

Notes from the Meeting for the Owners

With the in-person and Zoom platforms there was good participation at the session; more than 48 people attended in total. Thank you to those who came, interacted, and provided input and feedback to the Board.

This document provides the topics submitted before the meeting, the Board's response, and any "follow-up" and/or new questions with responses where available. It is not meant to be exhaustive but a summary of the discussion on the topic. The questions/comments are not recorded as script.

Carmène chaired the meeting, and all Directors were present.

Carmène opened the meeting with a good news story about the work done by the Emergency Preparedness Committee to prepare for a possible power outage during the Christmas weekend storm. Although we did not have an outage, we are better prepared for future events.

Questions submitted prior to the meeting: Question/Topic in **black**;
Board/Management response in **blue**; follow-up clarification or responses to new questions in **red**.

- 1) **Financial:** What is the amount of funds for reserve matched with the reserve fund study? Please advise as to the deposits, the interest and the guarantees, the holder of securities. I am interested in the balance of income funds as at December 31, 2022.
 - a) Re the funds for reserve matched with the Reserve Fund Study (RFS): **These items are included in the year-end audit and presented at the annual general meetings. At the end of November 30, 2022 (as we do not have the December financials until February due to year end), the amount in the reserve was \$2,572,765 and as per the RFS we should have \$2,659,288 which is a difference of \$86,523 but we can add the December appropriation of \$39,000 which leaves a projected difference of \$47,000. As we all know some years there are more expenses and some less so we will never be bang on. The corporation contributes ~\$40K each month from the condo fees collected to the RF. No reserve fund expenses were done in December 2022.**
 - b) Re the deposits: **The RF account currently has a balance of \$2.2M in 27 GICs, none over \$100,000. Rates of interest range from 0.6 of 1% to 4.7%.**
 - c) Re balance of income funds: **The operating equity at the end of December 2022 is estimated to be \$50K - \$75K, which is the estimate provided during the budget.**
 - d) Re interest: **There is \$227K in a cash account and \$130K of reserve fund contributions in the operating account where it is collecting ~3% interest. These funds are moved into GICs when appropriate.**

2) Boilers: What is the update re the Boilers?

An engineering firm was hired to prepare the technical specifications to tender for quotes from potential bidders. These specifications have been received except for one outstanding item. When this item is completed, the Board will seek quotes from at least three contractors. On receipt of the quotes and providing it makes financial sense, the

Board will decide whether there is an acceptable bid and if so, proceed to sign a contract. The Board would prefer to complete the work prior to the next heating season if possible.

3) Town Hall Meetings: What follow-up has there been to the previous Town Hall meeting?

A summary has been prepared and will be distributed to the owners in the next few days. The summary contains the questions posed in writing as well as those asked in the open session along with responses and any follow-up, some of which was obtained the morning of this Town Hall. The Secretary apologised for the delay in not getting this summary out earlier.

4) Electric Vehicles: Given all the various announcements re electric vehicles, would it not be advisable for the Board to proceed to get an updated study which would include options and costing? If the Board doesn't want to proceed, please explain why not.

The Board has a plan in place. There is an EV Committee that has been studying the situation for at least 1.5 years. Their Board liaison is Scott McDermott. The Committee has made one presentation to the Board and will make a second presentation to update their research. This is a challenging decision for the Board. It would be unwise to proceed with expensive retrofits while batteries are improving so quickly and there may be better options at less cost to the corporation. There are several owners in the building who are supportive of EVs. Will there be government funding to offset any costs of retrofits? The EV Committee is on top of the many aspects of this decision. The Board is aware of EVs and their future and wants to make the best decision when the time is right.

5) Shared Facility Meetings: Why has there been so little information forthcoming re SFC meetings? Specifically, there have been references re a Landscape plan but no detailed information. If there is a plan, why hasn't it been shared? If there isn't a plan, shouldn't there be one? If SFC is developing a plan, it would be in order to ask residents for input or even, perhaps have a Landscape Committee.

Landscaping is a responsibility of the Shared Facility Committee; this committee makes recommendations to both the RG1 and RG2 Boards. The Committee continues to address damage from the May 2022 derecho that resulted in significant damage on the property. It is an expensive undertaking to remove tree stumps or cut them close to the soil level. This was a cost not anticipated when the SF budget was struck in October 2021. There is \$11,000 in the 2023 budget for cleanup of the grounds. We need to get the property back to where it was before deciding on what to do overall. The goal of the SFC for the past several years has been to ensure the landscaping decisions made will reduce the maintenance of the grounds. These costs along with the snow clearance and removal are rising quickly, no matter the contractor engaged.

6) The Pool: Is there a progress report on ventilation in the pool area?

