

Heather Gardens Metropolitan District

Clubhouse/Restaurant Committee Report

January 17, 2019

To: HGMD Board of Directors, HGA Board of Directors and General Manager

From: Sandra Rosenberg

Subject: Report of January 17, 2019 Clubhouse/Restaurant Committee Meeting

Committee: Sandra Rosenberg Barbara Brown  
Jill Bacon Barbara Schneller  
Jerry Brewster Christa Boehmer -Excused  
Tom Merges JoAnn Fitch

Staff: Linda Aluise (Clubhouse Manager), Cormac Ronan (Restaurant Manager), Courtney Haynes (Assistant Restaurant Manager)

Guests: 14 Guests were present

Chairman Sandra Rosenberg welcomed members and guests. We do have a quorum.

The November 15, 2018 Clubhouse/Restaurant Committee Report was approved as written with one correction.

**Committee Chair Report: Sandra Rosenberg**

Since our last Clubhouse/Restaurant Committee meeting on November 15, 2018, the HGMD Board held a Special Board Meeting on December 13, 2018 and a Special Board Meeting on January 10, 2019.

At the HGMD Special Meeting on December 13<sup>th</sup>, the Board ratified the appointment of Sandra Rosenberg as Board Secretary. Former Board Member, Gary Hizer, who was the Board Secretary, resigned from the Board due to health reasons and the need to move to a lower elevation. The Board also approved the purchase of Property and Casualty Insurance recommended by the Insurance Subcommittee for the calendar year of 2019. And, we ratified the purchase of a pass-thru refrigerator for the Restaurant, with the recommendation that it be delivered in 2019 as it is a budgeted item for 2019.

At the HGMD Special Meeting on January 10, 2019, the Board appointed David Funk to fill the HGMD Board vacancy. You might remember that Mr. Funk was one of the HGA Board candidates in 2018, and his bio is available in the September 2018 issue of Heather 'n Yon. He will be chairing the Property Policy Committee, and Bill Archambault will be chairing the Golf Committee. The Board was notified that the Hot Tub Heater replacement will occur near the end of January, and the Board approved the purchase of the Rendezvous Chef's Table, which is another budgeted item for 2019.

The next HGMD Board meeting will be held on February 21, 2019. We will have a work session in the morning and our Regular Board meeting at 1:00.

**Clubhouse Manager Activities Report: Linda Aluise**

The Clubhouse Manager provided a report of accomplishments for December 2018 (See attached report). The Clubhouse Manager reported a very busy month with many events. Class registration began on December 17<sup>th</sup> and classes started on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, with a couple of new classes. The woodshop, in an attempt to be more user friendly, has started a woodshop workshop class designed to train new people on the proper use and safety procedures of each machine, and these classes have been very popular and successful. We now have three Intarsia classes, and have a Woodshop Open House scheduled for Saturday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. The Green Team held a Community Awards

program and the Clubhouse received a Green Team Award. Staff also worked with the Optimist's Giving Tree and took down the Clubhouse Christmas decorations.

Goals for 2019 include getting the stage flooring replaced, working with Eagle Scout on a project for giving computer classes, and replacing the chairs in the auditorium. The Clubhouse staff is working with the Restaurant staff on some combined activities and goals.

The Clubhouse Assistant Manager's report is contained on the back of the Clubhouse Manager's report. The Assistant Manager sent out 12 email blasts, and handled 9 Rental Contracts. He is working on the logo project and HG Directory with the HGA Communications Committee, and collecting locker renewals fees. This month he is working on getting applications out for the Resource Fair scheduled for March 29th.

#### **Restaurant Manager Report: Cormac Ronan**

The Restaurant Manager had several handouts for the Committee Members (See attached). The handouts included comments addressing banquet room issues, suggested requirements for banquet room uses, messaging ideas to the community in support of their concerns and 2019 Restaurant goals.

Listed below are a few ideas from the Restaurant Manager's 2019 Goals list:

- Extending summer hours to allow for a later happy hour and to accommodate late afternoon golfers
- Looking into a Saturday morning breakfast
- Staying open later on Sunday till maybe 6 or 7 pm
- Creating new menu for the dining room, with seasonal drink menus
- Focusing on daily lunch and dinner specials
- Herb garden for the spring – garden to plate food – Green Team may help
- Special Events to draw in more business
- Host Volunteer program reinstatement
- New Buffet – Update – What we can do with the new Chef Table setup – Stir fries, pastas, display cooking and possibly even cooking classes - maybe a summer salad bar for lunch, kind of a grab and go

The Restaurant Manager and Assistant Restaurant Manager reported the need to utilize the banquet room more efficiently to generate revenue and staffing concerns. In order to justify a dedicated server in the banquet room revenue needs to reach a minimum of \$300 for a 4-hour time period. Servers are paid a small salary and rely on gratuities. If the restaurant is unable to insure the staff a decent living wage, the server will find other employment. Small groups using the banquet room cannot support a dedicated server, and the restaurant cannot provide good service when we split the duties of a server into two different areas. The restaurant needs to find a way to accommodate smaller groups and retain our wait staff. Management is seeking ideas and feedback from the Restaurant Committee and residents on how to best serve the community while meeting its goals and staffing needs. This issue is an agenda item under new business and will be discussed in more detail later in the meeting.

