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TENANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, January 10th 2024
11:00 am – 2:00 pm – TAC Meeting
Building Meeting

Location: 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, ON

“Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land has a rich history of First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today.”

In Attendance: Wendy Thompson, Michelle Mellen, Lindsay Avard, Caleigh Wilson, Carol Seiler, Leah Pantich, Gina Colavecchia Peter, Annie Du Toit, Pieter Do Toit, Norman Hill, Karen Littlewood, Cameron Banach

Regrets: Carol Chapple, Patricia Scott, Lynda Sim

REGULAR MEETING

1. Welcome, introductions & Land Acknowledgment **Michelle & Wendy**

2. Review Minutes of Last Meeting (Recurring) **Michelle & Wendy**

Approved

3. NRH Update & Staff Update **Michelle**

- **Leah Pantich** is no longer a Tenant Support Representative for the St. Catharines portfolio and is now the Housing Initiatives Coordinator

- **Melissa Matheson** is absent as a Tenant Support Representative for the St. Catharines portfolio while she covers a temporary Rent Supplement Analyst position
 - Coverage for this position is in place until Melissa comes back or someone is hired in the near future
- **Alisha Forstinger** will return as Community Resource Program Assistant in February of 2024

4. Smoke Sensor Trial

Michelle

- A smoke sensor trial has occurred on NRH property
 - Other housing providers have had success with these
 - The sensor would be installed in non-smoking units and records chemicals in the air within that unit only
 - Units that have been grandfathered are still smoking allowed
 - Tenants who smoke marijuana are allowed to smoke it in the unit if they are in a smoking unit (if the unit is 'non-smoking, they are not allowed to smoke it in the unit)

5. Geneva St. Development

Cameron Banach

- NRH Developments update
 - York St. in Welland – building has RGI housing units (units are mixed layout)
 - Fort Erie – housing for women and children feeling violence, manage by Community Services
 - Geneva St., St. Catharines – to include bridge and NRH housing in 3 phases (the additional phase may be sold or keep as public housing)
 - Port Colborne – NRH is partnered with Port Cares to provide RGI housing units (units are mixed layout)
 - Summer St., Niagara Falls – 24 hour shelter managed by Community Services
 - Riordan St., St. Catharines – temporary 24 hour shelter managed by Community Services
- **Wendy and Michelle** to bring 'New Development Update Chart' for TAC members to review to future meetings 1-2 times per year
- Cam was asked why some buildings in The Region sit empty for so long
 - Due to length of time pertaining to permits, zoning, etc.

6. NRH Complaints Policy (see attached)

Wendy

- Policy has been revised to apply to NRH owned units only
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committee recommended that TAC reviews the new policy as well
 - Any feedback from TAC is encouraged particularly from those who are a part of marginalized communities

- TAC did not have questions or suggestions at this time
- Feedback is welcome after the meeting – please contact Wendy, Michelle or your Property Management team to send the feedback
- Policy to be revised to change wording ‘Property Administrator’ title to ‘Property Manager’
- Policy to be revised to have 2 of the phone extensions updated

7. Program Review (Recurring)

Wendy

- DEI Committee also suggested that TAC review NRH programs for feedback
 - Not all locations have partners available that provide programming – partnership depends on many factors (ex. if partners are available/funding available etc)
 - Community Programs Coordinators (CPC) connect with partners in communities regarding programming
 - Examples of programming include seniors fitness in Grimsby, Footcare in St. Catharines
- Annie expressed that she wishes more tenants would engage with building programs
 - Annie finds tenants in her building to be busy due to the building’s close proximity to services and amenities so they are out all the time
 - If tenants have ideas for programming they should contact their CPC to let them know
 - Programming and attempts to program in buildings will always be made by NRH, as participation ebbs and flows
- Karen asked about an update for the ‘Cyber Seniors’ program
 - The last update noted that computers and wifi are needed in Common Rooms before the Cyber Seniors program can start on-site
 - Neighbourhood Connects company is only able to offer affordable wifi for in units in 3 buildings but hopefully will be able to offer more
 - Other internet providers have been asked to let NRH know if they can support affordable wifi for NRH tenants
 - Companies like Cogeco have already been asked if they can provide wifi for tenants in NRH buildings

8. Communications (Recurring)

Wendy

- Group was asked if there is any feedback about the website or other tenant communications
 - **Leah** to bring communications update to next meeting
- NRH will be starting to produce a Housing Herald calendar after the next (Spring/Summer) edition of the Housing Herald newsletter
- Updated tenant move-in videos will be put on the website
 - TAC to review new videos as they are updated

- No communications feedback at this time

9. TAC Composition and Recruitment (Recurring)

Wendy

- There is currently an extra TAC member in St. Catharines – this will be revisited as TAC now has more members
- Wendy and Michelle will introduce 2 new members in upcoming meetings
- Currently there are no TAC members from Welland, Niagara-On-The-Lake (and Thorold)
 - Thorold is not currently included as a municipality for TAC recruitment

10. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (Recurring)

Wendy

- No suggestions or concerns were brought forward about diversity or racism in NRH communities

11. New Business (Recurring)

All

- Karen wanted to confirm some components of the pest control process
 - Michelle confirmed that tenants are to report any findings of pests or any questions they have to Pest Control TSR and pest control tech
 - Tenants are encouraged to trust the expertise of the tech
 - Pieter suggested some things tenants can do to prevent pests from spreading:
 - Blocking pest entry underneath doors (i.e. door draft stopper strips)
 - Seal holes in walls around pipes (i.e. with duct tape)
 - Please a dry cloth over sink drains in the evening to be left overnight – this dries up excess moisture in the sink and blocks pest entry from the sink drain
 - Call Pest Control TSR if you even suspect pests in unit or find minimal activity

12. New Business (Recurring)

All

- Every other TAC meeting will be on-site
- Meeting schedule for the year will be sent out to TAC members when complete
 - Meetings will aim to be held
 - In a Fort Erie community in the Spring
 - At Ailanthus Ave. community in the Winter as it is a closer drive for everyone
 - In a Grimsby community in the future