

Minutes of Meeting – Final
Joint Committee Meeting – Charles Street Community – January 31, 2024

Management Members Present: Gloria Cuneo - Director, University Family Housing (UFH)

Tenant Executive (TE) Members Present: Mel Heibert - Vice President, Alexander Valencia Sanchez - Secretary

Absent: Apostolo Zeno - Assistant Director, University Family Housing, Mike Kaev - Manager, Building Operations & Services, University Family Housing and Maryam Owodunni - President, Tenants' Association Executive.

Minutes: Penny Wilson - Business Officer.

New Action or Carried Forward Items:

Orientation Session: TE to reach out to Penny to schedule a meeting.

Rental Rates for Upgraded Units: TE to reach out to Penny to schedule a meeting.

TE to bring forward Items from 2023: 1) Gym space 2) Pests Assessment/inclusion in survey.

Bike Thefts and Car Vandalism:

- 1) Gloria will ask staff to put out a communication to tenants to be cautious in the garage, to stow away items that should not be in plain sight, and other actions to help mitigate loss or chances of non-tenants gaining entry.
- 2) Gloria will ask Mike and Vithu how many cameras are in the garage and explore if there is a need to increase signage.

TE Collaboration on Annual Surveys: See full discussion in notes. Gloria to develop a plan and timeline and bring it forward at the February or March JCM.

Printer/Photocopier: Apostolo provided an update at the November 21st JCM that there has been some exploration of a printer as part of the 2023 survey which attempted to gauge/quantify current interest. The results of the survey were provided on that date: 29.5% no interest/would never use, 25% would use once every few months, 22.5% 1-2 times a month, 16.5 % 1-2 times a week and 6.5% more than twice a week. Apostolo was still in the exploratory and data gathering phase. Further information to come.

Status/Updates of Action Items from November 21, 2023
--

Orientation Session: Since there are several new TE members, an orientation session with the entire Executive will be scheduled. To be brought forward at the January JCM.

❖ Carried forward. Gloria asked TE to reach out to Penny to schedule.



Locker Availability/Allocation Protocol: Mike to provide an update including any protocol changes.

- ❖ Gloria described the locker procedure process being developed. The UFH team is doing an audit of the lockers at 30 Charles to identify the potential number available and ensure that all those that appear to be occupied are indeed occupied by tenants. This should determine the number of spaces available. Spaces will then be made available, especially to those tenants in a one-bedroom unit at 35 Charles. This process will take several months because tenants will need to be contacted. We are required to do our due diligence in case people have some belongings in those lockers.

Rental Rates for Upgraded Units: Gloria suggested that the TE reach out to Penny to set up a time for a more focused meeting with Gloria and Apostolo on this subject, especially considering it was brought up at the Tenant Association AGM.

- ❖ Carried forward. Gloria asked TE to reach out to Penny to schedule.

TE Agenda Items: TE agenda items for next JCM include: 1) Gym space 2) Pests Assessment/inclusion in survey and 3) Survey results.

- ❖ The TE has tabled Survey results to be discussed at the January 31st meeting (see detailed minutes). Gloria suggested they request to include gym space and pest assessments for future meetings as they wish.

Tenants' Association – Mel & Alexander

Bike Theft and Broken Car Windows in Underground Parking Garage: Alexander brought forward the issue of Facebook posts of broken car windows and items stolen as well as a bike being stolen from the bike cage. The bike had a U lock, and the lock was cut through with an angle grinder.

