

Minutes
GHI Board of Directors
August 18, 2005

Present: Abell, Alexanderwicz, Alpers, Eichhorst, Hess, Hudson, Lauber, Lewis, Moore

Others in Attendance: Gretchen Overdurff, General Manager
Stephen Ruckman, Director of Finance
Eldon Ralph, Director of Physical Plant Services
Joan Krob, Director of Member Services
Brenda Lewis, Director of Human Resources
Tom Sporney, Staff Engineer
Diane Wilkerson, Chair, Audit Committee
Mary Crellin, Audit Committee
Diana McFadden, Audit Committee
Genevieve Courbois, Recording Secretary
Mayor J. Davis, City of Greenbelt
Matt Berres
Patricia Novinski
Betty Deitch
Barbara Havekost
Elizabeth Jay
Lora Katz
Elizabeth Bianchi
Dolores Petry
Ed James
Suzette Agans
William Orleans
Kris White
Alice Mitchell
Mary Moien, *Greenbelt News Review*

President Eichhorst called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm. She added *Drainage Work Update – 25 Ridge Road* to the Agenda as Item 7m and *Paint/Trim Colors* as Item 7n. She removed Item 7c. *Request for Proposed Gardenside Addition – 31A Ridge Road* as the member was unable to be present.

1. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: MOVE APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AS REVISED.

Moved: Abell

Seconded: Hess

Carried

FOR THE RECORD: BOARD POLL ON JULY 21, 2005 ACCEPTED THE FOLLOWING PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS INTO THE COOPERATIVE AND MEMBERSHIP AFFORDED THEM AT THE TIME OF SETTLEMENT:

- SHANNA PERSON-MERKOWITZ, ERIK B. CHRISTIANSEN, DAVID R. MERKOWITZ, AND CAROL S. PERSON
- CRAIG S. CHARRON
- HELEN G. CORNEJO
- ROBERT ESSER
- AMY L. PAINTER
- DEBORAH C. CHRISTIAN

MOTION: THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVES THE FOLLOWING MUTUAL OWNERSHIP CONTRACT CHANGES:

- TONI DURANTINE, SOLE OWNER, TO TONI DURANTINE AND ANTHONY N. DURANTINE, TENANTS IN COMMON
- ROBERT W. HURST, SOLE OWNER, TO ROBERT W. HURST, DAVID HURST, LEIGH HURST AND CAROL HURST, JOINT TENANTS
- JOSEPH RUCK AND JANUARY TRAVEL, JOINT TENANTS, TO JOSEPH RUCK AND JANUARY RUCK, TENANTS BY THE ENTIRETY
- FRED A. BOWLEY, SOLE OWNER, TO FRED A. BOWLEY AND AVELINA Z. BOWLEY, TENANTS BY THE ENTIRETY
- LOUIS LAYTON III, SOLE OWNER, TO LOUIS LAYTON III, TRUSTEE UNDER TRUST DATED NOVEMBER 20, 2001
- JAMES CARPENTER AND MOORE CARPENTER, JOINT TENANTS, TO JAMES J. CARPENTER AND ANGELA C. CARPENTER, TENANTS BY THE ENTIRETY
- CYNTHIA J. CUTRIGHT, SOLE OWNER, TO CYNTHIA J. CUTRIGHT AND DARRYL W. MUNSEY, JOINT TENANTS

Moved: Lauber
Opposed: Hess

Seconded: Hudson

Carried

FOR THE RECORD: BOARD POLL ON JULY 21, 2005 APPROVED THE FOLLOWING MUTUAL OWNERSHIP CONTRACT CHANGE:

- LYNN BUSH, ALICIA BUSH AND NANCY WHITE TO GREENBELT HOMES, INC.

6. Committee Reports

All Committee Reports appear as items on the Agenda.

7a. Presentation on New Legislation in Prince George's County – Del. Justin Ross

Delegate Justin Ross presented an update on new County legislation that may be of interest to GHI. He focused on proposed legislation that will earmark a portion of the current tax on cellular telephone usage for the capital expenses of the County school systems, e.g., construction of new schools. At this time, according to Ross, \$20 million raised through this tax goes into the school system's operating budget. Del. Ross is sponsoring legislation that will dedicate that portion raised above this \$20 million (which could be as much as \$25 – 30 million) towards capital expenses and requests public opinion on this proposal.

In response to a question about a specific bill from member Bill Orleans, Del. Ross explained that the bill levies a surcharge on developers of new house construction, which goes toward public safety. Mayor J. Davis, City of Greenbelt, stated that the City receives 12.5% from the surcharge, which is directed to public safety.

