

Condo Board Report February 5, 2004

Community Center Decisions:

- **Project Manager/Lot Owners' Representative Hired**

John Steele, a very experienced professional project manager, was hired by the Board to represent Venture Out's interests on all aspects of the renovation of the Community Center. The average budget of projects he has managed runs \$2,000,000. He has managed projects with a budget as high as \$800,000,000. Earlier this week, he met with Concord, with CCBG, the Condo Board and Venture Out residents. A primary task is to see that our project does not exceed \$4,000,000.

He recommended that the Board hire Concord to be our contractor for a number of reasons: other buildings that Concord has constructed are impressive; they intend to obtain three or more bids for each sub contract, and will contract out 85 to 90% of the work; their unit prices are reasonable; and, to put the project out for bids again would substantially delay the project. He will review the selection of each sub contractor.

- **Concord Chosen to be the Contractor for the Community Center Renovation Project**

The Board voted unanimously to contract with Concord to construct the new Community Center. John Steele will review the contract and recommend any needed changes to the Board.

Report of other Agenda Items

President's Report, Merv Houghton

"When Larry, Bill and I joined the Board in the spring of 2001, we were confronted with the fact that Venture Out was losing three upper-level long-time staff members. They were Jerry Minnis, Marj Jarvis and our General Manager, Marilyn Baker, whose collective experience with VO was 48 years. What a rude awakening. My first assignment was to head up a three-man search committee – the other members were Earl Herring and Bill Weiss – whose task it was to find a new manager.

"This all happened from late August until mid-October when we were miles away from the park. During the seven-week search period that followed, we were introduced to the competencies of our corporate secretary, Coreen Henry, who became the silent, efficient fourth member of the team. It is difficult to comprehend the amount of paper work Coreen handled during the search. She put the advertisement in newspapers; wrote the 150 applicants inviting resumes; wrote the applicants again advising them of the process and the time lines they could expect; she faxed these mountains of resumes to Earl, Bill and me; and then one by one she advised and thanked the unsuccessful candidates as they fell by the wayside. When we were down to the final 20 candidates she asked for and received letters of reference. And then lastly, she arranged an interview schedule for the nine finalists. I wonder how often Earl, Bill and I were on the phone with Coreen. I might add this was pre-computer time for me.

"You remember what a great dancer Fred Astaire was and all the praise he received. But we seem to forget that Ginger Rogers was doing everything he was doing only backward. That was our Coreen. Thank you Coreen.

"The rest is history. The Condo Board hires only one employee. We think we did a pretty darn good job."

Manager's Report, Mary Schmit (excerpts)

"The past two weeks we have been spending much time in meetings related to the new Community Center and trying to get answers for the transition process. Just yesterday afternoon we received word that the City will allow the use of the annex. Therefore, it now becomes incumbent upon us to determine what those uses will be.

"We also received some initial cost estimates for office trailer modules as a substitute for the activity office. At first blush they are very expensive, \$25,000 - \$30,000 for one year's use as an example, and so we are faced with the option of is there a better way to spend that money?

"We also tallied up the utilities for the property and will be able to safely say that by shutting down the building as quickly as possible in April, we should anticipate a minimum of \$40,000 savings. These cost savings can go to offset other transition expenses.

"We met with our insurance representative last week and were pleased to see initially only a slight increase in our rates; however we have asked him to go back and recalculate some building values and contents and then come back to us with a final proposal. It is notable that his quote was \$20,000 lower than another received.

"During the period of construction, the builder's risk insurance will cover the Community Center, and we will be credited back any dollars that would have been charged for the property coverage of this building. In addition, our Rep will review our contractor's insurance and make certain that Venture Out is fully covered in the event of any accident or liability issue as 'Additional Named Insured' on the Builders Risk policy.

"We are getting bids on the replacement of the isolation valves. I do expect to ask the Board to approve these at budget, and allow us to begin the work in April so that we might complete as many replacements as possible prior to the beginning of construction. Thom, our Maintenance Supervisor, would like to begin this process on the west side of the park as there are fewer valves and the majority of his problems seem to occur on this side of the park, no doubt due to age.

"Realtors have sold seven units in the last two weeks with many of the new owners expressing their intent to remove the old units and install new, or build new.

"I am also very pleased with the rental department. They are already leasing units for next year...Phyllis has ZERO availability or is 100% leased for this season."

Treasurer's Report, Bill Weiss

The report reflects financial statements dated December 31, 2003, the mid-point of our fiscal year.

Revenue for the current month is 5% over budget and 6 % year to date based mainly on revenues from the variable income accounts such as Real Estate sales and rentals, space rental and laundry facilities.

