

CLEARVIEW HEIGHTS CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION
Special Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2019

Present: Karen Burkinshaw, Richard Lacasse, Norman Muller, Rosemary Thompson, Al White, and 10 unit owners.

Ms. Burkinshaw called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss fire safety with our guest speaker, LT. Katie Collins-Kalbaugh of the Chicopee Fire Department. The Lieutenant spoke on several related topics and answered questions along the way. Below is a summary of the items discussed:

Smoke Alarms:

- Years ago, if a fire started in a home, the occupants had approximately 20 minutes to get out. Today's homes are filled with lighter-weight construction materials and synthetic materials and the escape time is about 3 minutes.
- Smoke alarms have a ten-year life and should be replaced after ten years.
- Photo-electric smoke alarms are required today. The older ionization smoke alarms gave too many false alarms, especially in kitchen areas with normal cooking smoke.
- Combination smoke/carbon monoxide detectors have a useful life of 5 to 7 years.
- Alarms should be tested once per month and backup batteries should be replaced at least once a year.
- A smoke alarm is needed on every level of a building and they should be hard-wired together so if one alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Even though you have a smoke alarm in the hallway on the bedroom level, you should sleep with the bedroom door closed and have a battery operated smoke alarm inside the bedroom.

Proper Disposal of Smoking Materials:

- If you smoke outside, all smoking materials should be fully extinguished either in a can of sand or a jar of water. NEVER flick a cigarette (even if you think it is extinguished) you are finished with. One spark could cause a fire.

Mulch:

- Mulch is flammable, especially when it is dry. By law, mulch must not be placed closer than 18 inches from a frame, multi-family (6 or more units) building. After her presentation, LT Kalbaugh toured the outside of several of our buildings and said the charm-stone is a façade over a wood-frame building and the 18-inch rule applies to all sides of all of our buildings.

Gas Grills:

- People need to follow manufacturer's instructions regarding how far to place grills from buildings, etc.
- Be sure to shut off gas at the tank after using a propane gas grill. With natural gas, be sure to shut off the gas at the shut-off nearest the grill.
- The state building code specifies requirements for installing natural gas grills. For more information on this, you can contact Columbia Gas of Massachusetts and the Chicopee Building Department.

Outdoor Burning:

- Outdoor burning is not allowed in the city of Chicopee because of building density. This would include fire pits and other related burning devices. If you see outdoor burning, report it, immediately.

Kitchen/Cooking Fires:

- Cooking is the leading cause of fires. If you have a fire extinguisher in your kitchen, learn how to use it properly. Never leave your cooking unattended and always have a lid ready to cover a pan that catches fire. Stand by your pan.

Other:

- Never leave candles burning unattended. A draft or a blowing curtain could cause a fire.

Bedtime Safety:

- Keep your bedroom door closed at night. A closed door will slow down the progress of a fire. If an alarm goes off, before you open the bedroom door, feel it. If it feels warm, do NOT open the door.
- Keep a phone by your bed. In case of fire, call the fire department immediately.
- If you can't get out of your room due to the fire, stay where you are, open a window and either blow a whistle or signal to the firefighters, who will help you exit by your bedroom window.
- If you are charging electronics (lap-top, cell phone, etc.) in your bedroom, be sure these are not being charged on a combustible surface such as the bed or a rug.
- If you are hearing-impaired, you may not hear a fire alarm so a bed shaker would be helpful. The fire department can give you more information about this.

Home Escape Plan:

- You need to plan more than one way to exit your home in case of fire. Plan on several escape routes and also have a plan to meet once you exit the burning home. If you have emergency ladders or other devices to escape from upper-level bedrooms, make sure these items are fully operable and check them before you need to use them.

Fire Department Response Time:

- We are located very close to the Chicopee Street fire station and main fire headquarters so response time in the event of fire is well below standard.

Questions/Concerns:

- If you have questions about any aspect of fire safety, feel free to contact the Chicopee Fire Prevention Bureau for more information.

We wish to thank LT. Kalbaugh for taking the time to meet with us to discuss this very important issue.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Norman Muller
Vice President