

The House Special

Volume XIX, No. 5

September 1999

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

The good news is that at its meeting on August 23, 1999, the Board passed a Resolution setting the Special Assessment to cover the costs of the garage repairs at \$2,132,000. This is nearly a 47% reduction from the \$4,000,000 figure that was passed in a Board Resolution on April 15, 1999. In addition, the August 23 Resolution specified that Unit Owners will be required to pay their assessments by December 1, 1999 or sign up for a three-year monthly repayment plan. A letter to all Unit Owners announcing this news will be mailed to non-resident Unit Owners and delivered to resident Unit Owners on or about September 1. That letter is not the official notification to Unit Owners of the amount of their assessment. Personalized letters to all Unit Owners advising them of the exact amount of their Special Assessment and associated information cannot be sent out until the existing loan agreement with the National Cooperative Bank has been amended. The Bank's agreement to the changes in the line of credit ceiling and the amount of the Special Assessment has been requested, and their concurrence is anticipated early in September.

As soon as the amended loan agreement has been signed, a letter will be addressed to all Unit Owners advising them of the exact amount of the assessments on their units and — if they elect to take the three-year repayment plan — the amount of the monthly payment, as well as the fee they will be charged to cover the costs of preparing the note and Deed of Trust they will have to sign. The deferred payment arrangements will carry an interest rate of 9%. Prepayment of principal will be allowed.

The Board hopes that all Unit Owners who can possibly do so will pay their Special Assessment in full on or before December 1, 1999. Checks should be mailed or delivered to the Management Office. (PLEASE DO NOT SEND OR DELIVER CHECKS UNTIL YOU RECEIVE THE OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION LETTER.) If all but a few Unit Owners were to pay their Special Assessments in full by December 1, the Association probably could pay off the loan from National Cooperative Bank promptly. This would be a highly desirable development.

The reason for the dramatic reduction in the amount of the Special Assessment stems from the fact that the best information we had early in April on the estimated cost to complete the repairs on the garage beams

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and other major repairs that we knew had to be done totaled \$4,000,000. Even though in April we were still uncertain of the actual cost, National Cooperative Bank required us to assess the maximum amount we might want to borrow as a condition of their approving the loan. It was essential that we have prompt access to the Bank's line of credit to continue work in the garage because we had just about run out of reserve funds to pay the contractor. Since the repairs on the garage had been started in the spring of 1998, and we had been without guest parking for a year, we felt it essential to continue the construction without interruption. That is why the Board approved the April 15 Resolution levying a Special Assessment of \$4,000,000.

Since then, we retained another engineering consultant in the late spring for a second opinion. This consultant, Dr. Randall Poston, concluded that far less work is needed than we had previously been advised was the case. Dr. Randall Poston is one of the country's top experts on post-tensioned concrete construction of the type we have in our garage. It is on the basis of his firm advice on what remaining work needs to be done that the Board is able to revise its estimate of the amount of money we need to borrow from the National Cooperative Bank.

Although any Special Assessment is bad news for all Unit Owners, the nearly 47% reduction in what we thought we would have to pay comes as good news to us all.

USE OF RESERVE FUNDS

Skyline House is almost 20 years old. We are facing major repairs and replacements of equipment that is wearing out. Big ticket items such as the cooling towers, elevators, and balcony repairs all will have to be addressed. The Board believes that by raising the amount Unit Owners contribute to the reserves in their regular condo fees (the General Assessment) starting in January 2000, and by carefully scheduling the work we should be able to manage the necessary repairs and equipment replacements without resorting to Special Assessments in the foreseeable future. We are using reserve funds to pay for the roof replacements on both buildings and also the condensing units for the common area air conditioning. After paying for these major expenditures — about \$640,000 total — we expect to have over \$500,000 in the reserves at the end of 1999.

This is the time of year that intense work on next year's budget is underway. The amount of the monthly contribution to the reserves will be studied carefully by Management and the Budget Subcommittee of the Financial Management Committee before recommendations are made to the Board at its October meeting. The Board normally passes the budget at its November meeting so that letters can be mailed to Unit Owners early in December advising them of the amount their monthly condo fees will be starting in January, 2000. These are important issues that are — and will be — discussed and studied intensively by all concerned in the next few months.

