

Presidents Council Zoom Meeting Minutes

December 27, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Melanie Fox, Montreal, called the Presidents Council Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and took a roll call of hi-rise Representatives present, along with PHA staff members.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Aado Perandi, PC/RPC Secretary, Wabasha, stated you can always find a copy of the Minutes posted on the PC website. He also asked Representatives to instruct their resident council Secretaries to print a copy of the PC Minutes and post them along with the Minutes from their resident council meetings. Jason Bruce, Exchange, made a Motion to accept last month's Minutes as they stand. Leonardo Thomas, Seal, seconded and the Motion carried.

GUEST SPEAKER

Mary Hearst, MPH, PhD, who is a Professor at St. Catherine University, reported on their research project titled *Aging in the time of COVID: Racism, Isolation and Meaning*. The purpose of this research is to engage historically underrepresented undergraduate students in a research study aimed at understanding the experience of aging, isolation, racism and meaning for black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) older adults and frontline healthcare workers using Photovoice.

KARE scholars are the underrepresented undergraduate students that are part of the KARE scholars program. The first aim is to explore how interaction with older adults influenced KARE scholars' values, attitudes, perceptions, and understanding of the older adult population. The second aim is to document and disseminate the lived experiences of BIPOC older adults living alone or with another person during the COVID-19 pandemic. The third aim is to document and disseminate the lived experiences of BIPOC frontline healthcare workers who care for older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photovoice is a participatory research approach in which participants photograph and reflect upon a particular community issue. They then engage in critical consciousness through large and small group conversations about the photographs and then disseminate the photographs in an exhibition to influence community leaders and inform social changes. In this study the community issue is aging with COVID-19.

The research project is looking to recruit a total of 30 adults over the age of 65 years who lives alone or with one other person. The older adult needs to identify as black, indigenous or other person of color and must be able to consent to participate. Hi-rises can identify/recommend individuals for us and the research project will have fliers available to post.

If you would like to recommend someone for the program you can contact Valerie Ponce Diaz at vyponcediaz778@stkate.edu. Mary Hearst can be reached at mohearth@stkate.edu or by phone at 651-690-6157. The floor was then opened for questions.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Melissa Pappas, PC/RPC Treasurer, Seal, gave a rundown of income and expenses for November.

For November the cleared balance is seventy-nine thousand, seven hundred eleven dollars and twenty cents (\$79,711.20). The ending balance is seventy-nine thousand, two hundred fifty-two dollars and twenty cents (\$79,252.20). The report will be filed for audit. Melissa then took questions.

PHA MAINTENANCE REPORT

Brent Feller, Construction Program Manager / Maintenance Contracts updates were given by Mike Silvan, Assistant Maintenance Director. Maintenance staff is busy budgeting, planning, and getting out contract and bid documents.

Current projects include: The Front plumbing project will be continuing into spring; Iowa will be getting new hot water tanks in April; Valley will have the electrical updated starting late spring or early summer; Wabasha will have the exterior brick and concrete updated starting late spring or early summer; Dunedin, Exchange and Hamline will each have some painting work done; the back of house energy management system and HVAC controls for heating and water will be upgraded over the course of the next year or so.

PHA MAINTENANCE REPORT *(continued)*

Mike Silvan, Assistant Maintenance Director, had a few things to say during these winter months.

1. Life safety inspections are done for this fall and will start up again next spring.
2. Preventative maintenance inspections will be continuing, currently they are over 95 percent done, so they should be finishing soon.
3. Pest control sweeps will be occurring this coming January for Dunedin, Mount Airy, Exchange, Wabasha and Montreal.
4. Put on AC cover for your air conditioning unit. If you do not have a cover, please call in a work order so that a cover can get installed. Maintenance does not want any broken pipes.
5. Snow removal: please be prepared to move your vehicle off the lot so that the lot can fully plowed.

Maintenance then took questions from the hi-rise representatives.

PHA MANAGEMENT REPORT

Tara Johnson, Resident Services Senior Manager, reported that we should put on the AC cover for our air conditioning unit. If you do not have a cover, call in a work order so that a cover can get installed. If you do not know the number for maintenance, contact your building manager. If you see any pests, call in a work order, or let your manager know so that a work order can be submitted for pest control. Tara wished us all a safe, healthy and happy New Year. She then took questions from representatives.

