 6% to 7% of Revenue. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 3-0. Motion passed.**

4. Tenant Commissioner Report

Ms. Savery said that she conducted the meetings on November 16, 2016 at both Congregate Housing and Ballard Green. Ms. Savery said discussions included Computer class offerings and ideas for the Annual Holiday party. Ms. Savery said she would speak with Ms. Henderson next week about the discussions and ideas. Ms. Savery noted that the Annual Holiday party invitations were sent out last week. The parties would be held on December 14<sup>th</sup> at Congregate Housing and December 15<sup>th</sup> at Ballard Green. Ms. Savery said the RHA Board was invited to both.

**Mr. Hebert moved and Mr. Coyle seconded a motion to approve the Tenant Commissioner Report. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 3-0. Motion passed.**

5. Management Report

Mr. Sfraga reported:

- A. **Occupancy** - Mr. Sfraga stated Ballard was at 100% occupied as of November 1<sup>st</sup> with no vacancies anticipated any time soon. Mr. Sfraga stated Congregate Housing was 97% occupied as of November 1<sup>st</sup>, with 100% occupancy expected by November 27-28, 2016. Mr. Sfraga stated Meadows was 100% occupied as of November 1<sup>st</sup>, and one anticipated occupancy which should be filled by December 9<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Sfraga said General was at 93% occupied as of November 1<sup>st</sup>, and anticipates a 97% occupancy rate with a move-in on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Overall, YTD occupancy is 94% for General.
- B. **Maintenance Issues** – Mr. Sfraga said Boston Capital issued a good inspection report in the prior week with no issues. High marks were given for the building appearance and status of repairs. Mr. Sfraga said in the following week at Ballard Green, the old library furniture would be removed as the new furniture was on its way. The rooms scheduled to be painted next week are the library as well as the maintenance storage room. This maintenance room will be used as a private place for RSC resident assessments. New doors were being installed in the common room which are ADA compliant and have a key fob access. The key fobs are a good security system as they electronically identify who enters/exits at which entrance. Two key fobs will be given to each resident. There will be a \$30 fee for a lost key fob.

At Congregate, there were also a lot of positive changes. On Tuesday, the kitchen will be refinished, the cabinets repainted and spruced up and new linens displayed. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, there will be a final decision on new chairs for the dining room area. The door entry system will be repaired along with the issuance of the key fob. It will now be possible to buzz visitors inside. Regarding the water leakage at Congregate, Mr. Sfraga anticipated receiving the report.

At the Meadows, the fence will be repaired as well as the pad for the bike racks. The bike racks will be moved to the back when the area is cleaned out. This would be to prevent theft.

- C. **Resident Services Coordinator Report** – Mr. Sfraga read the RSC Report. Mr. Sfraga said he would be going over the holiday plans with Ms. Henderson. For Prospect Ridge, the Holiday party is to be held on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Invitations were also extended to General and Meadow residents. For either Holiday party, residents could invite a friend to help them celebrate the holidays. Mr. Sfraga said they were working on providing entertainment for both Annual Parties to play oldies music.

Looking ahead, Mr. Sfraga said they were working with the Missing Links project which had some success with stimulating dormant memories with people who had early onset dementia and Alzheimer's using selected music of the 30's-60's. Mr. Sfraga said the turnout at Ballard Green on December 15<sup>th</sup> was two residents. The Congregate turnout on December 16<sup>th</sup> was 7 residents. Mr. Sfraga said they anticipate continuing this project in 2017.

Mr. Sfraga said WestConn students met with Ms. Henderson on November 15<sup>th</sup>. They were developing a program for residents of both Ballard Green and Congregate housing. Their focus was on resident involvement and combating bullying, which generated negative thoughts and behaviors towards others.

Mr. Hebert asked about the Missing Links project, if it could be marketed to other non-resident seniors in Town. Mr. Sfraga thought that was a wonderful idea which he would pursue. Mr. Hebert suggested reaching out to senior organizations affiliated with the churches and synagogues in Town.

Mr. Hebert asked if Doug was doing the painting. Mr. Sfraga said some of the painting was being contracted out. Doug would be painting the community room, office, library and laundry room.