SKYLINE HOUSE ON LINE

One of the goals I hoped would be achieved during my tenure on the Board is now a reality....and, I can't even take any credit for it!

(Continued on Page 3)

– Skyline House Unit Owners Association now has its own World Wide Web site. Check out

<http://www.shuoa.org>

to see our new home page. The Board and Management hope this site will serve two purposes: (1) to promote Skyline House as a great place to live and (2) to provide Unit Owners and Residents with an additional source of general information about life at Skyline House. The site features floor plan information and will include selected items from the House Special.

This site is the creation of our own GREG GRIMM and MOHAMMED IBRAHIM of 1705W. Special thanks to Mr. Ibrahim, who is a student at Jeb Stuart High School! A number of other residents have made contributions to the site, including Jack Herzig, Julian Gelenter of 1308E, Nadyne McKelvey and a number of representatives of our various committees.

Your comments and recommendations concerning the new site are most welcome. Please use one of the e-mail hotlinks on the site or drop off notes with Nadyne McKelvey in the Management Office. I look forward to seeing this site develop rapidly into an effective means of communication from the Association to residents and the community at large.

THE HOUSE SPECIAL

– For the time being, the Association will use The House Special as a means to communicate exclusively with Unit Owners and residents. In contrast to our new Web site, content of The House Special is not directed to external audiences. The House Special at this time does not accept any advertising, and we will make no distribution to the community at large. Accordingly, for the time being we will distribute The House Special by mail to Unit Owners residing outside Skyline House and via unit boxes at the Front desk for those residing on the premises. This will enable the Association and Management to communicate with you on all matters of common concern.

HAIL AND FAREWELL

I'm very pleased that MS. GUSBY SILVA has joined our staff as Deputy General Manager. (Randy Lyon has plenty to tell you, so I won't steal the General Manager's thunder.)

Congratulations to engineer Loay Al-Malaeka and best wishes to his bride, Deema, who were married August 13th. We thank Loay for his cheerful service here at Skyline House and wish him well in his future endeavors.

Charley Roberts

RE: For the information of all unit owners, the Virginia Condominium Act sets forth the following with respect to owners' rights to see and copy books and records of the Association.

B. Subject to the provisions of Subsection C, all books and records kept by or on behalf of the unit owners' association, including, but not limited to, the unit owners' association membership list, addresses and aggregate salary information of unit owners' association employees, shall be available for examination and copying by a unit owner in good standing or his authorized agent so long as the request is for a proper purpose related to his membership in the unit owners' association, and not for pecuniary gain or commercial solicitation. This right of examination shall exist without reference to the duration of membership and may be exercised (i) only during reasonable business hours or at a mutually convenient time and location and (ii) upon five days' written notice reasonably identifying the purpose for the request and the specific books and records of the unit owners' association requested.

C. Books and records kept by or on behalf of a unit owners' association may be withheld from examination or copying by unit owners and contract purchasers to the extent that they are drafts not yet incorporated into the unit owners' association's books and records or if such books and records concern:

- 1. Personnel matters or a person's medical records;**
- 2. Communications with legal counsel or attorney work product;**
- 3. Transactions currently in or under negotiation;**
- 4. Pending or probable litigation;**
- 5. Matters involving administrative or other formal proceedings for enforcement of the condominium instruments or rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto;**
- 6. Disclosure of information in violation of law;**
- 7. Meeting minutes or other records of an executive session of the executive organ held pursuant to subsection B of 55-79.75;**
- 8. Documentation, correspondence or management or executive organ reports compiled for or on behalf of the unit owners' association or the executive organ by its agents or committees for consideration by the executive organ; or**
- 9. Individual unit owner or member files, other than those of the requesting unit owner, including any individual unit owner' files kept by or on behalf of the unit owners' association.**

D. The unit owners' association may impose and collect a charge, reflecting the actual costs of materials and labor, prior to providing copies of any books and records.

