

**Washington House Condominium Association
Council Meeting Minutes
22 January 2014**

Those present at 7:00 p.m.

Presiding: President, Bruce Chase
 Treasurer/Enforcement Officer, Joy Scott
 Secretary, Pamela Bobbs
 Member at Large, Len Sawyer
Absent: Vice President, Bob Persak

A. Attendance via Sign-in

Twenty-one owners were represented by 32 attendees.

B. Opening Remarks

Mr. Chase opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming to this council meeting which is one of the two required by the Code of Regulation. He reminded all present that owners elect individuals to serve on council, but council members themselves vote on officers. Apart from the owners vote on new council members, any other vote taken at this meeting will be voted on by council members only. Following this clarification he called the First Quarter Meeting of the Washington House Condominium Association to order.

C. Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes of 4 December 2013

No corrections or changes to the 4 December 2013 Minutes were brought forth. The President called for a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Mr. Sawyer made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously: Vote 4 to 0.

Aye — Bobbs, Chase, Sawyer, Scott

Nay — 0

Absent — 1

D. President's Report and Building Issues and Maintenance Report

Mr. Chase noted that, in Mr. Persak's absence, he would also be discussing building issues.

1. ASPEN TRANSITION

Daily management and maintenance of the WHCA has been transitioned to Aspen effective 1 January 2014. The monthly dues have been increased by \$50/unit per month to cover the costs of these critical services. Transition of finances (bank accounts, billings, collections, payments, etc.) will occur on 1 February 2014. Owners have been sent a letter from Aspen asking them to sign up for their preferred dues payment option. Ordinarily someone from Aspen will be in attendance at WHCA Council meetings. Aspen's Building Manager for Washington House is Ms. Linda McGinnis who is in hospital. Aspen president, Mr. Brad Carrillo is covering for her. However, his mother is seriously ill and he was called to Colorado. We all agreed that this meeting would take place without an Aspen representative who would be debriefed upon his/her return. Aspen's Washington House Maintenance person is Mr. Steve Cline who will be working four to five hours a day, Monday through Friday at Washington House. Mr. Chase said that he likes what Steve has been doing. He is taking care of the trash rooms, patching paint, replacing lights, and is proactively looking for things to be done and doing them. Council and Aspen will review the time and task list in six months to determine if any changes are needed. Mr. Steve Cline reports to the Aspen Maintenance Manager (all properties), Mr. Joe Cline. As specified by WHCA, Aspen is responsible for the maintenance of all common areas of Washington House. If individual owners have problems in their units, they may call Mr. Joe Cline (443-

907-0913). If Aspen is able to do the work they will work directly with, and directly bill the owner of the unit. If they cannot do the work they may be able to recommend someone who can.

2. FROZEN PIPES

- a. Two of the four residential units directly under the sun decks (307, 308, 313, and 314) had problems with pipes freezing up after the first cold spell this year. This is of concern because the water pipes and sprinkler pipes are in the same space. To preclude the damage this would cause, the sprinkler system was valved off on the third floor. The Fire Marshall required that we have a "Fire Watch" until the problems could be addressed. Our Maintenance person from Aspen (Mr. Steve Cline) was our watchman.
- b. On the second floor, unit 209 had water damage as a result of the drain pipes at the garage level freezing preventing water above from draining. The water backed up into the unit causing damage to floors, etc. This could happen in any unit, particularly those on the second floor, so owners and residents are reminded to check the mechanical room frequently to ensure there is no water on the floor and to call a council member immediately if there is.
- c. Owners/residents of units with a sink on an exterior wall are advised to turn on the water to a very slow drip during freezing weather. These units are primarily the corner units and units with a sun deck on one side.
- d. It is recommended that thermostats be set at 70 degrees to reduce the risk of damage due to freezing pipes.
- e. Residents are reminded that the main shut-off valve for the individual units is in the water heater closet. Turn the valve clockwise to turn off the water. Be sure to support the pipe with one hand while turning with the other. There is also another shut-off valve in the hall. Mr. Walsh noted that his water shut-off valve was glued shut and had to be repaired. Owners/residents may want to carefully check that their valves are operable.
- f. Freezing weather is expected for 10 more days. Let us hope we get through this safely.
- g. A question was asked about outside faucets. Faucets on all four sun decks have been turned off. Residents of units with external faucets should turn them off now if they did not do so at the beginning of the winter weather.

3. SNOW REMOVAL AND ICE ISSUES

- a. There is a danger of falling ice from above the Main Street and Delaware Avenue entrances. Remember to look up before you exit or enter. The area of the roof where the icicles form is too far away to knock off.
- b. The snow removal company Aspen has engaged has been doing a great job.