There is a large Dectron unit under the pool that provides for proper temperature and chemical balance. Recently, the Board received a quote at a cost exceeding \$300,000 to replace this unit. This at a time when the lifespan of the unit is only about 50% complete. This unit is complex and there are not many contractors versed in repair or replacement. It may require going out of the city for contractor input. In the meantime, the Board has asked the engineering firm RJC to determine if the Dectron can be repaired or indeed needs replacement. We appreciate that the fans and ventilation do not make for an

inviting atmosphere; however, given the cost, we need to ensure the right decision is made.

The cost in the most recent RFS to replace the Dectron unit is \$73K (significantly less than the quoted replacement cost) and the unit has a service life of ~20 – 25 years.

7) Open Board Meetings: Has the Board reflected on its experiment after 6 months and is there any conclusion?

This is our second Town Hall; we are hosting it in person and on Zoom. The Board committed to holding 3 – 4 Town Hall meetings yearly along with the AGM and the Owners Budget meeting. There will be a third Town Hall held in the spring, the date yet to be determined. After only one town hall, it was premature to consolidate criteria for assessment or comment on effectiveness. At this time, it can be noted that participation in the Town Halls is better than at the open Board meetings both in numbers of participants and breadth of input. Should any owner have suggestions, please send them to the Secretary who will ensure the Board receives and considers them. The Board elected at the AGM will decide future steps.

8) Bulletin Boards: Has the Board changed its approach/policy concerning personal advertisements on the bulletin boards? The policy is (was?) that no personal notices for the sale of any items should be posted on the bulletin boards and that the Library's bulletin board should be used for that purpose. The exception was that items of importance to owners related to owning a unit, such as parking spot to rent or condo for sale were the only items to be approved by the PM. We are seeing all types of items (beds, chairs, cars, etc.) advertised with the approval (initials) of the PM.

Page 9, §3 of the Owners' Handbook addresses use of the various bulletin boards. *"The right side of the bulletin boards is for use by the residents subject to the following restrictions: • Maximum size is 8.5" x 5.5". (Half a letter-size page) • No advertising of commercial services or products (e.g., cleaners, realtors, decorators, etc.)."* The current policy is silent on personal items for sale by owners. The Library bulletin board was meant for posting items from outside the building re events or notices that may be of interest to owners. Items (e.g., furniture) from various owners have been posted on the bulletin boards in years past. The Board will review the current policy at a Board meeting. An owner at the Town Hall made the point that this is a nice perk for owners and asked that the Board not impose additional restrictions on the use of the bulletin boards.

9) Reduction of heating by 1 degree Celsius in common areas: Are there data to substantiate a possible significant saving?

A 1°C change in the ambient temperature in the hallways will have negligible effect on the cost of heating a condo unit. The fan unit in the heating mechanism incurs a large part of the hydro cost. Owners who run their fans all the time will see a significant difference in the hydro costs than those who set the fan to run only when the heat is on. The reduction of the temperature in the common corridors was a suggestion the Board agreed to try over one season. There are many factors that will influence hydro costs related to heating: a colder or warmer winter, the individual thermostat setting in the unit, the direction of the wind, etc. When winter utility costs are in, the Board will attempt to assess any possible contribution to lowering the thermostats. Because of the various factors influencing energy costs, a temperature change of 1°C might be lost in the noise.

The Building Superintendent has confirmed that the ground floor foyers each have an individual thermostat and the temperature in the lobbies from floors 2 to 19 is controlled by one thermostat in the mechanical room, which he checks every morning and evening.

10) Difficulty implementating some rules and regulations: As examples, the questioner cited infractions to the party room rental rules on December 28 and too many people in the pool. How are the rules enforced?

It is difficult at any time when Iron Horse staff are on the front desk to ensure rules are followed. This is more difficult during a holiday period. Over the holidays, although our staff train the Iron Horse staff who are then assigned to RG2, we cannot ensure we get staff we have trained. That was the case this holiday weekend as the concierge on duty was trained by an Iron Horse concierge the day before his shifts began. However, the concierge did speak to the renters on December 28 and the Property Manager followed up with a letter. An apology was received from the renter.

Use of the Party Room is restricted to owners and tenants in RG2. When someone rents the room, s/he is provided with a copy of the rules and signs that s/he will comply. The rules appear on p 36 of the Owners' Handbook.

11) Salt/Sand on the Property:

a) There appears to be over-use of poor-quality salt on the property. It is damaging the grass.

It is not the salt that kills the grass. This occurs when the snow is plowed to the grade level exposing the roots and ultimately killing the grass. The Shared Facility Committee has considered many options. Perhaps marking the area to be plowed with poles would guide the plowing of the sidewalks.

