

Home Inspection Advisory Committee

Minutes of October 10, 2000

Public Session

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Home Inspection Advisory Committee was called to order by Chairman Randy Ortiz at 9:20am in the Monmouth Conference Room, 7th Floor, 124 Halsey Street, Newark, New Jersey. All parties were duly notified of the time, date and place and all pertinent material had been provided.

SUNSHINE LAW ANNOUNCEMENT

William Mandeville, Management Assistant, read the statement required by Chapter 231, Laws of 1975 known as the Open Public Meetings Act, and announced that notice of the meeting was prepared in the Office of the Committee and mailed to the Secretary of State, the Star Ledger, the Courier Post, and the Bergen Record and the Atlantic City Press.

ROLL CALL

CMs present:

F. Michael Fitzpatrick	Robert Lacovara
Robert Corrado	Randy Ortiz

CMs absent:

Thomas Kraeutler

Others present: Arthur Russo, Executive Director, William Mandeville, Management Assistant, Joseph Grabowy, Management Assistant, Ernest Gonzalez, Recording Secretary, Deputy Attorney General Olga E. Bradford, and one member of the public.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 12, 2000

On a motion by CM Fitzpatrick, seconded by CM Corrado, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes of September 12, 2000 as amended.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

General Report

ED Russo reported that the Committee office is receiving a large volume of in-coming calls regarding the home inspector licensing requirements and the "expected" date for licensure. The Committee office is informing these callers that there is no exact or tentative date for licensing to commence, and that a copy of the Home Inspection Professional Licensing Act, which became effective on July 30, 1998, will be furnished upon request. A discussion ensued

regarding the various ways to be in contact with callers interested in licensure. To date, approximately 1,200 names and addresses of potential applicants have been recorded in the office database. It was generally decided that a finite list of interested parties will receive a copy of the statutes and regulations when adopted, with the remainder receiving home inspector application forms. Another suggestion was to include the home inspector licensing requirements along with a possible press release from the Division of Consumer Affairs advising of the adoption of the home inspector rules and regulations. A third option was to provide licensure information to schools offering home inspection programs. ED Russo informed the Committee there was no new information to report regarding the publication in the New Jersey Register of the proposed home inspector rules and regulations.

Draft Letter to William C. Apgar, Assistant Secretary for Housing, Federal Housing Administration

This draft memo to Mr. Apgar addresses the Committee's concerns about the perceived misleading Health and Urban Development (HUD) television commercials, currently being aired, which depict home appraisals as home inspections.

After a review of this draft, a motion was made by CM Fitzpatrick, and seconded by CM Lacovara, to approve the draft as amended. This memo will be released to William Apgar after approval by Deputy Director Miragliotta.

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE

Richard M. Ritota, Program Manager, Lead & Asbestos Program, Consumer & Environmental Health Services. RE: Attendance at the September 7, 2000 Committee Meeting

The Committee requested ED Russo to draft a letter thanking Mr. Ritota and to assure him that there is not any conflict between the Department of Health and Senior Services' Lead Evaluation Rules and the recent legislation to license home inspectors. Mr. Ritota is to be assured that specialized inspections for lead, radon and asbestos can only be performed by individuals certified or licensed by other state agencies, and that such inspections are excluded from performing home inspections. These exclusions will be stipulated in pre-inspection agreements which will be signed by both home inspectors and clients.

APPEARANCE BY STACY MOLA, REGULATORY ANALYST

Stacy Mola appeared before the Committee to inform it of the status of the proposed home inspector regulations. Ms. Mola reported that the draft home inspector regulations have been finalized by the Division of Consumer Affairs and have been forwarded to DAG Olga E. Bradford of the Division of Law, for her review.

PROPOSED HOME INSPECTION CONSUMER INFORMATION PAMPHLET

The Committee discussed a draft pamphlet prepared by CM Fitzpatrick of useful consumer information pertaining to home inspections. The Committee reviewed the contents of the pamphlet and recommended several changes and modifications.

CM Fitzpatrick will make the recommended changes and present an updated version of this handout at a future meeting.

APPEARANCE BY FRANCINE WIDRICH, SUPERVISOR, PRINT PRODUCTION UNIT

Francine Widrich spoke to the Committee about developing a Website for home inspectors. She indicated that development cannot start on this project until the home inspector rules and regulations have been adopted. Ms. Widrich suggested that several topics will be included on the Website including a question and answer (Q&A) page, which would address frequently asked questions from consumers. To save time and effort she suggested viewing other states already existing home inspection Websites. CP Ortiz and CM Fitzpatrick will develop a list of frequently asked questions and responses for the Website. In addition, she suggested adding the following: the adopted home inspector rules and regulations, an on-line directory of licensees, including any disciplinary history, and the inclusion of

application form(s) and corresponding instructions.

Updates to the Website's list of licensed home inspectors will initially occur on a monthly basis using the electronic feed from Centralized Licensing in Trenton. After adoption of the Licensure 2000 computer system, updates to the Website's licensing directory will be more accurate with frequent, perhaps weekly updates, since the source data will now originate with this office.

MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by CM Corrado, second by CM Kraeutler, the Committee voted to move to Executive Session for the purpose of completing the Executive Session agenda.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

In accordance with a motion made in Executive Session by CM Corrado, second by CM Kraeutler, the Committee voted to return to Public Session to complete the Public Session agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by VC Corrado, seconded by CM Lacovara, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 2:00 p.m.

Approved by:

Randy Ortiz,
Chairman

Arthur Russo
Executive Director