4. SPRINKLER INCIDENT

Fortunately, a UD employee reported to a Washington House resident that he saw a truck drive into the garage and knock the sprinkler head off on 17 December 2014. After reviewing the security tapes to get the timing of the start of the water pouring from the pipe and when the water was turned off by the Fire Department, the police were able to get pictures on Traffic Cams from Delaware Avenue that confirmed a Capital Linen truck was responsible for the damage. The management at Capital Linen took responsibility for the damage. A bill for ~\$3,500 has been sent to the company. If you see Officer Bystricki of the NPD, be sure to thank him for the great work he did on our behalf.

5. SALES

Unit 303 is expected to settle by the end of January. Unit 315 is in flux. The real estate agent thinks it will go through, it is just a matter of time. If it does, there will be only three units left to sell. All of the unsold units have liens for unpaid condo fees. So with each sale, money is collected and goes into the Reserve Fund.

6. ASPEN ONSITE MAINTENANCE PERSON

Mr. Steve Cline, the onsite maintenance person for Washington House, works for Mr. Joe Cline, Aspen's Maintenance Manager. They will be handling all of the maintenance and repair problems from this point forward except the bulging brick problem that was started by Ramano and Avalon last summer. Romano will complete the work they started on the south side as soon as the temperatures

reach 50 degrees F. Engineering analysis in September indicated this would be an ongoing problem unless the brick were completely removed and resurfaced. If other incidents occur, repair work on the west and east sides of the building will be overseen by Aspen.

7. THANKS TO THE CURRENT COUNCIL/COMMITTEE HEADS

Mr. Chase thanked the current council members and the committee chairs for their service over the last two years, which resulted in a round of applause from all. A big "thank you" was also extended to Mr. Chase for the incredible work he has done on behalf of all owners. This too brought a hearty round of applause.

8. OTHER

a. Landscape Committee: Chair, Jamie Chase, said that the grasses in the area along the driveway (that separates WH from the Lang Apartments) will be replaced by river stone up to the first red bud tree. The grasses are not doing well.

b. Community Liaison Committee: Chair, John Hornor reported:

i. *City of Newark News*

a) New mayor — Polly Sierer

b) Council representatives from districts 3, 5, and 6 are up for reelection this spring. Mr. Funk suggested that District 2 may also have an election if there is a resignation.

c) The City Council delayed a fee planned to pay for storm water sewer improvements until February.

d) Data Center at the UD Star Campus — Newark approved the zoning for the data center considering that the power plant is an accessory to the data center. There are some restrictions. The power plant cannot sell more than 30% of the excess power it generates. It can sell only to the City of Newark, Delmarva, or DEMEC but not third parties. The City will continue to follow the development and if things do not occur as planned, the City can revisit the zoning again. Now the process moves on to DNREC and the air permit. Opponents say they will continue to fight.

e) Delledonne Associates are building a 10-story building on the UD Star Campus behind the current building they are renovating.

f) Bloom Energy at the Star Campus has hired nearly 100 people some of whom are contractors. Employment must reach 300 by September 2014 to meet the goals required to receive state money.

g) A housing development was approved for the Cleveland Avenue location replacing the defunct development. In the McKees Park area, a solar park is under construction to provide the City with some renewable energy.

h) Two skate parks have opened in the City. They are quite popular.

i) Construction of a new park at the old Curtis Paper Mill site on Paper Mill Road will begin in the next couple of weeks. Walking paths are planned along with some historical signs.

ii. *Main Street News*

a) Lang Development Group (LDG) received approval for another commercial apartment building on the Main Street curve around the corner from the UD parking lot across from Deer Park. Construction has begun. It will be a 4-story building with commercial on the 1st and 2nd floors and apartments on the 3rd and 4th. Parking is planned to be in the UD garage to obviate the need for a parking waiver.

b) The newest LDG apartment building next door to WH is completing commercial space for a *UD Acorn Entrepreneur Group*.

c) *Kate's Place* occupancy is planned for June 2014. No word yet on the businesses that will front Main Street though an architectural firm is rumored to be interested. There will be no restaurants. Townhouses on Choat Street are now in full construction.

d) *Seven-Eleven* next to Piece of Pizza is now open.

e) *Clothes in The Past Lane* moved to the old Charlie B Travels site at 77 E. Main Street. It has opened along with a *Blow Dry Salon* in a partnership with Gloss.Salon.

