

**Thames River Community Service, Inc.  
Board of Directors Meeting  
October 16, 2019  
At Thames River**

**AGENDA**

1. Review of Minutes
2. President's Report
3. Executive Director's Report
4. Committee Reports—Finance
5. Old Business
6. New Business
7. Adjournment
8. Executive Session

Next Meeting: November 20, 2019 at Martin House

**MISSION:** The mission of Thames River Community Service, Inc. is to provide safe housing with support services by creating an environment in which families and individuals who are experiencing homelessness pursue goals for self-sufficiency and control over their lives.

This mission is accomplished by promoting family and individual wellness, by empowering people to develop an achievable plan for successful independent living, to pursue significant employment, to acquire life skills and to maintain stability.

**Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes**  
**Thames River Community Service**  
**Wednesday, September 18, 2019**

The meeting was called to order and chaired by Nancy Roberts at 6:15 PM

**Present:** Robert Fusari, Nancy Roberts, Debbie Eskra, Ornet Hines, Gayle O'Neill, Louise Summa, Ellen Crichton, Matt Lisee

**Excused:** Mike Bennett, Theresa Madonna, Marilyn St. Onge, Keith Lee

**Executive Director:** Kathy Allen

**Guests:**

**Minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to accept minutes from last Board meeting. Motion carried

**President's Report:** Nancy reported that the August Board retreat was successful. She discussed Charter Oak's Matching Gift campaign. It was requested that when there are revisions to the Board Calendar that they are dated each time there has been a change.

**Executor Director Report:** Kathy reported the possibility of two applicants for Board of Director's vacancies. Kathy discussed the Combined Transitional Housing/Rapid Rehousing model as a possible repurpose of the present Transitional model

**Finance Committee:** Gayle presented draft calculation of operating reserves. Gayle reviewed revenue streams. Discussed need to meet with Development Committee to focus on future development.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved to adjourn into Executive Session 7:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Kathy Allen

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**  
**October Board Meeting 2019**

**Administrative/Finance:**

**HUD** application has been submitted for the new year beginning May 2020. I am still doing research on the possibility of changing to a combined Transitional/Rapid Rehousing model. In the meantime, recent grant applications have requested funding to off-set the cost of the apartments and what residents can pay. The Lord Foundation has given us the okay to write a letter of intent to also request funding for this purpose.

Unfortunately, one of the persons who had submitted an application to me for the Board, had to rescind her application due to a family medical emergency for which she needed to relocate temporarily to South Carolina. We agreed that she would reconnect with me when/if she can.

**Marketing/Networking/Fundraising:**

Moving forward with the Fall event. We will have tickets, sponsor forms and flyers to distribute at the board meeting. Looking forward to 100% board support for this new event.

**Development:**

**Plan of Action for FY 2019/20**  
*Timeline*

**September-October**

- 1. Add appeal letter to Facebook to reach more people and add Thames River website as a link to donate as well.**  
Done
- 2. Development Committee presents Plan to Board of Directors**  
Presented at the July Board meeting.
- 3. Provide copies of the Board Fundraising Involvement form to Board members for completion and emailing back to the Development Office**  
Still waiting for a few board members to do this
- 4. Design content and identify speakers and videographer for a Program video**  
Video has been completed and will be presented at Deb's gathering for the first time on October 12<sup>th</sup>.
- 5. Prepare profiles of lapsed donors, monitor their response to the recent appeal and reach out by phone and/or mail to re-establish connection**  
Lapsed donor list has been compiled and reconnections will take place in October
- 6. Provide pre-addressed envelopes and notecards for Board acknowledgements at October meeting**  
Board members will receive these at the October meeting

7. **Determine which Board members are available for telephone calls/personal visits to donors (from the Involvement form)**  
This list has been compiled from forms already received; Calls to be made to those who have agreed to this.
8. **Discuss naming opportunities with Board members**  
To begin in October.
9. **Schedule major donor visits to discuss naming opportunities and program support**  
Small gathering at Deb Eskra's on the 12<sup>th</sup> kicked off this activity; will follow up with those who attended and others.
10. **Meet with Development Committee to establish remaining timeline goals**  
Committee meets next in October.

### **Program:**

#### **Thames River Family Program Highlights:**

One of the difficult aspects of the transition to working with young adults is when a couple enters together with either their own child or a "surrogate" parent. It is rare that a couple who initially entered Thames River together as a household, leaves the program that way. Young adults who have been through a lot as children and now parents have a hard time maintaining a relationship. Often it is in the best interest of everyone if one of the parents (usually, the male) leaves to live on his own. The mother stays with the child(ren) and eventually leaves for permanent housing as a single parent.

With that said, we recently housed a couple, who came here having faced many struggles growing up. Once they started their relationship and then became parents, their life was not any easier, as they were homeless once they found out they were having a baby. Unlike others, this young couple left here for their own apartment together with their daughter; in fact they got married during their year here.

Knowing that the odds were stacked against them given their ages and their life experiences, they were determined to keep their young family together. Their daughter was born soon after they moved to Thames River, so while mom stayed home so they wouldn't have to pay for childcare, the dad worked long hours to provide for all of them. Besides receiving the support from staff here with the usual skills such as parenting, budgeting, employment, etc., they also felt they would benefit from a referral for couples counseling. They engaged with a counselor who has been coming to the Program to work with young adults (usually singles) who've been homeless. They met with her the entire time they were here and have continued to work with her since leaving.

They are now in their own apartment, dad continues to work, while mom is now looking forward to continuing her education. No one can accurately predict what the future holds for this young couple, but because of their commitment to each other and their young family and their willingness to work on their relationship and their new life, we feel they have a bright future!

### **Facilities:**

The Meeting Room kitchen reno should be complete by the Board meeting. The NPU Day of Caring on the 18<sup>th</sup> will complete the final stage of this project.