

Minutes
GHI Board of Directors
September 17, 2009

Present: Hickey, James, Lewis, Morse, McFadden, Novinski, Mazursky, Agans, Boswell

Others in Attendance:

Gretchen Overdurff, General Manager
Joan Krob, Director of Member Services
Joe Perry, Director of Finance
Tom Sporney, Staff Engineer

Dianne Wilkerson, Chair, Audit Committee
Henry Haslinger, Audit Committee
Patty Bergemann, Recording Secretary

President Agans called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda

A request for contributions from the New Deal Café was added to Item 6e.

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

Moved: James

Seconded: Novinski

Carried 8

2. Visitors and Members

There were no visitors or members present.

3. Approval of Membership Applications

MOTION: THAT THE FOLLOWING PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS ARE ACCEPTED INTO THE COOPERATIVE AND MEMBERSHIP AFFORDED THEM AT THE TIME OF SETTLEMENT:

- **THERESE M. REXFORD**
- **PAUL LEISNHAM AND CARA LEISNHAM**

Moved: James

Seconded: Hickey

Carried 8

4. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports to review.

5. Consent Agenda

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.

Moved: Lewis

Seconded: Boswell

Carried 8

6a. Approval of Minutes: August 27, 2009 Special Meeting

MOTION APPROVED BY CONSENT AGENDA: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVES THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 27, 2009 SPECIAL MEETING.

6b. Underground Utility Contract, Additional Sites – 2nd Reading

MOTION APPROVED BY CONSENT AGENDA: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AUTHORIZES THE MANAGER, FOR SECOND READING AND FINAL PASSAGE, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH B&P UTILITIES, INC., FOR THE REPAIRS OF UNDERGROUND SANITARY SEWAGE AND STORM DRAIN UTILITIES AT SIX (6) SITES AT ITS BID, \$47,215, PLUS 10% FOR CONTINGENCIES, FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED \$51,937.

6c. Reverse Share Loan Proposal

The Board discussed the positive and negative issues related to the reverse share loan program, including; 1) the use of one million dollars collected for replacement reserves for this program; 2) the preference to utilize the funds to benefit the general membership, as opposed to the few who would be able to partake in the program; 3) the length of time that the funds may be tied up; 4) increased time commitment required from GHI staff members; 5) GHI's lack of expertise in banking and 6) risk.

The Board discussed the importance of the potential wording of the program documents, as well as the need to consider all factors when making the decision for or against the program. A suggestion was made to allow the lawyer to draw up documents outlining the program and bringing it to the membership to gauge interest. President Agans affirmed that if the Board voted to move forward with the reverse share loan program, it would need membership approval before it takes effect. Agans shared her opinion that the program would be a good investment for the coop from a strict investment standpoint; however, it is a risk to lend money with an imminent large rehab project.

MOTION: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS DOES NOT ENDORSE THE REVERSE SHARE LOAN PROGRAM AS PRESENTED SEPTEMBER 17, 2009.

Moved: Lewis

Seconded: James

Carried 6-2

6d. Proposed Rules Change – Placement of HVAC

Staff Engineer Sporney reviewed the history of the proposed rules change regarding placement of HVAC air conditioning equipment. The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) discussed the verbiage of the existing rule and voted 4-0 to recommend the rule be changed from "preferred" service side placement to "required" service side placement of HVAC air conditioning equipment, with written consent from neighbors for placement on the garden side. A question was asked how this rule change would apply to end units with a side yard. Sporney explained that if there is a neighbor across from the side yard, side yard placement of HVAC equipment would require written consent of the across neighbor.

The Board discussed whether the rule change was significant enough to go to the membership for comment; it was decided that this was not a significant rule change. Upon a question whether the rule change applied to window air conditioners, Sporney responded that historically, the rule has been applied to whole house air conditioners and not to window units. The Board decided that the rule as written did not clearly apply only to HVAC units outside the home.

