

GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Board Meeting

April 21, 2016

Minutes

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

OTHERS PRESENT: Executive Director Barbara Heaphy, Sue Honeycutt, accountant, David Blanchette & James Wilusz, Tri-Town Health

Tenants: Jackie Sinico, Marlene Koloski, Jane Green, Barbara Chamberlain, Susan Morris, Linda Steinberg. Citizen – Eileen Mooney

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Deborah Salem at 2:17 p.m.

Citizens Speak:

Jackie stated she will start planting next week and thanked Barbara for the hose. Jackie stated that everyone present would give their citizen speak minutes to Marlene so she will have twelve minutes to speak. Marlene asked if the job of drain installation in her daughter's back yard was posted. Barbara said no. Marlene stated that if Rich is going in to clean #13 next Thursday and is using harsh chemicals, her grandkids cannot be around this. They are allergic to mold. Marlene asked about the floor treatment and why it wasn't mold resistant. Deborah stated that these are operational questions and Marlene should set up a time to speak with Barbara. Marlene asked what is the Board's role is. Deborah stated the Board sets policy. Barbara stated that the Industrial Hygienist sat down with Rich and me and told us that Rich could do the surface cleaning with the product, Mold Ex.

Jane Green asked what the Board's function is. Deborah stated the Board sets policy and oversees the director. The Board. Board meetings are business meetings and we are obligated to offer Citizen's Speak which gives citizens, tenants an opportunity to speak. Linda Steinberg stated that the Board should be doing more for the residents. Citizen's Speak is not a discussion time and a tenant can request to be put on the agenda.

Ann stated that she's been on the Board for a while and every one of its members cares and takes their position seriously.

Barbara gave an update on the mold remediation: All cleaning in #15 had been done. Moving on to #13 next week. The dehumidifiers have been ordered. They are energy efficient, tamper free, will be installed to enter into the drainage system. The Housing Authority will pay for the electricity used. DHCD approved an allowance. The regrading of lawn at #15 will be finished and #13 will be re-rolled. Shep Evans from the Conservation Commission came and looked at the water behind the buildings. He stated it has no impact on the moisture issues we are dealing with in these buildings. The stream is flowing and is lower than the property. There is no run off onto the Housing Authority property.

Ann suggested a posted progress report. Jane Green asked why there isn't a tenant liaison anymore. Tenants would go to this person with any issues before a Board meeting. This tenant would go to the meeting and present the issues. Deborah suggested Barbara give a progress report to tenants and it be on the agenda. Jane Green mentioned she met with Barbara in the past about specific issues and was satisfied with the outcome of the meeting. Jane doesn't like the time limit set during Citizen Speak.

Jackie stated the elevator walls need washing, deck needs staining, trees trimmed, lines painted in parking area and stairways cleaned. These are the things that need to get done at Flagrock.

Richard stated it's his understanding that the chemicals are being used to surface clean the mold in three

apartments, Kilz is then painted on and dehumidifiers are installed. If this remedy doesn't work, more testing and remediation will be necessary.

Susan Morris asked what the procedure would be if a tenant went to Barbara with an issue and wasn't satisfied with the outcome. Barbara mentioned a grievance hearing or meeting with the attorney.

Marlene asked why the notice from the water dept. wasn't passed out to the elderly. Barbara stated that it was posted in a few places in community room. Jackie said she never goes in there so she never saw the water notice.

David Blanchette & Jim Wilusz, Tri Town Health – Smoke free properties:

A survey about going smoke free was passed out to tenants and the results showed enough interest in making this change. There was some opposition. David spoke about this. He stated that once implemented, start date would be a year out to make it a smooth transition. David provided a lease addendum we could use. Tri-Town was awarded a large grant to assist with smoke free properties, providing community health workers, cessation programs and wellness fairs.

Jim stated that smoke free properties are becoming a priority. You can't prevent second hand smoke. Tri-Town has the resources to help GBHA go smoke free. Bostwick Gardens is going smoke free. Also, Jim recommends incorporating the e-cigarette and combustible medical marijuana in our policy. Barbara will be meeting with David again about setting up a health fair at Flagrock.

Eileen Mooney asked if she was a smoker and the property went smoke free, would she have to leave. Jim said No, a smoker would never be asked to leave. Smoking would not be allowed in apartment or on the property. This policy does not grandfather current smokers. There is no constitutional act that protects smokers.

Minutes:

After a grammatical correction, motion made by Ronnie, seconded by Deborah to accept the March minutes. All members voted in favor.

Check Register:

After Barbara answered questions about the check register, motion made by Nan, seconded by Ronnie to approve the March check register. All members voted in favor. Richard had a few questions about the balance sheet and Sue Honeycutt answered them.

FY 2017 Budget Approval and Certifications:

Sue Honeycutt stated it is unfortunate that the tenants did not stay to hear the budget presentation for a better understanding of the financial constraints the Housing Authority is facing.

