

LCA Board Meeting 07-05-2007
Meeting Minutes

LOCATION: "Percolator" (4819 Springfield Ave.)
7 pm Walk-thru inspection
7:15 pm Convened

PRESENT:

Teresa, Malanie (4722),
Misia (Tree House)
Rob (Ailanthus),
Naima (Nyumbani)
Rick, Aden (sp?) (Percolator)

MINUTES PREPARED AND SUBMITTED BY: Robert Monk, LCA Secretary and Ailanthus Board Rep.

AGENDA & TABLE OF CONTENTS

I - Regular Agenda Items:

- A) ACTION: Walk-thru inspection SEVERAL ITEMS NEED CORRECTION
- B) SCHEDULING: Next Meeting AUGUST 2ND @ Nyumbani (1014 S. 47th St.)
- C) REPORT: Community Check-ins and 'Visions' presentations
- D) REPORT: Finance Report (Appendix A - "Financial Report")
- E) REPORT: Harmony Debt - Facilitation? TABLED
- F) REPORT: Maintenance

II - Business Forwarded from April Meeting:

- A) PROPOSAL: Approve Appendix B - "Late Rents Policy" APPROVED w/ revision
- B) PROPOSAL: Approve Appendix C (wiki only) - "Administrative Code" TABLED
- C) DISCUSSION: Financing/sale - next steps TABLED
- D) PROPOSAL: Committee to finalize c. 2003 "Draft Member Packet" TABLED > October GMM
- E) PROPOSAL: Optional bi-annual meetings of community finance managers APPROVED

III - New Business:

- A) PROPOSAL: LCA to Join NASCO? TABLED > September Board Mtg.
- B) DISCUSSION: Shofam Status (Missed meetings, communication; good cost-share)
- C) DISCUSSION > PROPOSAL: What maintenance qualifies for \$4K spending? TABLED
- D) ACTION: Authorizations for access to safe deposit box - more to do

IV - Announcements:

- A) AILANTHUS: Still seeking new housemate.
 - B) AILANTHUS: Dance party Saturday, July 14th from around 9pm.
 - C) TREE HOUSE: Pay-the-debt Benefit July 28
 - D) SECRETARY: There's an Administrative Calendar on the WIKI (<http://lifecenter.xwiki.com/>)
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MINUTES

I - Regular Agenda Items:

A) ACTION: Walk-thru inspection

The walk-thru inspection identified several safety/insurance items needing correction:

1. Basement smoke detector could not be located.
2. Basement extinguisher certification expires now.
3. 1st Floor extinguisher certification expired one year.
4. 2nd Floor extinguisher certification expired now.
5. 3rd Floor extinguisher certification expired now.
6. Attic smoke detector could not be located (replace w/ smoke/CO combo detector).
7. Attic extinguisher certification expired now.

ACTION ITEM: Percolator correct inspection issues.

Miscellaneous maintenance items were also noted during the walk-thru, and will be noted in the survey to be completed by Percolator and the Maintenance Committee.

B) SCHEDULING: Next Meeting

The Board agreed on **August 2nd at 6:45 pm, at Nyumbani House (1014 S. 47th St.)** as the date of the next monthly meeting of the Board.

C) REPORT: Community Check-ins

1. Shofam
 - a. Teresa (4722) reported that Theresa (sp?) (Shofam) recently had surgery. Shofam has been absent at this and the previous Board meeting.
2. 4722
 - a. Teresa reported Morgan has taken a sub-letter to share the 2FL apartment.
 - b. The east exterior wall and its cap have been repaired through a collaboration with Mural Arts.
 - c. Teresa read from 4722's latest documentation of its vision as a community/organization.
3. Ailanthus House
 - a. Robert reported A. is still seeking a new housemate.
 - b. Still preparing community vision document.
4. Percolator
 - a. Rick reported P. is seeking one new housemate, and able to take time.
 - b. Maintenance issues include need for tree removal, follow-up to get lingering leaks fixed that Trama has already worked on, electric upgrades for 2Front bedroom and other items.
 - c. Rick read from Percolator's latest documentation of its vision as a community.
5. Nyumbani
 - a. Naima reported Cameron is expecting approval of his moving out of halfway house, and will most likely move in at Nyumbani.
 - b. Naima's son-in-law got visa and will arrive next month.
 - c. Maintenance: Snaking of roof drains may have cured basement flooding issues; still trying to get a contractor to work on rear shed area.
 - d. Naima spoke of Nyumbani's vision as being substantially the same as their original proposal at move-in: extended family.
6. Tree House
 - a. Misia reported Sorena (sp?) has moved into the Attic room.
 - b. Maintenance: turned in info sheet to Robert (Maintenance Committee); got CO detector and seems ok; mold on items stored in basement.
 - c. Misia read from Tree House's latest documentation of its vision as a community.
 - d. Tree House will host a get-out-of-debt benefit party on July 28.