#### **Clubhouse/Rendezvous Unfinished Business:**

**Capital Reserves:** Subcommittee on Reserves last met in September of 2018. The HGMD Board still needs to have the component list updated. The Committee will probably not meet until after a new HGA Controller is hired.

**Budget 2019:** The Committee Chair summarized the 2019 Budget items as follows:

- The auditorium stage floor replacement
- Replace Auditorium Chairs
- Boiler for the outdoor pool
- Chef's buffet table – approved by the HGMD Board last week

- Kitchen Pass-thru refrigerator - ordered but not in as yet

#### **New Business:**

**Banquet Room requirements:** The Clubhouse/Restaurant Committee Chair stated everyone likes to use the banquet room, but a number of problems occur when the group is small, or only a small number of guests' order food and drinks. As mentioned earlier the wait staff cannot adequately serve two different rooms, and we cannot justify a dedicated server in the banquet room without providing a decent wage. The HGMD Board hears a lot of concerns over the clubhouse, restaurant and golf course subsidies. So, there is a need to find ways to help bring that down and increase revenue. One way to do that is through renting out the banquet room and/or using it more efficiently. Recently a group booked the banquet room for 15 guests, 9 showed up and only 6 ordered a meal. It also happens the other way too, with groups booking for 15 people and having 25 or more show up. Cost of banquet room set-up, cleaning and event preparation must be taken into account when considering costs.

#### **Residents wishing to address the Committee on Banquet Room requirements:**

- Anne Hummel-Gillis, CP-1, voiced concern about having their monthly Happy Hour in the banquet room. We usually have about 40 people. They like to walk around and socialize so the Banquet Room works well. She is concerned about a surcharge and not being able to use the Banquet Room. Their Happy Hour is the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month and only a few don't eat.

The Restaurant Managers stated they should not have a problem meeting the minimum requirement with 30 to 40 people. However, some groups tell us they have 30 people coming and then only 15 show up. This is an inadequate number for the server to make money. Minimum sales need to be around \$300. So, a surcharge would only be required if sales are under the minimum.

- Mavis Richardson, CP-4, complimented the restaurant for what they are trying to accomplish. She stated she is a huge fan of the restaurant and wants it to make money. However, she was very unhappy with the experience her group had last night at the restaurant. The group had 26 people and were put at a long table in the very back of the restaurant. People couldn't get in or out of their seats. When the banquet room isn't in use, large groups should be able to use it. Or a section of the restaurant should be cordoned off to give people more space. Their group would prefer smaller tables of about 8, as they like to walk around and socialize. Unfortunately, they have booked 4 future socials outside of Heather Gardens.

The Restaurant Manager explained that a member of their group came in and told him the group would be 12 to 15 people. The tables were set up in four rows with 6 to 8 chairs at a table. Members of their group wanted the tables turned in a long row, and they had to keep adding tables and chairs as the group expanded at the last minute. After he was given the smaller number of participants, he sent one server home early. Both agreed that in the future better communications prior to the event would help determine the size and desired set up.

The Restaurant Manager added groups can use the square tables in the restaurant that accommodate 8 people at a table, round tables in the restaurant accommodate 6, and the banquet room round tables seat 10. The Manager also liked the idea of having a movable partition for groups meeting in the Restaurant to add privacy and reduce noise.

#### **Banquet Room Requirements:**

The Restaurant Manager explained the purpose of his handouts, the problems encountered by the staff and their ideas solution to address the issues. They are looking for the Committee Member's recommendations and support. Servers earn their living wages with the collection of gratuities and when we have a group in the

banquet room, we have to dedicate a server to that group. Servers make about \$7-\$8 an hour and need tips to bring their hourly wage up. With fewer than 25 to 30 people in the banquet room, the revenue for a four-hour shift does not generate enough in tips for the server to make a livable wage. Failure to insure the server is making money will result in turnover and staff shortage. Tips equal approximately half of their wages. A policy requiring a minimum number of people or a dollar figure for sales is needed, for example 30 people or \$300 for a 4-hour period. If the group doesn't meet the minimum, there needs to be a surcharge. Sixty people is a comfortable maximum number for the banquet room. More than that the room becomes crowded. The room holds more when set up for meetings with just chairs.