DHCD gave us a 0% increase in spending this year. Costs, benefits, insurance increase, Executive Director's salary schedule was increased and maintenance salaries were increased. These expenses have to be offset. Unfortunately, to do this maintenance contracts and materials and supplies have been decreased. No other line item can be cut in the budget. Therefore, maintenance contracts and materials and supplies were reduced in FY17. Our reserves are less than \$10,000. Sue put in for a reserve augmentation of \$35,000. Spending will have to be closely watched and prioritized this year. A big concern is the snow plowing next season which is our biggest contract expense.

Motion: Ann Condon moved that the proposed Operating budget for State-Aided Housing of the Great Barrington Housing Authority 400-1, for Fiscal Year ending 3/13/2017 showing total revenue of \$370,415.00 and total expenses of \$436,860.00, there by requesting a subsidy of \$96,445.00 be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development for its review and approval. Ronnie Cunningham seconded the motion which, upon roll-call, was passed by a vote of 5-0.

Motion: Nan Wile moved that the proposed Operating budget for State-Aided Housing of the Great Barrington Housing Authority 689-1, for Fiscal Year ending 3/31/2017 showing a total revenue of \$13,504.00 and total expenses of \$21,152.00, therefore by requesting a subsidy of \$0.00 be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development for its review and approval. Ann Condon seconded the motion which upon roll-

call was passed by a vote of 5-0.

Executive Director's Report:

There is one- one bedroom apartment at Flagrock, vacant that will be filled this weekend. There is a three bedroom unit vacant that Rich and Anthony are working on. Applicants on the waitlist are being notified. Accounts receivable is high. Tenants still owing have been sent written notices and will be getting phone call reminders tomorrow. Tenants in 11 & 13 are still withholding rent. Two families left owing. The one that left owing a large amount, can't be located.

Dewey Court:

We are 100% occupied at Dewey Court. The new capital plan is being prepared.

Citizen Speak Issues:

Jackie asked about the deck staining. It will be done when the weather gets warmer. Line painting in the parking area will be done in three or four weeks. A tenant parking sign will be installed in the flower bed at the entrance of the first lot. A visitors parking sign will be installed at the entrance of the upper lot.

Marlene asked about the drainage in her daughter's back yard. It got very wet when it rained recently. It seems to have dried up but it will be re-rolled when #15 is done. The gutter by the front door of #13 was completely replaced.

Nan asked if there is anything that can be done to ensure that Rich Phair and contractors are professionals hired by the Housing Authority and are highly qualified for the work they do. There is no need for tenants to micro-manage.

Nan stated that she is offended by the way Jackie insists on telling Barbara and Rich how to do their jobs. Deborah stated that next month are elections. Deborah won't be running for Chairman. She states that it's been difficult running Citizen's speak. The rules that have been laid out are not being followed. As a board, we need to be more consistent. Deborah stated that day to day issues such as deck staining & elevator cleaning should be brought to Barbara, not the board. Nan suggested posting when certain projects are going to take place.

Health Department Update:

Since she was on vacation and wouldn't be attending the BOH meeting, Barbara sent a progress report to Jayne Smith.

Deborah attended the BOH meeting and said it appeared that Jayne Smith wanted more information from the industrial hygienist. The report wasn't clear or conclusive. BOH members felt strongly about hiring an engineer. One BOH member stated that this issue is dragging on too long. Ann asked if the industrial engineer's role is to come back and do more extensive testing. He is coming back to retest, once the recommended work is done. More extensive testing will be done if needed. Richard's take away from the meeting was there wouldn't be an engineer hired. The industrial hygienist's findings were low levels of mold with one exception - #15 kitchen/dining area. It isn't necessary now to break into the walls. Once dehumidifiers and enhanced fans are operating, retesting will be done to see if problem is eliminated. Ann stated the BOH is pushing for further testing to determine if mold is present that isn't visible. Mildew is reappearing on visible surfaces. Barbara stated that she had a phone conversation with Jayne before the meeting and Jayne said she believes we are proceeding appropriately. She said she agrees that the dehumidifiers will be the solution.

Ann stated we should get the minutes of the meeting to be able to assess the BOH's position.

Barbara will contact DHCD Construction advisor to come out again and look at the progress made. DHCD has supported us financially with this issue.

Deborah asked about Shep Evans and what makes him eligible to make a determination on the water behind the buildings. Barbara said he is the Conservation Commission's agent for the town and she does not know his credentials.

The attorney for the tenants spoke at the meeting about dissatisfaction with the industrial hygienist and wanting someone from the private sector. Our attorney wants us to complete everything as soon as possible.

Deborah stated that at the meeting the tenants were making several accusations as recommended work was being checked off. Also, the BOH members and Jayne seemed to be buying into what the tenants were saying. Deborah stated she feels the BOH doesn't support the Housing Authority's approach to this problem. Ann stated they don't agree with the way we are going about remediating the mold issue.

Barbara asked for a board vote on the Certificate of Substantial and Final Completion of the 705 window replacement. Motion made by Ronnie, seconded by Nan to approve the Substantial and Final completion of the window project. All members voted in favor.

Motion made by Ronnie, seconded by Deborah to adjourn at 4:45 p.m. All members voted in favor.

Next meeting is May 19, 2016

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Heaphy
Secretary