

**STONINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY  
EDYTHE K. RICHMOND HOMES  
COMMUNITY BUILDING  
JULY 8, 2014  
MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Tom Hyland called the regular meeting of the Stonington Housing Authority to order at 4:00 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Those in attendance were Commissioners Tom Hyland, Julie Savin and Ruth Holder. Absent were Commissioners Jim Kelley and Giulia Jaramillo.

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Hyland made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the regular commission meeting held on May 13, 2014 as they are posted both in the Community Room and also on the town's website as well as approve the minutes as written. Commissioner Savin seconded the motion and the motion passed, 3-0-0. Commissioner Hyland made a motion and Commissioner Savin seconded the motion to waive the reading of the March 11, 2014 minutes as they are posted both on the website and in the Community Room and to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2014 meeting with corrections. The motion passed, 3-0-0.

**READING OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Commissioner Savin presented the Treasurer's Report for June 30, 2014 showing a balance of \$992.00 in the Pet Deposit Account, \$500.00 for Restricted Cash Special Deposit, \$1,833.66 in Checking with a TOTAL of \$2,333.66 in the Citizen's Checking Account. Savings and Investment Accounts total \$522,556.50, Petty Cash is \$151.47 and the TOTAL of all Savings and Checking assets are \$526,033.63.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:** None

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR:**

1. I met with Andy Rizzo, Consultant on June 13th to review the 3 proposals for the security system. We contacted the low bidder to clarify his proposal and it was agreed the work proposed was consistent with the other proposals. In addition Chuck and I met with Rob from Brookside Electric to find out what was needed to power the security cameras on the 7 buildings in addition to the cameras that will be installed on the community building for a total of 16 cameras.

2. Andy Rizzo, Building Code Consultant from AR Consulting, LLC reviewed the site and recommended the site for approximately 16-18 new units. I printed the zoning regulations as they pertain to our site RH 10, the Town's Design Review Guidelines and the CGS 8-30g for the Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Procedure. I met with Keith Brynes and Candace Palmer to review the options with setback regulations etc. They were both very helpful and provided the Inland Wetlands and Special Use Permits and suggested if we are planning to apply for January 2015 grants, we start the process and hire engineer, soil scientist and surveyor in the near future. They anticipated we would need at least 2 months to get our approvals once we have plans. Commissioner

Savin provided the name of the Engineer firm, Winthrop Group, Ed Wenke III, PE who has provided a proposal that is part of your package. I also contacted Ian Cole, the Soil Scientist we had provide a report on the corner lot, to provide a proposal for the pond for both cleaning it out and working with the Engineer on the site. I sent a RFP to 3 surveyors from the information provided by Mr. Wenke and plan to have information by the meeting. I will bring copies of the proposals to the meeting.

Commissioner Savin made a motion to accept and move forward with the Proposal for Professional Civil/Site Engineer Services for the amount of \$2,500 as well as James Bernardo Land Surveying, LLC in the amount of \$7,360 for the A2 Survey. Commissioner Nolder seconded the motion and it passed, 3-0-0.

Commissioner Nolder made a motion to hire Advanced Alarms Security Systems, Inc. to install a security camera system for the amount of \$28,756. Commissioner Savin seconded the motion and it passed, 3-0-0.

3. As requested, I contacted ConnNAHRO and an email was sent out to all the Small Housing Authorities regarding their Smoking Policies. The following results were found:

a.) Newington – No smoking in any building. There is no smoking area, however, residents can smoke 10' away from the buildings. They put smoker chimneys and benches in areas around the site. For one of the non-smokers who complained, one smoker has to be 15' away from the non-smoker's window. They served Kapa Notices, Notices to Quit and went to court. One resident still didn't comply and the court ordered an eviction but the tenant died before the eviction.

b.) Trumbull – They have 4 apartments to a building. Several buildings were converted to non-smoking. If a tenant moved out of a smoking building, then the other 3 residents are asked if they smoke and if they do not, that apartment is declared non-smoking.

c.) North Canaan – They converted to No Smoking a couple years ago. They did it in steps, grandfathered in all the current residents and new residents were not allowed to smoke in the apartments but they can on-site. They had a resident meeting and voted for no smoking in apartments. They changed the lease and rules and regulations. Two were still smoking and they went to court. Court allowed them a 6 months' probation to correct their actions and both have stopped smoking in their apartments. In the process they did have one couch fire from a smoker who fell asleep while smoking.

d.) Portland – They have been no smoking for about 1½ years. The majority of the smokers still smoke. If they can prove they have been smoking in their apartment, they fine them \$50. They have not tried to evict anyone yet, but anticipate that they will.