Gloria said the last incident of a window being broken into was 3 months ago at which time UFH staff directed the individual to Campus Safety. Gloria said there have been no recent reports of either theft or vandalism to cars or bikes in the parking garage. She asked if there have been incidents not being reported to UFH staff or to Security. There are patrols conducted regularly by Security and Transportation Services. There is a ticketing process in place, facilitated by U of T Transportation Services, who check spots to ensure authorized vehicles are parked in each spot. With regard to reports on Facebook or reports to the TE directly, Gloria asked the TE to go back to the individuals and ask that they report to the Residence Office and Campus Safety? We monitor these closely. Mel posted the Facebook item in the Teams chat as well as a photograph of the cut bike lock. Gloria asked if this one occurrence happened inside of the bike cage and Alex confirmed that it did. Gloria described that at the bottom of the ramp at Level A there is a huge bike cage with 100 bike spots, and it is actively used by tenants. You need a key FOB to gain access – the same as to get into the parking garage or the front door. Thefts could occur if people followed someone in. Gloria added that UFH partners with Campus Safety to explore ways to reduce the opportunity for thieves to do these “smash and grab” car break ins. Gloria said we have advised tenants who park in the garage to take their personal belongings or to cover up anything that looks



valuable. The Security team does camera monitoring and they have warned away several people who were stalking the bikes outside of 35 Charles. Gloria said she wishes there were no incidents of bikes being stolen but from what she was able to gather, it does not seem like the level of thefts has increased. This is costly for our tenants, and we do our best to mitigate incidents. If the TE is aware of incidents of car damage and thefts, please ask the individuals impacted to contact the UFH Residence office and Campus Safety. Gloria will ask that a communication be sent out advising residents to be cautious in the garage and to stow away items/devices out of plain site.

Alex was curious about what happens once an incident has been reported to campus police. Gloria said that we ensure that the proper UFH protocols are in place: Security is aware, Security remains vigilant and if we see that this sort of activity is increasing then we deploy additional protocols – we know that Campus Safety has a line of communication with Toronto Police Services. If there is an uptick of certain behaviors this is reported to raise awareness and hopefully police will increase surveillance etc. Gloria recalled that several years ago there was an uptick of this “smash and grab” activity. There are a number of ways the university responds to this type of activity, examples are increased patrols and security, tenant communication to raise awareness and support. In the case where theft or vandalism occurs to a vehicle, it is incumbent on the owner to engage with their insurance provider for replacement of stolen or damaged property.

Alex asked if a FOB is needed to get into the bike cage - - in this case, the bike cage was not damaged, but the bike lock was cut, and the bike was stolen. Alex asked if UFH can guarantee that only current tenants have access. Gloria said that UFH is responsible for the allocation of Key FOBS and only current tenants have key FOBS. Tenants are required to turn in their keys and FOBS at move out. Even if they do not return the physical FOB, the access is controlled by the Office and that FOB would be terminated in the system.

Mel said that these thieves got into the bike cage with an angle grinder. Gloria said they are clever and don't look different or draw attention to themselves and just like with building access, they could piggyback behind someone. Mel asked if someone could gain access to the garage now. Gloria said that it is only with a FOB could someone get into the garage and into the bike cage. If they get into the main lobby at 35 Charles, they can take the stairwell or an elevator into the garage, but they would still not have access to the bike cage. The bike cage is locked unless someone propped it open or unless someone followed a tenant in. Mel asked if they could, by way of brute force, get into the bike cage and Gloria said that it is a very rugged metal cage and we have not had that happen yet and any damage would be obvious to the structure. Mel said the theft could then only be by someone living in the building or someone following a tenant in. Gloria indicated that it is unlikely another tenant committed the theft as we have not seen that type of behavior in the past. Mel asked how many cameras are in the parking garage. Gloria will confirm this with UFH team but said there is one camera pointed at the entrance as well as the exit. Mel asked if this would be solved by having a camera near the bike cage. See action items.

