

# **ST. JAMES TOWERS | MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023**

## **DIRECTOR'S MEETING OF ST. JAMES TOWERS, INC.**

The Meeting started at 7:02 Via GoToMeeting Video Conference Call

**Directors Present:** Dr. Noreen Hosier, Mr. Patrick Stennett, Mr. Warren Harding, Mr. Ronald Roxey, Ms. Yvonne Hilton, Ms. Arlene Arrington, Mr. Rudy Moore,

**Directors Absent:** Ms. Nicole McKnight, Mr. Claudio Jordan

**Building Manager:** Nicole Duncan

### **Armstrong Teasdale Workshops**

Dr. Hosier sent the board information on a series of web-based workshops offered by the corporate attorney's firm, Armstrong Teasdale, and encouraged the board (especially new members) to participate.

### **Manager's Report**

- Apartment Vacancy Updates:
  - Renovations on two apartments have been completed (17A, 20H), HPD approvals pending
  - 19B: bathtub restoration only item left to be completed
  - Apartment 21I was reassigned to applicant previously approved for 1G. This is due to the ongoing delay of unit 1G. Restoration in progress.
  - 5J Renovations
    - Comparison chart consisting of four contractors was reviewed by board; L.E.S. Construction (Munchy) was the lowest bidder. Munchy is currently working on apt. 21I, which is in its second week. The next lowest bidder, Shakti Construction (Happy) is not working on any apartments at St. James; Dr. Hosier recommended that Ms. Duncan negotiate with Shakti to meet L.E.S.' price to work on 5J.
- Shareholder of 6K submitted scope of work and contractor insurance for kitchen and bathroom repairs. Ms. Duncan verified the contractor's qualifications and license information.
- BrightView: scheduled to walk through on Wednesday, 2/15/23 and prepare and submit a limited maintenance service agreement. Once the time is confirmed, Ms. Duncan will notify any board members who are available to participate in the walk-through.
  - Dr. Hosier discussed the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as justification for vendors to increase their prices for services. She noted that the CPI increase is less than 6 percent as of December, 2022; BrightView's proposal quotes an increase based on a 7 percent CPI increase. She asked Ms. Duncan to discuss this issue with BrightView and question their rationale for the 7 percent CPI increase. In the meantime, Dr. Hosier suggested that St. James proceed with contracting with BrightView.
- Apt. 5L (Philips): St. James received the outstanding balance of \$24,110.27, which covers up to January. Due to court proceeding delays, monies from arrears in other apartments will be further delayed.
- Playground Update: Improvements were observed. The area will remain closed until final work is completed. Installing rebar for benches is pending. The contractor noted that the sidewalk covering the Lafayette Ave. driveway needs repaving. Ms. Duncan will send the contractor property line information indicating the property boundaries of St. James

Towers. Dr. Hosier asked our corporate attorney about releasing DV Construction's performance bond, since more than 90 percent of the playground work has been completed. Response from the attorney is pending.

- Security resignation and replacement: On 2/8/23, Security Officer Norris Allen resigned. Officer Alex Morales has been assigned as his replacement effective immediately. He will be working at the front desk as well as a Rover on different shifts.

## **OTHER ITEMS**

**Utility Pass-Through Denial by HPD:** Dr. Hosier discussed HPD's denial of St. James Towers to impose a utility pass-through to cover increasing utility costs. Our corporate attorney reached out to HPD for an explanation for the denial, and they responded that St. James has a reserve account in the amount of over \$900,000 to that could be used to cover utility costs until December, 2023. However, this account is a capital reserve account to be used for capital projects. The professionals serving St. James are questioning whether HPD is implying that the corporation may use reserve funds for both operating and capital purposes, which differs from HPD Policy. A response from HPD is pending.

**Cycle 9:** Dr. Hosier mentioned that the Cycle 9 work should be scheduled to start by June, but given the lack of funds, the project will probably be postponed, placing St. James in the position of paying penalties. But if probing is done and a repair plan is filed with the Department of Buildings without completing repairs before February 21, 2024, and the building is deemed safe, the fine will be \$1000 per month. If probing is not done and no repair plan is filed, the fine would be higher. The number of probes to be done needs to be determined (11 recommended by Rand or 12 recommended by Lawless). The cost per probe is cheaper with Lawless; therefore, the proposal with Rand from 2020 should be terminated. Corporate attorney Marijana Predovan is reviewing the case to determine whether St. James is entitled to a downpayment refund since probing had not been done. Other factors to consider: installing scaffolding to perform probing, or whether the probing can be done by propulsion and the costs of these methods. It was uncertain whether scaffolding is required for propelling; Ms. Duncan will inquire.

**Meeting with Professionals:** The next meeting with the professionals is March 6, 2023 at 7 PM. Accountant Robert Mellina will provide a midyear financial report the week before for review.

**Funding from City Council President:** Discretionary funds from the Brooklyn Borough President are available; Patrick Stennett will investigate the application process.

**Elect-U.S.:** The proposed price for packaged services is \$2,650.00 (which includes a \$100 discount) compared to a per meeting price of \$3600 (\$500 per quarterly meeting, \$600 for Candidates' Night, \$1500 for Annual Meeting). The contract price is based on a 7 percent CPI increase; Ms. Duncan will inquire into why Elect US have a higher level than the national rate of under 6 percent. Further discussion is tabled until the next meeting.

**No Standing Signs:** No Standing signs will be installed by the front entrance of the building once additional materials are delivered.

**Arm Barrier Update:** No response from contractor for repair date.

**BuildingLink:** The BuildingLink program was launched to all households February 10, 2023. The new management computer was set up on 2/9/23. The computer setup for Maintenance will be completed by 2/15/23 due to wiring connections.

**Community Room Charges:** Comparisons among the following buildings for Community Room fees were as follows:

- St. James - \$425 with \$100 deposit
- Lindsay Park - \$825 with \$200 deposit (similar in size to St. James)
- Ryerson – was \$600 before they closed for renovations

Board will discuss increasing Community Room fees at St. James.

**Community Leaders Meeting with Rep. Velazquez:** Wednesday, Feb 22nd from 6-8 PM at the Ingersoll Community Center. Please let Ms. Duncan know whether you wish to attend.

**Hallway Lights:** Ronald Roxey reported that the timing of turning off the hallway lights is earlier than expected. Adjustments need to be made for the time change from Daylight Saving to Standard. Ms. Duncan will follow up.

**Bus Redesign Petition:** Warren Harding reported that the final meeting for the MTA redesign is March 9. He contacted Councilmember Hudson's office and was told that a copy of the petition with the collected signatures can be sent to the Councilmember's office, who will forward them to their MTA contact. They also recommend that we send the original to the MTA to emphasize the importance of the matter. Mr. Harding also mentioned that the MTA website has a page where individuals can submit comments and suggested that the link be posted in BuildingLink for cooperators to access. The petition that has been available to sign at the building's front entrance will remain for another two weeks.

**Survey Questions:** Dr. Hosier reminded board members to send ideas for survey questions to Nicole McKnight.

The meeting ended at 8:51 PM.

Minutes prepared by Warren Harding, Secretary



2/19/2023

Signature

Date