SAFETY & SECURITY REPORT

Sgt. Amy Boyer, St. Paul Police Department, ACOP Unit, was not available for the meeting, her report was given by Tara Johnson. Try to track your packages the best you can and try to pick them up as soon as they are delivered. If your package is stolen, please let your manager know, so that a police report can be filed with ACOP. Do not let unauthorized people into the building. Do not confront an unauthorized person, call 911 and report the incident. The non-emergency number is 651-291-1111. Please do not leave your car running with the key in the ignition to warm it up. There have been a number of vehicle thefts reported.

Sgt. Amy can be reached at amy.boyer@ci.stpaul.mn.us or at her cell phone 651-703-7141.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Language interpreter.** Youa Thao reported that currently, Resident Councils can receive up to \$100 in reimbursement for language interpretation with documentation and receipts from the RPC. The Resident Council must approve the use of a translator, the translator must be introduced to the entire Resident Council, the translation must be made available to all at the meeting and the Resident Council must use their own funds to pay for the translation and then can make a request for reimbursement. The total reimbursement available is \$100 for the Resident Council for the entire council year.

Some Resident Councils have asked if they can use the translation funds to translate documents in addition to the translation of spoken voice. Melanie Fox reported that in her experience the Resident Councils are most efficient when there is diversity in the Resident Council meetings. The Presidents Council would like to see more diversity in Resident Council meetings. All voices are important regardless of disability or language.

Dennis Loudon, Edgerton, made a motion to approve that the translation fund can be used for translation of documents in addition to the normal translation of spoken voice. Yasmine Aminou, Central, seconded and the Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Challenge Grant.** Youa Thao informed the Resident Councils that a onetime Challenge Grant was set up a couple of years ago that reimburses each Resident Council up to \$425 toward health and wellness initiatives. Also, the grant reimburses each Resident Council up to \$200 towards having a fitness instructor come to each site to teach residents. To use these funds the Resident Council must use their own funds to make qualifying purchases and then submit receipts + "request for RPC reimbursement" form. The Presidents Council will determine if the purchases qualify for the challenge grant reimbursement. Because of the pandemic, PHA has now authorized councils to use the \$200 grant towards health and wellness activities of the council's choice. If a Resident Council has spent their \$425 grant, then the \$200 grant could also be used for other health and wellness activities. If there are any questions as to what qualifies for each grant, check with Youa Thao and Betsy Christensen.
2. **Special Event Door Prizes.** Youa Thao informed the Resident Council officers that they currently should not participate in any door prize drawings for Resident Council board meetings or for Resident Council meetings. The President Council's board had discussions whether Resident Council officers should be

able to participate in drawings held in special events such as picnics or holiday parties and if so whether to allow the individual Resident Councils to vote at their own site whether officers will be allowed to participate in special event prize drawings.

Yasmine Aminou, Central made a motion to allow individual Resident Councils to vote at their own site to determine whether officers will be allowed to participate in special prize drawings at their own individual councils. Laurie Wrycza, Valley seconded and the Motion carried.

3. Book Donation. John Cardoza, Cleveland Resident Council reported that he has a total of five boxes of books, and he is looking for hi-rises that may be interested in receiving donated books. Some of the books have come from Magers & Quinn Booksellers, some of the books are newer and some are pre-releases. If interested or have any questions please contact John Cardoza at info@johncardoza.us. John then took questions from representatives.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REPORT

John Cardoza, Cleveland, Commissioner, reported that there is no Board of Commissioners report—he missed the last meeting because he was not feeling to well. He expects to have a meeting and report next month.

SECTION 3 UPDATE

Beth Pacunas, Section 3 Projects Coordinator/Youth Literacy, updated us on education and training, etc.

A lot of businesses are short staffed. The Science Museum is doing a research project with families and groups of adults that will bring you into the Science Museum. They will interview you, take pictures of your group, take you on tours, and in return you will get some complimentary passes, free parking and possibly a gift card for the group. There is free certified nursing assistant (CNA) training available as long as you commit to taking an appropriate position after training. There are apprenticeships for construction work available.