Annual Tenant Survey:

Alex asked if the TE could collaborate with UFH in the Tenant Survey process. Mel said that the TE would like to help shape the survey and see the actual results (as opposed to seeing only the public facing summary). Gloria will take this back to her team and is open to the idea of collaboration. Gloria asked if the TE wishes to shape the survey in terms of the broad areas such as facilities and services, staffing, common areas or are there specific topics that they wish to survey. Mel said both, to engage in a collaboration and have more ability to ask and get a closer look at the results and see the full qualitative feedback as opposed to an infographic. Gloria said this is a

good initiative and UFH has done two surveys and there is room for growth. Gloria said the surveys should continue to be anonymous, so people are comfortable providing feedback. In Apostolos's absence Gloria will reach out to his staff and explore the idea for the 2024 survey i.e., to think about developing a collaboration with the TE in terms of questions, execution, and survey results. Gloria thinks this can happen and she will start to develop a timeline for the 2024 Survey. Gloria is also contemplating other aspects – she is concerned about survey fatigue and wants the feedback to continue to be rich and meaningful. It is important for UFH to be able to have analytics to measure progress. Gloria is thinking about surveying every 2 years or tailoring the questions to specific areas. Collaborating with the TE will be helpful since the TE has access to the Facebook page and comes with lived experience in the buildings. Gloria will get back to the group with a timeline, if not in February, then for the March JCM meeting.

Printer/Copier Access for Tenants Proposal: Mel asked if there had been resolution on this proposal. Gloria recalled that we looked into this several years ago and it was cost prohibitive at the time. We would not be looking to make any money and would provide the print service at cost, but the service would likely be more than residents would want to pay and it is likely most have access to their own printers or cheaper alternatives. There was also the issue of paper replenishment - we can't leave paper out in the open. Penny thought that Apostolo had reported on this recently to the group (in fact he did at the November 21st JCM) and there was not a significant amount of interest, but Penny could not recall the specific details. Mel said that 70% wanted a printer/copier and 30% did not. For the purpose of the Minutes Penny has since provided the results of the survey: 29.5% no interest/would never use, 25% would use once every few months, 22.5% 1-2 times a month, 16.5 % 1-2 times a week and 6.5% more than twice a week. Gloria wondered if we could put it in the survey, so we capture interest in light of the cost of providing the service or raise the issue with more specificity. We would lease the equipment and it could be housed in the Meeting Room which is open 24/7. In terms of paper, we could ask Security to keep some on hand. Mel said paper availability would not necessarily have to be 24/7. Gloria said it could be checked daily by staff but suspects there might be heavier use on the weekends when staff are not in the office. Gloria said we can entertain this again. Mel suggested that the UFH team get in touch with U of T Copy, Print, Scan. Gloria said that paying by TCard means that the nonstudent residents would not have access.

Building Operations Update – Gloria for Mike

Elevator Modernization: The elevators should be complete at 35 Charles by mid to late February with the exception of the digital signage that will go up in each cab, but these installations will not be disruptive to tenants. Gloria added that tenants have been very patient with this upgrade. Once we conclude with the physical work at 35 Charles the project will move to 30 Charles for the remainder of the year. The elevator cabs look good, but Gloria is not happy with the tiles and there are cracks in a few but this will be addressed. Deficiencies are identified and addressed at the end of the project.

Parcel Locker: Mike has met with several vendors to assess location, as well as the number of lockers that would be appropriate given the number of apartments being served. Building space is limited. At 35 Charles we could manage to squeeze in 10-15 lockers based on our communication with other building operators, users and vendors. This number will not provide the level of support for this size of operation. There is a huge initial cost as well as ongoing costs, including the networking the space. UFH has no solution at this time, but we are still looking to explore options. There is little space at 30 Charles. The lobby is larger at 35 Charles, but it still cannot



support 711 apartments with 10-15 lockers. It is just not feasible. UFH would also want to meet the demand for food delivery. Gloria and Mike do not have a solution at this time but will continue to investigate. Gloria visited UTSC this week where a new residence for first year undergraduate student opened in the fall. This facility had very impressive lockers and could accept groceries etc. Gloria added that she sits at many planning meetings and always advocates for lockers, cooling stations and security as this is the reality of the needs at this time. UFH is operating buildings that were opened in 1969 and designed in the 60's. So, addressing this for new builds is the best way, however, this is not a forgotten topic.

Next JCM

- Subsequent to the meeting it was determined that JCM February 28, 2024, from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm would be moved to a date in early March.