

# COMMITTEE AND MANAGER UPDATE FEBRUARY 2012

## INFORMAL OWNERS MEETING

We invite everyone to an informal owners meeting on Wednesday 15 February at 4.00 pm in the meeting room behind the admin office. If a lot of people come, we may have to move to another location. It is an opportunity for everyone to express their views and ask questions. The manager will explain about voting and pre-registration. We are very keen to get feedback from owners.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 19 February. We urge everyone to attend. We have many important issues to discuss and vote on, especially the budget and finances. We need at least 25% of all owners to attend to make a legal quorum. If you cannot attend, please give your proxy to a friend.

## NEW MANAGER

The new Manager Khun Noi has a lot of experience in condo management and the committee is very pleased with her knowledge, hard work and efficiency. She has dealt with a large number of problems very quickly.

## ACCOUNTS

There was an accounting error on the December accounts. Incorrect figures were entered for electricity payments. This has been corrected.

## FINANCES

To run the building and repay the sinking fund, we are still discussing the additional budget which may be approximately

- 640,000 to repay the sinking fund for the lifts plus safety and fire equipment expenses. (This is 3.2 million spread over 5 years)
- 450,000 for fire doors on each corridor. When City Hall received the annual building survey report, they told the surveyors they expected to start soon. If not, they could inspect the building and they had the power to close it because we have a major defect.
- 500,000 for building repairs, preventative maintenance, renewal of water pipes, new cable TV system and interior electrics
- 700,000 as reserve for any unexpected expenses such as the electricity bills
- 500,000 for extra running costs (staff, accounting costs, annual building survey, transformer maintenance, inflation and partly offsetting the 328,000 electricity penalty in September 2011)

TOTAL 2,790,000 baht. This represents an increase of 80% in the common fee or the equivalent of 18 baht per square meter.

We were advised that increasing the common fee requires a 50% vote by all owners and that it is almost impossible for any large condo to even get a 50% quorum. So the normal route other condos follow is to ask for a special assessment charge each year according to the required expenses. This requires a 25% quorum and a simple majority.

## FIRE DOORS

We received 4 quotes. By far the cheapest for the 40mm steel doors (30 pieces) was 324,000. We plan to use our own staff to build the partitions to save money. We have to add the cost of wall materials and illuminated fire exit signs. Some corridors may need modification because of obstructing water shafts and wood doors not to specification (see photo).

## ACCOUNTS / ARREARS

We had a total common fee income for 2011 of 4.9 million (assuming the pre-committee accounts were correct). The total possible common fee figure if everyone pays is about 3.5m so effectively (as there are some in continual long-term arrears) that means we collected about 1.6m in arrears which is quite an achievement by the committee member responsible and the manager and office staff.

We still have the final instalment for the lifts to pay. Collecting the arrears and making savings on the water bill and management company have offset some of the major expenses on the basic infrastructure of the building this year. But the condo cannot be properly managed or the sinking fund repaid unless owners vote to increase the income.

## WHEELCHAIR RAMP

This has brought a lot of interest and debate from residents. Our entrance design does not make it easy to add a ramp. The manager asked our surveyors to advise. They provided the Thai regulations but said this only applied to new buildings and suggested 1.2m wide and 4m long (see photo)

We decided on a compromise between practicality and length so the ramp is 1.2m wide and about 4.5m long. We will modify one flower bed to avoid a triangular-shaped ramp and make the overall design of the entrance better. We have an adjacent disabled parking space and we have 24 hour security who can be called for assistance so there is no reason for a disabled

person to have to use the ramp unassisted. This is a 1 to 6.5 slope which is less steep than the UK spec for a temporary assisted ramp which is 1 to 6.

## TV AND CABLE RECEPTION

We know this is very important to many owners. We have received quotations and allocated a budget. This will be one of the first things the manager will do if the budget is passed (cost may be about 75,000)

## LOBBY RENOVATION

We had hoped to allocate a small budget to improve the lobby as part of the improvements program we set out when the committee started. In view of all the expenses and some major unexpected expenses, we are going to ask owners to vote to improve the lobby but try to finance it ourselves from voluntary contributions. We will have an interior designer make plans and a presentation.

Our target is 150,000. We currently have 15,000 in contributions deposited in a special bank account and promises of about 85,000 more.

## PAINTING THE TEMPLE WALL

There was a meeting with the Head Abbot from the temple where the issue of the temple promising to paint the wall was raised. As soon as the AGM is over, the new manager will be briefed on the history of this issue and she will follow it up.

## BIKE STAND

The committee was asked to provide better facilities for bike owners. Normally they are chained in different parts of the building and it looks messy. As part of reorganising the parking area, we will provide a covered stand just under the entrance to the pool.

## PARKING

The manager put notices on motorbikes that appeared abandoned. They will be moved behind the building if the owners do not respond to the notice.

## EXTERIOR

The manager supervised the design of the new flower bed behind security. The exterior improvement program is now almost complete. Many residents have commented very positively how pleasant our building looks compared to before.

## LEGAL ISSUES

The condominium lawyer, Ajaan Saard met with members and the manager in December and January. Regarding some outstanding legal issues, he advised that:

1. We were correct not to include personal details in the list of arrears. (The previous manager added the room number so this list has been available in the office since mid-December after we spoke to the lawyer)
2. We cannot apply to the court to rent out an empty room to recover the long-term arrears on that room.
3. We could sue the owner and if successful, the court could order the unit sold. This may take 2 years. But the problem for the committee is obvious. We could spend more money on lawyer and court fees than we would recover. This is very complicated (some debt is from deceased owners so we then have probate issues) so we will have to look on a case-by-case basis. We have recovered a large sum in arrears on behalf of owners and for the moment we will continue with this program.
4. He has prepared new rules to update the original condo rules to comply with the Condominium Act 2008. (A copy is in the office in English and Thai.) We need 50% OF ALL OWNERS to make a quorum so we can vote on this. (By law we were supposed to have updated rules no later than a year after the Act came into force.) The new rules are much fairer and more democratic for owners and this vote is very important.
5. Expenses over 1 million baht require a vote of approval from co-owners at a General Meeting.
6. We can ask the police to remove vehicles that appear abandoned or do not have permission to park here.