

VILLAGE OF FOUNTAINVIEW

Minutes of the Fountainview General Meeting (ZOOM)

Wednesday, February 10, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

ATTENDEES

Karen Baker
Esther Boone
Mary Davis
Dennis Duckett

Patty Hagan
Debbie Ingram
Cam Vu
Mel Wenneman

President Patty Hagan opened the meeting at 6:30. Secretary Esther Boone read the minutes from the 12-09-20 and the 12-19-20 meetings. Patty asked for questions or corrections of the minutes; there were none. Mary Davis made a motion to accept the minutes as read. Dennis Duckett seconded. The minutes were accepted by vote as read.

Treasurer Cam Vu read the Treasurer's report. Patty asked for questions. There were none. The Treasurer's report will be filed with the minutes.

Patty asked Karen Baker for an update on the flooring project. Karen reported that she spoke with the contractor and he stated that the flooring will be installed during that the last week of February. He will call Karen February 22nd to confirm his schedule. The contractor stated that FirstService Residential was very quick in getting the check to him, but that the postal service has been slow lately. He had delayed ordering the floor tiling until he received the check, but considering the postal delays, he went ahead and ordered the materials.

Karen also stated that as soon as the flooring is done she would like to have the painting started, and considering the postal delays, she thinks we should have FirstService Residential cut and deliver the check as soon as possible so the painting can begin soon after the flooring is done. Karen also explained that while the flooring is being done the workmen will need access to some of the units. The flooring will be installed in sections and will take about five days to do the floor. They have to get to the transition strips in the doorways, requiring that the residents either be there or give their keys to someone who will be available. Access to storage doors will also be needed. Karen responded to a question from Dennis asking if the carpeting will stay in the storage rooms. Karen answered yes, and there will be a threshold transitioning from the carpet to the tile. Samantha Summers has said that she will create a notice to be distributed letting residents know about the need for access. Patty asked for questions and thanked Karen for her work on this project.

Patty asked Dennis Duckett for an update on the water bills. Dennis gave a brief background, explain that last June we introduced a water bill policy to be used to calculate water bills for residents in the three buildings. Dennis said that we needed the new policy because we hoped

to have smart meters installed last year, but the city of Newark was not able to do that at that time, probably because of the Covid pandemic. So we had to come up with a way to calculate our water bills each month until we do get the smart meters installed. It involved dividing the total water bill of each building by the number of occupants in the buildings. That method allowed us to break even for the last $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year. So far this year we are on schedule.

Dennis reported that he found that there were various situations that made counting the occupants difficult. He discovered that some units that were vacant for long periods of time were getting water bills anyway. In some cases the occupants had passed away or moved to a nursing home for an extended period of time or sold the unit, and the unit was vacant until the new owner moved in. Some units were abandoned or (in a small number of situations) were in the hands of a bank. In some cases people took extended vacations. In all cases we charged the owners the regular amounts. The number of these situations was actually small.

Following this brief history, Dennis made a motion that effective January 1 of this year all units that are unoccupied for a minimum of one full month will not receive a bill for that month. If the unit remains unoccupied for an additional month it will still not receive a water bill for that period of time. A partial month will not be included in calculations. In other words, if an owner goes away for a one or two week vacation, we will not try to compute how that might affect the water bill. Dennis added that the need for these complicated calculations will disappear, of course, when we get the smart meters. Cam Vu seconded Dennis's motion.

Jerry Clifton offered that even if Fountainview used no water for a month, the city would still have basic expenses such as administration and infrastructure, and perhaps should apply a minimum service fee regardless of interrupted occupancy. He and Patty shared a conversation listing how those expenses are reflected in the water bills. Debbie Ingram (?) suggested that we have a time frame in which owners must advise us of planned vacancies. Dennis responded that that was necessary part of the new policy. Dave Kelly expressed concern for situations like leaky faucets that are not repaired, and the other unit owners are forced to pay for the wasted water. Dave discussed and described several situations in which high water usage records can be generated by unattended plumbing problems, even if small problems, and the extreme costs of water damage. He suggested that perhaps we should hire someone to inspect and scan meters outside the buildings, and monitor the status of plumbing of units inside. He warned about situations in which no one was checking on vacant units. Patty referred to the age and poor condition of our current meters, with 20-25 of them broken. She agreed that we have a bad situation and that we cannot invest money in a system we are trying to get rid of, so we are stuck with it for now. Concern was expressed that there could be a long delay in obtaining the smart meters, and Patty assured the gathering that Cam Vu has been in constant contact with the people in charge.

In response to a question from Rosario Balzamo, Dennis re-stated that each building's total water bill is divided by the number of occupants in that building, and that the average bill is approximately \$2,000 more or less per building.

Bill Scheper asked if the populations of the buildings will be checked each month for changes such as sales of units. He added that we need regular inspections of vacant units, and gave several recent examples of vacant units with problems. Patty stated that the water bills for each building have increased by \$40. Jerry Clifton stated that he has observed that Cam Vu has been in constant contact with Newark's City Manager and he believes that the smart meters will be delivered in 3-4 weeks. Jerry cautioned the gathering that once the smart meters arrive there will be delays because of the complication and size of the task of installing them. He added that once the installing is complete there will be equity: careless use of water will directly cost the persons involved. He commended the Fountainview Association for putting up with the current situation, and he is sure that the smart meters will encourage conservation of water,

Debbie Ingram advised that a motion was still on the floor, and that we could move forward voting as a council on Dennis Duckett's motion as he presented it, or, if we need more details, we could postpone the vote and add to Dennis's motion Jerry Clifton's suggestion that we add a minimum service fee to the water bills. We could then vote on the motion "as amended". Patty stated that the new fees that went into effect this month add approximately \$80 a month per building. Patty said she felt we should postpone voting on the motion and have more discussion on how we would cover the \$120, and Debbie Ingram made a motion that we postpone voting on Dennis's motion until we have a further look into it. Patty asked for a second to the motion. **ESTHER CANNOT RECOGNIZE WHO SECONDED** Esther asked Patty to re-state the motion for her notes for the minutes. Patty said "We are going to hold off on the motion until we can look at the new service charges that we are getting from the city and how they should be distributed." The motion to delay the vote was seconded and approved by vote. The motion is postponed until next month. ESTHER'S TAPE DOESN'T TELL WHO SECONDED. IS AT 39.43 ON THE TAPE.

Patty advised the group that although the police have done some initial outside surveying, they have not yet provided a complete safety survey. She hopes it will be finished next month.

Patty advised us that Mary Ellen Fish has resigned from the Council due to health issues, so we have one open position. Anyone interested in filling it should call Patty.

Patty advised us that there has been a covid-related death in Building 2000.

Patty made a motion to create a committee to over-see our Reserves Fund. The members of the committee will be Dennis Duckett, Cam Vu, and Jim Millan. Mel Wenneman seconded the motion. Patty asked for any questions. Karen Baker asked Patty to describe the duties of the committee. Patty replied that, for example, the committee would monitor costs, making sure comparisons of fees were made in anything dealing with banks. The committee would be a way of making sure that more people look at the Reserve Funds and make sure the money stays there. Patty asked for a vote from the Council members. The motion was approved by vote of all Council members present.

Patty called for further questions and a motion to adjourn. Karen Baker made a motion to adjourn, and Mel Wennenman seconded it. The motion was approved by vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:15pm. The next meeting will be March 10th.

Respectfully submitted,

Esther Y. Boone Secretary