e.) Middlefield – They are implementing a policy 7/1/14. They are making an accommodation for the existing 4 smokers.

f.) Windsor – They have 2 sites that allow smoking. Another site was set up as No Smoking but the 2 smokers smoke outside

4. On July 2nd we had a resident meeting. I have attached a copy of the agenda. We had 35 residents attend. As you can see by the agenda, the No Smoking was a discussion item. Our thought was since we were getting information from other housing authorities we also needed to ask the residents since we have had a significant turnover this past year since the No Smoking was adopted. Two very outspoken smokers spoke of the hazards of going off sight with weather, darkness, wild animals and one resident was hit by a car on Winthrop St. Ext. Several non-smokers also spoke of their health concerns so it was a very active discussion. Since we are aware that 20% of our residents are smokers I would like to offer an option based on the information from our residents and other housing authorities. We are aware that 50% of the residents in Buildings 11 and 12 are smokers therefore, make those buildings for smokers, and amend the existing policy to Grandfather them in but maintain the No Smoking, especially new residents. We can offer the other 50% no smokers a opportunity to move and allow smokers into those units. If a smoker wants to move then they will be responsible to pay to paint and repair the unit they are moving from for a resident from either Building 11 or 12 to move into. We can do a lottery for the smokers who want to move until a unit is available. In the meantime, unless they live in Buildings 11 or 12 then those smokers would have to sign and agree not to smoke in their apartment and install a smoke alarm that would signal if a resident is smoking. The cost of these units are approximately \$350.00 each so it is cost prohibitive to have them installed in all units and we are aware of the smokers. I believe the policing of the smokers is going to be arduous for staff and residents and detrimental to long term cohesive culture of all residents. We do not want to break down the efforts that have been made to include all residents into activities.

Following this item of the Executive Director's report, discussion ensued with several recommendations being made by the tenants who were present at the meeting. Options were discussed and it was decided to install a device in each of the known smoker's apartments which would alert to smoke in the apartment. Each device would cost \$350.

A motion was made by Commissioner Savin and seconded by Commissioner Nolder that with the approval of the Stonington Housing Authority's attorney, smoke detectors be installed in the units of the known smokers. Motion passed 3-0-0.

5. Otherwise the Resident Meeting was very productive. In preparing for the meeting we found the original Rules and Regulations and I am including a copy for your review. The language is excellent and very inclusive. We plan to update the existing Rules and Regulations to bring more of the caring tone of the original. We spoke of the security system that is on the agenda for the Board meeting. Several residents were concerned about being "spied" on and we assured them they were not being monitored but if an incident occurred then we would have the cameras to look at to protect the residents. We reviewed the possible expansion and it was well received since we would not be impacting the already developed areas. We also got feedback on signage. We are going to have large signs made and installed at the entries (3) to the campus and list from Private Property, No Skate Boarding, Video Surveillance on Property, No Soliciting, No Dogs, No Sledding, No Bike Riding, No Dumpster Use, etc. Then we can have Resident Parking Signs and Visitor Parking Signs and not post multiple signs all over the campus. Chuck contacted Printing Plus and they have the capability to make the signs we need so we will move forward in order to complete this very overdue project. Residents also requested we set up more day outings.

Commissioner Nolder recommended placing larger signs at each of the entrances stating that this is a smoke free facility to discourage new potential smoking residents from applying. Commissioner Savin recommended that the signs at the entrances include the wording "Private Property, No Trespassing" to cover all activities which might prove detrimental to the residents.

6. The hearing for the Fellows St. Ext. is set for July 23rd at 7 PM. Kris Bell provided the information for the 2 public notices that need be put in the paper and the information for the sign to be put onsite.

7. I completed and submitted the new CHFA Resident Program Fund grant requesting \$4,776.82. The grant request includes the purchase a new large 65" wall mounted screen TV, with 2 speakers and DVD/DVR, another year of Netflix and a new larger 6 sq. ft. gas grill so we don't have to borrow Commissioner Nolder's grill for the resident events. This would also allow us to have more cook outs during the warmer months.

8. I am working on the application for the \$25,000 CHFA Small Improvement Program. We need to get prices on replacing kitchen faucets and sinks (except those that were replaced under the CDBG grant), enclose the dumpsters and replace the rear storm doors.

9. We anticipate we will find out sometime this month if the Town received the HUD CDBG Small Cities Grant for the replacement of the apartment floors, bamboo closet doors, toilets and sinks and enlargement of the community room/office.

10. The garden continues to grow and provide some produce. The tomatoes are getting larger by the day and the squash leaves are huge. Residents are signing up for their day to water.

