

# The Grapevine Newsletter

I heard it through the Grapevine...

## Notes from the December 10, 2024 Berkowners, Inc. Board Meeting

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### Attendees:

**Board Members Present:** Walter Chadwick, Wanda Chin, Cecilia Durbin, Ed Leahy, Maxx Salat, William Walter

**Board Members Absent:** Peggy Russell

**Also present:** Superintendent Carlos Rivera, Joe Doren (Metro Management)

### 1. Meeting Called to Order at 6:31pm

Board voted in favor of adopting the minutes of the November 20th, 2024 Board Meeting

### 2. Superintendent's Report

- a. High Pressure Gas conversion successfully took place on 78th St A side**
  - Inspections performed by Berkeley staff in all A-side apartments
  - Nat'l Grid checked meters downstairs
- b. Window Update:** Necessary repairs made, moving to Final Punch List
  - 77th St fire escape and grounds cleaning need to take place
- c. Plaster Repairs - 77th St**
  - Moving to second floor of A-side on Fri 12/13; B-side follows
- d. Staffing update**
  - Retirement forthcoming for employee
  - 90 day probation period to determine if temporary hire's skill set matches what co-op needs to fill in open position
  - Plumbing job in co-op owned apartment performed successfully
- e. Basement Return Leak 35th Ave B-side Ramp**
  - Passeggio will replace return line 12/11 with insulated pipe, construction of removable steel ramp will take place after
  - Entrance will be closed for duration of construction (less than one week)

**f. CCTV**

- Hard Drive needs to be replaced, may be more cost-effective to simply replace the whole system
- Spectrum billing review

**g. Proposal for AC installation process in new windows**

- Architect's plan needs to be consistent with Tindel's installation
- Proposed plan uses 2 astragal bars, current installations use 1

**h. Parapet Inspection performed by Jack Jaffa**

- All clear given, report kept on premises in case of inspection

**i. Additional compost bins were ordered through National Maintenance**

Mr. Rivera left the meeting at 7:34pm

**3. Manager's Report**

- Received copies of LL150 gas filing - approved for another 4 years
- NYC LL88 found fully in compliance by Metropolitan Refunds
- LL11 Engineer Bids
  - Will set up interview with Zakorski/Lawless&Mangione in January

**4. President's Report**

- Funding Holiday Party - reviewing limit on corporate card

**5. Treasurer's Report**

Balances as of November 29, 2024; total reserves \$2,677,185.13

Board-managed:

Chase checking and savings \$55,196.98

RJFS \$2,465,569.54, composed of \$256,728.44 cash (mostly in one bank) and nine (9) bank CDs (\$230,000 to \$250,000 each). Cash position reflects proceeds from one CD that matured 11/25/24. The nine CDs mature from 1/13/2025 to 11/7/2025, with rates ranging from 4.15 to 5.15%.

During the month of November, for the window replacement project, a \$550,000 payment from reserves was made to Tindel. The final payment to

Tindel, less a small amount for open items, is anticipated to be approximately \$663,000.

Metro-managed:

Chase - Beautification account \$46,840.14

Chase - Window assessment account \$109,578.47

The last window assessment will be billed with the March 2025 maintenance. Reserve balances are expected to be about \$1.9 million with the completion of the window replacement project. The sale of a Treasury unit that is currently under contract is expected to generate additional cash of approximately \$670,000 some time in the first quarter of 2025.

- The NYC Council passed a “new J51” program last week. The window project may be eligible for up to a 20-year tax abatement; more research to be done.

## 6. Welcoming Committee Report

- Reviewed language in welcome packet
- Potential candidate for committee identified

## 7. Communications Report

- **Capital Improvements Committee**
  - A shareholder has volunteered to chair a committee around future projects
  - Could put together a survey to assess shareholder interest in capital improvements to rate interest
  - Wishlist with projected assessments
- **Website**
  - Creation of password-protected user portal for shareholders only to view insurance policy, other shareholder-only documents
- Meeting Adjourned at 8:32pm

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## FEBRUARY CHILDREN'S CIRCLE

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Saturday February 15, 2025, 11 AM

77th Street Basement Community Room

All Berkeley families are welcome. Looking forward to seeing you there.

