



# Life in the Sunshine

## The Towers of Key Biscayne Newsletter

**Board of Directors:** President: Anthony Ottavio, Vice President: Alison Owen, Treasurer: Mario Lopez, Directors: Dr. Elsa Dominguez, Joseph Furfaro, Ricardo Martinez, Olga Robbin.

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### **BOARD MEETINGS**

- At the Board meeting of October 25, Tony Ottavio was elected President of the Board replacing Ms. Owen who was Acting President. She will continue as Vice President.
- At the Board meeting of September 14, the Board voted to elect Ricardo Martinez to fill the Board vacancy created by the departure of Dr. Martin McCarthy.
- The carpet for the main hallways is currently being installed by East Coast Flooring.
- The Board authorized the purchase and installation of carpet for the back service halls.
- The Board approved the purchase of bulletin boards and mirrors for the elevator lobbies. Bulletin Boards have been installed; mirrors have just arrived.
- The Board authorized an upgrade to the filtration system for the fish ponds and an ongoing monthly maintenance program to cure a very serious and dangerous algae problem. There has been a huge improvement in the condition of the pond and its occupants.
- The Board decided to clarify the long-standing policy concerning individuals wearing diapers not being allowed in the pools. The Board decided, based on health issues and feedback from owners, to reaffirm the existing policy that individuals wearing diapers would not be permitted in the pools. The Association's attorneys are formalizing the clarifying wording changes to the rules.
- In Mr. Ottavio's report on the hallways he cited several instances of vandalism by BB gun pellets, pencils and markers. We ask all residents to exercise vigilance about these kinds of incidents to help ensure that the hallways do not incur damage.
- The service doors get visibly and noticeably scratched and beaten up by people delivering garbage to the trash chutes or traversing the back hallways. The Board approved \$1000 to fund a pilot project to test special damage-resistant protectors for the doors which can also be decorative and painted to coordinate with our décor.
- As a starting point for the Phase II Lobby renovation, Howard Design was asked to provide a complete, comprehensive proposal for the completion of the lobby refurbishment project including the common areas. The proposal will be in sufficient detail to allow us to bid the job out to any contractor of our choosing. They will deliver the proposals within 30 days for our review.
- Mr. Lopez reported that the loan documents for \$750,000 were signed with Colonial Bank. He stated that the association will only borrow what is absolutely necessary. The proposed 2008 budget and reserve study has been mailed out to the owners.
- The Board voted to approve the purchase and installation of light fixtures for the ceilings outside the kitchen doors. All have been installed.
- Mrs. Norma Blum was elected Chairman of the Enforcement Committee.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT -TONY OTTAVIO**

The year 2007 has certainly been an exciting and transitional year for The Towers. We have undertaken many projects and activities during 2007, all targeted at enhancing the quality of our lives as well as the up scale image of The Towers as one of the premier properties on The Key. Our largest and most visible project has of course been the Hallway Renovation. Since joining the Board as President, my primary focus has been to ensure that this project is completed as quickly and smoothly as possible.

To ensure the highest level of excellence we have assembled a dedicated team (Norma Blum, Patricia Blasser, Joe, and myself) to inspect each and every hallway according to 13 points of detail, before they are accepted as complete by the Association. That's 216 individual hallways, almost 2000 lights, and over 2100 doors each individually opened and quality inspected, along with the contractor's team to ensure that every detail that detracts from our high standards is corrected on the spot. We fully expect that our arriving "snow birds" will find a dramatically new and upscale look that will not only take us into the future but will also help maintain our property values and competitiveness in this difficult real estate market.

As you read this newsletter we should be approaching the 75%-80% mark in completion. The last major phase of the Hallway Renovation is the Carpet installation which is proceeding at the rate of 2-3 floors per day. We probably won't make 100% by year-end because of the holidays but we won't be far from it. Please bear in mind that the Hallway renovation was originally scheduled to be an 18-month project that we have compressed down to about one year, so we are well ahead of the original schedule. When we are done with the hallways we will have refurbished about 90% of the entire internal space at The Towers leaving only the main lobbies and the common areas to be addressed.

The most visible project for 2008 will be Phase II of the Towers Renovation: the two main building lobbies and the common areas on that level. We learned some lessons from the Phase I project and will leverage that experience in executing the Lobby Renovation. Our first step will be to obtain a set of ideas on design, architecture, furniture, and other issues in addition to recommendations which help ensure that what we do in the lobbies is consistent with, and builds upon our investments in the upper floors, pulling everything together into a cohesive and beautiful work of art.

We will not proceed with Phase II until we have a firm, comprehensive, complete, and approved project plan. We will also pre-verify that the budget and the financials support the plan and direction of the project and that they are sufficient to produce the desired result. We will also design the plan so that it can be modularized, allowing different elements to be undertaken separately or at different times, should budget and other practical considerations so dictate. With financial and planning controls in place it will also be easier to track the project, control costs, and keep the owners informed as to progress and issues as they develop. I look forward as you do to this and the many other high impact project activities we will undertake in 2008.