Management reports

- ▶ Garage repairs are finished;
- ▶ Guest parking is once again available;
- ▶ West Tower roof will be finished first week in September;

GUSBY SILVA, Deputy General Manager, came on board on August 30, and Tycia Haight, Bookkeeper, is now full time.

We welcome both of these employees. Stop by and get acquainted with them.

GUSBY SILVA was born in Colombia. She came to the United States in 1981, and lived on the East Coast of Florida until 1986. She then migrated north to the cold clime of Virginia.

She has 15 years of experience in Property Management. She came to us from AIMCO (Apartment Investments and Management Company) where she has worked for the past 7 years.

She is a certified Property Manager candidate, and is a member of IREM (Institute of Real Estate Management).

Gusbey has a son, Fabricio, who teaches English and Spanish in Brazil; a daughter, Felicidad, is doing her last semester of Anthropology in Ghana, West Africa and youngest daughter, Priscilla, is 15 years old and in the 10th grade at Woodbridge.

If you haven't heard the name Gusbey, it is original, the "Gus" coming from father, Gustavo and "bey" from mother, Betsey.

TYCIA HAIGHT, has been a part-time Accounting Assistant with Skyline House since May, 1995. While working part time here, she was a full time employee for the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc.

Recreation Committee

Tony DiSalvo, Co-chair

Tish Linsinbigler, Co-chair

The committee met on Wednesday, August 11, in the West Card Room. A short discussion took place on future activities. The Flea Market was selected to be held on Friday, November 19. Tables will be reserved for Skyline House residents only. There will be NO charge for tables. The Flea Market will open at 7:00 p. - 8:30 p.m., with ample time for setting of tables. Full details later.

TGIF in August was well attended even though a dozen regulars were out of town. If you are a new resident, make this your first to attend TGIF and meet your neighbors and to make it easier, you are requested NOT to bring a plate of hors d'oeuvres, just your own liquid refreshment.

COMING EVENTS

TGIF - Friday, September 10, 6:30 p.m. EPR

TGIF - Friday, October 1, 6:30 p.m. WPR

Rec. Cte. Meeting Oct. 13., 7:00 p.m. WCR

GOOD NEIGHBORS

Good Neighbors are available to assist all residents who are in need of temporary help due to illness or emergency. Call one of the Good Neighbors of the month if a need arises. Good neighbors for September are:

Darryl Graham 820-1138

Geraldine Naveau 931-4643

NEEDED:

A volunteer librarian for the first Monday night of each month from 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Please leave your name at the front desk.

Physical Plant & Operations Committee

Excerpts from PPOC minutes -August 19, 1999

Chairman's Report

George Beams was thanked for his willingness to chair the July meeting, even though none was held. At the suggestion of Randy Lyon, the committee decided to change the meeting time from 7:30 to 7:00 pm.

Management's Report

VDOT cleaned George Mason Drive in front of Skyline and cleared blocked drains. They plan to plant flowers in the median strip at a later date. We can thank Dorothy Farrell for getting this done, at no cost to Skyline House.

All public area air handler filters have been changed in accordance with Skyline's preventative maintenance program.

Light timers have been installed in trash rooms.

The fire alarm system will be tested again. This seems to be a never-ending process because as soon as the fire department finds a deficiency, they have to reschedule, which takes several weeks. Ed Bisgyer noted that we have spent \$120,000 on the system and it still doesn't work. One of the problems may have been overheating in the fire control room, which has now been air conditioned.

Air conditioning has been extended to elevator control spaces in hopes of improving performance.

Tests have shown our fire sprinkler systems work only 50% of the time. We must find out why.

The West Tower roof will be finished during the first week of September. This is late due to the excessive heat.

Status of East & West Garage Terrace

At the present time, removal of the peripheral planters is not required according to our consulting engineer, Dr. Poston. I quote:

"Therefore, it is our opinion that moving the planters would have very little benefit, if any, on improving the overall durability of the terrace level structural system. This opinion is predicated on the assumption the existing planters contain reasonable water proofing and drainage. The deteriorated sidewalks must be repaired, even if the existing planters are not relocated."