The staff is starting to take reservations now for the December Holiday Building Parties. Groups who had the room in the past will have the right of first refusal. Once the past groups have made their selection, an email blast will be sent out to notify the community of open times and dates. Holiday Parties usually pay in advance, and taxes and tips are included in the banquet price.

A couple of groups that come on a regular basis, but know they're number of participants will vary for meals, are considering eating in the restaurant first and then moving to another room in the clubhouse for their meeting. The Kiwanis Club is one such group. The Restaurant has the Rotary Club meeting for lunch every Wednesday in the banquet room, and it is helpful and cost efficient if we can set up on Tuesday evening.

Many comments and ideas were presented from the restaurant manager, assistant manager, the committee members and the audience. Ideas included:

- Adding a movable room partition(s) in the restaurant/banquet room and maybe even the patio. Could be a little noisy but might work. (A committee member will investigate the purchase and/or rental cost).
- Take photos of the banquet room set up and use the photos for promoting it, instead of having it set up to show perspective clients.
- Use the patio for smaller groups when the weather permits.
- Require a minimum number to use the banquet room or a minimum dollar amount of sales.
- For banquet room usage, if the number of attendees decreases, groups will need to cover lost revenue for those who don't show up.
- Residents can purchase a drink at the bar and take it to a Clubhouse meeting room.
- Possibly use the TV room for the meeting portion.
- Include tip amount in bill for groups of 6 or more.

A Motion was made by Jill Bacon to recommend to the HGMD Board to look into renting or purchasing partitions for the restaurant. It was seconded by Tom Merges, with the motion passing unanimously. Tom Merges will look into where partitions might be obtained and get some costs estimates.

The Restaurant Manager and Assistant Manager thanked everyone for all the ideas.

## **2019 Goals:**

2019 Clubhouse Goals (Tentative Events list attached):

- Changed the movie night to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> night to help get the word out in Heather 'n Yon
- Looking at doing concerts in the evening. The Clubhouse staff receives a lot of calls from musical groups wanting to perform.
- Hosting the 9-News Health Fair, Thursday, April 11th. Starting to get key volunteer positions lined up, and will need about 100 volunteers altogether.
- Resource and Craft Fair: Restoring the Resource Fair to twice a year as it produces revenue of about \$7,000 and the event is very popular.

- Work with the restaurant and golf pro on new events. For example, Sunrise Yoga on the patio.
- Next week all the departments and some committees of Heather Gardens will participate in a Meet and Greet, Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup> between 3 & 4.

A suggestion by a Committee member was made to consider outdoor movies and concerts on the golf course. This would require the Golf Pro's approval, golf course maintenance consideration, and timing as the golf course is in use until late evening.

**2019 Restaurant Goals discussed and listed above.**

**2019 Contract with Frolics:**

Discussion: Rehearsals will begin soon. Last year's contract was for \$1,000. This year the Frolics will have 4 shows instead of 3. Clubhouse policy is that event holders that charge a fee must pay a Clubhouse user fee. A Committee Member asked if there is a cost to Heather Gardens? The Clubhouse Manager answered Yes and No. We lose availability of some rooms and auditorium for rental income, staff is needed for set up and cleaning, but no direct costs to us. The Clubhouse Manager stated, the Frolics Club has purchased items in the past like the piano for the clubhouse.

A Motion was made by Tom Merges to recommend the renewal of the Frolics Contract at the same yearly amount to the HGMD Board. The motion was seconded by Jill Bacon and passed unanimously.

**Residents wishing to address the Committee on non-agenda items:**

Carol Bard Vincent of Building 216 reported on two recent experiences she had in the Restaurant. She felt the wait staff was not dress appropriately, and suggested uniforms or white shirts and black pants. She does not like to see tattoos and felt the waitress was not very professional while taking their order. She did not think the music was appropriate today. The large screen TV was also on making the restaurant very noisy. She would like to have lunch without the news and feels we are not a sports bar. She recommended customer comment cards on the table.

The Restaurant Manager loves the uniform idea. He added, we have had a lot of turnover and do need to review our dress policy with the servers. Unless someone changed the radio channel, the music is set on a smooth jazz station each morning by the manager, which most guests enjoy. The large screen TV is usually flashing the photo club pictures. An individual was working on the large screen TV today, and may have caused the disruption. The two smaller TVs over the bar do show sporting events and/or News coverage throughout the day.

Committee member suggested that a lot of the conversation today should be in a Heather 'n Yon article.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm.

**NEXT MEETING: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month, at 1:00 pm  
February 14, 2019**