

Presidents Council Zoom Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

John Cardoza, Cleveland, Chairperson, called the Presidents Council Meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. and took a roll call of hi-rise representatives who were present.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Bob Knutson, PC/RPC Secretary, Ravoux, stated there is always a copy of the Minutes on the PC website. He also asked Representatives to instruct the Secretaries on their resident councils to print a copy of the PC Minutes and post them along with the Minutes from their resident council meetings. Drusilla Garrett, Dunedin, made a Motion to accept the Minutes as they stand. Mio Rosario, Mt. Airy, seconded and the Motion carried.

GUEST SPEAKER

Beth Pacunas, Section 3 and Marit Woods from *Twin Cities RISE*, is offering an extremely robust and wonderful job skills training employment counseling program that will be on-going as we come into the next year, and will be starting in November. There are many different programs to choose from. In the next week or two, you'll start to see posters, and flyers coming out that will help residents understand what is being offered by *Twin Cities RISE*. Marit Woods presented a PowerPoint presentation that went into more detail of what this program is about and what it entails. After the PowerPoint presentation she took questions from hi-rise representatives.

Twin Cities RISE began in 1993. Founder, Steve Rothschild, former Executive Vice President at General Mills, was motivated to find a solution to the poverty experienced by many people of color in the Twin Cities. They have served over 19,000 individuals with their various programs and recently celebrated 26 years of serving the Twin Cities. The program is also 100% FREE.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Melissa Pappas, PC/RPC Treasurer, Seal, gave a rundown of income and expenses for the month of September. The cleared balance is sixty-one thousand, eight hundred eighty-seven dollars and ninety-two cents (\$61,887.92). The ending balance is fifty-seven thousand forty-one dollars and thirty-seven cents (\$57,041.37). The report will be filed for audit.

PHA MAINTENANCE REPORT

Brent Feller, Construction Program Manager / Maintenance Contracts, gave an update of where they stand with many projects that are either in the works or are scheduled to be done throughout the hi-rises. The biggest project that will be starting soon is the plumbing and boiler replacement at Front Hi-Rise, which should begin mid-November. Resident moves will be starting in early December, and Resident Services will be reaching out to Front Hi-Rise residents in the next week or two to get them prepared to begin moving out of units. He went on to talk about other projects they are involved in.

PHA MAINTENANCE REPORT *(continued)*

Mike Silvan, Assistant Maintenance Director, spoke about on-going maintenance work. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they've been forced to slow down on non-emergency Work Orders, but are now working diligently with their entire staff to get the back log of Work Orders completed. Also, due to the pandemic, they will not be doing a full Preventative Maintenance this year, but will be doing what is required by the City of St. Paul. He said they have also been involved in pest control work. John Cardoza, Chairperson then asked each individual hi-rise representative if they had any questions regarding maintenance.

PHA MANAGEMENT REPORT

Tara Johnson, Resident Services Senior Manager, stated she was requested to talk about the smoking policy in PHA buildings. There will be no smoking in the units, and when residents go outside to smoke, they must be twenty-five feet away from the buildings. There are designated smoking areas for this. Some residents still complain of being able to smell the smoke and Tara said that at this point in time, there has been no further guidance from HUD regarding the twenty-five foot distance and are following HUD's guidance regarding that.

With regard to residents who are smoking in their apartments, she said when they do get a report of that, they act upon it and speak with the resident. Violation of the no smoking policy could result in lease termination. She then called for any questions with regard to the no smoking policy or any questions regarding smoking in general where the hi-rises are concerned.

One hi-rise representative brought up the subject of whether or not the PHA would be installing structures for those that go outside to smoke, and Tara Johnson stated that at this time they wouldn't be providing shelter for that activity. Also, resident council funds cannot be used for providing shelters.

Tara Johnson addressed the issue of when Community Rooms can and cannot be open to residents. Community Rooms were unlocked and open for residents this past summer due to the excessive heat. But now that the excessive heat is over, they will be developing a plan to close the Community Rooms once again, with a few exceptions; i.e. small in-person resident council meetings, residents who need to meet with case managers, etc. They would need to go through building management to have the rooms opened for those events, and management would determine which events the Community Rooms would be opened for.

SAFETY & SECURITY REPORT

Sgt. Amy Boyer, St. Paul Police Department, ACOP Unit, stated with regard to the smoking issue, that that was a violation of the PHA's policy and is not a criminal act, so it would not warrant calling the police. However, she did say that if you detect the smell of marijuana coming from a unit, or you witness illegal drug activity, the police should be notified.

She wanted to thank those who have been aware of their surroundings and who phoned in reports of unauthorized persons in their buildings. These incidents will increase during the colder weather, so be aware of that. She also addressed a question that was asked at the last meeting regarding riding along in a patrol unit. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and social distancing guidelines, that will not be possible at this time. She also mentioned that Officers-In-Residence (OIR's) will begin participating in resident council Zoom meetings. If your council meeting will be in person – with social distancing and masks -- notify her so she can contact the OIR of your hi-rise to make them aware of that.

