

**MANAGER’S MEMORANDUM**

TO: GHI Board of Directors  
FROM: Eldon Ralph, General Manager   
DATE: March 11, 2022  
SUBJECT: Items for the **GHI OPEN** Board Meeting on March 17, 2022

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**GHI Open Meeting**

6a. Approve Minutes of the Open Meeting Held on February 3, 2022 – (Attachment #2)

**Motion:** I move that the Board of Directors approve the minutes of the Open Meeting, that was held on February 3, 2022 (as presented/as revised).

6b. Request by the United Nations Federal Credit Union to Become an Approved GHI Share Loan Provider – (Attachments #3a-3b)

At present, there are five GHI-approved lenders who provide share loans to members.

Attachment #3a is an email from Ms. Terri Darvish, a Mortgage Loan Officer with the United Nations Federal Credit Union. Ms. Darvish states that the UN-FCU (headquartered in Long Island City, New York with base locations in Washington, DC and Tysons, VA) has approved GHI’s Recognition Agreement and desires to be added to GHI’s list of lenders. The UN-FCU was founded in 1947 and currently has almost \$6 billion in assets. UN-FCU is FannieMae (FNMA) insured for co-ops and NCUA insured (equivalent to FDIC for “banks”).

Attachment #3b contains UN-FCU’s financial statements for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020. Ms. Darvish has been invited to the Board meeting to answer questions.

This item is on the agenda for discussion and action.

**Suggested motion:** I move that the Board of Directors allow United Nations-FCU to become a GHI-approved share loan provider.

6c. Companion Animal Committee Report for July to December 2021- (Attachment #4)

Attachment #4 is a report from the Companion Animal Committee regarding its activities during the period July 2021 to December 2021.

This item is on the agenda for discussion and action.

**Suggested motion: I move that the Board of Directors accept the report from the Companion Animal Committee, regarding its activities during the period July 2021 to December 2021.**

6d. Permit Request to Install a Greenhouse Structure in the Serviceside Yard at 60-D Crescent Road – (Attachment #5a-5c)

On January 22, 2022, staff received a Type II permit request (attachment #5a) to construct a greenhouse in the serviceside yard of 60-D Crescent Rd, that was signed [REDACTED], who are joint tenants and the member of the unit. On February 18, 2022, [REDACTED] requested that his signature be withdrawn from the permit request form, but the review process could continue without his approval.

This request requires consideration of the following GHI Rule:

**§IX.B.4, “Accessory Buildings require approval by the Board of Directors”.**

During the ARC meeting on February 7, 2022, the following points were discussed:

- a. The member would like to construct a prefabricated poly-carbonate greenhouse on a concrete slab in their service side yard. The size of the greenhouse would be approximately 6’-1” wide, 8’-1” long x 6’-10” high. The member plans to use the greenhouse to extend the growing season for vegetables. There are no current plans to heat the greenhouse.
- b. The current rules in the Member handbook do not permit storage shelters or sheds in the serviceside yard.
- c. The member’s gardenside yard is sloped and does not receive much sun. It is not a suitable location.
- d. The yard at 60-D Crescent is at a higher elevation, making it visible to every unit in the court and to cars driving by on Crescent Road.
- e. Several members of 60 Court Crescent Rd spoke in opposition to this request. While they appreciated the member as a neighbor and co-op member, they felt that the serviceside is an inappropriate location for any structure, much less a greenhouse.
- f. There was additional concern that the greenhouse would be accompanied by additional clutter to serve the gardening process.
- g. A member in the Court spoke about the cohesive nature of the service side yards in the court. She noted that the yards are all small, but taken as a whole, the serviceside feels very

open and communal. Adding a greenhouse, or any structure, would very much detract from this open space.

- h. One member of the court suggested that the member at 60-D Crescent Rd should apply for a community garden plot across from the administration building as an alternative.
- i. There was concern that allowing any structure on the serviceside would set a precedent for future serviceside structures.
- j. The neighboring members were not made aware that there would be a permanent concrete slab base for the proposed greenhouse when their consent was requested.