7b. Request for Proposed Chain Link Fence, 21H Ridge Road

On April 12, 2004, member, Matt Berres, submitted a permit request for the purpose of installing a chain link fence around his gardenside and end yards. GHI rules state “fences shall be placed on designated perimeter yard lines...” (§VII.B.1). After considering this case on July 27, 2005, the A&E Committee recommended 8-0-0 that the Board approve the proposed fence, pending certification of the yard plat.

In response to a Board inquiry, Member Berres clarified that the fence will not encompass the serviceside yard and ends at the serviceside corner.

MOTION: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AUTHORIZES STAFF TO APPROVE PERMIT REQUEST FOR A NON-PERIMETER CHAINLINK FENCE AT 21H RIDGE ROAD, SUBJECT TO CERTIFICATION OF THE GHI YARD PLAT, OR MEMBER AGREEMENT TO RELOCATE THE FENCE IN THE FUTURE SHOULD YARDLINES BE CERTIFIED IN A DIFFERENT LOCATION.

Moved: Alexanderwicz

Seconded: Hudson

Carried

7c. Creation of Ad Hoc Committee to Study 2005 Sustainable Designs

Alice Mitchell, summarized the proposed goals and budget of the Sustainable Design and Practice Ad Hoc Committee, which were submitted to the Board. Treasurer Lewis suggested that any anticipated income be reflected in the proposed 2006 budget. Director Hess believed that a speaker honorarium had never been offered by GHI before; President Eichhorst noted that often a speaker's expenses are covered in lieu of an honorarium. She also suggested that the research of alternative heating methods be a Committee priority.

President Eichhorst noted that the Woodlands Committee would be sponsoring a workshop on rain gardens on Saturday, September 10, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. in the Board room.

MOTION: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPTS THE PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE AD HOC SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE AS PRESENTED AUGUST 18, 2005, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED TO THE MASTER MINUTES.

Moved: Lewis

Seconded: Hudson

Carried

With the approval of this motion, the Board is able to appoint Committee members. President Eichhorst stated that Director of Physical Plant Services Ralph would serve as the Staff Liaison, Director Hudson as the Board Liaison, and the committee will be officially appointed at the next Board meeting. The Board commended the Committee members for their efforts.

7d. Review of GHI Committees' Functions and Relationship to the Board

At the Board's planning session held June 9, 2005, one of the goals identified for the coming year is to review the Board's relationship with GHI committees. Specifically, the objective is to evaluate the current process of communication between the Board and committees, to review the procedure for reporting to the Board, to decide how Board directives should be communicated to committees, and to review the functions of each standing committee.

Treasurer Lewis began discussion by suggesting the By-Laws Committee be a standing committee rather than an ad hoc committee. In addition, she said that too many committees can stretch Board resources and suggested that some committees expand into subcommittees. She also suggested the formation of a communications committee and newsletter subcommittee, which would perhaps fall under the Member and Community Relations Committee. President Eichhorst responded that the Member and Community Relations Committee and the Newsletter Committee would need to be consulted about this idea.

CONSENSUS: TO RE-ESTABLISH THE BY-LAWS COMMITTEE AS A STANDING COMMITTEE.

Director Alexanderwicz emphasized the need for committees to communicate with each other by perhaps having one member of each committee be responsible for this task. President Eichhorst stated that if a Communications Committee is established, each Committee should identify a member to serve as the liaison to the Communications Committee and be the contact point for articles in the *Communicator*.

President Eichhorst stated that the Board needs to work on sending clear direction to the Committees and would like to see the Board provide written directives. Member

Kris White, agreed that clear directives would ensure that a committee stays focused in its mission. In response to President Eichhorst's query about who would develop the

memo outlining these written directives, several Board members felt that the Board liaison would be most appropriate.

CONSENSUS: WRITTEN DIRECTIVES TO A COMMITTEE FROM THE BOARD WILL BE DRAFTED BY THE COMMITTEE'S BOARD LIAISON AND REVIEWED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD AND THE COMMITTEE'S STAFF LIAISON.

President Eichhorst also brought up the issue of how external communications from committees should be handled and what the proper "chain of command" is for external communications. Board members offered thoughts on who should review the letters and who should sign them. President Eichhorst emphasized the need to develop a process and follow that model.

CONSENSUS: EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEES BE PRINTED ON GHI LETTERHEAD AND THE BOARD LIAISON WILL DETERMINE ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS WHETHER THE COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT.

President Eichhorst suggested that the Board discuss when and how committees are expected to report back to the Board on their progress. Ideas included a committee-wide forum session with the Board and training sessions for committee members. General Manager Overdurff suggested that those committees with full agendas submit a written report to the Board each month. Member Lora Katz, stated that committees might have a communications model already in place, which may just need some fine-tuning. Matt Berres, said that that increased written reports may be counter-productive for certain committees based on their directives, nature of work, and timeline.