Charley Roberts recommended, for children safety, that the peripheral planters should be removed or a fence installed on the existing parapet. Doug White, consulting engineer, states we are in compliance with Building Code requirements.

It was brought out that any alteration of the terrace that is required in a repair exceeding \$10,000 must be approved by the unit owners in compliance with Article XI, Section 3 of the By-Laws. Removal of peripheral planters will cost approximately \$100,000.

MOTION: East Plaza garage peripheral planters should be retained. All other repairs recommended by the modified Skyline House Roof Plaza repair approved by PPOC of June 17, 1999, remain unchanged. The Association should invite competitive bids (3) for this work as soon as possible."

At the culmination of discussion, six committee members voted in favor and one abstained.

Robert Lowry, Co-Chairman

LIBRARY

The Library is flourishing. New books are arriving. A large selection of good books are for sale. We encourage you to pay a visit to the Library.

Barbara Michelman

Editor Nadyne McKelvey

Copy Due Date 20th of the Month

Published: Monthly

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: *The House Special Welcomes brief comments from its readers.* Please limit your letters to 250 words and include your name and unit number. The Association Board reserves the right to refuse incorrect or improper statements.

Information for the House Special may be left at the Management Office, the Reception Desk, or sent by e-mail to nmckelvey@hotmail.com

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Letter to the Editor

What has happened to overall prices for Skyline House Units over the years and what has happened to them in recent months? Many owners have speculated. They need do so no longer. We have calculated weighted average price indexes that take into account virtually all sales from 1981 through 1998. They are constructed in basically the same way as the Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates its Consumer and Producer price indexes. The results, presented below, are based on prices that have been adjusted for differences in floor levels and unit size. The price index reached its peak in 1991 at 129.8 percent of the 1981 price index. Since that time it has fallen almost continually, and in 1998 was approximately the same as in 1981. However, preliminary 1999 data based on only a few units indicate that prices rose early this year. If the higher price level prevails throughout the

year, it will represent one of the largest single-year percentage increases since 1981.

1981 = 100.0	1987 = 107.3	1993 = 119.0
1982 = 104.7	1988 = 116.7	1994 = 119.0
1983 = 103.5	1989 = 125.9	1995 = 115.0
1984 = 100.7	1990 = 128.9	1996 = 105.9
1985 = 103.9	1991 = 129.8	1997 = 103.3
1986 = 105.8	1992 = 123.3	1998 = 100.9*

* = Preliminary

Jerry Lagace 806E

Letter to the Editor

It has been brought to my attention that recently, various staff people of Skyline House have been subjected to verbal abusive assault by certain residents.

It was brought to me as Chairman of the Covenants Committee to see if there was something we could do about this very inappropriate behavior.

Nobody, employee or resident, should be subjected to verbal abuse. It shows a lack of civility, courtesy and good manners by the abuser. There is already enough of that in this world. We do not need any more, especially in our own community and directed to people here who serve the needs of the members of our condominium.

All staff people have a job description under which they operate and they are trained to NOT respond in kind to abuse. If any resident has cause for dissatisfaction with the performance of any staff member, report this to management. That is where the ultimate responsibility resides. The verbal abuser only displays his/her ignorance when they engage in such juvenile activity.

If you wish to be spoken to respectfully, treat others the same way.

H. David Kafka

Skyline Plaza Community Relations Committee is holding a candidate's night on Tuesday, September 28, to introduce Skyline residents to the candidates for the State Senate, House Delegates, and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

The forum will be held at 7:30 p.m., in the South Party Room of Skyline Plaza. Each candidate will make brief remarks, followed by questions from the audience.

Skyline House residents are invited and encouraged to attend.

Don't forget to register to vote, if you haven't done so already. For information on registering call the Board of Elections at 703-222- 0776.

Reported by Barbara Michelman from George Ferguson

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