

UP 3259 CAPITAL HILL APARTMENTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING No 85
6th February, 2017

Minutes

Venue: Apartment 115/21

Present: David Campbell (DC), Chairman & Secretary, 205/19; Peter Ford (PF), Treasurer 115/21; Horace Saducas (HS), 118/23.

Apology: Terry Gassner (TG), 12/19.

a. **WHS Matters.**

Nil report.

b. **Treasurer's Report.**

PF reported that the Balance Sheet as of 31st January records our Total Assets as \$316,443.04, which comprise \$258,167.82 for the Admin Fund and \$58,275.22 for the Sinking Fund. That's a very satisfactory net improvement in our position of over \$70,000 this financial year. Total Admin Fund expenditure for the first five months of our FY is \$76,062.34 out of a budget allocation for 2016/17 of \$232,563.

Levies in arrears amount to \$7,901.83, which the Committee regard as too high for this point in the budget cycle; half-yearly levies were due over two months ago. Our \$100,000 Term Deposit matures this week; the Committee decided to renew it for three months, thus keeping open the possibility of using it should the solar power prospect be realized in the near future. **Action: MA**

c. **Landscape Report.**

HS has been applying apply liquid fertiliser to the nature strip. The recent spate of very hot weather means hand-watering is now required and a new roster has been drawn up. Recent storm damage to trees has been repaired. Dead patches in the lawns need attention; crimson sentries brushing against walls need pruning. Dead patches in the lawns need repair. Paspalum and other weeds have been treated. Timings for irrigating the balcony planter boxes have been adjusted to cater for the current hot weather. Fertilising and weed killing is needed on the nature strip. Last July, the *Grevillea* in front of the buildings were replaced with *Azalea* Red Wing and *Pieris* Christmas Cheer. They have since taken well but seem to be appreciated by some people to the extent that a few plants have been dug up and stolen. Others have died, presumably under heat stress. They will be replaced. The landscape contractor has been tasked accordingly.

TG raised the question of taps being installed at the ends of the 17/19 and 22/23 ramps to facilitate hand watering of the nature strips. This would facilitate an irksome task. He also discussed the installation of an irrigation system in the nature strips. Both matters have been examined in the past but despite their obvious merits, the costs are still considered to be prohibitive. Nevertheless, further enquiry will be made. **Action: TG**

d. **Remedial Insurance Work.**

Renewed cracking in the western parapet wall between Buildings 17 and 19 will be repaired under Remedial's warranty. Remedial has been hastened.

e. **Correspondence.**

Correspondence during the period was of a routine nature: welcome letters, cigar smoke, smoke alarms, etc.

f. **Web Site and Lift Notices.**

There were very high numbers of visitors to our web site in recent months. Items in News on our web site have been posted and lift notices routinely turned over. Usage data for the period on the web site are not yet available. The Apartment Manual has been amended in a couple of minor places. Vandalism of notices in the lift of #17 occurred in late December; the culprit(s) remain unidentified.

g. **Business Arising from Previous Minutes.**

a. **Current Repairs.**

Work on the water ingress problems of apartments, 208/21 and 115/21 continue at snail's pace (the insurance assessor attended on 9th January but his report has yet to be received; Sergon has been hastened) as do works on 205/19's balcony. The concrete beam above cage 62 was patched on 31st January using Nanocrete R2, a micro-fibre reinforced repair mortar. Despite promises of the work to be done before Christmas, the broken concrete path between Buildings 17 and 19 has not yet been repaired. The cats' eyes have been received but not yet installed; perhaps next week. (Little is ever achieved between mid-December and Australia Day.) Work on the rain heads was completed on 3rd February, and a good job it was, too.

Other routine repairs during the period have included work by QMax on the four sump pumps although we await a report on why these pumps continue to fail from time to time. **Action: MA, HS**

In the latest water problem, hot water from above car park 34 began to leak on 6th February. It was repaired the same day but because of the urgency of the matter, notice was unable to be given to residents in Building 17 and some minor inconvenience resulted.

b. **Apartment Log.**

This remains a work in progress. **Action: PF, DC**

c. **Air BNB and Holiday Letting**

The Committee keeps returning to this item. Whilst there is yet no evidence of this practice in Capital Hill Apartments, the Committee is worried at the prospect. Rentals being advertised in Canberra have tripled in the past three years. Concerns range from physical security to the very real challenge of being able to enforce compliance with Section 115 of the Act. The matter will be kept under review.