11. I've added three photos to the Stonington Housing Authority website, however, I can't seem to be able to print the pages. Our site is [www.stoningtonhousingauthority.org](http://www.stoningtonhousingauthority.org). Please view the site at your convenience and I'll try again to print it. I also updated information on the waiting list. It's a very easy website to maneuver once you begin to work with it. I also added the email option through Go Daddy. We have the capability to have 5 individual email addresses under Stonington Housing Authority.org. Next project is to get a logo created so we can produce business cards. Chair Kelley printed some temporary cards which have been helpful.

12. Finally, Comcast is providing a credit for one month's free to SHA that was promised. We did not collect from residents. I had to make several calls before I was able to get a representative to authorize the credit. Now I am working on getting the taxes off the bill. I sent them our tax-exempt paperwork in April and it still hasn't been credited to our bill. The person who provided the one month credit is looking into our tax credit.

13. On June 25th as stated in Commissioner Nolders' report, we had a very successful Sock Hop with 50's & 60's music, hamburgers, French fries, ice cream sundaes, games and prizes. The cost to the housing authority was less than \$35. The residents had such a great time. One of our new residents, Joy Griffin, took photos and had them developed. It really was a fun day.

14. Cindy is continuing to create a 2 week calendar of events which seems to be working well and Commissioner Nolder is distributing them to residents. I have attached a copy for your review that provides a glimpse of all the increased activities that are being held.

15. We had a fox walking around the site on Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, specifically near the office/community room area. The Police were called but it left before they arrived.

16. The ConnNAHRO Conference August 24th through 27th at Mohegan Sun Convention Center. Please advise if you are available and would like to attend. As soon as I have the agenda I will forward it on to you.

17. During the past month Chuck completed 81 total work orders: 19 for carpentry, 41 for grounds, 13 for plumbing and 8 for electrical.

18. A copy of the original handbook was found and it's well written and eloquent wording will be included in the updated version of the current handbook which is a work in progress.

19. Cindy, Chuck and I regret Commissioner Nolder's decision to resign from the Board. We will miss her energy, determination and compassion for the residents of EKR. (Resignation letter is attached to these minutes.)

#### RESIDENT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

What a blast from the past! Twenty-seven residents joined together to celebrate the 1950's. Remember hamburgers, fries and root beer floats---slinky's, paddle balls, ball and jacks, and pic up sticks? And who can forget the jitterbug and the stroll. Residents dancing and playing games brought about lots of laughter and good fun.

If you check out our raised garden beds, you'll see enormous squash and tomato plants. They look awesome! We can't wait to start harvesting them! Our thanks to Irene Allen, Kathryn Donovan, Donna Jo Kurasz, Ken Lanphere, Denise Parzych, Ray and David Perrin and Ruth Nolder for taking turns watering the garden and flower beds.

The Stonington Human Services Office put out a request in the Westerly Sun for donations for a Pawcatuck family whose home was destroyed by fire. I went door-to-door collecting can goods and dry goods from residents. Our residents are wonderful and caring. I collected a box and seven bags of food to take to Human Services!

In late June, the Westerly Sun and the Resident News featured our very own Jack Sammataro along with his fellow classmates from the Stonington High School Class of 1942. If you read the article in the the Resident News, you'll appreciate how the reported captured the event with the words, "The graduates greeted one another and embraced. Love and joy filled the room and the tears that flowed were of the finest kind, born of an unbreakable common bond."

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Approval of motions from June meeting – because the meeting was not posted, the meeting never took place.
2. Status of grand request – discussed in Executive Director's Report (see above).
3. Development of Housing Authority Property – discussed in Executive Director's Report (see above).
4. Title of SHA Property – Public Hearing is scheduled for July 23, 2014. The Public Hearing will take place on July 23, 2014 at the Mystic Middle School starting at 7:00 p.m. A sign-up sheet will be posted for car-pooling of those residents who wish to attend.
5. Strategic Planning – July 29, 2014. Executive Director will look into possible locations for the meeting such as Ender's Island in Mystic.
6. ConnNAHRO Annual Conference Attendance – Commissioner Savin is unable to attend, however Commissioner Hyland and the Executive Director will be in attendance. Elaine will check with Commissioner Kelley to see if he plans to attend and make the appropriate reservations.

PUBLIC – Dot Post brought up her concerns for the safety toward staff and Commissioner Savin agreed a 0% tolerance toward this type of behavior was important.

#### ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Savin and seconded by Commissioner Nolder to adjourn the meeting. Vote passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas J. Hyland, Secretary