- f) Construction continues on the site of the old Newark Newsstand. No word on who is moving in.
 - g) The building previously housing Clothes in The Past Lane and the Delaware Book Exchange will be demolished. A 3-story building with 24 apartments on the second and third floors and retail at ground level will be built on the site if approved by the City Council at its meeting on Monday. If you have issues, you need to attend the meeting and voice our concerns.
 - h) Boardwalk Fries next to California Tortilla has been replaced by *Sandwich Town USA*.
 - i) *Jimmy Johns Sandwich Shop* is opening at the old Sliders location on Main Street.
 - j) Cafe de Cucina is under new ownership (but the same chef) and has a new name: *Tarantellas*.
- iii. *City Council Meeting* — next Monday, 27 January 2014.
- iv. *Questions*
- a) Ms. Debbie Dunlap asked about the possibility of a Dog Park. Mr. Funk said it has been talked about in the past but no one wants it on their property.
 - b) Ms. Scott reported that Cafe Gelato at 90 Main Street has had speakers on the outside patio for some time. She tried to talk to Mr. German but he didn't do anything. Now the SAS Cup Cake shop has speakers. Ms. Scott reported these two violations on the City's webpage and citations have been issued. The problem is if we do not report these infringements, we will have speakers with all different kinds of noise right outside of our doors. So if you pass a business and hear music coming from speakers, report it. Mr. Funk confirmed that it is important to report these infringements and noted that Maureen Feeney Roser, Director of Planning and Development is the person to whom these code violations should be reported.
 - c. Handbook Committee: Chair, Pamela Bobbs, reported that the handbook would undergo significant revisions to reflect the changes involved with the transfer of operations to Aspen.
 - d. Emergency Action Plan: Co-Chair, Kent Woods, said there was nothing new to report since the last meeting

E. Treasurer/Enforcement Officer Report

1. ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT — There were a few problems regarding the disposal of live Christmas trees this year, Ms. Scott said. Individuals removing the trees left significant amounts of debris down the hallway and down the stairs to the garage area and dumped the dead trees in the "large items" area. Next year we will leave a notice on every door reminding residents who wish to have live trees (a) to clean up the mess left when the dead trees are taken to the outside of the building and (b) not to leave them in the WH trash area because WH will be charged for the additional pick up. Mr. Funk said that the trees can be left at the curb on Delaware Avenue on Wednesdays starting in January. Check the City website for the date next year.
2. TREASURER'S REPORT — Ms. Scott reported that the Reserve Fund has a balance of approximately \$88,500 which will increase as the rest of this quarter's dues are paid. Expenses this year will be more manageable because of regular billings from Aspen. Avalon had a tendency to bill sporadically. The only large outstanding receivable is for 16 Mile Taphouse with which Council is dealing aggressively. A registered letter has been sent stating that the account will be turned over to Aspen for collections and lien filing if the past due and currently due amounts are not received by the end of this month. The third quarter water bill is also outstanding.

F. Election of New Council Members

Mr. Chase introduced the three candidates for Council: Ms. Swan, Mr. Roberts, and Ms. Hornor. They were asked to stand and be recognized. Ballots were distributed and collected. The in-meeting ballots (including proxy ballots) were counted and added to the count of absentee ballots. A total of 34 ballots were submitted,

33 for the candidates and one abstention. Mr. Chase said "Congratulations and thank you all" which produced another round of applause.

G. Open Comment

1. Mr. Walsh (unit 215) said he had plumbing problems and thanked Council members who were very helpful. He noted that the pipe connections for the master bath toilet were installed upside down and that the wax ring on both toilets was too big causing a slight leak in both bathrooms. One of the toilets was flowing at less than 50% with the remaining water going under the tile. He also noted that the tub surround has nothing behind it and the pipes coming down were not connected to anything. He suggested that if anyone is having a plumber in for any reason, s/he/they may want to have the plumber check for these issues as well.
2. A brief discussion ensued regarding plumbers and electricians. With Aspen on board, if residents have problems in future, they can call Aspen who may either be able to help (and bill owners directly) or possibly recommend someone to do the work.
3. Ms. Martuza noted that some parties got sick in the elevators on New Year's Eve and wondered if cameras could be installed to catch culprits to clean up their own mess. The system that runs the cameras would have to be expanded for more cameras can be added. Additionally, cameras in the elevators would have to be wireless. Expanding the use of cameras is on the "do list" for the Association but other problems have taken precedence.
4. A question was asked about the elevator floors. These too are on the list. A decision regarding carpet or tile needs to be made. The argument for the tile is that it is easier to clean. The argument for the carpet is that it serves as a foot wipe and prevents dirt and grime being tracked throughout the hallways. Mr. Chase has proposed that when the carpeting in all common areas is replaced, sufficient extra carpet be stored so the elevator carpet can be replaced more frequently. The cost of replacing just the carpet in the two elevators is \$4000.
5. Mr. Hornor, who serves on the City of Newark's Conservation Advisory Committee, asked anyone with concerns or suggestions for the City to please let him know. Several general comments about better care of and more trees were heard. Individuals should contact Mr. Hornor with specifics as soon as possible.

H. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Chase called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Bobbs placed the motion that this meeting of the WHCA Council be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Ms. Scott. Motion passed unanimously: Vote 4 to 0.

Aye — Bobbs, Chase, Sawyer, Scott

Nay — 0

Absent — 1

The meeting adjourned at ~8:00 p.m.