RIVER VIEWS                  January 2017

**The newsletter of the River Towers Condominium Unit Owners Association**

**Board of Directors Meeting –** The Board met on January 26th in Executive Session from 6:30 to 7:35 p.m. to discuss contracts, legal and staff matters.  At 7:40 the Board began their regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

Some of the discussion/decisions from the meeting were:

1)  **Discussion:**  Master Insurance Policy

2)  **Discussion:**  Annual Contract Schedule

3)  **Decision:**  Initial Payment to Minkoff for Shoring Materials ($150,000) **APPROVED**

4)  **Decision:**  Retainer to KCE Engineers for $153,443.03 **APPROVED**

5)  **Decision:**  Hire Firm to Assist Displaced Owners with Insurance Claims - **APPROVED**

6)  **Decision:**  Fence Material for Geese – **FAILED**

7)  **Decision:**  Communications Committee Requests – **PARTIAL APPROVAL**

**Master Insurance Policy -**We are justifiably concerned having just recently been advised by USI, our insurance broker, that our current master insurer, Travelers, does not wish to renew our policy, which is due to expire in just a few weeks. USI is trying to negotiate with Travelers to give us adequate time to seek and obtain another provider. It is possible that we might have to seek multiple providers if no one entity is willing to ensure our entire property.

**Welcome to our New Office Employee -** We wish to welcome Alcides (Al) Montiel to our office staff as the new administrative assistant.  He is learning the ropes of business at River Towers and we hope this begins a long and fulfilling relationship with our community.

**Roll Out of Kitchen Pipe Project –** In December the Board agreed to move ahead with the in-house kitchen pipe replacement project.  Work is tentatively planned to begin on Tuesday, February 21.  As a reminder, David Mosher (our lead engineer for in-unit services) feels this one type of pipe behind kitchen sinks  is the single most problematic, causing the most emergency repairs and damage to multiple units when it fails.

The work will involve cutting a hole in the wall under the kitchen sink, or behind the dishwasher depending on where the pipe is located in each unit.  The engineers believe they can complete 2-3 units per day where the kitchens are back-to-back, though all units will be addressed over time.

Work will commence on the 9th floor of the 41 building.  Repair of the wall under the sink or behind the dishwasher will be done approximately one week after the pipe replacement and the wall will either be closed up or an access panel installed.  If the engineers find a cracked or leaking sink traps or garbage disposals, they will be replaced while they are there. That portion of the work will be billed to the owner, while the actual pipe replacement will be considered a common element repair, with costs covered by River Towers.

**Other Work on the Property –** Beyond the porticos and the kitchen pipe replacement project, there are a number of other areas that require attention around the property and will be dealt with in tandem.  Prior to the events of October, the board had been working on plans to address a number of areas on the property, with an eye toward both enhancing our marketability and our quality of life. While the board recognizes some may feel any expenditure at this time is unwarranted, it simply isn’t feasible to not move some items forward, albeit, in a more limited fashion than had originally been planned. In as much as the board has a fiduciary responsibility to maintain the property and its marketability, regular maintenance and necessary upkeep cannot be fully suspended.  A property of this size and age requires continual attention to cosmetic as well as major component issues in order to remain viable.

You may recall that based on a contract approved by the board several years ago, new floor covering was ordered for all three lobbies, the front elevator platforms and the Club Room last summer.  That flooring, which could not be cancelled, has been held by the installer for several months, as we hoped to have the portico work done prior to installation. However, our vendor can no longer hold the materials without us incurring storage fees, so we will be discussing a plan to have the flooring installed at least in the 21 and 41 lobbies and the Club Room. The 31 Lobby may await completion of the portico work there.  In addition each lobby, the Club Room, service hallways and other areas will be freshened up as needed.

When the portico work is completed, the barricades are removed and the displaced owners are back in their homes, the work will begin to open our doors to show that River Towers is back and better than ever.  At that time we are considering inviting representatives from the local real estate agencies to a luncheon to reintroduce them to our property and the unique qualities we have to offer potential buyers. Other marketing strategies are also under consideration to help ensure our fiduciary responsibility to the Association and to our fellow owners is met.

**Fire Alarm Testing –** The County will conduct their annual testing of the fire alarm system in the buildings on January 31.  Residents will periodically hear loud alarms as each floors system is tested.  We regret the inconvenience, as we realize the noise is more than merely annoying.