SAFETY & SECURITY REPORT (continued)

Sgt. Boyer then took questions. If you need further information regarding ACOP, or have any questions regarding policing activities, contact Sgt. Boyer at **651-558-2305**, or email her at Amy.Boyer@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Youa Thao, Resident Council Coordinator addressed the following:

1. All Representatives were given a copy of the PC Budget to look over prior to this meeting. She wanted to update everyone on the increased stipend for the PC Treasurer and Secretary. Those budget line items were removed from the RPC Budget and were incorporated into the PC Budget line items for those positions. Because of the added additional duties, the Treasurer and Secretary were given a \$25.00 stipend increase, putting the Treasurer at \$100.00 and the Secretary at \$75.00. She asked if there were any questions. A Motion was made by Melanie Fox, Montreal, that the PC Budget be approved, along with moving the Treasurer and Secretary line items from the RPC Budget to the PC Budget with stated increases in stipends. Al Bacon, Front, seconded and the Motion carried.
2. Ballot update for adding another PC Board member. Melanie Fox, Montreal, won the election to be on the PC Board and was immediately sworn in by Youa Thao.
3. Youa would like to add one additional PC Executive Board position to make it a six Board members instead of five. A Motion was made by Melanie Fox, Montreal, to approve of adding a sixth PC Board member. Al Bacon, Front, seconded and the Motion carried. This change will become effective in November.
4. PC Newsletter update. It would be appreciated if any of you can reach out to Melissa Pappas, Seal, John Cardoza, Cleveland or Youa Thao, Resident Council Coordinator with any updates you would like to add to the Newsletter. Please try and do this by mid-November. Youa will also send out an email to everyone addressing that. She then took questions.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REPORT

John Cardoza, Cleveland, Commissioner, gave a report on their September meeting at our last PC meeting, but since they haven't held a meeting for October, John will give an update at the next PC meeting.

SECTION 3 UPDATE

Beth Pacunas, Section 3 Projects Coordinator/Youth Literacy, stated that if anybody had any questions on the *Twin Cities RISE* program, which was presented at this meeting, please direct them to her at the phone number or email below. She also wanted to remind everyone that her job as Section 3 Coordinator is to organize partnerships and find people jobs, including field training, and education that will lead to employment and help with anything else which will aid people in achieving their goals.

SECTION 3 UPDATE (continued)

There will be a Section 3 survey included in rent statements this month and she would appreciate it if you would fill it out and return it.

The Science Museum Vouchers you currently have are still in effect and have not expired. The Vouchers are for anyone desiring to go to the Museum, or even participate in any of the activities online. So please feel free to use these Vouchers as you like.

Beth stated that she believes the Rondo Library, located at University and Dale in St. Paul, is open. So if anybody is looking for a job or needs some help on a computer, contact them to make an appointment. She also said to keep your eyes open for posters and flyers that will be coming up regarding the services Section 3 offers.

If you or someone you know is trying to find a job, obtain job skills or education; or if they just need more information on Section 3, they can contact Beth Pacunas at: **651-228-3204**, or email her at elizabeth.pacunas@stpha.org.

RESIDENT INITIATIVES REPORT

Alicia Huckleby, Resident Initiatives Director, stated that our eleven year partnership with St. Paul Ramsey County Public Health is coming to an end on October 31st. So our *Statewide Health Improvement Partnership* (SHIP) grant is going to be ending at the end of this month. We're not pleased that the partnership is ending after all of the good that was accomplished throughout the years. So on behalf of the Resident Initiatives Department, as well as the PHA, we thank them for all of their support and openness, along with being a great strong partner with us. Much was accomplished; especially in the health and wellness areas.

Part of our SHIP Grant funds included money for a SHIP Coordinator, which Betsy Christensen has filled for a number of years. Alicia Huckleby, however, is happy to announce that when our SHIP Grant ends, the PHA decided to transition that SHIP work to a regular position with the PHA. She announced last week to PHA staff that they have hired a *Health Improvement Programs* (HIP) coordinator, and Betsy Christensen has accepted that regular full-time job beginning November 1st. So all of the wonderful work will continue, plus we'll get to do some new things now that this position has been created.

SHIP GRANT UPDATE

Ann Tranvik, Ramsey County Public Health Nurse, stated that Youa Thao will be emailing the SHIP updates to everyone, so be sure and share that information in some way with your individual resident councils. There are a lot of details in that information which contain websites, phone numbers and links to helpful events and activities that are available.

Ramsey County Service Center has five hubs that are dedicated to any Ramsey County resident, who can sign up and use their Computer Labs. All you have to do is go online to the www.ramseycounty.us/coronavirus website where you can pull up a lot of Ramsey County resources, or you can call **266-8500** and schedule an appointment. These are computers that have been set up specifically to give people a place to use computers during this Covid-19 pandemic, for job searches, etc.

SHIP GRANT UPDATE *(continued)*

There is also information on the County website as to where you can go to get tested for Covid-19; to determine if you're infected and who else you may have infected. This will aid in allowing Contact Tracers to keep it from surging, as it's doing right now. You can continue to be tested as many times as you think you should and it's always FREE. Look on the County website to find out when you can do this testing. You can be tested all the way into December.

CLOSING

Youa Thao, Resident Council Coordinator, wanted to remind everyone that as the Resident Council Coordinator, she is here to provide support and to help anyone with questions or problems.

Some of the things she's observed while attending resident council Zoom meetings, was a problem with the taking of the Minutes. She would like the Secretaries to follow the established format when they do their Minutes. If you need help with this, reach out to Youa and she will provide you with a sample of the Minutes format to use. In addition, she would like all of the councils to have a solid Agenda prior to the meetings. Please make up a hard copy Agenda when you have your Executive meetings. Also, if Treasurers have any questions, please contact Youa Thao or your Quick Book Peer. She then took questions.

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

Submitted by:



Bob Knutson
PC/RPC Secretary
peetiebird2@gmail.com

MEETING REMINDERS:

Next Presidents Council Zoom Meeting:

Monday, November 23, 10:00 a.m. – Noon.

Zoom Executive Committee Meeting: Friday, November 13 @ 11:00 a.m.

Zoom Computer Team Meeting: Thursday, November 26 @ 1:30 p.m.