



December 31, 2014

THA RECAP

PERIOD: JULY 1, 2014 – DECEMBER 31, 2014

From Harriet Polansky, Executive Director

To include, but not limited to the following:

Health Insurance Benefits for Full-Time Employees

I negotiated a new plan for medical benefits for our full-time employees that will save the THA money.

Department of Rehabilitation Services

In order to find jobs for our disabled residents, I contacted the Department of Rehabilitation Service. They provided an informational session for our residents and a few of our residents have taken advantage of this opportunity. In fact, I hired Linda Jennette (the p/t administrative assistant) through this agency.

Grant from State

We received a grant for \$2,500 from the State to be used for resident services.

Wii Game Systems & Games

I worked closely with Aquarion to provide water bottle for our residents and I also requested a donation. Aquarion purchased a Wii Game System and games. This has allowed us to have a Thursday Night Wii Bowling League and game night.

The Annual Summer Picnic

Our September picnic was huge success. Donations amounting to \$525 were received. We had approximately 115 residents from the Village and Congregate.

Legal Counsel

In order to find legal counsel to meet our needs, Neil, THA Commissioners and I spoke to several attorneys, reviewed several websites, interviewed qualified attorneys, and narrowed the selection down to Attorney Ray Rizio for General Counsel and Land Use, and Attorney James Scaramozza, for CHFA financing/LIHTCs and contractual agreements as needed for the revitalization and redevelopment of Stern Village. This was approved by the Board.

Harriet on the Board of the Trumbull Chamber of Commerce

On behalf of the Trumbull Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, I would like to welcome you to the board. We are really looking forward to having you as part of our board. The board is excited to have the representation of Stern Village and this will be a great connection to the seniors in our community.

Lori King

*Executive Director, LGB and
Trumbull Chamber of Commerce
BRBC*

Mental Health First Aid Training

I completed a free, two day, intense course that provided me with the skills to help someone with a mental health problem or experiencing a crisis. This interactive course was invaluable. It was extremely powerful and validated many of the approaches I was already using, as well as provided me with a wealth of information and a process on how to evaluate and implement mental health first aid.

Resident Service Coordinator

Advertising on-line for this position generated hundreds resumes. I reviewed resumes and interviewed several candidates that appeared to be qualified. Jenn Gillis, the social worker for the Town also reviewed key resumes and helped with the selection. Our new RSC is Paulette Mack.

New Office and Storage

We worked with our maintenance team to create an office for the RSC and a new supply closet. This is extremely functional. The office is also shared, from time-to-time with our counselors and social worker.

Home Depot

We are on a special program with Home Depot to save us money. Home Depot also gave us a large cabinet for the Knitting Club's supplies.

Outsourcing Food Services

Based on our analysis of the kitchen/food for the congregants, it became evident that we needed to outsource the food services. Neil, Madeline and I were spending an extraordinary amount of time and money managing the kitchen operations. Three food service firms responded to the RFP. I created a "tasting committee" that included Madeline Smerglino, Congregate Manager, Linda Nassrah, THA Commissioner, Marilyn Ruben, a congregant, Neil and myself. The purpose of this committee was to dine at various congregants and evaluate the meals served. Neil and I also met with each respondent to evaluate their management, costs and competencies. After several meetings, it was determined that Jeff Shapiro, owner of Creative Culinary would be the best fit. Jeff also offered the position of congregate cook to our current employee Lorraine Miller and she declined. Our fill-in chef Armando Vicenty was hired by Jeff.

TD Bank Charitable Contribution

After providing lots of documentation, we received \$10,000 from TD Bank from a grant that we applied for in March. This helped off-set the cost of hiring our RSC.

The Affordable Housing Academy

The THA was selected to participate in the Affordable Housing Academy at no cost. This is for "critical and at risk" housing authorities. These monthly, intense sessions started in September and will end in January. We have learned about the needs of other housing authorities, pre-development, financing/raising equity using tax credits, resident participation, relocation, and what is required from CHFA and DOH. These concentrated sessions were designed to get us ready to apply for funding in April 2015.

Environmental Consultants

In order to request funding from the State for our rehabilitation and renovations, the THA must engage with an Environmental Consultant and an Architect. This is mandatory and part of our pre-development phase. Based on Millennium's years of experience, we budgeted \$23,000 for the Environmental Consultant. Six responses to the RFQ for the Environmental Consultant were received. Bruce Whittaker & Frank Stellato of Millennium, Neil Gerhardt and I reviewed the proposals. Out of the six responses, it was narrowed down to two firms. After discussion of both firms, we chose Cardno to be the environmental consultant. Bruce and Frank discussed the evaluation process at a THA Board Meeting and provided our recommendation to the Board. Harriet also negotiated with them for a lower cost.

