

## AGENDA for NILMA MEETING

September 13, 2018

GREAT MEADOW HALL

**Attendees:** Michael Ross, Sharon Gouveia, David Goldman, Norman Berkowitz, Ernest Greenberg, Frances Shaer, Murray Staub, Judy Stavis, Fay Busgang (temporary). Excused: Dorrit Senior. Management: Steve Colwell.

### **Call to Order**

**Michael Ross**

Meeting started at 2pm. Mike announced that Shoshanna is no longer a member of NILMA and needed to resign due to health problem. Fay Busgang is sitting in as a temporary representative for the September meeting.

### **Approval of August meeting minutes**

August minutes had some name typos that Mike has fixed. The minutes were moved to approval.

### **Election of NILMA secretary**

Dorrit Senior has volunteered. Mike opened the floor to any other nominations. Sharon motioned to have Dorrit Senior as the next secretary. Everyone voted yes!

### **Old business**

#### **Courtyard renovation status      Steve Colwell**

“Things are going well however we have encountered some delays. We are hopeful that most of the work will be completed by mid-October. It’s possible that there may be some planting that we hold off on until the spring. Blair, our consultant, will be working out all these details. If you have questions, we have a map near the courtyard doorway. I suggest you refer to that.”

Sharon asked if more trees would be planted, Steve said he did not know, Jay said more trees would be planted.

#### **Maintenance project status      Steve Colwell**

1. Cottage painting is still in process. Three more clusters need to be painted. The plan is to be finished by the beginning of October. Mike said mid-August was the original timeline. Steve said the painters were set back because work needed a little more thoroughness. We also had a lot of rain this summer which caused some delays. We did not allow painters to paint on Jewish High Holidays.
2. Where there is currently slate flooring around Nosh, we are getting carpeting which should arrive by early November. The entire lower level area will be carpeted and we will no longer have slate flooring.

3. We have painted the bottom of all the light posts.
4. The garage door in the community center has rust, the plan is to have that painted before the cold sets in.

## **New business**

### **Pet policy**

**Michael Ross**

Mike read his Pet Policy remarks:

“Almost all IL residents agree that pets provide important emotional support and companionship to both their owners and to other members of the NBOC community. The goal is to ensure that pet owners will feel they and their pets are welcome at NBOC and at the same time non-pet owners will not face the problems.

However, there is currently unnecessary tension at NBOC surrounding pets, specifically dogs. I have had multiple lengthy conversations regarding the causes and potential solutions. This includes speaking with several dog owners, members of the landscape committee, other non-pet owners, and with members of management. The comments I will make are based upon those conversations.

The tension has arisen from two things:

- Improper toileting of animals: there has been dog feces that was not cleaned up from sidewalks, in the garage, inside Centro, and on lawns, both near Centro and in cottage areas. IL residents have stepped in it, and in at least two cases slipped on it. Everyone agrees that this is unacceptable.
- Damage to landscape: circular brown spots on lawns due to dog urine including in the middle of the courtyard. We expect and take pride in the appearance of our landscaping, and work to maintain and improve it.

In my comments and in our conversation today, we will not identify specific animals or pet owners:

Although I have shared the relevant sections of the member’s handbook with the NILMA board, I want to highlight the key points that are present in the handbook, because the pet policy provides a framework that has worked for NBOC for many years. These pet guidelines are the same as those used at Orchard Cove, where they have also worked successfully to allow pet owners to be a welcome part of the community and have avoided conflicts and discord among residents. All of our residents have agreed to and signed on to the user handbook including its pet policy. I want to emphasize that for the majority of pet owners there have been and will be no issues.

Let me summarize several key points, essentially verbatim:

- Well-behaved pets of Members and their guests are welcome in the Member's Residence and the exterior grounds of the campus.
- Pet owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets.
- Outside the residence, keep your pet leashed and away from landscaped areas.
- Pets will be on a short leash or in a carrier at all times when outside the Residence
- Pets are not permitted in indoor public spaces of the Community except when taking the most direct route from the Residence to the outdoors.
- If a pet threatens any Member, guest or staff of the Community (e.g. jumping, growling, barking), or if a pet creates an undue disturbance or nuisance, you will no longer be able to keep the pet in the Community.
- In the event you do not adhere to the Pet Policy, you will be advised in writing and requested to take corrective action. If problems persist, NewBridge reserves the right to remove the pet from the Residence.

