



COMMONWEALTH TERRACE

COOPERATIVE STUDENT HOUSING

Commonwealth Terrace Cooperative

Board Meeting Zoom Meeting – July 28, 2022

Meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM - Via Zoom

Directors Present:

Ryan Johnson (Chair)
Amer Al-Homoud
Jyoti Sanini Sharma
Ever Mykoni
Taiwo Aremu
Manlin Cui
Munkh-Erdene (Muugii) Bayarsaikhan
Sofia Simeto

Directors Absent:

May An

Also Present:

Shanea Amundson, CTC Executive Director
Patrick Broderick, CTC Operations Manager
Lindy Wirth, CTC Marketing & Customer Support Coordinator
~~Scott Creer, UMN Housing and Residential Life Co-op Liaison~~
Jovin Lasway (Prospective Board Member)

Timekeeper: Lindy

Process Assistant: Tanner

Welcome, Timekeeper (minute taker) and Process Assistant (Chair)

Approve: Packet / Agenda / Consent Agenda

Muugii makes the motion to approve the packet, agenda, and consent agenda. Jyoti seconds the motion. All seven (7) vote in favor. Zero (0) opposed. Packet, agenda, and consent agenda is approved.

Community Voices (2 minutes each)

- Reminder: the board is a listening body to hear concerns in the community. Yet, action and solutions can be further investigated -- not provided tonight.
- Community Voice: Altercations between children when playing outside, involving CTC youth bullying (excluded from games, name calling) the resident's child over several



COMMONWEALTH TERRACE

COOPERATIVE STUDENT HOUSING

months. The situation has now escalated to involve parents. The parent of the other children have recently become involved, as they did not like how the reporting resident spoke to the children to stop bullying their child. The other parent has called the police three times now on the reporting resident. The police have come and said no crime had been committed. However, with three calls, the police find the situation is escalating, with a high risk of civil arrest. Unknown what to do moving forward. Asking for help.

- Lived here for 4 years, never experienced this before with the parent
- Feels concerned and restricted; continued involvement of the police in the matter could impact visa standing
- If he approaches the kid, it can be a civil arrest because the police have visited their house three times.
- Board Response:
 - We aren't able to place blame on anyone involved. However, we want everyone to feel safe within the community; we also commend taking action if you see something that you disagree with.
 - We encourage collaboration to working together and finding a solution that we all believe in; important to hear and understand from both sides.
 - Plan to talk more with both reporting residents in the household and discuss options and solutions in a reasonable way
 - It isn't uncommon that children are unattended in the community. Reports of other children being mean to other children in CTC, such as at the basketball court area. Supervision and guidance from parents are important.
 - CTC MGMT: Mediation has been proposed to both sides to resolve the situation together. Neither side has taken the suggestions.
 - University has Conflict Resolution Center
 - Do they allow everyone to use their services (such as beyond students – like student's families and post docs?)
 - Action: This is something we need to check before we send CTC residents there
 - Typically, community members are approachable. It's okay and respectable to hear neighbor's requests when they are in a respectable manner and reasonable requests.
 - Calling the police on the neighbors: it's best to communicate with neighbors
 - Recirculate previous community announcement
 - "Thank you for approaching me to work it out vs reporting to MGMT or the police"
 - The police are intimidating, especially for international students
 - If you feel uncomfortable approaching your neighbor, maybe we could provide alternative avenues (such as through MGMT)
 - Rebuild the community with events – once people get to know each other better, it will help alleviate
 - Times are difficult after COVID; communication is different