Architectural Firms for the Revitalization & Redevelopment of Stern Village

Millennium, Neil and I started evaluating architectural firms the beginning of August, 2014. We had six firms that submitted their proposals (based on our RFQ) and attended our mandatory walk-through meeting. Of those six firms, 1 dropped out and 2 did not have enough experience for our project. This left us with 3 candidates. Bruce, Frank and Steve from Millennium, Neil and I met with each candidate for a two hour meeting. At that time we reviewed their proposals and got acquainted with each firm. I requested additional proposals to review costs. I also requested an additional proposal that outlined an idea, in order to measure "apples to apples" and a cover letter to include availability and competing projects. References were checked. Based on all the information gathered, a cost structure/comparison, presentations and best ideas, Wile + Architects were chosen.

Resident Participation Plan –RPP

As part of the pre-development phase, we also needed a Resident Participation Plan. I convinced one of the Directors of CHFA to allow the THA to be first in line for TOVAH's services. CHFA has provided us Kim Pietrorzio of TOVAH to work closely with the Stern Village residents at no charge to the THA. CHFA also allowed us to use Susan Harkett-Turley from Housing Education Resource Center (HERC) at no charge to help us with the creation of a Resident Participation Plan. Kim helped the residents through the RPP process. The plan has been accepted by the residents and the Board and will continue to be in effect. Kim will continue to work with the residents in 2015.

The Resident Development Advisory Committee

As per TOVAH, a nine person resident advisory committee is needed to help facilitate the information and assist with decision making processes for the revitalization and development. The election was held on Tuesday, December 16, 2014. I'm looking forward to working closely with the following committee members:

Nancy Bonitatibus
Roberto Cortes
Edward Horan
John Koch
Gloria Lanham
June Leonard
Bob Lewis
Lisa Manzione
Joe Ventura

Meeting with CHFA and DOH

The THA were one of 10 "critical" housing authorities to meet with the State and provide substantive information on our revitalization and redevelopment project. Our 8 member Team THA consisted of Millennium, Wiles, Ed Lavernovich, Susan Fatse, Neil and myself. Two syndicators, members of the Housing Coalition, key people from CHFA and DOH were present. Everyone commented on how well prepared we were and the depth of our presentation. This presentation was also provided to the residents of THA.

Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman

Nancy Wyman stopped by Stern Village and met with Neil and me in my office. Nancy knows that we are apolitical and she was kind enough to meet with just Neil and myself. (There were no residents or candidates in the community room.) We discussed the demographics and base rent of Stern Village, our present needs and the CNA that was done by the state (as well as the flaws in the CNA). We reviewed our revitalization plans and explained how we are moving forward as per State mandates. We explained that we need a large portion of rental assistance from the State (Department of Housing) which is key to start the funding process.

High Performing Housing Authority

CHFA has told us that we are a high performing Housing Authority. This means we are following their processes and procedures and they do not have to visit us on a regular basis.

Converting to Non-Smoking Apartments

I converted apartments an additional 11 apartments into non-smoking apartments. We now have 135 non-smoking apartments.

Harriet's Monthly Tuesday Teas

These are on-going and very successful. Several issues have been resolved due to resident involvement during these meetings and the guest speakers have been well received.

Turkeys for Stern Village Residents

John and Darby Ruby of Shelton, donated twenty, 8 lb. turkeys, to Stern Village. This was spearheaded by our resident Don Scinto and Paulette Mack.

Annual Inspections

In September we completed our annual inspections of 222 apartments. We used a new form this year which was 6 pages and extremely detailed.

Wait List for 2014-2015

Our wait list is completed and resides on our website. It is listed by Control Number for each applicant (who met our criteria and passed our screening process) and position. We took in approximately 135 applications from July 1 – October 1, 2014. Out of that we have 58 applicants that made it to the wait list.

Bigelow Tea

Bigelow Tea donated a huge box of tea bags for our residents, thanks to Paulette's efforts.

Holiday Party

The holiday breakfast, catered by Creative Culinary (at no charge) was a huge success. We had close to sixty people and everyone had a great time. Paulette Mack coordinated this for our residents and she was instrumental in its success.

Resident Services

Paulette Mack has contacted agencies to provide companionship and chore services for residents in need. Forms for DSS redeterminations for SNAP (Food Stamps), QMB (Qualified Medicare Beneficiary for Medicare B premiums, T19 (Medicaid) and home care services (medical) have been completed for several residents.

Security Procedures – Congregate

At 5 pm the front door of the congregate is locked and the person signing in must show his/her ID to the attendant on duty. Additional "ringers" were strategically installed, to enable attendants to hear the bell.

Starting on December 31, 2014, residents must call the office by 10 am or walk into the office. If they do not, the attendant will knock on their door and open it if they do not hear from them. Congregants must notify the attendant if they will be gone for the day.

Additional security procedures are being developed for January of 2015.