Expenses are on budget with a few minor exceptions. For example, water and sewer are under for the month but slightly over for the year. This year, both income and expense budget items were allocated to the month in which they occur rather than spread equally over 12 months. He commended Len Niemyski for making this change.

The MRR fund balance stands at \$508, 371.52.

The Special Assessments for the building fund received to date total \$602, 200.

Social Board Report, Connie Wray, President

A budget impact meeting to assist the clubs' executive with the impact on their budgets and financial obligations next season took place January 23. Core operating costs of the Activity Office will continue next year but without many of the income generating programs such as Monday night programs, dances and vendor sales.

Russ Miller's term on the Memorial Committee is completed. The new member, joining Willie Walenta and Pat Laurita, is Helen Christiansen.

At the Social Board annual meeting, scheduled for March 16, four new directors will be elected.

Channel 11's Temporary Home near Shuffleboard Courts

The Handymen's Club will construct an 8' x 10' extension to the Shuffleboard building to house the Channel 11 studio until the new Community Center is completed. When no longer needed by Channel 11, this facility will be used by the Shuffleboard Club.

Commemorating the Present Community Center

An event commemorating the present building will be held March 22, 2004 at 1:30 in the Ballroom. Don and Rose Plummer are heading the committee to plan this event.

Rude and Verbally Abusive Residents

The need for a policy regarding residents who are rude or verbally abusive to staff or volunteers was discussed following Dave Green's comments (see copy attached) about recent egregious incidents. The most serious example resulted in the resignation of a staff member. This problem, attributable to only a very few of our residents, will be discussed further at a coffee session.

Florence Brownridge

Dave Green

Abuse of staff, employees and volunteer workers. Is this a problem at VO?

The following comments pertain to a perceived problem: verbal abuse of staff, employees, volunteer workers, and guests in Venture Out. A few examples:

- *Just recently we had a water problem and the water in the Park was turned off for ELEVEN MINUTES. During that brief time, THIRTEEN people called to complain – not to inform staff or to ask a question, but to COMPLAIN. A few of them, unfortunately, did so with PROFANITY and ANGER sufficient to frighten and/or intimidate staff.*
- *A resident directed such anger and verbal abuse at one of our women employees that the employee resigned. We have lost a valued employee.*
- *A party staying in one of our pull-throughs was so pleased with Venture Out that she stopped to visit with our Manager and to express their interest in buying. A few days later, she told a different story. Each day she had walked her dog to the Pet Walk and back, and each day, during her walk, someone YELLED AT HER about having her dog out on the street. She stopped by Mary's office again, but this time to say that they were leaving and had changed their mind about buying.*
- *Last FRIDAY, I stopped by the Administration Building just before closing time on an errand. At the desk, I saw PJ (one of the happiest, nicest people I know – she makes me smile whenever I see her). I stopped to wish her a nice weekend, and was disappointed to hear her say: "Thanks. I need it. This afternoon has really been bad." When I asked her why, she told me about two separate instances that afternoon when residents had yelled at her time and again in a very irate manner. One party was late with his quarterly payment and had been informed of the \$5.00 late fee. And, he was there to take it out on her and to challenge her to 'just try to make him pay that \$5.00'. As if it were PJ's fault. As if PJ could make the fine go away. I looked at PJ's fellow worker, Marge, who just nodded her head in support and in sympathy.*
- *One day, guests came to visit us. We wanted to show off Venture Out, so we set out for the Rec Center. As our friend drove his car into the parking circle around the Center, he turned left into a parking space right alongside the driveway. Before we could finish explaining that he was supposed to only make a right turn, someone came running across from one of the units yelling at him, questioning if he had the necessary intelligence to have a driver's license. These were, and still are, good friends, and we have had many laughs about the incident. Can you guess what they remember most about their visit to Venture Out?*

We all know that this type of behavior is not at all typical of Venture Out residents. At a gathering that filled the Oasis one evening last year, I happened to sit next to a couple visiting here for a week. It was obvious that they were enjoying VO, so I asked what they liked best. I expected to hear about the palm trees, the flowers, the pools. But, I was even more pleased when they gestured around the crowded room and said simply: *The People. You've got great people here!* Like most of her residents, Venture Out does have both an "outer" and an "inner" beauty. We can't afford to lose that.

Your Condo Board is very concerned about the few who are abusive, and your Board is considering ways in which to protect our employees and our volunteers. One possibility is to require the abusive party to appear before a Committee of Condo Board Directors. This problem involves just a very small number of our residents, but it occurs too often.

We invite your input, and we encourage your help in addressing this concern in positive ways. Are you concerned?