COMMONWEALTH TERRACE

COOPERATIVE STUDENT HOUSING

Fair Housing Training - Josh Dye

- Fair Housing started from a lawsuit, founded based on discrimination. Getting into the housing, housing experience (not different, altered, or minimized) because you are in a protected class.
- Rules, events, processes: always consider fair housing when making decisions.
- Most fair housing violations are unintentional.
- **History**
 - Racism and discrimination 1865-1964
 - Landlords wouldn't rent to Black people
 - Black people weren't allowed to rent or buy homes in certain areas
 - White people weren't allowed to sell homes
 - This doesn't include hostility or discomfort
 - Civil Rights Act 1964
 - Discrimination was banned
 - Yet Housing Discrimination was still legal from April 10 1964-April 10 1968
 - April 11, 1968 Fair Housing Act was passed
- Federally Protected Classes
 - Race
 - Color
 - National Origin
 - Religion
 - Sex (added in 1974)
 - Familial Status (added in 1988)
 - Disability (added in 1988)
 - Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity
- MN Protected Classes
 - Creed (a set of beliefs, not necessarily a formal religion)
 - Sexual Orientation (includes Transgender)
 - Marial Status
 - Receipt of Public Assistance
 - Source of Income (Minneapolis & St. Paul)
 - Age (St. Paul only)
 - Ancestry (Minneapolis & St. Paul)
- Live Poll
 - Q: Which protected class make the most Fair Housing Complaints?
 - A: Disability
 - Includes mobility; most pertains to emotional support animals or service animals
 - Q: Deny housing for bad credit:
 - A: Yes
 - Cannot solely base it on credit score in Minneapolis
 - Q: Is a company allowed to make exceptions to their rental criteria sometimes?
 - A: Yes (screening criteria as long as it's not based on their status in a protected class, then document it. Don't make it a pattern though of a certain demographic).
 - Q: Could a prospect make a Fair Housing Complaint because you forgot to respond to an email or return?
 - A: Yes



COMMONWEALTH TERRACE

COOPERATIVE STUDENT HOUSING

- *Must show equal treatment and turnaround time. Set up good systems to be responsive to all equally.*
- Q: Is it ok to say that a community is a great for singles and young professionals?
 - A: No
 - *In our case, we can say student family housing*
 - *Marital status is protected.*
- Q: Should you assume that a Muslim wants an east facing unit for prayer purposes?
 - A: No
 - *Ask what if they have any preferences/what is most important to you, especially if there are multiple units available*
 - *Ask them what the resident's needs and wants. Do not assume or impose your own assumptions on the resident.*
- What actions are illegal?
 - Denying them a unit because of their status in a protected class
 - Offering different terms, conditions, or criteria
 - Criminal background, credit, income, rental history are not protected; you can impact housing on these factors
 - Steering
 - Advertising that indicates illegally preferences
 - Creating or allowing a hostile environment
 - Was bullying race-based? Find root of the problem...
 - Familial status is a protected class
 - Providing different services or facilities
 - Denying a reasonable accommodation
- Fair Housing Lawsuits are expensive, and you may be personally and financially liable
- Discussion about your rules and policies:
 - Reconsideration of current Pet/Animal Policy: open policy up to dogs.
 - OK to charge pet fees to pets
 - Doesn't apply to ESA or companion animals
 - Companion vs. service animal vs. emotional support animal
- Obvious vs. Subtle Discrimination (intentional vs unintentional)
 - Responsiveness: Standard, consistent experience
 - Great customer service can minimize this
 - Focus on the renter's wants and needs
 - Let each renter know all of the options that match their preferences
- What kind of people live in this community?
 - Never mention protected classes
 - Diverse community of international and local students
- Service and Companion Animals
 - Which animals can be service animals? Dogs and miniature horse
 - Companion animals: can be any type of domesticated animal
 - Meet and greet (vs. breed restriction) ... base it off a safety concern
 - Pet policy (weight or breed restriction, wear and tear on the units, grounds, etc.) -- vs reasonable accommodation ("generally we don't allow Pitbulls but we would like to do a meet and greet")
- What is unreasonable accommodation?



COMMONWEALTH TERRACE

COOPERATIVE STUDENT HOUSING

- Undue financial/admin burden
- Fundamental alteration in nature of provider's operations
- Who pays for the reasonable accommodation?
 - Tenant
 - Housing Provider (in certain circumstances)
 - Both (e.g., let's split the bill)
 - Make a policy of what will you cover and what will you not. Apply consistently (not just to the good negotiators). Policy can change over time.
 -

House Keeping

- **Operations Committee Update / Pet/Animal Policy**
 - Amer: Met recently, discussing Pet/Animal Policy and the involvement of the Board. Start a task force to focus on the Pet/Animal Policy.
 - ***Amer makes the motion to create a task force to update/expand the Pet/Animal Policy. Jyoti seconds the motion. Five (5) votes in favor. One (1) opposed. One (1) abstained. Motion is approved.***
- **Elect Board Replacement Candidate (Action)**
 - Jovin applied to join the board of directors, as recommended by Ever, who is departing from the board. (Fulfilling the two-year term through June 2024)
 - ***Amer makes the motion to approve Jovin as a board member. Jyoti seconds the motion. Seven (7) votes in favor. Motion is approved unanimously.***

Amer motions to adjourn the meeting. Jyoti motions. No objections. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.