



Grand Harbour Views

February, 2019

Report from the Board

At our first meeting of the year (January 28th) we got back to business by discussing some on-going issues.

We decided that the white mantel fireplace, gifted to us by Napoleon, will be installed in the lobby, and the wall mounted one will be installed in the nook outside the party room. The brown couch currently in the nook will be placed in the library if Shared Facilities wishes it, and our manager will look for two small chairs to place in the nook in front of the fireplace. She will offer two or three options to members of the Social Committee and other interested residents for a final choice.

A brief discussion about emergency planning took place. An emergency plan for residents will be presented to the Board for approval at the February meeting and announcements regarding emergency planning will be in the March newsletter.

The manager reported that there is a new lock on the recycle room door which causes it to automatically lock after use. This addresses one of the security issues raised at the AGM.

Security was discussed. We are currently paying a significant amount for security service and are not receiving value for that money. The manager is seeking quotes from other security companies, and also quotes for installation of cameras which may possibly lead to the need for less security, or no security. The goal is to provide protection of our property and residents without wasting money. The Board will discuss this issue over the next couple of months and it will likely be a focus of our next owners' and residents' information meeting sometime in the Spring.

The possibility of using on-line banks for our savings in order to gain more interest on our deposits was raised. The idea was shelved for now as there is

currently no corporate set-up that would efficiently accommodate the practice, and we were informed that this has been tried and abandoned at some other condos.

Management is in the process of scanning and electronically saving all the minutes from Grand Harbour into the server at Bayshore head office. There are many bankers boxes of paper minutes involved. Once they are scanned, management will be able to search for specifics which is hugely important and will save hours of sifting through paper looking for items.

We discussed the newsletter. The March 1st issue will be my last. As no volunteer has come forward to take on this job, and as this is traditionally a volunteer activity in condos, there will be no newsletter at Grand Harbour after March. Owners and residents seeking information will get it through the posted notices in the mailroom and elevators, and will be able to ask for minutes of board meetings. The Condo Act requires management to provide electronic copies of minutes to owners at no charge and is able to charge a small fee for hard copies. As well, minutes are available on our web site which site may shut down in 2019 when Frank Baillie relinquishes that volunteer position.

Susan Bracken

Manager's report

Smoke Detectors for Landlords:

As a reminder for owners who rent their units; you are responsible to test the smoke alarms annually and after every change in tenancy. You, as the landlord, are responsible to ensure the tenant does not disconnect the alarm and to report to you if the smoke alarm is not working.

Smoke in Your Unit?:

We've all done it. Burnt toast or while making dinner the smoke alarm goes off. If this happens, open

your windows and turn on all the exhaust fans but please do NOT open the suite door to the hallway. The alarms in the hallway are connected to the main building fire system which means the smoke from your unit will activate the alarms for the entire building. If you encounter smoke in your unit, not from cooking, call 911 and follow the “Stay or Go” procedure for fire alarms.

Unit Files

Is your unit file up to date? With a community this large, we need your help in order to ensure accuracy of our files. If you have recently moved in or made changes to your contact details or emergency contact, please take a moment to stop by the office to complete an Owner Information Update Form. Should there be an emergency, we want to be sure that we are able to reach you. Off-site owners – please ensure the office has a copy of your current lease and tenant contact details.

Special Assistance

Please let us know if you require special assistance in the event of an emergency. If you’ve already notified us there is no need to do it again – we keep it on file until you notify us of any change.

Pets & Cold Weather

It’s not likely that any of the pampered and much loved dogs living at Grand Harbour are subjected to anything but the best of care, but the following information may be of interest anyway.

As the frigid temperatures set in around us it is a good reminder that the cold also affects pets. Below is a list of tips that can help during the winter months.

- Keep your unit humidified and towel dry your pet as soon as he comes inside the lobby, paying special attention to his feet and in-between the toes. Remove any snow balls from between his foot pads. Alternatively please carry your wet dog through the hallways and towel him off inside the unit.

- Never shave your dog down to the skin in winter, as a longer coat will provide more warmth. If your dog is long-haired, simply trim him to minimize the clinging ice balls, salt crystals and de-icing chemicals that can dry his skin, and don’t neglect the hair between his toes. If your dog is short-haired, consider getting him a coat or sweater with a high collar

or turtleneck with coverage from the base of the tail to the belly. For many dogs, this is regulation winter wear.

- Bring a towel on long walks to clean off stinging, irritated paws. After each walk, wash and dry your pet’s feet and stomach to remove ice, salt and chemicals—and check for cracks in paw pads or redness between the toes.

- Bathe your pets as little as possible during cold spells. Washing too often can remove essential oils and increase the chance of developing dry, flaky skin. If your pooch must be bathed, ask your vet to recommend a moisturizing shampoo and/or rinse.

- Massaging petroleum jelly or other paw protectants into paw pads before going outside can help protect from salt and chemical agents (but carry your pet to the outside door if you do this). Booties provide even more coverage and can also prevent sand and salt from getting lodged between bare toes and causing irritation. Use pet-friendly ice melts whenever possible.

- Pets burn extra energy by trying to stay warm in wintertime. Feeding your pet a little bit more during the cold weather months can provide much-needed calories, and making sure she has plenty of water to drink will help keep her well-hydrated and her skin less dry.

- Remember, if it’s too cold for you, it’s probably too cold for your pet, so keep your animals inside. Don’t leave pets alone in a car during cold weather, as cars can act as refrigerators that hold in the cold and cause animals to freeze to death.

Lisa Johnston R.C.M.

Director training course

CCI Huronia is offering a two-day intensive course for board directors or condo owners considering running for the Board. Many current hot topics will be covered.

