



# COMMONWEALTH TERRACE

COOPERATIVE STUDENT HOUSING

## Commonwealth Terrace Cooperative

### Board Meeting Zoom Meeting – October 28, 2021

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM - Via Zoom

#### Directors Present:

Tanner Deeds  
Sofia Simeto  
May An  
Laura Eckhardt  
Ryan Johnson  
Senanur Avci Tosun  
Dami Mofikoya  
Amer Al Homoud

#### Also Present were:

Shanea Amundson, Executive Director  
Jeff Ciesynski, Facilities Manager  
Lindy Wirth, Marketing & Customer Support Coordinator  
Erica Torkelson Flaherty, Accountant  
Scott Creer, HRL University Liaison  
Nick Juarez, UMN PD Community Engagement Liaison

Timekeeper: Lindy

Process Assistant: Tanner

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

**Approve: Packet / Agenda / Consent Agenda**

*Laura makes the motion to approve the packet, agenda, and consent agenda. Sofia seconds. All seven (7) vote in favor. Zero (0) opposed. Motion passes.*

#### Scott Creer/HRL- University Updates

- UMN Board of Regents: recent meeting did not talk in great depth about Saint Paul master plan, but simply the overview of the campus plan over all 3 campuses. This plan is expected to be approved in December 2021. When approved, it is used as a site map for individual departments to then move forward. It does indicate that the CTC property will remain housing (yet now with mixed-use housing) and will not be used for academic building use. When approved, CTC will be waiting on Housing and Residential Life (HRL)



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to initiate the process of change on this property with an expected wait time of 5-10 years.

- UMN Requirements: FY23 requirements of why they are/how it is balanced in more detail presented at next month's meeting. The requirements reflect forward thinking, what is going to happen in the future, including a financial piece.
- Scott anticipates on keeping upcoming monthly reports light, as CTC's Board will be largely occupied with approving the budget and capital projects. Then, likely in the spring, we'll review the results from the co-op satisfaction survey and campus plan survey results.

### Community Voices

- Community Garden Plots: Noticed a lot of unused vegetables in the compost upon the plot clearing deadline. Discussed solutions to repurpose/minimize waste:
  - We could set up an annual, produce give-away for residents if there is a surplus from the gardeners.
  - Remind gardeners/garden plot coordinator to send seasonal reminders to give away and pick up.
  - Incorporate U Mobile Pantry on CTC or do our own farmers market concept.

### UMN PD Community Engagement Liaison - Nicholas Juarez (Discussion)

- Juarez joined UMPD in August as the Community Engagement Liaison and comes with an extensive background working toward community safety in the local area.
- Crime and safety issues at CTC: Theft of personal property (catalytic converter, bicycle, packages, outdoor belongings); reckless driving/speeding on Cleveland Ave (near co-op property) when it's a high pedestrian and occasionally people have not felt safe crossing the street.
  - Catalytic converter theft is an issue in the Twin Cities and nationwide. Some cars' converters are more desirable or easier to steal. The metals in catalytic converters are in high demand, used for computer chips – where there is a current shortage – and now seeing the metal grinded into a drug, increasing the demand in other countries.
    - FBI reports groups are stealing them then shipping out of state. A lot of these organized groups are not attempting to resell them local, thus the STPPD measures to paint does not significantly help.
    - Effective catalytic converter theft deterrents:
      - Go to mechanic or dealership if you have a valuable converter, they will weld a cage to help protect it. The cage will make it harder to take, whereas otherwise it usually only takes 1-3 minutes to steal.
      - Back into a parking spot. This helps for low rise vehicles because the rake of a vehicle is lower in the front, making it more challenging to jack up from the front. A jack usually isn't necessary to steal from high rise vehicles.
  - Bike thefts: bikes are an easy resell item (craigslist, Facebook marketplace, etc.). A group was operating 2 years ago that was transporting stolen bikes out of state.



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Only reason why it was found was that UMPD could track one of their stolen “bait bikes.”