D) REPORT: Finance Report (see Appendix A - "Finance Report")

1. Updates:
 - a. Percolator Q2 report is lost in transit, and will be re-submitted.
 - b. 4722's payment was stuck in Julie's pocket, preventing it from being accounted.
 - c. Nyumbani has submitted a replacement check for a previous payment that was returned for NSF.
 - d. Harmony debt: Robert made no progress on finding a facilitator. Teresa reported NASCO considers the case fairly hopeless.
2. Pentridge Children's Garden unpaid taxes: Naima reported that Julie spoke with Erin, who was apologetic but did not offer any hope of immediate payment: the impression seemed to be that PCG activity has stalled somewhat.

ACTION ITEM: Melanie to contact Erin and discuss possibilities for LCA support for PCG revival.

3. General Fund: There's about \$6K available, that may be issued for grants.

E) REPORT: Maintenance

Robert reported for the Maintenance Committee.

1. Met with several communities and continuing to solicit and receive maintenance survey info for compilation into an ongoing tracking database.

2. Developing survey/info form for individual communities to track and report maintenance items and priorities.

ACTION ITEM: Robert to email maintenance info form to LCA listserve.

II - Forwarded from May Meeting:

A) PROPOSAL: Approve Appendix B - "Late Rent Policy" APPROVED W/ REVISION
The Board briefly reviewed the document as revised by Julie, and approved it with a revision to the effect that the parties to any arbitration will share the costs of the arbitration per the judgement of the Arbitrator; the LCA would pay and be credited for any up-front costs from the arbitration.

RESOLVED: The LCA adopts the attached "Late Rent Policy" with one revision, as its procedure for responding when individuals or communities do not pay rent on time.

ACTION ITEM: Julie to incorporate the intended revision and deliver the new official policy to the Secretary for inclusion in the LCA records and distribution to Membership.

B) PROPOSAL: Approve Appendix C (posted to wiki only) - "Administrative Code" TABLED

C) DISCUSSION: Financing/sale - next steps TABLED

D) PROPOSAL: Committee to finalize c. 2003 "Draft Member Packet" TABLED > October GMM
There was informal agreement to work toward finalizing the member welcome/information document, and the Board agreed to form a committee for the purpose at the General Membership Meeting in October.

E) PROPOSAL: Optional bi-annual meetings of community finance managers APPROVED
The Board agreed to schedule the next meeting of community finance managers for September, to review and discuss annual budgets prior to the fiscal year beginning October. The board will pick a date at its monthly meeting in August

ACTION ITEM: Board Rep's to get availability for September Finance Managers' Meeting on Annual Budgets

III - New Business:

A) PROPOSAL: LCA to Join NASCO TABLED > September Board Mtg.
Teresa presented about membership costs and benefits. Initial membership for a community is a bulk-discounted \$10/member, and registration of new members (due to turnover or addition) is \$36. Most NASCO member communities charge incoming members the new member fee, which exempts the individual from new-member fees if they enter any other NASCO member community.

Concerns about autonomy vs. NASCO were largely laid to rest when Teresa clarified a distinction between a few NASCO member communities whose facilities are NASCO-owned and operated and the majority of membership and communities, who use NASCO resources but remain independent.

Several Board members wanted to review information on the NASCO website (<http://www.nasco.coop>) and elsewhere, prior to making a decision.

We agreed to table a discussion, whether to recommend membership, until September. The entire membership will be involved in a final decision at the General Membership Meeting in October.

ACTION ITEM: Board Rep's to review information prior to September Board Meeting (decision whether to recommend membership to Members)

B) DISCUSSION: Shofam Status
Melanie inquired about Shofam's absence, and there was brief discussion for her benefit and Aden's, who have not been at recent Board meetings. Several Board members shared anecdotes of difficulty staying in communication with Shofam. Cost-share payments have been good.

C) DISCUSSION > PROPOSAL: What maintenance qualifies for \$4K spending? TABLED

D) ACTION: Authorizations for access to safe deposit box
Robert noted briefly that there are further steps required for Julie and Russel to be authorized to access the LCA's safety deposit box at PNC's downtown branch, per a Board decision at its most recent meeting at 4722 Baltimore.

ACTION ITEM: Julie and Russel to contact Robert for info on how to become authorized.