It is at the Ferndale Banquet Hall on April 27th & 28th, and the Corporation will pay the entry fee for any two G.H. residents who wish to take part. If you are interested ask at the office for a flyer with details, and a sign up sheet.

Still no additional categories for dispute resolution

It took years to achieve an affordable dispute resolution process for condo owners. It was finally up and running in late 2017 and called the CAT (Condominium Authority Tribunal). In the beginning the Tribunal was only able to hear cases involving access to documents but it was promised that more issues of dispute resolution would be added. More than a year later, that has not happened. Now the CAO (Condo Authority of Ontario) has announced that the fees paid by all of us to fund the Authority will be reduced from \$1 per month to .75 cents per month due to the delay. I expect condo owners across the province would prefer that the government gets on with it and provides the promised dispute resolution process rather than recoup 25 cents a month in costs. Also, I hope that this tribunal does not end up on the chopping block of the Ford government. A condo owner currently has no recourse for dispute resolution (except for access to documents) outside of the courts, and court costs are sky-high.

One thing that has been accomplished by the CAO is the publication of a new Condo Buyer's Guide - a 32 page document available on the website: www.condoauthorityontario.ca. Thirty-two pages sounds impressive but there are many colour photos of condo buildings that take up a lot of space and do not contribute to a new owner's knowledge. The Guide is mediocre at best, but it is a basic knowledge base that is consistently available on the website.

The guide includes information about governance, documents, and roles and responsibilities.

Here is an excerpt which shows just how basic the content is:

The role of condo management

Many condo corporations decide to hire a condo manager (or a condo management provider) to oversee the corporation's day-to-day operations. The manager is accountable to the board of directors of the condo corporation.

Different condominiums have different management needs depending on the size, age and nature of the property. A condo manager's range of responsibilities may include:

- creating and maintaining records for the condo corporation
- responding to owner complaints
- coordinating the maintenance and repair of the property
- hiring and monitoring the performance of service providers
- preparing draft annual budgets and monitoring the reserve fund
- preparing status certificates
- issuing meeting notices and reporting on the affairs of the corporation
- organizing board meetings and overseeing administration of all owners' meetings
- monitoring the corporation's insurance
- preparing financial reports and arranging for audits
- collecting common expense fees
- advising the board on its financial responsibilities (e.g. contributions to the reserve fund, long-term reserve fund planning)
- advising the condo board on its obligations under the Condominium Act, 1998

Lisa and Sam are kept busy with all these responsibilities, each of which involves considerable work. And there are potential pitfalls around every corner these days. Last year, in Ontario, a condo manager, on behalf of the board, announced an "owners' meeting" to discuss some architectural plans. As it was intended as an information meeting no minutes were taken but a brief outline of the discussion was subsequently sent to owners.

Nine months later an owner requested minutes of the meeting. The manager informed him that there were no minutes because it was not an official meeting under the Condo Act. The owner took his request (dispute) to the CAT and the adjudicator ruled that the owner was entitled to assume it was an official meeting because it was announced as an "owners meeting". The corporation was penalized - \$500 was paid to the owner. Assuming that owners know the difference between an information meeting and an official owners

meeting was a pitfall that resulted in inconvenience and a fine. The announcement should have read “owners and residents information meeting”.

This is the type of picky little issue that is getting dealt with at the CAT. Access to documents is important and refusal by a corporation is not to be tolerated, but surely this was a case that should have been dismissed without penalty. Owners are still left without an affordable, efficient way of resolving disputes about noise, harrassment, waste of money, poor landscaping, repairs or maintenance and a myriad of other important issues.

At Grand Harbour we have a good management team that is willing to go the extra mile for legitimate resident needs and it is unlikely that we will be faced with a dispute that has to go to court. Still, one never knows, and we should all contact our member of the legislative assembly and tell him that we want action on condo dispute resolution.

Susan Bracken

Social news

Many thanks to all who participated in the Pancake Breakfast on Saturday January 19th. A special thanks to the chefs, Bev. and Terry Waterhouse, and their helpers.

Mark your calendars for a special Valentine’s free coffee and cake on the morning of February 14th (everyone welcome)! also on Wednesday February 27th our annual Pot Luck Supper; watch the bulletin board in the mail room for sign up and time.

Upcoming Events

Movie night Sunday February 3rd 6:30pm.

Valentine’s free coffee and cake Thursday 14th 9:30am to 11:00am.

Pot Luck Supper Wednesday February 27th.

Have a Safe, Happy, Healthy, February - *Your Social Committee*

Social events are posted by the Social Committee. Newsletters are delivered as close to the 1st of each month as possible.

Electronic delivery is available by contacting the editor at bracken0300@gmail.com [save trees!!]

Items from residents (poems, cartoons, articles, products of interest, etc.) are welcome.

Contacts:

Building Supt.: Joe Murray, 705-627-5951

Propety Management, Bayshore Property Management, 11 Ferris Lane, Ste. 101, Barrie ON L4M 5L6; Manager, Lisa Johnston, 705-722-3700, ext. 227, ljohnston@bpmgmt.ca; Property Administrator, Sam Snow, 705-721-4192, ssnow@bpmgmt.ca [**Sam is your first point of contact for all management requirements**] On-site hours are Monday & Wednesday, from 8 - 4 PM (closed for lunch)

Newsletter Editor: Susan Bracken, 705-728-0300 or bracken0300@gmail.com

See **www.grandharbour.info** for current and archived issues of the newsletter and calendars, Grand Harbour’s Declaration and Rules, minutes of Board meetings, suite floor plans, photographs, and links to Water View, and much more.

You can also download forms connected with facility activities, such as elevator booking, notification of Bell or Rogers appointments etc.