

GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

2 Bernard Gibbons Drive

Great Barrington, MA 01230

Phone: (413) 274-1142 || Fax: (413) 274-1143 || Email: gtbarringtonhousingauthority@gmail.com

Minutes of Board Meeting July 20, 2017

Call to Order at 2:15 PM

Board Members and Employees Present: Ann Condon, chair; Veronica Cunningham, treasurer; Josh Risen, member; Vera Cartier, executive director; Jesse Mangiardi, administrative assistant

Tenants: Jane Green, Jackie Sinico, Sue Ball, Ann Pruhenski, Janice Fisher, Barbara Chamberlin, June Bozek, Annie Bushka

Citizens: Jim Mercer, Michael Andelman

Call to Order at 2:15 PM. The meeting is recorded.

Chair Condon would like to welcome Josh Risen back to the Board; he has been appointed to fill out the remainder of Nan Wile's term, set to expire in 2018.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Veronica Cunningham to approve the minutes of the Board Meeting of June 15, 2017, seconded by Josh Risen, unanimously approved.

Review & Approve Warrant of Bills: The Board reviewed and approved the warrant for checks paid by the Authority in the past month. Motion by Veronica Cunningham to approve the warrants, seconded by Josh Risen, unanimously approved.

Old Business: The Board reported no old business.

New Business:

Approval of changes to authorized representatives on GBHA's Massachusetts Municipal Depository Trust account: Motion by Josh Risen to authorize the addition of Vera Cartier, Executive Director, as well as all three current Board members (Ann Condon, Veronica Cunningham, and Josh Risen) as Authorized Signers & Traders on the Great Barrington Housing Authority's Massachusetts Municipal Depository Trust account. Seconded by Veronica Cunningham, unanimously approved.

Approval of the Fiscal Year-End Schedule of All Positions and Compensation for FY 2016: Motion by Veronica Cunningham to approve the previous fiscal year's Year-End Schedule of All Positions and Compensation for submission to DHCD. Seconded by Josh Risen, unanimously approved.

Discussion and Vote on a Newly Proposed Smoke-Free Policy: Director Cartier explained that the GBHA's Smoke-Free Policy has been revised to permit smoking twenty-five feet from buildings and common areas on the property. She stated that the policy is freely available in the office and that tenants will sign a new Smoke-Free Lease Addendum as part of their rent recertification, which will begin on August 9th.

The Board decided at this point to move forward with the Executive Director's report and to return to New Business afterward.

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Executive Director's Report:

Rent Recertifications: Director Cartier stated that rent recertifications will take place the second week of August. Families will be able to come into the office to complete their recertifications and sign their lease addenda on August 9th and 10th. Elderly residents at Flagrock living on the first floor will come in on the 9th, and those living on the second floor will come in on the 10th. Brookside residents will be able to come into the community room at Brookside on the 11th from 9AM to 1PM. Director Cartier stated that any residents who cannot make their scheduled time or who cannot physically make it into the office or community room should call beforehand to make special arrangements with the office.

Public Housing Administrator Training: Tomorrow, July 21, Director Cartier will be in Falmouth, Massachusetts to attend the first of seven classes required to obtain her Public Housing Administrator Certificate. This class will cover Personnel Management areas such as Performance Reviews and Hiring and Firing.

Administrative Assistant: Director Cartier informed the residents that the current administrative assistant, Jesse Mangiardi, will be leaving GBHA in mid-August to attend law school. She wishes him much success in his studies. The administrative assistant position has been advertised locally and interviews will likely begin next week.

Dewey Court: This month, Director Cartier will begin managing Dewey Court in Sheffield for the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority. She will be required to be present in Sheffield for fifteen hours per week as per the GBHA's memorandum of understanding with BCRHA.

Sidewalk and Parking Lot Construction: The sidewalk and parking area construction is running smoothly and is expected to be finished in a few weeks, weather permitting. There is a notice posted on the door and in the community room each day designating where residents may park.

Local Tenant Organization: Director Cartier is encouraging residents at Flagrock and Brookside to begin organizing an LTO so that the tenants may appoint a resident Board member. Tenants may call the office for more information.

New Business:

Discussion and Vote on a Newly Proposed Smoke-Free Policy: Chair Condon stated that there are two pieces to the Smoke-Free paperwork, the Policy and the Lease Addendum; she added that the Policy is for the Board to approve, and that the Lease Addendum is the responsibility of the Executive Director to draft and enforce. The Board members stated that they had had time to review the policy. Motion by Veronica Cunningham to approve the Smoke-Free Policy proposed on July 20, 2017, seconded by Josh Risen, unanimously approved.

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Citizens Speak

Jane Green expressed her wish that the tenant Board representative be a resident from Brookside because she feels Brookside gets left out. Chair Condon gave the floor to Director Cartier, who asked who Jane had in mind. Director Cartier asked the tenant to contact her to discuss this.

Ann Pruhenski stated that she is upset about the nonsense that occurs at Flagrock. She stated that Vera has been doing a wonderful job. She wants the tenants to put more effort toward being adults. She stated that the smoking area has been working out well. She asked that people not make accusations, as she is upset about being accused of smoking on the property; she stated that she was smoking a vapor cigarette, and that later someone had peered into her window to look into her living room, which she noticed because she heard a cart outside. She stated that this is inappropriate and that she will report this as harassment or stalking if it occurs again. She stated that the tenants' problems are amongst themselves, and that Vera does not need to get involved.

Jackie Sinico stated that back in March or April, former Chair Wile stated that she had spoken with Jim, who told her that the pipes at Flagrock would be replaced in July. Jim Mercer stated that he told Chair Wile the meters would be replaced, not the pipes, and the meters have in fact been replaced. Jackie stated that the stench of chlorine has increased and that she feels the water is contaminated. Jim Mercer, the treasurer of the Housatonic Water Company, stated that there is no contamination. He stated that three locations in town returned high lead and copper readings, and that this was not a result of the water itself being contaminated, but that customers' pipes were causing the high readings. He explained how the water is tested. Jackie asked whether the testing was at the water company's expense or at the expense of the housing authority, and Jim Mercer said that she would have to ask the Board of Health about that. Jackie stated that five residents at Flagrock have begun losing their hair as a result of the water, and Jim Mercer stated that any lead in the water was from the pipes, and that this would not cause lead poisoning. He stated that the state requires a high usage of chlorine in the water, and that the Housatonic Water Company is buying a large storage tank to reduce the amount of chlorine in the water customers draw from their taps. Board Member Josh Risen asked about letting the water run for a moment before using it, and Jim Mercer replied that this may help as water that has been sitting in the pipes for six or eight hours has had time to accumulate metal ions.

Adjournment: Motion by Josh Risen to adjourn the meeting at 2:47PM, seconded by Veronica Cunningham, unanimously approved.