

**Presidents Council**  
**Executive Board Meeting Minutes**

**March 13, 2020**

**OPENING**

*Julia Hupperts*, Resident Council Coordinator, called the Presidents Council Executive Meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. on March 13, 2020, and introductions followed.

**CORONA VIRUS**

Jon Gutzmann, Executive Director of the PHA and Alicia Huckleby, PHA Resident Initiatives Director, were in attendance to give further information and guidance on how to proceed in protecting staff and residents against the Corona Virus, and how to communicate if we're unable to meet in person.

Julia Hupperts, Resident Council Coordinator, briefly informed Jon Gutzmann and Alicia Huckleby what had been discussed at the Resident Participation Committee meeting that preceded this P.C. Executive Meeting.

**JOHN CARDOZA**

There were a few recommendations on how to go forward. One of them was communicating by networking or meeting by web cam or phone. The options will be researched to find the best way to accomplish this. An option to suspend all Presidents Council activities for a period of thirty (30) days was presented. There was also discussion about activities at the individual hi-rise resident councils and how they will proceed.

**JON GUTZMANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Mr. Gutzmann said he was glad to receive the recommendations from the Resident Participation Committee, but he wanted to say a few things about the PHA, and their response regarding the Corona Virus.

They have a statement issued on the PHA webpage on what is being done. He wanted that statement in the event the press called asking what the PHA was doing during this crisis. Every day since last week, the PHA have been changing and evolving and moving quickly. They issued a statement, and Alicia Huckleby procured hard to come by hand sanitizers, which were put in stations throughout the PHA system. He also said the PHA just bought nine thousand (9,000) bars of soap -- three bars of which will be distributed to every hi-rise resident -- at a cost of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00). He has a list of things the PHA is going to do under an emergency authority:

1. They will continue to use their emergency powers to do things quickly.
2. They will use any HUD guidance that is given, which up to this point is none.
3. They will use common sense authority as people, survivors and neighbors.
4. Mr. Gutzmann convened a meeting this morning with the people who administers the Section 8 program, in order to change how they will interact with clients. Decisions were made this morning that will result in two hundred fewer applicant visits to the downtown building, to reduce in-person contacts. And mostly client-centered actions, which will include inspecting units differently and allowing residents to self-certify to reduce face-to-face interactions.
5. A list will be put together of what the Maintenance staff are going to do, which will include wiping chairs and surfaces in the hi-rises and community centers, twice daily. Once in the morning and again in the afternoon.
6. They will be preparing other new check lists.
7. Preventive maintenance inspections, which are done annually, will be postponed.
8. They will postpone their own staff gatherings; i.e. meetings, etc.
9. They will procure as much hand sanitizing products as they can.
10. The Work Order hotline will now be asking the question whether or not anyone is sick at home before performing maintenance.
11. He stated that they were inventing preventative measure on the fly and he will be meeting with Kim Nguyen, Director of Resident Services, at noon today, and he will challenge her to again use the near-emergency authority to possibly redo re-certifications differently for some period of time, in order to reduce face-to-face interactions.
12. They will be cancelling the PHA all-employee meeting, where he addresses the group about all the good things being done.
13. They will cancel all other unnecessary staff meetings.

He suggested looking into conducting Presidents Council meetings through other mediums other than in person. Perhaps through an email meeting, etc. Be creative. Stipends would still continue. He also suggested that no in-person meetings take place until the fall, which would be longer than the thirty days John Cardoza recommended. This would be for an indefinite period of time. He feels the annual luncheon should be put on hold for one year, as well.

As far as individual resident council meetings and events are concerned, it's up to each hi-rise resident council to decide whether those activities take place or not. The PHA will not get involved in those decisions. But he suggests that we consider not having meetings for a while.

He was glad that the RPC and Executive Board were meeting today, because we are inventing as we go along at this point and all suggestions are helpful.

In closing, he said that in his job, he also has to prepare for scrutiny by the press, who are already calling. They're not going to be interviewed by the press, but rather will be issuing a written statement that sort of talks about the things he discussed today.

The PHA is taking their direction from Ramsey County Public Health and the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and as new statements are made, they will be put on the PHA webpage.

### **ALICIA HUCKLEBY, DIRECTOR, RESIDENT INITIATIVES**

It was reiterated that the PHA purchased 9,000 bars of soap. Included with the soap was a two-sided handout from the CDC. We're not the experts on the Corona Virus and she repeated that they are very much taking their cues from the CDC, Ramsey County Public Health and the Minnesota Department of Health. They are the ones leading efforts for all-around testing, making recommendations regarding quarantines, and making determinations around isolation for somebody who is exhibiting symptoms or have tested positive for the virus.

What she encourages all of us to do is go back – and as part of your discussions with your individual hi-rise resident council members – encourage the resident council and neighbors not to throw the information away that came with the soap, but to pay attention to the suggestions from the CDC about washing your hands regularly throughout the day. Also limiting your face-to-face close contact, such as handshakes, pats on the back or hugs. These are the ways this virus can be shared.

Have a conversation with your individual councils about what you want to do about having meetings, events, etc.

There may be some changes around the activities of our partners, as well. She has already spoken with the representative for the Twin Cities Mobile Market (TCMM); the bus that comes to the hi-rises to sell food. One idea they are entertaining is that residents not come onto the bus, but rather place their order with TCMM and they will get the food for you and handle the payment transaction. Alicia has asked them to provide a list of the items they sell, to be handed out to people who use the service.

The bottom line is that systems and processes -- as we know them to be -- will have to change for a while, and you will hear the phrase "social distancing" which will often require people to adjust their social activities so they don't have large groups of people gathering over extended periods of time.

## CLOSING

Julia Hupperts stated the following recommendations were made by the PHA at this meeting:

- Suspend the Annual Recognition Event
- Put on hold all Presidents Council Meetings until the Fall
- Individual hi-rises will make their own decisions regarding meetings, etc.
- The Vendor's Fair has been postponed

John Cardoza, Cleveland, made a Motion that the Annual Officer's Recognition Event be canceled for this year. The Motion was seconded by Yasmine Amanou, Central, and the Motion carried.

Yasmine Amanou, Central, made a Motion that Presidents Council Meetings not take place until next September. It was seconded by Angela Graves, Hamline and the Motion carried.

No further Presidents Council Executive Board business was discussed or conducted, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.



Submitted by:



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