The ARC recommended by a vote of 5-0-1 that the Board of Directors not allow the construction of the greenhouse in the serviceside yard at 60-D Crescent Road.

Reasons for the ARC's motion were as follows:

- Lack of neighbor support (consent)
- Very small serviceside yards at 60 Court
- High visibility from 60 Court and Crescent Road

Attachment #5b is an email from [REDACTED] of 60-D Crescent Rd responding to concerns about the greenhouse that were expressed during the ARC meeting.

Attachment #5c contains letters from members about allowing the greenhouse to be constructed. A summary of letters received is as follows:

Address	Comment
[REDACTED]	In favor
[REDACTED]	Against
[REDACTED]	Against
[REDACTED]	Against
[REDACTED]	Against
[REDACTED]	Against
[REDACTED]	Neutral
[REDACTED]	In favor
[REDACTED]	In favor
[REDACTED]	In favor
[REDACTED]	In favor

On March 3, 2022, the Board reviewed the permit request and decided to further discuss the matter at a future meeting, pending responses to several questions that were asked. Staff's comments and responses to the questions are as follows:

- a) On March 4, 2022, ██████████ sent an email to President Brodd and General Manager Ralph saying: *"I'll state clearly right now that I \*disapprove\* of the greenhouse permit application at 60 Court Crescent Road Unit D, and I would like that application revoked"*. GHI's legal counsel Joe Douglass subsequently advised that the Board may continue to review the permit application and if appropriate, approve the permit, despite ██████████ opposition to the greenhouse, since the other two members on the Mutual Ownership Contract wish to continue with their plan to install it.
- b) If permitted, the greenhouse and concrete pad would be constructed directly above buried underground sewer pipes as shown in a drawing within attachment #5a. In Section X. Improvements, Alterations, Additions of the GHI Member Handbook, it is stated "GHI Structures may not be built over buried utilities ....."
- c) The height of the proposed greenhouse is 6'-10" and the plan view of the greenhouse on the yard plot shown in attachment #4a, is drawn to scale.

This item is on the agenda for discussion and action.

**Suggested motion: I move that the Board of Directors (allow/not allow) the member of 60-D Crescent Road to construct a greenhouse in the serviceside yard.**

6e. Review 2021 Investment Committee Report – (Attachment #6)

GHI's Bylaws state that the Board shall report to the members annually on the status and performance of all investments. Attachment #6 is the 2021 Investment Performance Report that the Investment Committee prepared.

After the Board accepts the report, it will be included in the 2021-22 Annual Report that the membership will receive prior to the annual meeting.

This item is on the agenda for discussion and action.

**Suggested motion: I move that the Board of Directors accept the 2021 Investment Performance Report that the Investment Committee prepared and direct that it be included in the 2021-22 annual report that will be distributed to the membership.**

6f. Format of Meetings After the COVID-19 Pandemic – (Attachment #7)

The Board's current action plan states that the Board needs to decide about continuing to hold virtual Board, committee and membership meetings post Covid-19. Some of the factors that the Board may wish to consider are as follows:

- a) Should Board, committee and membership meetings be virtual, in-person or hybrid (in-person/virtual) meetings?
- b) The cost of providing audio visual equipment needed to ensure synchrony between the virtual and in-person components of a hybrid meeting. GHI hires a company to provide this service for hybrid annual meetings. The cost for this service in 2022 is \$1,590.
- c) GHI must ensure compliance with MD State regulations pertaining to virtual meetings. House Bill 1147 (attachment #7) that is currently being considered by the Maryland General Assembly requires a person conducting a meeting of a cooperative housing corporation, by telephone conference, video conference, or similar electronic means, to provide participants a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting, and equal access to any available chat function.
- d) Procedures that are necessary to ensure more efficient conduct of virtual meetings, e.g.
  - Proper identification of Board, committee members and key staff.
  - Better sequencing of persons who desire to speak.
  - Should discussion of items listed for discussion/action on an agenda for a Board meeting be limited only to Board members and those persons who are directly concerned with the topic being discussed, or should discussion be open to any member or visitor?
  - Should there be a time-limit for persons who desire to speak during the member/visitor portion of the meeting? Should a person submit a brief summary of the issue(s) they wish to discuss, prior to the meeting?