CONSENSUS: REFER THE PROPOSED RULES CHANGE FOR PLACEMENT OF HVAC UNITS BACK TO THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION.

6e. Requests for Contributions

The Board discussed the requests for contributions and deferred acting on the request just received from the New Deal Café to the next meeting, in accordance with Board policy.

MOTION: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVES OF A DONATION TO THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS: CDF \$0; NASCO \$500; LABOR DAY FESTIVAL \$300; GREENBELT EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND \$1000.

Moved: Lewis

Seconded: Morse

Carried 8

6f. Board Retreat

The Board discussed the upcoming retreat in terms of purpose, benefits, location and cost. A suggestion was made to use the Guest House because it would not cost anything; other locations in Greenbelt are too expensive. In response to an inquiry from Agans, Director Boswell stated that the Buildings Committee would need at least three more weeks before they are able to present a report to the Board, and that they will not be ready to present anything to the membership before the holidays. He noted that the report is not necessary for the Board retreat.

The Board began discussing the date of the retreat. It was noted that for 2009 audit purposes the retreat would need to be paid for by the end of 2009 but the actual event could occur early in 2010. The Board set the date for Sunday, January 24, 2010; the Guest House is available on that day. The retreat would begin around 9:00 a.m. and could last through dinner, or until just before dinner, at which point the Board may choose to go out to eat as a group. General Manager Overdurff will look into Nixon Farm for that date as well, though it may prove to be too expensive.

7. Items of Information

The Board discussed the upcoming committee training. Director Boswell will be leading the discussion/brainstorming session focusing on how to recruit new committee members. General Manager Overdurff will prepare the green training manual, and will provide an updated copy for Agans and Boswell before the training. An e-vite was sent to all committee members. In addition, a message was posted on the Greenbelters yahoo group page extending an invitation to any GHI members who may be interested in joining a committee. Director McFadden was appointed to the position of “ambassador”, welcoming prospective committee members to the training and directing them into the meeting.

General Manager Overdurff passed out the paperwork related to the upcoming executive session scheduled the same evening. The Board will hold the executive session in the lobby while members file into the Boardroom for the committee training. Executive session will begin at 7:00, and the committee training will begin at 7:30.

8. President

President Agans shared an email she received from Laura Kressler thanking the Board for helping the court to make the best of a bad situation. She announced appointments to committees: Irvin Wartell, Member and Community Relations; Jo-Anne Fournier, Communications; Richard Olsen, Woodlands; Ryan McClellan, Architectural Review. Agans shared that she is looking forward to the upcoming Utopian Film Festival. She also shared information about a GHI forum with the city council candidates, which will be held on Tuesday,

October 6 at 7:30 p.m. She explained that the first part of the forum will consist of a set list of questions to ask the candidates, and the second part will be open for attendees to ask questions of the candidates. President Agans asked the Board members to email questions they would like asked of the candidates by the following week. It was suggested that the candidates be given a list of questions or possible topics to be discussed prior to the forum.

9. Board Members

Director Novinski explained the new ARC meeting setup to the Board. A new member to the committee suggested that the current setup was a bit ominous for those members coming to meet before the committee. A new setup in the lobby was used at the last meeting, which felt friendlier to the committee members and those other people involved in the meeting. However, if the committee were to continue to use the lobby, it would involve Staff Engineer Sporney moving many things into the lobby. If the committee were to continue using the Boardroom, the ARC members may consider sitting in front of the Board table instead of behind them. Novinski also stated that Elizabeth Shepard has been a member of ARC since 2003. She suggested that the Board reward her dedicated service to the committee by sending her a letter of thanks for all that she has done through the years. President Agans suggested that Shepard could be named Volunteer of the Year.