Capitol was contacted regarding the type of salt used onsite at 3580/3590. It contains only salt, no sand. The salt is purchased from Rideau Bulk and is not like the dry salt purchased at hardware stores. This bulk salt is wet and provides better traction but does result in some clumps of salt as it is spread. (The Building Superintendent has confirmed that traction on the RG2 garage ramp is better than he has experienced at other sites. He observes this later in the evening when he makes rounds or in the early morning when putting out bins.) Because the salt is wet, it is shoveled onto the property. The salt may appear to contain sand or perhaps seem 'cheap' as it is not treated with a white dye. The SFC and the Boards always put safety of those on the property first and hence the deposit of salt may be seen as an overuse.

b) Can they **pile snow on the pavement?**

Yes. Over the winter season the snow builds up. The snowfall over the season cannot be predicted early in the season and hence snow is moved off the pavement initially. There needs to be sufficient visitor parking spaces for winter visitors. Piling snow on the grass and the pavement reduces or avoids the high costs of removal of snow.

12) City of Ottawa Vacant Unit Tax: It may be helpful to have the Board's direction regarding the City of Ottawa's requirement concerning the Vacant Unit Tax.

This tax was approved by the City in the spring. All registered owners of condominiums must declare by March 16, and each year thereafter, that the unit is not unoccupied for 184 consecutive days. Owners should have received a letter from the City indicating the due date for submission, the Roll number, and an Access Code to complete the submission online. Once you submit, you receive a confirmation that it has been

received. If you do not submit by the deadline, your property taxes will increase, and you can be fined up to \$10,000.

Questions from the Floor or via Zoom:

- 1. Owners or Guests with Dogs:** Please remind owners and guests that dogs are not to be taken out beside the building to “do their business”.
This can be included in the next Newsletter. If you see this happening, please inform the Property Manager or Concierge.
- 2. Air in the Elevator Lobbies:** If the heat in the lobbies is reduced, the air coming into the units will be colder. Some owners block the air with weather stripping under their main entrance doors; however, we have been asked not to do this as it can increase dust and impedes the functioning of the air intake.
The air in the elevator lobbies is a combination of fresh air and recycled air. It can sometimes be colder particularly when the outside temperature is low. The Building Superintendent adjusts the system manually according to the exterior temperature.
- 3. Christmas Lights:** Why are they still on?
This is a SFC responsibility. They decide the day the lights come on and the day they are turned off. The lights are all LED and cost little to operate. It’s a subjective call as to how long lights should be on and each year the SFC selects a reasonable period of time.
- 4. Emergency Preparedness Update:**
A technician from T&M Electric toured the building with the Building Superintendent with a complete list of the questions brought to the Property Manager or Board. We have yet to receive a report responding to the questions with costs for those items that could be accomplished. Once it is received, the report will be considered by the Board and shared with the EP Committee. A temporary protocol was established in case of a power outage over the Christmas weekend when there was a storm. Notices will be placed at the elevators on each floor indicating what can and cannot be done. This temporary protocol remains in place until the Board has determined what can be done following receipt of the T&M report and a new protocol is in place.
- 5. Outlets in Corridor Storage Rooms:** Do the Owners pay for hydro used in their corridor storage rooms? If so, why is it so difficult to connect an outlet in a parking spot to our meter?
Yes, the owner pays for the hydro used by the storage room outlet. The linking of a parking lot outlet to your meter is more complicated. There are not currently outlets in the parking spaces. The EV Committee report will help to clarify what is possible. Trickle chargers installed at parking spots are not connected to the owner’s meter; these owners are charged a set fee for hydro use.
- 6. Boilers:** How many are there?
There are four main boilers; three are in use and one is used for parts as it is no longer functional. The building generally needs only two main boilers in operation at

any given time. There are two booster boilers. These are located in the west end of the building on the 7th and 13th floors. The domestic hot water comes from the top floor. When it reaches the 13th floor and the 7th floor, the booster boilers heat the water again. This is to ensure the lower units receive hot water in a reasonable time.

7. **Heat in the Hallways:** Can the elevator lobbies from floors 2 to 19 have temperature set individually?

No – the heating or cooling is set in one place common for all floors 2 to 19 and is adjusted manually by the Building Superintendent as needed.

8. **Change in Temperature by 1°C:** Will data be collected monthly from gas and hydro invoices to assess if this change had an impact?

Yes. These data are kept and have been assessed annually for many years as part of the budget preparation. However, any savings attributable to the thermostat change will be difficult to isolate because of the many variables affecting energy costs.

9. **Reupholstering Main Lobby Chairs:** Would the Board display swatches with owners so that they could comment?

Only two chairs are being considered at this time for reupholstering because of their deteriorating condition. The Board has a professional advising the Directors. Swatches could be displayed for comments. When the lobby is refurbished in accordance with the Reserve Fund Study, it is important to note that furniture and painting are operating expenses and hence come from operating accounts. Certainly, when the entire lobby needs an update, it would be an idea to have a few colour boards prepared by a professional decorator and these boards could be displayed for owner comments.