I would add that Pet owners are responsible for all those individuals who help them manage their pets – including aides, dog walkers, and relatives

So where is the problem, and how do we solve this so that we can have real harmony among the NBOC residents?

- There are multiple reasons why there may be non-compliance with this pet policy:
  - o Ignorance of the pet policy, whether willful or not
  - o Inability to fulfill policy, inability to bend over, inability to walk pets, etc, either on arrival at NBOC or subsequently due to change in circumstances
  - o Residents no longer able to properly care for pets  
These types of compliance issues are the responsibility of and need to be addressed by specific pet owners, when problems are called to their attention. Failure / unwillingness to resolve this in a specific case will require management intervention.
- Need for better definition of appropriate areas for dog walkers to toilet their animals
  - o Where?
  - o Specific form (eg mulch, grass, etc)?
  - o Reasonable accessibility to where residents with pets live
  - o This issue needs to be addressed by the community at large, in a way that satisfies everyone.

In my conversations with management, we have discussed how to enforce our pet policy in a fair way, respecting the objectives of having a pet friendly environment and of having a clean, safe, and attractive environment.

Management is committed to overseeing and enforcing the policy. Management has been doing this, behind the scenes, without any public fanfare or shaming of individuals (or their pets). This requires a balancing act and will continue going forward.

I am creating an ad hoc pet committee, with the specific charge of addressing these dual issues of communicating pet compliance issues among pet owners and defining appropriate areas for dog owners and their surrogates to use.

This committee will include Evelyn Botkin, Roz Dreyfus, Richard Medverd, Judy Stavis, and Charles Weinstein.”

**Members of NILMA then provide comments:**

Jay: 1. Except for service dogs, no dogs belong in dining rooms. 2. We used to vacation in CA and in public parks they had poop bags open to the public. 3. The town of Dedham has a wonderful dog park down the street, maybe we need one here.

Judy: It’s taken us 9 years to get a dog waste basket. There is no support with dogs here. We now have 5 dog trash bins. There is no excuse. NBOC markets a friendly dog environment and there seems to be a disconnect between marketing and management. Someone from OC just moved here and could not believe the lack of friendliness that NBOC residents have for dogs. We have a lot of new residents here that have dogs and I believe we have a dog problem.

Steve Colwell: Management has enforced the pet policy and will continue to do so. The challenge is when people disagree with the policy. I feel that it’s not necessary to separate management from marketing. We want people and pets to feel welcome. It’s adds to our social flavor. We bring in therapy animals for AL and HCC and I believe that it’s helpful. I do disagree with Judy’s assessment, but think there is common ground that will work for everyone.

Judy: NBOC has to decide if we really wants dogs here. We the dog owners don’t feel like dogs are wanted.

Steve: I don’t think that should be a consideration. When we opened, every person who came here knew we welcomed pets. In my opinion it’s very similar to kosher food. Just because you don’t have a pet does not mean we are not committed. We have always said we would welcome pets. Steve asks Judy what would welcoming pets look like?

Mike thinks if we can resolve these issues the whole environment will become more dog/pet friendly.

Sharon: It's not the pets that are the issue, it's the responsibility of the owners to toilet train their dog.

Steve agrees it's about being respectful of one another.

Judy: Then why can you not walk a pet though a building?

Steve: We could consider changing that if people are open to that. In some cases it may be helpful for pets to walk through the hallway for access purposes. I would make one further request: if your animal has made a mistake I'd prefer that you let management know so that we can clean up after them.

Norm: I have a daughter who is a vet. There is something you can give dogs to eat that prevents the staining of grass.

### **Other Discussion**

Norm: As a result of our floor meeting there are several things that need to be discussed. Mike reminded Norm that he should be given this information in advance so that it can be put onto the agenda. Norm noted that interpersonal relationships have come up, and that his floor is having a cocktail hour every 2 weeks as a social activity.

Judy: I bake for our floor meetings and my plan is to make it a little more social.

Earnest: Our floor would like a speaker to be present at every meeting. We last had a dietician at our meeting. Steve said all you need to do is ask for an administrator to be present.

Judy notes that she already has management coming to her floor meetings.

Mikes points out that Joel and Sal from Culinary are now going to each of their floor meetings to hear feedback

**Adjourn ~ meeting adjourned at 2:33**

**Minutes prepared by Emily Sigal, reviewed by Michael Ross.**