CONSENSUS: TO CONDUCT COMMITTEE TRAINING, HAVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEES ON A QUARTERLY BASIS AND HOLD A JOINT COMMUNICATIONS SESSION FOR ALL COMMITTEES.

7e. Yardline Committee Update – Report on Yard Plat Exercise

At the Board meeting of July 14, 2005, the Yard Line Committee discussed its review of the 3-ring binders in the Technical Services office containing yard plats. The Committee's goal was to perform a statistical survey of the information readily accessible within these binders of yard plats.

Staff provided the Board with an example of the yard plat documentation used at resale and the procedure staff plans to use to update the binders to reflect actual existing yardlines and the goal in accomplishing the task.

CONSENSUS: THAT STAFF CONTINUE WITH ITS PLAN OF ACTION TO UPDATE THE YARDLINE BINDERS AS PRESENTED TO THE BOARD ON AUGUST 18, 2005.

7f. Marketing Committee Recommendations

Referencing the Marketing Committee's written report to the board, Chair Barbara Havekost summarized the Committee's suggested initiatives in selecting new members. General Manager Overdurff acknowledged that the prospective member questions need revision and that she is working towards this goal. Member Kris White, suggested adding a question about what a prospective member brings to GHI as well as adding the criterion that a member should participate in GHI affairs. Director Alpers suggested that the Committee research situations in which members are financially enabling their children to live in GHI as well as vehicle issues, e.g., parking of personal or commercial vehicles. General Manager Overdurff suggested that information could be gathered on the former at the next NAHC Conference.

Treasurer Lewis noted that GHI was cited as an example of a housing cooperative that markets the cooperative advantage in the *Cooperative Housing Bulletin*. She also stated that she was unable to actively participate in GHI until she retired. Secretary Lauber mentioned her experiences in other organizations while her children were growing up, then becoming active in GHI after she retired. President Eichhorst noted that on Monday, September 19 at 7 p.m., the Marketing Committee would be holding its first bi-monthly coffee to educate new members on the workings of GHI and to encourage their involvement with committees.

7g. Companion Animal Committee Recommendations

Kris White, Chair of the Companion Animal Committee, summarized the Committee's written report of August 18, 2005, which included nine initiatives the Committee proposes to undertake in educating the community on companion animal issues. In response to the proposed initiatives, Mayor J. Davis commended the Committee for its work and encouraged the Committee to liaise with the various departments within the city, such as the Public Advisory Safety Committee and Animal Control in implementing the initiatives.

President Eichhorst reminded the CAC of the need to present its mission statement to the Board for review and ratification.

THE BOARD RECESSED FROM 9:10 P.M. UNTIL 9:25 P.M.

7h. Finance Committee Recommendations

Treasurer Lewis summarized the Committee's written report of August 18, 2005. Director Hess expressed his support for the Committee's recommendation to retain the

current interim staff member while serving as Accounting Manager. In response to this recommendation, Vice President Abell questioned the hiring of more staff, as she understood that the ultimate goal was to reduce staff in the finance office. Director of Finance Ruckman explained that with the anticipated installation of new financial

software, the office would need to be fully staffed through the first quarter. After that time, Ruckman will re-evaluate the staffing level as the new financial software is expected to provide greater efficiency in the office.

CONSENSUS: TO RETAIN THE CURRENT INTERIM STAFF MEMBER SERVING AS ACCOUNTING MANAGER UNTIL THE END OF THIS YEAR.

7i. Salary Survey

GHI uses compensation surveys to compare market rates of employers similar in size and business structure, which participate in the yearly BLR (Business and Legal Reports) survey in order to obtain results at no cost. Their survey, which was conducted Jan/Feb 2005, is extensive and included salaries for exempt, non-exempt personnel as well as benefits for over 4,100 companies nationwide. This year, staff again specifically targeted participation from the City of Greenbelt, the University of Maryland, and Internet sources. With the recent changes in the City's and the University of Maryland's salary scales, GHI is lagging behind in several categories. The survey indicates that GHI should adjust its ranges in order to remain competitive. GHI's salary scale was last updated in 2003. The Board was provided information about how GHI salary levels are spread and how adjustments are made within the salary ranges.

At the onset of Board discussion, Director of Human Resources Lewis summarized the information she had prepared for the Board. She emphasized that in the near future, some employees will be at the maximum allowable salary according to the 2003 Pay Scales chart. She stated that GHI strives to retain those employees who may have concerns about their salaries and at the same time to be competitive in terms of salary, and explained that in revising the pay scale, the mid-point range is adjusted which affects the minimum and maximum range.