Director Lewis spoke about October as National Co-op Month. She explained that there would be two banners across Southway and Crescent Road, a display case in the library, and a calendar of co-op events. Committee members can add items to the library display. Due to the upcoming city election, there will be limited space in the News Review for information on co-op month, but Lewis hopes to get one article and the calendar in the News Review. There will be a GHI booth at the Farmers' Market on October 4. Lewis shared that next week is the deadline for the November/December issue of the Communicator. In addition, the Communications Committee will be discussing redesign of the co-op's website and new ways to manage emails at its next meeting. Director Lewis shared concerns from the Finance Committee regarding the 2010-2011 tax situation: GHI will not know its tax increase until December, and so the members' coop fees will not be able to be set until after the tax information is received. The Board briefly discussed the possibility of changing GHI's fiscal year to accommodate the tax increase. Director Lewis shared that the Marketing Committee will be conducting a focus group on marketing GHI to University of Maryland faculty and staff who live in Greenbelt. Leaders for the focus group will be trained by Alice Mitchell.

Director McFadden shared that the Marketing Committee will help to staff a table at the Farmers' Market on October 11; the table will provide publicity for outreach. McFadden expressed interest in becoming a formal member of the Marketing Committee. She shared that public transportation in Greenbelt may shrink to one bus route serving all of Greenbelt. The next meeting of the Companion Animal Committee will be held on September 30.

Director Morse asked the Board if they received the E-Communicator, and shared a feature called "Around the Home Jar" that provides helpful tips about things you can do in and around your home. Morse also shared an anecdote of being pulled over by Greenbelt Police for driving too slowly on Ridge Road.

Director Hickey stated that he went to the Greenbelt Police Station and saw monitor screens connected to video cameras set up around Greenbelt. The center and bridge are completely covered by cameras, and are monitored. There are no cameras set up in Greenbelt West as of yet.

Director Boswell explained a sensitivity analysis that is being worked on by the Buildings Committee. Boswell expressed the need for someone who knows how to design a capital campaign of the magnitude needed by GHI. General Manager Overdurff stated that a planning session to discuss that issue would be held on September 24. For the upcoming Communicator, Boswell is writing an article about the role of members in the coop. He shared that he will be out of the country from October 2-16.

Director James shared information about an upcoming weed removal. He shared the results from M&CR's booth at the Labor Day Festival, as well as the booth winning fourth prize. James stated that the chair of M&CR is stepping down, and that a new chairperson is needed. He explained that the GHI membership picnic will be held on October 4 from 1-3 p.m. and that Board members can come at noon to help the committee set up. It will be held outside the GHI office building, rain or shine, though the doors to the building will be unlocked. Candidates for city council will be invited. Director Boswell asked about the "What I like about Greenbelt" quotes from the booth at the Labor Day Festival. It was suggested to include some of the comments in upcoming issues of the Communicator.

10. Manager

General Manager Overdurff shared that GHI now has a license plate camera in operation outside of the GHI office building, as well as the cameras already in use in the back of the building. She shared information on a conference focused on condos and condo insurance coming up on September 23 at Greenbriar. The tax appeal will take place on September 30 in the evening in Upper Marlboro. Board members may attend if they wish, but the lawyer will do all presentations. At the September 28 meeting of the City Council, a proclamation will be made for National Coop Month. President Agans will attend to receive the proclamation. Overdurff gave an update on the right-of-way work from Terry Hruby. A quote was received to do surveying and drafting of new boundaries; Hruby will be drafting a memo to make the City Manager aware of it. The work will be requested at some point in October. If the council is comfortable changing the property line, it will be brought to the GHI Board for approval after which the changes will be staked out and members may offer feedback. Once the actual survey is finalized, it will be sent to the utility companies, which may prove to be the most time-consuming step in the process. Overdurff will draft a letter to affected members outlining the process, without including any timelines. Overdurff also informed the Board that a member living on Westway called earlier in the week to discuss curbs and gutters in the City budget. Overdurff followed up with the City, who told her that the City has only received 10% of the funds expected from the state, and so cuts will need to be made. Overdurff will watch future City Council meeting agendas for this item.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN.

Moved: Boswell

Seconded: McFadden

Carried 8

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Ed James
Secretary