**Annual Pest Control and Extermination Project -** This mandatory building-wide extermination will begin in the 21 building on January 30. Schedules are posted on the bulletin boards of dates when access will be required to individual units.  Residents must ensure the office has a working set of emergency keys to your unit beforehand.   If you have a pet, it will need to be secured in a room that day that will not require access.

**Presidents Day Holiday -** The management office will be closed on Monday, February 20th in observance of President’s Day.  The Office will reopen on Tuesday, February 21 at 7:30 a.m.

**Request for Updated E-Mail Information:**  Last year management collected residents' emails so that we could send important information electronically. This system is in place, however, some residents are not receiving emails. The office is updating the information in our database to ensure all residents receive emails if they wish to receive them.

If you are not receiving emails from the office, please update your information by submitting your email address through an online form. Use this link: <http://www.rivertowerscondo.org/emailverification> to access it. You may provide this information to the office in person, but submitting the information electronically is the preferred method because it eliminates typo errors or mistakes due to difficulty deciphering handwriting.

**Call for Videographer -** The Communications Committee is looking for someone who would be willing to work with them to create a video of our property and its amenities.  This video would be used as a marketing tool with real estate agents and added to our website.  If anyone is interested in discussing this idea further, please call the condo office at (703) 768-3800 and leave a message for Katherine Smitherman, Communications Committee chair.  In addition to the above video, the committee would like to create short ‘how to’ videos for the website on preventative measures residents can take to help eliminate costly repairs for themselves and their neighbors.

**Rules Reminders:**All residents, owners and renters alike are reminded that the following rules are in affect and apply to everyone across the board.

* **Short Term Leases Are Prohibited -** River Towers does not allow short term leases of less than six months duration.   Air B&B or any other type of nightly/weekly rentals are strictly prohibited.
* **Derelict Vehicles -** The Rules and Regulations state that no vehicle will be allowed on the property with expired tags or inspection stickers, flat tires, or any other visible evidence that the vehicle is not operational.  Residents will be notified and given 30 days to resolve the problem before the vehicle is towed from the property at the owner’s expense.
* **Holiday Decorations -** The Rules state that all holiday decorations must be removed from common areas (unit doors, windows and balconies) within 30 days of the holiday.  Management appreciates resident’s attention to this matter.

**Use of Passenger Elevators vs. Freight Elevator -** The Rules state that the front passenger elevators may not be used for any moving related activities. Those activities may only be done using the freight elevator.  Additionally, the front passenger elevators are not to be used to take pets in and out of the building or transporting bicycles or laundry.  Exceptions are made ONLY if the freight elevator is out of service, in use by the cleaning staff or is reserved for an authorized move.

* **Restricted Areas of the Roof -** There is a viewing platform on the roof of each of our buildings which is available to residents for the quiet enjoyment of the views. Judgement must be exercised when on the roof top because residents live underneath and are easily disturbed by loud voices, music, etc.  Additionally, **NO ONE** is permitted under any circumstance to go beyond the fenced area which is clearly marked with **NO TRESPASSING** signs.  The police will be called if anyone trespasses onto the restricted areas of the roofs.
* **Pet Rules** - Please note that pet rules pertaining to weight limits for dogs apply not only to pets living at River Towers but to pets visiting River Towers as well.

**Club Room TV –** A TV has been purchased for the Club Room for use by the Events Committee for their community sponsored events.  The committee is planning to host a potluck Super Bowl Party on February 5, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.  Flyers are posted and the committee requests interested residents sign up in the condo office so the committee knows how many people to expect.

**February In-Unit Service Special - “Electrical Outlets and Cover Plates”.**Call the office to schedule replacement if you have any faulty outlets in your unit.

**Handicapped Parking for 31 Residents –** We all know the residents of the 31 building have the least hospitable parking options on our property. Currently, we request that residents of the 21 building who have handicapped placards but that are able to walk a little bit further, please utilize handicapped spaces nearer the front of 21 in order to free up spaces closer to the 31 building for residents who are really struggling to navigate the distance to get into their building.   Thank you for your consideration to your neighbors!

**FIOS Update -** Verizon is currently pulling wiring to be used for individual units.  At this time, they hope to begin offering service in the 41 building in February/March 2017.  Stay tuned.

**Bulk Trash Pickup Dates –** This complimentary service is provided by the Association at no charge to residents. The pickup dates are:

* February 10 and 24
* March 10 and  24

Residents may take their large items for disposal to the dumpster area the night before the pickup.

**Thought for the Month** -It is difficult to live in the present, ridiculous to live in the future, and impossible to live in the past. Nothing is as far away as one minute ago.”
— Jim Bishop, American Journalist & Author