June 2007 Financial Report:

Who owes what:

Ailanthus -- All paid up

Nyumbani -- Owe \$52 (August Cost Share), \$1384 unspent maintenance money

Percolator -- Owe Q2 financial report

Quilumbo Shofam -- Paid \$70 toward July Cost Share, Q4 (05-06) & Q2 Financial Report

Tree House -- Owe \$469.99 (Oct 05) Cost Share, Receipts from Q2&3, final 05-06 Financial Report & Q2 Financial Report

Vortex -- All paid up

4722 -- Owe June Cost Share

Pentridge Children's Garden -- \$246 this year's property tax & \$267 last year's property tax

Harmony House -- Owe Jun, Jul, Sept, Oct, Dec, Jan, Feb, April, May, June loan installments (received a payment in 8/06, 11/06 & 3/07)

Harmony House -- \$10976 Debt from FY03-04 & 04-05 & 05-06 (Original Debt was \$7600 in Owed Cost Share + in \$5076 Owed Maintenance, so far they have paid \$1600)

Bob Massey -- \$658

Current Balance:

\$6305 in our general fund (This can be used for maintenance grants)

\$10,000 in our emergency fund (the goal is to have \$10,000 for emergency maintenance)

\$4800 set aside for our property taxes which are due in February (I am setting aside \$1200 a month)

Agenda Items:

Notes:

\$1456 was sent to Basement Services for work at Percolator & Tree House. (\$1456 will be sent monthly)

\$800 was sent to Garth Gill for furnace work at Percolator

Late Rent Policy: Revision 1

Accrued debt equal to two or more months of cost share initiates the Late Rent Policy. It may apply to individuals or whole communities residing in LCA properties. A community's "rent" is equal to cost-share plus maintenance dues. An individual's rent is defined in their LCA Individual Membership Agreement.

Step One: Financial Consultation

The indebted individual or community members come to an LCA Board meeting to present their financial situation and personal plan for repaying the debt. If no realistic plan can be agreed on then the parties seek an agreement for terminating occupancy on the best possible terms.

Occupants terminating tenancy remain responsible for their debt. The LCA and vacating occupants shall seek an agreement cooperatively on a realistic repayment plan in light of all information available at the time of the Financial Consultation. The LCA's appointed "Rent Collector" will monitor compliance with the repayment plan and report any lateness immediately to the LCA Board President.

Step Two: Mediation

Mediation will be initiated when there is an unresolved financial dispute or if the repayment plan is not followed.

A mutually trusted, neutral third party will be brought in to attempt resolution of the dispute. The mediator will develop a Response Plan with both parties. The "Rent Collector" will be responsible for the monitoring of the financial aspects of the agreement reached during mediation. Any deviation from the plan will be reported immediately to the LCA Board President.

Step Three: Binding Arbitration

If the terms of the Response Plan are not followed the arbitration process will be initiated. ***The parties will share the cost of arbitration: a community pays ____ and an individual who is no longer part of a community pays ____ towards the cost of each session of Arbitration.** The LCA pays the remaining cost. If the indebted individual or community is unable or unwilling to pay the cost of arbitration will be added to the debt. The LCA will seek termination of the debtor's tenancy and the earliest enforceable repayment of all debt.

Step Four: Small Claims Court

If the debtor does not agree to participate in arbitration or does not comply with the judgment then the LCA may pursue repayment through small-claims court. The entire LCA Board must reach consensus on this decision prior to pursuing it.

APPROVED 2007-07-05 with revision to the effect that up-front costs of arbitration shall be paid by the LCA and the total costs, including those fronted by the LCA shall be divided among the participants as directed by the arbitrator.

Life Center Association Nyumbani Vision 2007

Nyumbani means 'home' or 'in the home' in Swahili, which for the most part is our communities mother language.

We chose this house name as we felt it resonated with our simple, extended, intergenerational family lifestyle. Our family has been committed to supporting each other through the transitions of life in the USA while we greet and nurture our next generation.

Our vision is to enable everyone to have the space, love and support necessary to live and grow. We promote a healthy, drug and relatively alcohol free home. We invite gatherings and garden parties. We are social activists and Swahili enthusiasts. We are physically active in yoga, soccer, swimming and walking.

While our family has grown we continue to lift up this vision while recognizing that our futures are in flux and new visions will emerge.

Masalaam

Percolator community vision 2007

We are a queer/queer friendly community of adults and children involved in various healthcare and social justice projects for queer/trans people, people of color, women, and young people/kids.

We work in healthcare, counseling, community health education, and building/craftsmanship, and seek to act locally to promote health, social justice and community living. Several of us are also students in healthcare programs. We enjoy cooking, building, gardening, animals, gaming, crafts, bicycling, fitness, art, dance and spending time with our kids.

We seek to create a chill, welcoming home to share with each other and our friends, and to function as a respite from our busy lives.

Treehouse community vision 2007

The Tree House located at 49th and Warrington in West Philadelphia is part of the Life Center Association land trust. The LCA owns and holds property in trust, keeping it affordable and well maintained for the long-term use of individuals and groups.

An alternative to the landlord/renter model, we collectively own and maintain our house. We are majority people of color and many of us do some form of social justice organizing. The house is also child-friendly and a safe space for queer folks and allies.

The Treehouse best suits someone who is responsible, self-motivated and self-aware. This person should also be interested in a communal lifestyle including the cleaning responsibilities and house maintenance essential to a large, multi-member house.

The rent is about \$200-250, in addition to all utilities. This includes an unlimited long distance calling plan, wireless DSL, laundry in the basement, backyard, front and back deck. A \$175 deposit will be due prior to move-in.