



JACARANDA HOUSING BOARD COMMUNIQUÉ And GENERAL NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2017

BOARD:

George Zukiwskyj
Peter Downie
Graeme Tudor
Debbie Stubbs
Pam Britton
Gordon Curtis

Chair
Treasurer

A Special General Meeting has been called by the membership.

Location: Queen Alexandra Home, Level 2, 347 Old Cleveland Road, Coorparoo, QLD 4151

Date: Saturday, 19th August 2017

Time: 1pm

Please contact the office if you have any queries or for further information. The business of the meeting is detailed in the notice.

Unfortunately things are not really great at the moment with two Board Members resigning in May, leaving the Board without a quorum. This means that we (the Board) cannot make any decisions until we appoint new board members, and this in turn leaves Jacaranda in a very difficult position. This is a very serious situation to be in. It is not just a matter of appointing anyone to have the quorum numbers; it is important to appoint the right skill set to ensure Jacaranda has a strong, functioning and well governed board to move forward. The General Manager has employed an outside agency, Windsor Group, to advertise for skilled, professional board members, so hopefully things will soon be able to forge full steam ahead.

At time of issuing the newsletter, it is expected the new board members will be appointed on the 14th August at a board meeting. The candidates selected have a wealth of knowledge and experience in various sectors and will be a welcome addition to Jacaranda Housing. Once appointed, further information on each candidate will be circulated to tenants and members.

GENERAL MANAGER:

A beautiful winter's welcome to everyone. We are so lucky to have been experiencing such a beautiful winter this year. Having not enjoyed many winters myself over the past 18 years, I am really enjoying how fresh it is.

You may remember that I was training to run my first half-marathon in early July. Unfortunately I was in a motor vehicle accident in May where my right knee was injured. I was unable to continue my training throughout May and most of June which meant I did not get to run in the Gold Coast Marathon. Things happen for a reason. I was not meant to run this particular race but I have certainly picked myself up and I am gearing up for my next opportunity to race and reach my goal in the future. Don't ever look at a set back as a reason to give up. Pick yourself back up and keep moving ahead.

Another busy period has passed for me, Karen and Lynette. The end of the financial year is over and we are busy preparing for the annual financial audit and presentation of results to the membership.

I am working with Q Shelter to streamline and overhaul policy and procedures within Jacaranda Housing. This is a huge task and not something which will happen overnight. It is for the benefit of board members, staff and tenants that the organisation has up to date policy, procedures and process in place.

June saw the QLD Government release the 10 Year Housing Strategy 2017-2027- where \$1.8 billion dollars will be made available to ensure access to safe, secure and affordable housing in QLD. The strategy aims to increase housing by 1700 new dwellings in the first three years and 5000 dwellings over the course of the strategy. Employment opportunities are also a major principle of the strategy where by construction industry jobs will be increased over the ten years. A tender process was open until the 31st July where an Expression of Interest to be involved in the strategy with the QLD Government. I submitted an EOI asking the Department of Housing to consider working with us to achieve the strategy outcomes which may be in line with Jacaranda. The board will receive further information on the EOI submission at the next meeting.

Karen will be out and about undertaking routine inspections over the next few months. Any maintenance or other concerns please let her know either at the inspection or by emailing the office. Karen's direct email is: housingmanager@jacarandahousing.com.au

Please remember that I am always available to discuss any concerns you may have regarding your tenancy or property or even just a general chat.

Lizz

NRSCH: (National Register of Social and Community Housing)

As most members/tenants would be aware, Jacaranda Housing was issued with a Notice of Binding Instructions by the Registrar on the 3rd April 2017. The Notice required compliance by the 30th June. As at 30th June, this was not complied with. This was due to there being no board quorum to assess, raise and pass resolutions relating to particular non-compliance matters raised by the NRSCH. It is also due to the inability of the board to govern effectively and work through matters in the best interest of the organisation. The Registrar's office is currently analyzing all of the evidence provided to date and is yet to advise of the outcome of not meeting compliance by the 30th June. I will keep you updated with further information as it is made available.

GENERAL INFO:

Council Waste Vouchers

Firstly, Karen has asked me to tell you that Brisbane City Council waste vouchers are available at the office, some are current until August '17 and others for the coming year. If you require a waste voucher please email: info@jacarandahousing.com.au or call the office on 07 3392 8848.

Electricity Rebate- Don't miss out

Electricity rebate - Apply now

Queenslanders with a Commonwealth Health Care Card and asylum seekers can apply for a backdated electricity rebate (until 31 December 2017) which could save up to \$330 a year on their electricity bills.

The rebate will continue to be available for eligible Pensioner Concession Card holders, Department of Veterans' Affairs Card holders or Queensland Seniors Card holders

To apply you need to get in touch with your electricity retailer and ask for the Queensland Government Electricity Rebate. Further information: <http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2017/7/30/eligible-queenslanders-encouraged-to-use-electricity-rebates>

Yeerongpilly Office Update

Lizz, Karen and Lynette (finance wizz) have settled well into the new office at Yeerongpilly.

Here are the contact and address details. Please note we have a new mailing address.

Office Address: Level 5, 973 Fairfield Rd, Yeerongpilly, Q, 4105
New mailing address: PO Box 64, Brisbane MKT, Rocklea, Q, 4105
Office number: 07 3392 8848
Fax: 07 3392 7729
After Hours Emergency: 0408 798 951
General Manager's mobile: 0439 942 438 the GM is available to all tenants who may wish to speak with her directly on any matters of concern or good news stories.