In reviewing the information provided by staff, Board members noted that both the receptionist and human resources positions are low in terms of the salary survey and inquired about plumbing staff salaries and retention. Treasurer Lewis added that GHI benefits also are part of the entire package, not just salary.

In terms of the health benefits, General Manager Overdurff stated that GHI has not received any notice of increases to date. Lewis emphasized that maintaining an age balance amongst the staff is important in containing increases in health care premiums. She explained that if the "age of the group" goes up, health care premiums could increase.

Treasurer Lewis commended the strength of the current GHI staff.

CONSENSUS: TO REVIEW THE GHI PAY SCALE EVERY TWO YEARS AND TO REVIEW A PROPOSED 2005 PAY SCALE AT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING.

7j. Second Quarter Operating Statements

The Board reviewed the second quarter operating statements with comments prepared by Director of Finance Ruckman.

7k. Management Audit Proposal – First Reading

On July 7, 2005, a special Board meeting was held at which Mr. Lincoln Cummings of Cummings & Associates, Inc. presented his proposal for conducting a management audit. Mr. Cummings gave an overview of the manner in which he would conduct such an audit, and answered questions.

Board discussion began with reference to a letter submitted to the Board by Director Hudson encouraging GHI to implement changes from within and target “the low hanging fruit” rather than conducting a management audit at this time. Director Alpers, Chair of the Ad Hoc Management Committee stated that, in light of the technology audit, she believes the management audit should be deferred until next year.

CONSENSUS: TO REVIEW THE PROPOSED MANAGEMENT AUDIT AGAIN BEFORE THE CURRENT BOARD YEAR ENDS, FIX THOSE ITEMS WHICH WE CAN FIX OURSELVES DURING THE NEXT YEAR, THEN RECONSIDER A REDUCED MANAGEMENT AUDIT IN THE FUTURE.

7l. Schedule Special Sessions

Friday, August 25 is the suggested date for the maintenance reserves planning work session. The Board offered to meet with the *Greenbelt News Review*'s Board of Directors the morning of Monday, September 26 or Monday, October 3.

7m. Drainage Work Update – 25 Ridge Road

Director of Physical Plant Services Ralph explained that this project at 25 Ridge Road has been delayed as the City review process of GHI's submitted application took longer than anticipated and the City is requiring pre-cast concrete drains be installed [several of the yards are in the City right-of-way.] The application was submitted with the intent to begin work on July 25; however, approval was not received until August 17. According to Ralph, GHI was intending to use plastic drains, and the use of pre-cast concrete drains will exceed the allotted budget and require more manufacturing time. Ralph is attempting to secure lower bids on these drains and conceded that the project may not resume until late September. President Eichhorst suggested that a Board poll for a vote be conducted once new bids are received.

According to Mayor J. Davis, Prince George's County maintains the storm water drains. President Eichhorst proposed that perhaps the City should pay for the pre-cast concrete drains if they are to be installed in the City right-of-way.

Ralph emphasized that the project needs to be resolved as quickly as affected members are anxious for their yard areas to be restored.

7n. Paint/Trim Colors

At the A&E Committee meeting on August 17, 2005, the Committee discussed adding Forest Green to the approved list of exterior trim colors for masonry homes. The Committee voted 7-0-1 to recommend that the Board of Directors incorporate this color under certain conditions.

MOTION: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVES THE REVISION OF GHI RULES TO REVISE §XL.B.1. TO ADD TO THE LIST OF APPROVED EXTERIOR COLOURS FOR BRICK, BLOCK, AND MINERAL-SIDED HOMES:
Forest Green (for trim only on a plain white house).

Moved: Hess

Seconded: Moore

Carried

8. Items of Information

No discussion.

9. President

President Eichhorst reminded Board members to sign-up to help out at the GHI booth at the Labor Day Festival. She stated that she was signing letters appointing Karen Seaton to the Woodlands Committee and Ruth Wilson to the A&E Committee. She advised that members are needed to serve on the newly established By-Laws Committee.

10. Board Members

Treasurer Lewis noted that GHI was mentioned regarding seniors aging in place in the recent *Cooperative Housing Bulletin*. President Eichhorst added that she was recognized in the *Bulletin* for her perfect attendance at NAHC meetings.

Director Alpers encouraged Greenbelt residents to enroll in the First Responder's Training Course coming up soon which teaches residents how to shut off gas valves, etc. Mayor J. Davis, City of Greenbelt, noted that the City's public safety department would have a table promoting this training course at the Labor Day Festival.

Director Hess suggested that attachment numbers be the same as the agenda numbers. In addition, he requested his name be placed on the mailing list for the *Cooperative Housing Bulletin*.

11. General Manager

No items of information.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN.

Moved: Moore

Seconded: Alexanderwicz

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 10:36 p.m.

Dorothy Lauber
Secretary