## **TREASURER'S SUMMARY REPORT – MARIO LOPEZ**

As of September 30, 2007 we had approximately: total assets of \$2,873,000 with \$583,000 in unrestricted cash, \$840,000 in restricted cash, and receivable balances of \$820,000.

As of September 30, 2007 we had recorded approximately \$2 million in liabilities, leaving an operating fund balance of approximately \$850,000. The September 30, 2007 special assessment positioned us to deal with the balcony repair expenditures without having to borrow funds from our line of credit.

The Replacement or Reserve fund balance as of September 30, 2007 is approximately \$570,000. However, this will be largely allocated to the Hallway project. We estimate that the January, 1, 2008 special assessment will allow us to meet the Hallway Project expenditures as they become due, possibly without the need to borrow funds from our line of credit.

For the nine-month period ended September 30, 2007 we had approximately \$4,470,000 in revenues including the September special assessment while expenditures were approximately \$3,750,000 against an original budget of \$3,713,000. However, this favorable balance will decrease as we pay for balcony repairs. Considering all the above, our best estimate is that barring any unanticipated surprises, we do not foresee any material deviation from our budgeted break-even for the year 2007.

## **MANAGER'S REPORT – JOE MAURA**

- We are removing pavers and soil from the area between the pools. This is to locate and correct a water seepage problem in the upper garage.
- We are continuing with our scheduled replacement of all sliding glass doors. 52 new sliding glass doors are being installed every year.
- The bulletin boards and mantels have been installed in the elevator lobbies.
- The new carpeting is being installed as the old carpeting is being removed by our staff.
- Please be aware that security guards are required to ask for ID from any resident who arrives at the front gate without a decal, unless he personally recognizes the resident.
- The exterior walls at the elevator lobbies have been painted yellow to highlight their location in the garage.
- Shower heads have been installed at all doors leading from the beach.
- We are formulating a policy about satellite dishes. Residents contemplating an installation must notify the office and comply with the approved installation method.
- New procedures for contractors and move in/move out and deliveries are being created in order to prevent damage to the walls and carpets. Please check with the office before scheduling a move or large delivery.
- The Phase I pool is now being heated.
- Pavers will be installed at the front entrance early next year replacing the worn asphalt.
- The manager will create an annual plan which lays out the anticipated projects for the year so that the owners can be informed of major on-going activities and priorities.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Residents returning for the season should notify the office if they have new phone numbers, e-mail addresses or if their authorized guest entry lists have changed.
- Receiving is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- Comcast is our cable provider. Call 305-266-2278 for service issues. Basic service is covered by your maintenance.
- Tokens for the laundry machines in the upper garage in Phase II can be purchased from the office or from the lobby attendants by check. A bag of 10 tokens cost \$20.
- There is a golf cart charging area in the lower garage between Phase I and II. The charge is \$15 per month for 6 batteries and \$30 for 12 batteries.
- Kitchen trash bags are available from the office.
- The trash chutes are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Use the chute and please don't leave trash on the floor.
- Air conditioning filters should be changed monthly to avoid freeze-ups and water damage to the carpeting. We have seen numerous water drips from clogged filters. Please call the office to schedule a change. Please have your air conditioning checked periodically by an air conditioning company to avoid leaks and carpet damage.
- Please make sure you have a decal on your car indicating your assigned parking space. The decals are available from the office.
- The barbecue area cannot be exclusively reserved. Residents renting the Ocean Room for a party do not also have exclusive use of the barbecue.
- **Please do not let your children skateboard on the parking garage ramps or anywhere in the garage. This is extremely dangerous and cannot be permitted.**

## SUGGESTIONS, COMMENTS, CONCERNS, COMMUNICATION

Your Board of Directors urges you to communicate and participate. Come to the meetings or watch them on Channel 64. Write to us. Let us know what you think. Elsa Dominguez at [elsa\\_tel@hotmail.com](mailto:elsa_tel@hotmail.com), Olga Robbin at [orobbin@aol.com](mailto:orobbin@aol.com), Mario Lopez at [mrlopez1@bellsouth.net](mailto:mrlopez1@bellsouth.net), Alison Owen at [aowen310@aol.com](mailto:aowen310@aol.com), Joe Furfaro at [JosephFurfaro@msn.com](mailto:JosephFurfaro@msn.com), Tony Ottavio at [tonyottavio@prodigy.net](mailto:tonyottavio@prodigy.net), Ricardo Martinez at [ricardomartinez@bellsouth.net](mailto:ricardomartinez@bellsouth.net).

The Board wishes you a happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

Board meetings can be seen live on Channel 64 and also Friday through Thursday at 9 a.m., noon, 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. the week following a Board meeting.

Please ensure that the manager has your fax numbers and/or e-mail addresses on file should we need to use them. You can e-mail Joe at [jmaura@tkbonline](mailto:jmaura@tkbonline). The Towers' website can be accessed at [www.tkbonline.com](http://www.tkbonline.com).

This newsletter is prepared by Alison Owen and Tony Ottavio. E-mail Alison with suggestions for the next edition. The newsletter is published four times a year and distributed with the quarterly statements.