Action: All

d. **Solar Power**

A quote from the third tenderer, Solar Hart, is awaited. The Committee continues to assess the market. Web sites such as

<https://www.solarquotes.com.au/top7mistakes.html?gclid=CNm234Lq9dACFZYrvQodL4sDuQ> are of enduring interest. **Action: HS**

h. **New Business.**

a. **Lift # 23.**

The accumulation of water in the lift well of Building 23 (noticed in December) is being investigated. This could entail minor concrete repairs and if so, the opportunity could be taken to re-seal a leak in the basement wall behind Cage 28. Inspection and a report from Schindler is awaited. Peak Consulting attended on 6th February and inspected the situation behind Cage 28 but could do nothing about the lift well as Schindler failed to make the meeting. **Action: MA**

b. **Car Wash**

Sometime during the night of 12th/13th December, a flood of some 7500 litres occurred near the car wash bay. Somebody had failed to turn off the tap and consequently the hose parted company. A more secure fitting has been installed by a civic minded owner but that is no guarantee a further failure will not occur. A notice clearly reminding users to turn the tap off has been prominently in place for years. Flooding occurred in Cages 25 and 27, the large Common Property cage and ten parking spots. Our corporate strata insurance does not cover such damage; this remains the individual owners' responsibility under their household contents policies (which all are encouraged to have). The incident is a timely reminder for all residents to keep their stuff on pallets or in waterproof containers.

c. **Power Failures**

There have been three electrical power failures in the past month, none of which has been explained by ActewAGL despite repeated requests. Perhaps a coincidence, but troubles occurred at the same time with the security systems' Swipe controls and the CCTV historic data log at a cost of \$2000 to repair. Perhaps as another consequence, replacement of a Foxtel power supply controller cost us \$400. The insurance aspects are being investigated and an assessor is expected shortly.

Action: MA

d. **NFS Contract**

We have long had National Fire Services maintain our fire detection and firefighting systems. While this service has been effective, the Committee has been looking for more competitive pricing. (We have a current NFS quote for \$792.03 to repair outstanding defects that we consider to be too high as well as perhaps incorrect in some detail.) A quote from P&T Fire Services has been received that proposes an annual contract for about \$2700 less than the current arrangement with NFS. The Committee decided to accept the quote subject to clarification of some of the Terms & Conditions and the scope of work. **Action: MA**

NFS has also advised that two batteries in the Automatic Fire Alarms Notifier have failed and require replacement at a further cost of more than \$1700. The Committee is not persuaded and will investigate the claim. **Action: HS**

e. **Smoke Alarms**

There was some exciting drama on 30th December when a smoke alarm went off in an apartment when the tenant was away. The usual consternation followed, which happens when owners/agents fail to advise us of tenant contact details. In the event, the alarm was replaced. Yet again, owners, agents and residents are

reminded of the need to routinely check their alarms. The MA has send another such reminder to owners/agents, this in addition to the advice in the Apartment Manual and routine lift notices.

f. Furniture Vans

Yet again, thoughtlessness and negligence have seen a heavy furniture/removal van parked on the lawn, this time on 27th January outside Building 19. The potential for damage not only to the lawn but, more seriously (and more expensively) to the underground irrigation lines has been noted time and time again. Owners/agents MUST ensure the safe and sensible procedures for removals are followed. There is plenty of advice in the Apartment Manual and constant reminders are given every few months. Owners are responsible in the first instance for any damage.

g. Toilet Fixtures

It is a sad fact that more than a few toilets have been poorly installed with subsequent leaking and resultant flood damage. The Owners Corporation is in no way responsible for the damage or repair. Checking on the installation is not a simple (or cheap) matter and the best advice the Committee can offer is for residents to be alert for the slightest evidence of a leak. That way, expense can be limited to repair and not flood damage. A note to this effect has been included on our web site.

h. Owners Corporation Network

Membership of the OCN for 2017 has been renewed. In a related matter, HS will be attending the AGM of the Forrest Residents' Group on 13th February. DC will investigate whether corporate membership of the Group is available. **Action: HS, DC**

i. Corporate Register

In ignorance (or defiance) of the legal requirement (Section 115 of the *Units Title (Management) Act 2011*), several owners or their agents persistently and consistently neglect to inform us of details of their tenants. Not a week goes by without some need for us to contact a tenant about some matter of urgency or importance, only to be frustrated by the lack of such detail. There is a constant effort to remain abreast of changes in tenancy but this can only be done with the cooperation of the owners/agents.

j. Tractor

Our tractor, used for hauling garbage bins, 'failed to proceed' on 5th February. Coincidentally, it was due for routine maintenance in Hume the very next day and that is where it is now. The drive chain is suspected, an old and recurring problem. Suitable alternative towing arrangements have been made with no disruption to our garbage service.

k. Pest Birds

Our contractor, Australian Pest Birds, inspected the premises recently and pronounced themselves satisfied with the present situation. Nevertheless, greater than the usual numbers of Indian myna birds have been noticed and APB will be invited to review the matter. [http://kb.rspca.org.au/What-should-be-done-about-common-\(Indian\)-myna-birds_140.html](http://kb.rspca.org.au/What-should-be-done-about-common-(Indian)-myna-birds_140.html) is of interest. **Action: MA**

Next Meeting: 6th March, 2017 in Apartment 118/23.

D.J. Campbell
Chairman

7th February, 2017