

Minutes of the CICA Housing Committee, Tuesday February 28, 2012 at 7:15 at the Parish House

Present: Donna Damon, Bob Earnest, Deb Hall, Beth Howe, Ruth Slagle, Erin Whetham
Absent: Mabel Doughty, David Whiston and John Wilson

Also present: Skipper Dyer, Valerie Riddle and Bobby Riddle

1. Possibility of paying for meeting at the Parish House

Beth said she had been talking to Ariette, the Church secretary, about meeting at the Parish House. Ariette said that the Church is considering whether it should change some or all groups for meeting at the Parish House since the Church needs more income. On the other side, she had said that it is to the Church's benefit within the larger Methodist Church organization to have its facilities used by members of the community. That is why they have put a sign-up sheet in the Parish House.

Beth asked what CICA's response would be if the Church did adopt a payment policy? Several people said they thought, but were not sure, that it would be possible to meet at the Rec or the Hall at no cost. On the other hand, CICA has always met at the Parish House. Donna said the Town did give a donation at the end of the transition to becoming a new town. Bob said that some organizations like the food coop do pay, but since the Church does not bill them, they tend to be erratic. Deb said that it would make more sense to charge non-profits that have paid membership and a regular yearly income, which CICA does not.

Deb suggested adding the item to the next agenda so that people can think about it. Beth will check on whether the Rec and the Hall do or do not charge groups to meet there.

2. Vote to authorize Bob Earnest to sign on behalf of CICA

Beth said there are two sets of papers coming up that require Bob to have a vote from the CICA Board to sign for the organization. One is a letter of credit with Camden National Bank. MSHA requires us to have either a letter of credit or a construction bond for 20 percent of the value of the project – around \$70,000, in case SHR does not get finished. Normally developers have a line of credit with a bank and the bank can issue such a letter of credit. But neither CICA nor Spring Island have lines of credit. Camden National Bank is willing to give CICA a letter of credit if Bob, Beth and John pledge their personal securities. It is a bit like a loan and has a closing where Bob would sign for CICA. Donna said there had been an arrangement like this when Archipelago had started up, but it was a shame to have to have officers have to pledge their resources. Beth said that the officers do not expect the project not to be completed. Deb moved, seconded by Ruth to authorize Bob Earnest to sign for CICA at the closing on a letter of credit with Camden National Bank. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Beth said the same kind of authorization is needed for the MSHA closing which is coming up. Donna asked when it would be. Bob said that MSHA and Lew have been working on the papers for it and that Liza thinks it will be around March 17. Deb moved, seconded by Erin that Bob Earnest be authorized to sign papers on CICA's behalf at the closing with MSHA on the School House Road project. Passed unanimously.

3. CICA Draft Pet Policy

Donna said she thought we should not define pets. Beth agreed – she was carried away. Ruth said understands the log of allowing pets but does not really like it. What if we had a policy that people who have pets already can keep them, but that people who don't or want additional animals can't get new ones? Deb was worried about intra-tenant fights over things like noise, and she thinks it will be impossible for CICA to evict anyone, especially since people will say their pets are well trained and quiet, etc. Bob said that the application asks how well trained/housebroken etc the pet(s) are and if it turns out to the contrary, that information will be grounds for eviction. Deb also does not want to allow having dogs on runs outside – it makes a mess of the yard and can be a problem for neighbors. Beth said she would take this out.

Donna said she thought that we should not dictate what people should do with their pets on non-CICA property. Beth said that was just a paraphrase of the Town Dog Ordinance. People agreed that it was not CICA's job to enforce the dog ordinance. So the specifics of the ordinance will be taken out.

Donna said she thought the Tenant Selection Committee should not be concerned about pets – we should accept applicants and then deal with pets.. Beth said that she thought the pets had to be part of the basic decision. There are also provisions about pets in the lease that the tenant has to sign, and that means that CICA has to give permission as well.

Someone asked how the pet deposit would work. It will not be a variable rate depending on what kind of animal it is. Beth said it is part of the general security deposit. Donna said she did not think it should be used to cover damaged not done by the pet. Bob said that John had intended that the two be lumped together but was suggesting that the non-pet deposit could be used to cover pet damage but not the other way around. So the pet deposit would not be used if damage was not from the pet.

Donna moved to adopt the Pet Policy as amended. Bob seconded. Adopted unanimously.

4. Eligibility criteria.

The pet language should be strengthened and written permission from CICA was added. Donna said that she didn't understand what community ties were and suggested connections instead. She also asked why paid work for the Town or a voluntary organization would matter. We will have the information about their paid employment. Bob said it was an effort to reward contributing to the community. Beth said she would take out "paid". There was a discussion of whether it was fair to require two unmarried people to both pay the minimum rent, when a couple would only have to pay the minimum only once. Otherwise there were no changes in the Eligibility Criteria.

Deb said that she had understood at the beginning of the process that one of the units had to be rented to someone in the very low income category. Bob said he thought that had been dropped. He looked in his documents and said this was not a requirement.

Donna asked what would happen to the rent if a family had a child in college who returned to live at home. Would that child have to pay rent? Beth said she thought that a situation like this would have to be decided on the discretion of the landlord. We should not cover all possible situations in the application materials.

5. Draft Application

Deb said we should take the question of whether they smoke out of the application. We have to make clear that smoking is not allowed before they fill out the application. Beth agreed and then found she did not have the correct version. Bob will send her corrections about smoking.

Donna asked whether it mattered whether applicants had had to move in the summer for any rentals other than their present one. Beth said she thought not but had trouble taking out the formatting. She will take all but the first one out.

6. Lease

Under Maintenance, Donna asked whether the tenant could have a garden. Beth said she would add it. Beth asked Bob what kind of fuel would run the heat. He said bottled gas in large “pigs”. There are several distributors on the mainland who come out to refill tanks on the island. The tenants should have a contract with one of them.

Donna asked where guests should park. Several people said “in the road”. It was agreed to add that guests should not park in the spaces of the other tenant.

The pet provisions had already been dealt with.

Deb asked whether the tenant was required to give 30 days notice if they decided not to renew the lease. Beth said she would add it [but it is already in 31. Extension of the lease that either the landlord or the tenant can serve written notice of termination on the other.]

Deb asked if there is a provision that tenants can't have microwave ovens. Bob said there is something in MSHA's regs about that. He looked it up and it is that MSHA does not allow built-in microwaves or ice-makers. Tenants can provide their own.

7. Update on Tenant Selection Committee

Beth said she had send out 8 requests to people to be on this committee yesterday. She has had one acceptance so far. Erin asked how the people were chosen to be asked. Beth said the group had developed a list made up of some people who had served before and some additional candidates. She had sent letters to the first 8 people and if she did not get enough members, she would send to the second 8.

8. Newsletter

Donna said she thought the section on the origin and development of the project was too complicated and should be left out. Beth said she had wanted to explain that the project had been vetted at the Town and State levels by a lot of people. Deb said she thought it was useful to have it. Donna said that she thought it would be better not to mention where the paths on the property went, but just that they would be protected. Beth agreed.

Bob said he thought it might be better not to say how visible the building will be, since we can't be sure.

Donna said she thought we should say that one unit is larger than the other. How will it be decided who gets which? Bob said this is only an issue this first time and that the Tenant Selection Committee can decide using some common sense rationale about the household sizes and composition.

Donna said she thought applications should be available in the Store and at the Town Office. Beth agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Howe