

GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Board Meeting
November 19, 2015
Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deborah Salem, Ann Condon, Veronica Cunningham, Nan Wile, Richard Needelman

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Executive Director Barbara Heaphy,
Tenants: Deborah Lord, Linda Steinberg, Jackie Sinico, Marlene Koloski, Diana Hankey,
Jane Green, Susan Morris, Janice Fisher, Joanne Iarocci, and Frances Kelleher
Selectman: Ed Abrams
Eileen Mooney, Michelle Gilligan
Garren Bisschoff, Sun Edison Solar

The meeting was called to order by Deborah Salem at 2:10 p.m.

Citizens Speak:

Ann presented an outline of guidelines she asked the board to review. Board decided that Citizens speak would be first. Motion made by Deborah, seconded by Ronnie to allow 3 minutes for speak time unless there are several who want to speak, then 2 minutes. The board will not respond at this time but will discuss any board matters at next meeting. 3 voted yes, 1 voted no, 1 abstained.

Jane Green – sent letter to board, Ex. Director, State Rep, Board of Health regarding issues with Flagrock property. The board meeting held at the Senior Center in October was never posted at Flagrock. Tenants planned on going to first Citizens Speak and weren't notified of change in location. One apartment has nicotine residue and black mold in the bathroom. One elderly handicapped apartment living room rug is badly stained. Jane also spoke about GBHA managing Sheffield. Why would we since we have nothing to do with Sheffield. Three properties are too much for Rich to handle. There is no representative from Sheffield on the board. Linda Steinberg spoke about giving people more time to speak. It is unfair that there is a time limit. Jackie Sinico spoke about a letter she wrote to the board and presented a copy to each board member. She requested it be read later, after the meeting.

Diana Hankey spoke about her brother Steven, 55 yrs. old who applied for housing two years ago. He was updated once but hasn't been updated in ten months. He isn't wheelchair bound but needs an apartment on the ground floor. Has difficulty climbing stairs. She stated that Barbara never returns phone calls, she is dishonest to tenants and board and doesn't keep a list. Barbara doesn't do her job. Diana said her brother has to get an apartment.

Linda Steinberg spoke about last meeting and how two out of three people spoke and the meeting ended. The third person didn't get a chance to speak. She said it is very wrong to be using a timer when there are so many tenants who have something to say. She said they waited for the board for half an hour to finish their business before they could speak.

Marlene Koloski said that Barbara tries to do her job but is overwhelmed by managing two places. Both Barbara and Rich need more help. Who oversees the board and what are you doing for the residents?

Joanne Iarocci stated that Barbara is doing her job.

Jane Green stated that the board is supposed to be our advocates and are failing.

If there is no one else who wants to speak, motion made by Deborah, seconded by Ann. All in favor.

Minutes:

Motion made by Ronnie, seconded by Ann to accept the October minutes. All members voted in favor.

Check Register:

After Barbara answered questions about the check register, motion made by Nan, seconded by Ronnie to accept the October check register. All members voted in favor.

Executive Director's Report:

Currently there are two vacant apartments at Brookside. Both have been filled and will be occupied by December 1st. Barbara reported that accounts receivable is the lowest she has seen in a long time.

Dewey Court:

We are 100% occupied at Dewey Court.

M&W Heating will begin the work to upgrade the heating system in building 3 next week. They are waiting for all the piping and radiation to come in. They will start in the boiler room, work out to the community room and then into each apartment.

689 Special needs Bathroom Upgrade:

The contracts have been signed and the work should begin soon. New tile had to be ordered because the color couldn't be matched. There will be a change order for this and a cost increase.

Roof Replacement at Brookside – Buildings 1 & 4:

Since there were no bidders, the project went back out to bid. We got one bid but it is being held up because the insurance bond was filled out incorrectly. It is being reviewed by DHCD legal and could be rejected. The contractor who bid is Diversified who installed the Family windows and are rehabbing the Special Needs bathroom. Our concern is whether these roofs will hold up through another winter.

Citizen Speak Issues:

Deborah liked Barbara's format for listing the issues and addressing them.

Barbara stated that many of these concerns had to do with management. Rich and Barbara went over each item. Emergency lights – inspected quarterly by Fire Dept. They work but are programmed to stay on only 60 minutes. Board asked if they could stay on longer. It's just how long the battery lasts. Board would like Barbara to look into extending the time and motion sensor.

Smoking wing – make one section of the property smoke free. Is this legal? This is something that will be on next meeting's agenda. Motion made by Ann, seconded by Nan to put the no smoking issue on December's agenda. All voted in favor.

Second floor apartments have one exit – Barbara checked into buying escape ladders for eighteen apartments that would cost about \$1300.00. Ann suggested speaking with Chief Burger and having a fire drill at both properties.

Sun Edison Solar Proposal:

Garren Bisschoff from Sun Edison gave a presentation on solar net metering. Sun Energy is a worldwide company that has been in Massachusetts for six years. It has 57 solar plants in the state. Sun Edison provides solar net metering to many Housing Authorities in the state: Northampton, Leominster, Winchendon and Lee to name a few. They work with the state and the utility company to provide credits to the Housing Authority. If we signed on now with a plant located in Munson, we would start receiving solar credits within six to eight months. The contract is for twenty years.

Power Options partnered with Sun Edison and DHCD has contracted with Power Options.

Garren presented a savings projections chart for over twenty years based on our own energy consumption with a total savings projection of \$708,163.00 in twenty years. This is the rate of savings now but it will increase next year.

No money up front. DHCD has pre-approved a contract with this company. DHCD allows Housing Authorities to keep 25% percent of the savings. The board thanked Garren for his presentation and would like to discuss this option further.

Greenhouse Heater:

Currently, the heater in the green house is working. As the weather gets colder, we might need an additional heater.

Deborah asked if the greenhouse was meant to be used year round and if the glass is thermal. Barbara will find out.

Community garden should be open to all tenants and will be addressed next spring.

Health Department Update:

Barbara updated the chronic dampness issue in apartments 11, 13 and 15. The new order is to provide dehumidifiers for 13 & 15 and also pay for the cost of electricity to run them. Barbara is waiting for a response from DHCD on how we would monitor electric cost on a specific appliance. Richard provided information on an electrical metering device that can be purchased at Home Depot. The Board of Health would like to meet with the Housing Authority employees and board at their next board meeting on December 3rd.

Certificate of Substantial Completion – 705 Window Project:

Motion made by Ann, seconded by Ronnie to approve the Certificate of Substantial Completion for the 705 Window Project. All members voted in favor.

Nan mentioned that Time Warner Cable wasn't receptive to her inquiries regarding internet in the units.

Motion made by Deborah, seconded by Ronnie to adjourn at 4:10 p.m. All members voted in favor.

Next meeting is December 17, 2015

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Heaphy
Secretary