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## JOIN THE CAPITAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE

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This new committee will play a key role in overseeing and advising on potential co-op improvement projects, from planning to completion. We're looking for individuals with expertise or an interest in fields such as architecture, engineering, landscaping, interior design, construction management, housing law, compliance, sustainability, and related backgrounds. If you want to help improve our shared space or further support our community, this is a great opportunity to contribute your skills and collaborate with other dedicated members.

**Please contact Victor Shey ([victor.shey@gmail.com](mailto:victor.shey@gmail.com))** if interested; the first meeting will be in mid-February, as best fits the schedules of those interested in joining.

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## A STAFF RETIREMENT AND NEW HANDYMAN

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After 37 years at the Berkeley, Jan Tarnawski will retire from his role as handyman. We wish him well as he enters retirement. Mr Tarnawski will be replaced by Ricardo (Ricky) Williams. Many of you have already had the privilege of meeting Mr Williams as he's been assisting in the plaster repair since the windows replacement and doing other jobs in the co-op. Please join us in welcoming him to our community. Photo of Mr. Williams by Ken Pao



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## MAINTENANCE INCREASE

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The Board of Directors has, in consultation with Metro Management and the co-op's accountant, performed a thorough review of the current year's operating expenses and our anticipated costs for 2025.

**The Board has approved an operations budget for 2025 that includes an increase of 3.5% to the monthly maintenance billing effective February 1, 2025.**

Gas, insurance and labor costs all have risen and are contributing factors necessitating the increase. Escalations in the cost of supplies as well as in our real estate taxes and water and sewer expenses over the past few years including projected increases for the coming year are also driving factors for the increase.

The increase is necessary so that we will be able to continue to properly maintain and operate The Berkeley. The board continues to pursue prudent financial measures to reduce expenses where possible including the LED lighting project and careful expense monitoring. Please note the window assessment ends with the March 2025 billing.

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## TIME TO REPLACE YOUR SMOKE ALARM BATTERIES

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The start of a new year is the perfect time to test your smoke and CO2 detectors and replace their batteries. If you haven't already done so, now is a great time. If you need assistance checking your detectors and/or replacing batteries, please reach out to Carlos. For more fire safety knowledge, check out the mailing we all received from Metro Management earlier this month.



## GAME NIGHT RETURNS!



After a long pandemic hiatus, the Berkeley Social Club is back

**Adults Game Night**  
**Friday, February 28**  
**7pm-10pm**

Berkeley Community Room, 77th Street basement

Our mission is to provide a welcoming venue for Berkeley residents to gather and socialize. We offer “BerkSocials” on the last Friday of every month from 7 to 10 PM.

We offer a variety of games including Bingo, Cards, Scrabble, Uno, Backgammon, and Sequence or bring your own tabletop game to share.

For more information, contact Marina Pomeroy & Stacey Zaretzky at [MyBerkSocial@gmail.com](mailto:MyBerkSocial@gmail.com)

We look forward to seeing you there!

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## WINDOW UPDATE

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Plasterwork continues. As of the week of January 20th we are finishing plaster repair on the 4th floor of 77th Street and moving to the 3rd floor. In about 2 weeks 77th Street will be finished and the crew will move to 35th Avenue. We plan on being finished with all plaster repairs by the end February.

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## SIGN UP FOR TEXT BLASTS FROM THE SUPER

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The Berkeley has a “BLAST” email/text message system to share pressing announcements pertaining to our buildings. These could include an elevator or boiler getting shut down for repair or our garden being closed for weather related reasons.

You can request the form from Carlos or download and print from the website. This is the only way to have timely access to important building updates. Please note that this system is used sparingly.

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## SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS

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The following Board meetings will be held on February 11th, March 11th and April 8th. If you have a topic you would like to discuss with the board, please email them at [berkboard@gmail.com](mailto:berkboard@gmail.com).

**A REMINDER:** *Residents are always welcome to address board meetings about anything about the co-op they feel needs addressing. Please give the board 24 hours notice that you'd like to attend. Meetings take place in the Community Room at 6:30 p.m.*

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Contributors to this newsletter were Walter Chadwick, Cecilia Durbin, Stacey Zaretsky, Victor Shey, and Peggy Russell. If you'd like to contribute content to the Berkeley Grapevine, please email [bconwayb34@gmail.com](mailto:bconwayb34@gmail.com).

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