- Effective bike theft deterrents:
  - There are a lot of bikes out there, and none necessarily stand out to thieves. Whether the bike gets stolen or not comes down to securing it and securing it properly (using a U Lock and locking snug to a solid post – not trees or chain-link fence).
  - Recommended to use Kryptonite/U Locks: takes longer, makes noise, attracts attention. Chains and cables are easy to cut.
    - The Hub provides a discount (10-15%) for U Locks.
    - Kryptonite has a program to reimburse those where their locks were defeated.
  - Important to report to identify patterns and hot spots. Then, UMN can put a “bait bike,” a GPS tracking mock bike to track down the thief/s and their location.
- Package theft: increase in package order/delivery and theft during the holidays. The company sending the package is the victim because there is a process to resend the package or refund the recipient when reported stolen; thus, the lost is to the company.
  - It’s important to report any thefts to be able to identify a pattern.
  - Usually thieves will follow/watch the delivery trucks.
  - Notify 9-1-1 if you notice a theft in progress or the unusual following/watching of the delivery persons/trucks.
- For Cleveland Ave: Juarez says we can enlist the services of the greater law enforcement to deter speeding, making it safer for pedestrians. Resources to tap into include contacting STPPD for the “speedwagon,” and UMPD to evaluate other options/come up with a plan for traffic control.
  - Cleveland Ave is currently under construction. The layouts are “traffic calming” meaning the design should force people to slow down.
- What can the board do for community watch/organization?
  - Community watch is everyone working together to ensure a safe community.
  - As you are outside – walking, playing, etc. – notice your surroundings.
    - Set a normal baseline pattern for your area (recognize your neighbors, their cars, typical behavior of your community), then you can see what stands out (person looking in windows, person following delivery truck, etc.) to know its unusual.
    - Communicating with neighbors is also effective: tell your neighbors when you are going out of town or expecting packages and won’t be home until late so if the neighbor could bring them in.
    - Watch out for each other and keep an eye out for each other and unusual behavior/people/cars.
- CTC is quiet and isn’t singled out for theft/crime, yet it happens occasionally.
- Questions:
  - Are recently installed security cameras helpful? Our cameras cover the entrances and exits of CTC. The University controls and has access to the cameras, yet no one is watching them live to move around/zoom or report crimes in process. The cameras catch basic information yet hasn’t caught anything for recent catalytic converter thefts. Cameras can be helpful with getting description information for



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solving crimes. License plates are especially useful for catching thieves, such as through eyewitnesses or surveillance cameras (depends on camera placement and visibility/light).

- Catalytic converters: likely to happen near entrances/exits. It's a crime of opportunity: easy access points; easy to converter and easy to get away.
- What is the response to residents' reports of theft/crime? Seems like not much information is available afterward, even months after?
  - Marking/painting of the catalytic converter can help if police pulls over a vehicle will a bunch in their car, can track it. This applies to most thefts. If there isn't any suspect information, a tool left behind, DNA, photo/video, etc., then no officer will be assigned (the case is "red lined"). That doesn't mean it won't be solved or helpful at some point, yet it will not be investigated if there isn't the who/where/when, because there is nothing for the officer to follow up on.
- Improve communication between neighbors. It will help build connections and reduce crime. CTC Facebook Group "Shop & Swap" shares a lot of information.

### Bylaw Change Proposal

- The bylaws were drafted a long time ago and don't consider technology updates. For example, it is still our co-op's goal to meet in person, yet to have the option to meet virtually (such as when especially useful like COVID). If there is pushback from OGC (UMN's legal counsel), CTC's Attorney can't support a legal response to keep our recommendations drafted from Chapter 308B and will have to remove it.
- One revision is absentee voting for the annual members meeting.
- Reduction of board members from 9 to 7, with the option for there to be 9.
  - How does that work with elections? Still every other year for terms.
- Typo on p. 13: electing on the odd year, not the add year.
- Revision (p.2): the board delegates management to give the non-member fee if a membership household is not fulfilling their membership duties (after proper guidelines and notices has been given).
- ***Amer makes the motion to move forward the Draft Audit (4) for the University's review. Laura seconds. All seven (7) vote in favor. Zero (0) opposed. Motion passes.***

### Executive committee – updates/suggested future agenda items – policies, future issues, events, community concerns etc.

- Laundry facilities: people leave items in washers/dryers for extended amounts of time (hours or overnight). Machines are heavily used, and it is disrespectful.
  - Reminders of laundry etiquette
    - Be considerate of others
    - COVID-19 door signs: use, communicate, then get out
  - New Operations Manager Patrick's first priority is creating a universal process for laundry room use (which differs from ward to ward nowadays).
- Policy for household security cameras? CTC does not currently have an official stance, unless it is damaging the building
  - This will be included in the updated version of the Resident Handbook

### Committee Liaison Update (2 minutes allotted)



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### House Keeping

- November meeting: falls on Thanksgiving, proposed new meeting date for November 18, 2021, with the executive meeting on Nov. 4.
- Topics next month: Our auditor, Tiffany, will present the audit. Finance committee will present their recommendations, and CTC Management will present another if different. Board members must approve the audit.
  - ***Laura makes the motion to approve changing the date for the November meeting. Amer seconds. All six (6) vote in favor. Zero (0) opposed. Motion passes.***
- Treasurer Position: Sena is resigning from the position yet will remain on the board. Ryan has volunteered to fill in the position.
  - ***Amer makes the motion to approve electing Ryan Johnson as Treasurer. Laura seconds. All six (6) vote in favor. Zero (0) opposed. Motion passes.***
- Switching clean energy investments from Clean Energy ETF (ICLN) to WilderHill Clean Energy ETF (PBW). Charles, from our investment company Morgan Stanley, met with the board last month. See Shanea's email for notes/greater detail.
  - Morgan Stanley likes Wilder's security system better
  - Pending questions regarding ethics (labor, future) for WilderHill
  - ***Laura makes the motion to approve recommended change. Dami seconds. All six (6) vote in favor. Zero (0) opposed. Motion passes.***
- Recruitment for Open Board Seat: Talk to friends and neighbors and ask them to apply!
  - Participation, involvement, and consistency is important to our presentation and success and sustainability of the co-op model.

***Amer motions to adjourn the meeting. Laura seconds. No objections. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.***