**Ms. Savery moved and Mr. Coyle seconded a motion to approve the Management Report. The Ridgefield Housing Authority voted 3-0. Motion passed.**

6. New Business

No new business was identified.

7. Old Business

- A. **Pump House at Ballard Green** – Mr. Hebert said notice had been given to everyone who had an interest but there were no ideas and no funding. The Pump House was not functional and was costly to maintain. The Historical Society had also been advised but a response had not been received. On December 15, 2016, the process of applying for a demolition permit will begin. Mr. Roche had previously offered to help with the demolition. Mr. Hebert said the lot would be levelled and a nice park like setting would be put in place that was safe and lit. The residents could enjoy a nice sitting area where they could see the new playground and feel more engaged in the community. The change would also be safer for the kids since they

could no longer go behind the building unsupervised. Mr. Hebert suggested a plaque with a photo of the Pump House and a historical write-up should be a part of the plan. Mr. Hebert anticipated that the renovation will begin soon after the first of the year, weather permitting.

8. Public Session

Ms. Proctor asked if there was a percentage limit on the rent increase. Mr. Coyle said that the State controls the amount of the increase at Congregate and Ballard Green. Each property operates under different programs. Mr. Sfraga said Ballard Green residents pay the lesser of 30% adjusted gross income with a maximum rent set at \$1141, whichever is less. At Congregate, the rent is based on 60% of adjusted income or \$1271 per month. Mr. Sfraga said in general, if there is an increase in the rent, it's because the resident's income went up. But generally, the State usually approves a 2-3% yearly increase, despite the operating expenses being higher than that.

Ms. Proctor said she noticed the parking lot light by the CVS was out and it was dark. Ms. Proctor said this light was out regularly. Mr. Sfraga said he would have it repaired.

Ms. Proctor said she noticed another huge dumpster. Mr. Sraga said residents were allowed to use it. Ms. Proctor asked if furniture is allowed. Mr. Sfraga agreed. Mr. Sfraga said this was also done during the summer which helped with the spring cleaning.

Ms. Barron said she wanted to thank everyone for signing the petition for the Dog Park lights.

Sister Martha said in walking to the trash area at Congregate, the ground was slippery. Sister Martha suggested that during the cold weather, the trash bins be brought inside and concealed by screens. Sister Martha said this would help prevent people from falling. Mr. Sfraga said if there was a mobility issue, the residents could reach out to the office and have housekeeping take a small bag to accommodate those residents.

Sister Martha also mentioned that the dining room was very chilly at lunch. She mentioned there were two different thermometers in the kitchen area. She suggested that many people were not coming to the dining room for lunch because of the temperature. In fact, it was chilly at 70 degrees which was the room temperature of the meeting. Mr. Sfraga said the temperature could be slowly increased at 8 a.m. and then turned back down at 2 p.m. Further, the bifold door could be closed. Mr. Hebert said that was a great suggestion.

Ms. Proctor was thankful for the no backing in signs. The next issue was having the residents follow them.

Ms. Bacon asked about the coverage on the sidewalk at Congregate, especially the entry way which was on a slant. Mr. Sfraga said they put ice melt and that tubs were out. Mr. Sfraga said we provide shovels at the General Apartments and that they had plenty of ice melt. Mr. Sfraga said a good job was done in the past with the snow removal and New England Landscape has been very responsive. Mr. Hebert said that even if there is no snow, the pavement is wet and icy. Mr. Hebert asked if it's possible for the security people to be trained to throw ice melt after

regular business hours, if and when necessary. Mr. Sfraga agreed. Mr. Hebert said it was a good idea to be vigilant, with visitors and residents alike, so that no one slipped.

Mr. Hebert asked if there were any other issues, concerns or compliments.

9. Executive Session

The meeting did not move to Executive session as there were no individual tenant issues.

Mr. Hebert stated the next meeting of the Ridgefield Housing Authority would be on December 28, 2016 at 7:00 p.m., located at Ballard Green-25 Gilbert Street. Mr. Coyle moved and Ms. Savery seconded a motion to adjourn the Ridgefield Housing meeting at 8:02 p.m. The motion passed 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Fields  
Recording Secretary