10. **10 People in the Pool Area Rule:** This is a City By-law. If there was a lifeguard, could the number of people be increased? Could an individual rent the pool and hire a lifeguard?

This building is considered a commercial property. Our pool is a Class B pool and must adhere to the City rules for such pools. The Corporation could hire a lifeguard; however, this would be very expensive and would not work well with a pool open 24/7. The pool is a shared facility. An owner cannot rent the pool.

11. **Criteria for Assessment of Closed Meetings and Town Halls:** Will there be some criteria for assessing the value of the Town Halls?

Yes. There will be both qualitative and quantitative assessment criteria. We may have a preliminary set of criteria available for the next Town Hall. The number and diversity of both participants and input are important factors to consider when assessing and/or improving a change. The decision as to the future format of Board meetings or Owner meetings will be decided by the Board in place after the 2023 AGM.

12. **Water Shutdown:** When the water is off on floors 1 to 7, will owners be able to use their toilets?

Yes. Owners should fill a bathtub with water before the shutdown. This water can be used to flush the toilets. A reminder of the shutdown and instructions on this issue will be sent to all owners.

13. Clean-Out of Stacks in the End Units: Is there a plan in place to investigate the need for clean outs in the end units (02,03,06, 07)? Has RG1 done clean-outs in these units?

Yes – there is a plan in place. The contractor cleaning the inner unit stacks will review the design and function and test the drains for the end units. Then he will inform the Board on whether or how often clean-outs should be done as well as the cost and time to do this. Here at RG2, the pipes from the kitchens to the main in the end units are 3” in diameter and 2” in diameter for the inner units. RG1 has installed clean-outs in the end units, 4 per riser. They have yet to complete the 04 and 05 units. The diameter of the pipes was not a factor in their consideration. However, their Property Manager indicated that all units had 2” pipes from the main to the kitchens.

14. Sewer Smell on the West Side of the Building: Where is the smell coming from and what is being done about it?

The smell is coming from Locker B on the P level. The sewer openings there backed up. Candor has been in and repaired the sewer openings. Unfortunately, it will take some time for the odour to be dispersed. The Building Superintendent is monitoring the situation.

15. Speakers Corner: Riley Brockington will be invited to be a speaker for Speakers Corner. Given the current situation, he may be invited sooner than later.

Good choice.

16. Cost to Paint the Main Lobbies: Could the Board get a price to paint these lobbies?

Yes. However, given that the furniture cannot all be replaced at this time as it is an operating expense, the Board would have to decide if repainting now in another colour would be wise and whether touch up paintings would suffice.

17. Zoom Meetings: Would the Board consider hiring a facilitator to manage the Zoom meetings?

The Board can discuss this suggestion. Cost and suitability are factors to consider.

Questions Received Following the Town Hall Meeting:

1. **Assessing the two formats for meeting with Owners and participation in the Town Halls and the Open Board meetings.** What will the Board use in assessing the formats?

The participants at the first Town Hall numbered ~50; more than 48 participated in the second Town Hall. The secretary has recorded the number of participants at each open meeting in her notes for many years. This is one quantitative factor that can be used in the assessment. The average number of participants at open Board meetings for the last 5 years appears in the following table:

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Overall
15	18	17	19	29	19.6

As well, qualitative factors will be included that reflect the input /feedback that comes from the meetings.

2. **Zoom calls or digital meetings** are simply part of doing business these days. The Corporation should consider simply buying a subscription for Board use. Zoom has a 'show hand' feature that should allow for better management of the in person vs. Zoom questions.
Digital meetings do allow for more participation, particularly during the winter season when many of our owners are away. The Board will discuss ways to host the Town Hall meetings and make any adjustments prior to TH3.
3. **Dual format for meetings:** Please continue to use the dual format (in-person and Zoom). This allows for more participation and the chair could control the questions by alternating between in-person and Zoom.
The Board will be discussing the format prior to the next Town Hall.
4. The **Summary of the Town Hall** is worthwhile as it provides good follow-up to the owner inputs. Please continue.
Thanks – the summary takes time to collate the information and obtain follow-up; however, it provides a record of the meeting, as is done in the Board minutes.
5. Could the Board consider sending a **list of the topics** received prior to the Town Hall? This might encourage some more owners to attend.
A list of the topics could be sent to owners – it would not be complete as we receive questions after the deadline for submission; the Board attempts to address all questions at the Town Hall.
6. **Evaluation of the Town Halls:** The criteria should focus on communication, and owner's satisfaction with this mode of communication. The evaluation could be done as part of the information package at the AGM.
The Board will establish preliminary criteria for assessment. Any decision on meeting formats would be the responsibility of the Board elected at the AGM.