

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECT BOARD OPEN MEETING
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL TOWN HALL
181 BUSINESS ROUTE 4, CENTER RUTLAND, VT 05736
SEPTEMBER 12th, 2023**

- The special meeting started at 5:30 P.M.
- Board members present Mary Ashcroft, Joe Denardo, Sharon Russell, and Matt Getty
- Also present, Anil Sachdev and Dhruv Kumar from The Cortina Inn, Town Police Chief Ed Dumas and Town Health Officer John Paul Faignant.

The purpose of this meeting is to meet with the owners of The Cortina Inn to discuss the homeless housing issues.

Mr. Sachdev thanked the Board members for coming out and visiting the facility recently. Mr. Sachdev updated the Board on issues seen there. He said the mold issue has been taken care of and the back door had been fixed. Additional fans are being added to help reduce humidity in the building.

Mr. Sachdev estimated there are 138 rooms rented with a total occupancy of around 200. They estimate there are 25 children staying there.

Mr. Faignant said he visited the site just before this meeting and found the back doors to still be broken. Discussed a request from 2 years ago that those doors be alarmed. Mr. Sachdev stated they have tried alarms and they have not been effective. When questioned about the type of alarm, Mr. Sachdev said they had tried alarms from Amazon. They were told a professional alarm company would need to be contacted. Mr. Sachdev said they would have it professionally fixed within 30 days.

Discussed the length of time they plan to accept vouchers. Mr. Kumar said the program is slated to end the April of 2024. Until there is a solution for the families he does not see a way to end it. Select Board Chair Ashcroft clarified the voucher program is voluntary and they could decide to end it at any time. Mr. Kumar said this was true.

Selectman Denardo asked what their plans are for continuing this program, and if they intend to get caught up on the money they had agreed to pay to the Town. The original agreement had them ending their participation in any government funded housing program as of March 31st. No direct answer was given.

Chief Ed Dumas expressed his concerns about their ability to manage a homeless population in this kind of facility.

The new fence is installed. A privacy filter will be installed soon.

The owners meet with their security company every 15 days to discuss issues in the facility.

Discussed scheduling a follow up meeting with the Board next week.

Mr. Kumar expressed his thanks to the Town Police and Fire Departments, and to EMS services as well.

When a meeting can be scheduled, the owners will be contacted.

The meeting adjourned at 6:08PM.

Mary Ashcroft, Chair

Joseph Denardo, Clerk

Sharon Russell

ABSENT

Kurt Hathaway

Matt Getty