This item is on the agenda for discussion and action.

**Suggested motion: I move that the Board of Directors establish a task force to recommend the format of Board, committee and membership meetings that should be adopted after the Covid pandemic ends and measures that should be implemented to ensure the efficient conduct of those meetings. The Task Force shall submit its recommendations by**

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6g. Request by the Greenbelt Federal Credit Union for a Partnership with GHI to Host a Paper Recycling Event – (Attachments #8a-8c)

Attachment #8a is a letter to the Board of Directors from the Greenbelt Federal Credit Union that requests GHI to partner with the Credit Union by contributing \$1,225 towards the hosting of a three-hour ‘shred’ event.

GHI’s Contributions Policy, shown in attachment #8b, outlines the process for requesting a contribution; all requests should fit one or more of the stated criteria. A chart of donations for the past six years is presented as attachment #8c.

This item is on the agenda for discussion and action.

**Suggested Motion: I move that the Board of Directors approve a contribution of \$ 1,225 to partner with the Greenbelt Community Foundation for the hosting of a paper recycling event within the City of Greenbelt.**

6h. Proposed Changes to Workplace Protocols Due to the Lifting of P.G. County’s Mask Mandate

A Covid Task Force comprised of GHI employees, met on March 9, 2022, to review whether staff should revise the Covid Epidemic workplace procedures currently in place. This was prompted by the recent lifting of the indoor mask mandate by Prince George’s County.

Based on the task force’s recommendation, staff proposes to implement the following revised procedures with effect from March 14, 2022:

- Individuals entering the Administration Building will no longer be required to wear a face covering.
- Visitors to the Administration Building will be confined to the lobby whenever possible.
- Employees will be allowed to move about the building without the need for a face covering; however, those wishing to continue the practice are welcome to do so.
- All employees and contractors performing work on behalf of GHI will continue to have face coverings available in the event a member requests they be worn before entering their home.
- GHI will continue to provide all employees with face coverings, hand sanitizers, anti-bacterial disinfectant, cleaners, and wipes.
- When two persons are traveling in a GHI vehicle, they will be strongly encouraged to wear face coverings.
- The restriction of one person at a time eating a meal in the kitchen will be lifted.

The Covid Task Force will revisit these procedures in the event of an upsurge in reported cases of Covid or a return to the Indoor Mask Mandate by Prince Georges County.

This item is on the agenda for discussion.

6i. Transition Survey Report and Draft Agenda for a Townhall Meeting to Discuss the Report – (Attachment #9)

The Transition Task Force recently conducted a membership survey to obtain valuable information that the Board will consider in planning and executing the leadership transition process and selection process for a new General Manager, when the current Manager decides to retire.

Attachment #9 is the Transition Survey report. The Transition Task Force proposes to hold a virtual membership townhall meeting on April 24, 2022, at 2:00pm; the draft agenda items are as follows:

1. Welcome and Background of Transition Task Force and its work – Tom Adams

2. Importance of Leadership Transitions - lessons from other organizations - Tom Adams
3. History of Leadership Transitions at GHI - Task Force or Board members
4. Survey Results presentation and discussion - Task Force members
5. Overview of Anticipated next steps and Transition and Search Process – Stefan Brodd

This item is on the agenda for discussion and action:

**Suggested motion: I move that the Board of Directors accept the Transition Survey Report prepared by the Transition Task Force and approve the agenda (*as presented/as revised*) for a membership townhall meeting to be held on April 24, 2022, at 2:00 p:m. to present the Report.**

6j. Motion to Hold a Closed Meeting on April 7, 2022

**Suggested motion: I move to hold a closed meeting of the Board of Directors at 7:00 pm on April 7, 2022.**