

# NDMHA News

October 2015

NDMHA News



**“The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual.”**

Vince Lombardi

Wishing everyone a happy and safe Fall Season!

Look who's coming to NDMHA's Membership Meeting on January 13, 2016.

## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!**

The afternoon will be dedicated to sales and marketing performance training by Paul Webb.

International Training Solutions, Inc. is an on-demand sales and marketing performance training company that has helped over 41,000 sales and marketing professionals achieve incremental, sustained, and predictable revenue growth. With clients ranging from 180 of the Fortune 500 hundred corporations and service professionals to vehicle manufacturers and national associations, I.T.S, Inc. uses unique sales and marketing technology and methodology to teach its clients.

Paul Webb leads I.T.S., Inc. with over 43 years of experience. Webb has provided training and consulting to leading private and publicly-owned corporations and has presented as a Keynote Speaker to numerous conventions, seminars, and associations. Paul Webb's unique training approach combines an interactive and guided discovery learning process with time-tested effective sales and management techniques. Humor is used - when they're laughing they're listening. When they listen, they learn. A licensed NLP Master Trainer since 1999, Paul Webb is an internationally recognized expert in the field of Neuro-Linguistic Programming and uses this science as the foundation for his training programs. Webb's training technique has an ability to transfer information and focus learning to create an environment that helps others find the motivation in themselves to achieve their greatest business goals...increasing sales and multiplying profits!

Check out Paul's website at [www.PaulWebbTraining.com](http://www.PaulWebbTraining.com)

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**The below meeting minutes are from a park operator meeting organized by The Atkinson Company.**

**Thank you Donna Barnhardt.**

A meeting of Bismarck-Mandan manufactured home park operators was held at 12 noon, September 17, 2015, at A & B Pizza South. Twenty-three persons attended. A summary of the program is as follows:

STAYING OUT OF TROUBLE WITH FAIR HOUSING: Rocky Gordon of Rocky Gordon Company, a property management firm in Bismarck, gave a presentation on issues involved in fair housing. Mr. Gordon has been president of the North Dakota Apartment Association as well as the Bismarck-Mandan group. He has acted as the legislative contact person for the association, and is a director of The North Dakota Guaranty & Title Company.

Major points of his talk were:

1. Federal laws prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status and disability. North Dakota laws cover all of these same groups and also include people 40 years old and over, marital status, and status with respect to public assistance.
2. The best way to stay out of trouble is to have clear and written policies. For example, in qualifications for new residents there should be a specific credit score; and also a clear policy of what is or is not acceptable in past criminal convictions.
3. If a fair housing complaint is filed against a park be sure to respond but do not make any admissions. Unless there is very strong grounds for the complaint it's better to defend than to enter a consent agreement, hoping that might save time and money as it probably will not have that effect.
4. Fair housing seminars presented by the North Dakota Labor Department are worthwhile to attend.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT OLDER HOMES:

What are parks doing? All parks now seem to have some policies concerning older homes. One park reported allowing homes which are 1979 or older to be sold one time, and then requiring that the home be moved if it is to be sold again. Another park has a paint program, giving the paint to the homeowner and requiring that the home be painted. A park has an incentive program where it will pay an amount equal to three months' free rent if the homeowner spends \$4,000 or more on outside improvements to the home. Most parks seem to be requiring that homes be fixed up to park standards before the home may be sold.

Abandoned homes: It's necessary to take some action before dealing with the abandoned homes. Usually this involves a termination and eviction proceeding. It's best to hire an attorney to handle this, particularly if the home has much value.

Home improvement incentive: Donna Barnhardt of The Atkinson Company (Tatley Meadows) covered this program where three months' free rent is given if the homeowner spends \$4,000 or more for outside improvements under an agreed program. More than 15% of the Tatley Meadows homes have taken part in the program. The details can be obtained from Mrs. Barnhardt.

UNREGISTERED OCCUPANTS, DRUG USE AND DRUG TRAFFICING: Good cooperation from police and drug enforcement officials was reported by the parks. "No trespass" orders are being used by some parks. Calling the police department with license numbers can help identify unregistered parties. It was suggested that parks should encourage residents to call the police if they see strangers around for some period of time.

TREE TRIMMING AND DEAD TREE REMOVAL: Some parks do trimming and dead tree removal without involving the homeowner. Others remove dead trees but expect the homeowner to do the trimming. There's some concern about park liability in case a tree falls on a person or home, but no agreement on this other than that parks should be sure their liability insurance coverage is sufficient.

## LATE RENT ISSUES AND HOW THE DIRECT DEPOSIT PROGRAM OPERATES:

What are parks doing? All parks have some form of late rent charge. One charges \$5 a day after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. Another charges \$12 on the 6<sup>th</sup> day and \$2 each day thereafter. One park charges \$15 on the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month, and another has a \$20 late fee after 15 days.

The Direct Deposit Program: Donna Barnhardt described the direct deposit program used by Tatley Meadows. All new residents must be on direct deposit. For the older residents who did not join direct deposit the rent is \$5 more per month. Donna explained that it takes promotion and continued effort but 89% of Tatley Meadows homeowners are now on direct deposit, saving a considerable amount of time in not having to deal with checks or cash, and also reducing the number of delinquent accounts. She will share the information on getting started to any park operator.

Termination of utility services: When a homeowner's utility service is about to be terminated there is good cooperation being received from Capital Electric but not from MDU. It probably will take a change in the law to assure cooperation from the utility companies.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS AND OTHER TAX ISSUES: There are nearly 3000 manufactured homes in Bismarck providing housing for around 12% of the population. Mandan's percentage may be slightly higher. Despite the fact that these are all residential homes for families there is discrimination when it comes to taxation.

In Bismarck special assessment taxes are double (200%) on parks what they are on other residential areas. Parks which have four or more homes are considered commercial property and taxed on the basis of 10% of assessed value whereas other residential properties (not apartments) are taxed at 9% of assessed value for the general property tax.

The effort to change the state law at the last session was partially successful. It requires that cities like Bismarck and Mandan have a public hearing and then set clear policies concerning special assessments. Parks should be watching for this hearing in the coming months, and be prepared to appear and to take part.

The state association should again take the lead in seeking to have the law changed so that parks are treated and taxed like all other residential subdivisions.

Kent French described the work of the state association, and encouraged everyone to be a member and to take an active part in association efforts.

FUTURE MEETINGS AND SUGGESTED TOPICS: The general feeling was that there should be another park operator meeting in about six months. In the meantime, park operators are encouraged to let Donna Barnhardt (701-223-1525) know of subjects they would like to see covered, or to share any information on park issues.

## **NDMHA Membership Survey**

Please go to <http://www.ndmha.com/news/?i=333> and complete the NDMHA Membership Survey.

Please be candid and honest. Your answers will be kept confidential.

The Board is interested in any suggestions/concerns you may have. Membership is NDMHA's greatest asset and the Board wants to do whatever they can to help NDMHA members and the manufactured housing industry. This purpose of this survey is to improve and strengthen the Association.

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return this survey. We appreciate and value your input.

You can fax your response to 701.223.8574, email your response to [ndmha@midconetwork.com](mailto:ndmha@midconetwork.com) or mail to NDMHA, PO Box 2681, Bismarck, ND 58502

## REMINDERS

- Membership drive will begin November 1, 2015.
- Watch the website for 2016 Membership Application and news regarding the January 13, 2016 Membership Meeting.