MEETINGS:

Our recent Member/Tenant meeting was held at Coorparoo on the 17th June, starting with the usual Sausage Sizzle. This was another "Question/Answer" meeting with the Board and General Manager in attendance. Points of interest discussed at the meeting:

Rental Bonds- Lizz explained that approximately 78% of tenants do not have rental bonds held against their property. This is a large financial risk to Jacaranda Housing and needs to be adequately managed. Bonds cover damage to property or failure to pay rent if a tenant vacates as an example. If you vacate your property and all is ok you will receive your bond back. All current tenants signing a lease renewal will be asked to pay a bond for their property which is 4 weeks rent in total. This can be paid either upfront, through applying for a Bond Loan with the Department Of Housing or on a payment plan with Jacaranda Housing. **The Department of Housing Bond Loan is the preferred option if not paying upfront.** The bond is not held by Jacaranda, it is held by the RTA. Jacaranda Housing is here to work with tenants around this matter and welcome your questions if you have any concerns.

Water Contributions- are voluntary. \$15 per quarter is all that is asked to be contributed by each tenant. Much discussion was had around this topic at the meeting. Jacaranda Housing currently spends close to \$90,000 per annum on water costs for all properties. It would be great to see this amount decrease and savings put towards property upgrades. Any contribution from tenants is greatly appreciated. It is also asked that tenants be water wise before turning on the tap, jumping in the bath or shower and when watering the

lawn. This will help us reduce the annual cost of water to the organisation. Every little bit helps.

Board- Deb Stubbs (Board Member) raised current issues occurring within the board and the inability to progress Jacaranda Housing due to the current behavior and continual disruptions by certain members. Constitutional change was discussed as the current Constitution makes it difficult to remove members/board members who are potentially having a negative impact on the organisation. Numerous members discussed the options available. It was explained that names could not be given of those potentially causing disruptions/poor behavior. George Zukiwskyj stepped out of the Chair position and as a member, asked the following question ‘Do members have a right under the constitution to inspect board meeting minutes?’ George was informed by Lizz that yes, they have a right to inspect the meeting minutes. The request is required in writing or by email.

NRSCH- Lizz detailed the current situation of the compliance with the NRSCH. All the evidence uploaded and provided to date was available for inspection by the group. It was explained that Lizz did not have confidence that the non-compliance issues would be met by the 30th June due to the board being without a quorum. Board participation in the process is vital. Further information listed above.

It would be so good if a few new faces attended these group meetings – it seems the same dedicated few turn up all the time, which means that many members probably don’t know the current state of affairs. Again, I say WE NEED YOUR PARTICIPATION, and **you** need to know what’s happening! Now, more than ever, actually. I think it’s a bit like government elections – you cannot complain if you don’t vote, and likewise you cannot complain if you don’t bother to participate.

I should mention here that these meetings are your chance to ask the Board and the GM questions about things you may be worrying about in relation to Jacaranda. If you have questions about rent or specific complaints, this is not the place to bring them. Rent enquiries to Karen, our ever-helpful Housing Manager, and complaints in writing to the General Manager.

MEMBERS:

I had no idea that Velvet and Tich were music teachers, although I’m not really surprised, having seen them perform at our meetings. They give and receive real joy through their music. There was a lovely item in the Courier Mail recently about a young man with Down Syndrome who has become an Elephant Whisperer and has been granted funds to take his remarkable vocal talent to Africa – all thanks to the patient teaching efforts of Velvet & Tich and their drums.



Velvet and Tich, this is fantastic work and congratulations to you both. We were so blessed to have you both sing at the June Tenant/Member meeting. It was refreshing and a breath of positivity which was welcomed by all.

Member Contributions:

This section of the Newsletter is yours. At the moment, only Julie Hunter is our main contributor. We would

love to see more from other members. It would be so good to hear from a few more members. Brickbats and Bouquets, ideas, family news, movies, recipes, books – anything you'd like to share.

SOLUTION by Julie Hunter

Conflict resolution

Code of Conduct

Peace and quiet enjoyment.

Mental stress,

Well-being

Confidence.

in that you are of this world.

Love of humanity

And the collective unconscious emerging to be healed.

APOLOGY by Julie Hunter

Distressed

Undressed

Shitting in my liver

About some information delivery – Privacy

Breach!

Julie wants you to know that she intends to stay at home now its winter, and she wishes all of us the very best. She's sitting back on her deck relaxing, waiting for consultation and debate about Tenancy Bonds. A share in equity!

COMMITTEES:

Asset Committee has still not yet been formed. The asset committee will be formed in the future.

The Jacaranda Advisory Group (JAG) JAG meets on the 1st Thursday of each month. JAG is the elected tenant group whom provide feedback to the board around matters relating to tenants and their properties. The most recent JAG meeting held on the 6th July was held at a tenant's residence and was also attended by the NRSCH Registrar, Mark Francis. From all accounts, Mark Francis provided valuable information to the group and answered many questions.

Complaints Committee: at the moment it is best to present your complaint/s in writing, to the General Manager. Mark the envelope "Private and Confidential" and the General Manager will record its receipt and then send you a confirmation it has been received and being attended to. Complaints can also be emailed to the General Manager at: generalmanager@jacarandahousing.com.au

Regards to all,
Pam Britton

Ph.: 32541834 or
pambritton2011@gmail.com (if you want to contribute anything)