If we or anybody we know needs help with employment, education or training please remember to check with Beth, who is doing a lot of case management in these areas. Beth can be contacted at 651-252-5799. She then took questions.

RESIDENT INITIATIVES REPORT

Alicia Huckleby, Resident Initiatives Director & Human Services Director reported that there are a lot of the new officers this year and the officers have been having interesting discussions when it comes to policy and budgetary issues and wants to commend everyone for their great work. Alicia sat in on a Resident Participation Committee (RPC) meeting a week or so ago and was impressed that the money is being distributed in a fair and equitable manner across all of the councils. Each council is held responsible to the whole group for appropriately spending the funds. She wants to thank everyone for the wonderful, tireless and sometimes unappreciated efforts that we put into our work. If nothing else know that myself, Youa, Tara and other PHA staff all appreciate what we do on behalf of our neighbors. She then took questions.

HIP REPORT

Betsy Christensen, *Health Improvement Programs* (HIP) Coordinator, has a short list of updates. The third quarter recycling tonnage report was received recently from Eureka which means that recycling checks will be sent out to all resident councils through the buildings assistant manager.

For buildings that are served by The Twin Cities Mobile Market (TCMM) they will be showing up in a van, not in a bus. The products and staffing is still basically the same. There will also be updated TCMM fliers posted.

HIP is planning to host a couple of Wilder Foundation *Living Well with Diabetes* classes, looking to start in mid to late January or early February. A telephone class option and a virtual class option are being planned. Fliers will be distributed when further information known. This six week course is mainly focused on type 2 diabetes, and is for anyone diagnosed with pre-diabetes, living with diabetes or is a caretaker for someone with diabetes.

HIP is also planning to host a six week Garden Mentor program which is in partnership with the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners and the Ramsey County Master Gardeners. Fliers have been sent out and will be posted. The class will be building ones gardening skills as well as adding to ones resource library. Up to ten PHA residents will be accepted and one can apply even if one has participated in this program before. The classes are a little different each year. Applications will be due at the end of January.

If we or anyone in our building needs a new facemask we should reach out to our assistant manager or to our human services coordinator (HSC). An assortment of types is available which may include cloth, KN95 or N95.

Community Clinic through Minnesota Community Care will be offering Covid-19 vaccines and boosters. These are walk-in with no appointment necessary sites. Minnesota Community Care can be reached at 651-602-7500. Further information will be included with the January rent statement. PHA is working on getting booster shots available at hi-rises, but nothing is currently scheduled and possibly may never happen. Get the shot elsewhere if possible. Betsy Christensen can be contacted at 651-298-4030 or at betsy.christensen@stpha.org. She then took questions.

CLOSING

Youa Thao, Resident Council Coordinator thanked all the hi-rise Resident Councils that returned their picnic form and picnic receipts, as well as returning unused picnic funds. The other hi-rise Resident Councils should make sure to return the required form and picnic receipts as well as returning unused picnic funds by December 31, 2021.

Youa Thao would like to thank all sixteen hi-rise councils for the leadership that has been shown in the individual hi-rises and the activities provided to our high-rise residents. All of the councils have been running well and meeting regularly. Youa reminded us that there is great diversity among our sixteen councils and this means that during our council meetings there could be a lot of different opinions and different ideas that are being shared. Youa also reminded us of the importance of respect, kindness and understanding. The council should be a safe and productive place for everyone to come and voice their ideas and creativity while we are growing as leaders. It is important to have respect and professional wisdom while communicating with officers, management or residents whether this is during council meetings, emails or in person. Thank you all for all the work you do as leaders of your hi-rise.

No further Presidents Council business was discussed or conducted, and the meeting adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

Submitted by:

Aado Perandi
PC/RPC Secretary

MEETING REMINDERS:

Next Presidents Council Meeting:

Monday, January 24, 10:00 a.m. – Noon.

Executive Committee Meeting: Friday, January 14 @ 11:00 a.m.

Computer Team Meeting: Thursday, January 27 @ 1:30 p.m.