

Housing Authority Minutes

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 14, 2010 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
HELD AT 87 MAPLE STREET, ORCHARD KNOLL, AT 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Richard Duguay, Asst Chairman
Emily Witkus, Treasurer
Joan Welsh, Asst Treasurer
Marcia Cairns, Board Member

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Anita Sullivan, Executive Director
Eva Gambaccini, State Appointee
(Not sworn in)

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Asst Chairman, Richard Duguay.

New Business:

Welcome of newly elected Board member, Marcia Cairns. Marcia spoke about her reason for wanting to become a Board member, related previous experience in working with others and her willingness to share new ideas.

Eva Gambaccini has been appointed to the Board as the State Appointee by Governor Patrick.

The New Slate of Officers is as follows:

Richard Duguay, Chairman
Emily Witkus, Asst Chairman
Joan Welsh, Treasurer
Eva Gambaccini, Asst Treasurer
Marcia Cairns, Secretary

Richard Duguay outlined his goals as Chairman of the Board. He wants the WBHA to have a page on the Town's website. He suggested general information about the Housing Authority and Board as well as links to pertinent information and applications. Anita has already put the essential information together and the Board had approved it. She will forward the information to Karen Pare again.

Due to a recent string of move-outs; 3 deaths, one long term care placement and two unit transfers, there has been a change in the wait list. We have no elderly local applicants for the second floor apartments, and have only three local applicants waiting for first floors. Marcia suggested placing information about the wait list in her senior newsletter which is published monthly. Also, Marcia suggested Anita be interviewed by Franklin Daigneau of the Senior Connection local television program to get the word out.

Anita met with Marcia before the Board meeting to give an overview of the Authority and how it is regulated and funded and generally operated. Marcia thought it would be helpful to link with the Council on Aging with articles in the newsletter about Orchard Knoll. A discussion followed on how best the Council on Aging could help “get the word out” about Orchard Knoll.

Unfinished Business:

After a discussion about the “mission” of the Housing Authority, it was determined that at this point the Board needs to be most attentive to preserving the Housing at Orchard Knoll. With budget cuts, aging and deteriorating buildings, and static and decreasing rents, preserving and maintaining Orchard Knoll is the “mission” of the Housing Authority. A mission statement will be discussed at the next meeting.

After receiving a letter from the Community Preservation Committee, denying our request for funding the roof replacements for three buildings, Anita researched projects that were approved in other Towns. Anita reported on several communities which have received funding under the Community Preservation Act in their Towns for projects that are similar in nature to our proposed roof replacements. After a discussion it was decided that Anita will contact Pat Crowley and ask for a meeting with the Community Preservation Committee to discuss in more detail the proposed roof replacement project and how it DOES meet the standards for an approvable project based on the guidelines. Anita will provide back up with pertinent information she receives from approved and completed projects in other communities. The Community Preservation Committee Application form was submitted to that Committee by the deadline of October 31, 2009. Anita needs to make sure that the meeting takes place before the June 1st submission deadline if we are required to submit another application.

Maintenance Report

There will be six one bedroom turnovers in the next couple of months. This is a huge task for Chuck! Anita has a request into the Sheriff’s Office for the Community Service program. If we are sent men, they may be able to paint and clean apartments as well as

tend the grounds. Marcia also suggested recruiting volunteers through the schools or scout programs, although with painting that might not work. There is no money to have rugs replaced so the painters would need to be somewhat skilled. The goal of all is to have the apartments turned over as quickly as possible so as not to lose rent.

Last month Chuck attended a maintenance seminar where the DHCD's Capital Planning System had been discussed. He was told at that time that we would receive award letters in Late Spring. As of this date we still have no idea how much capital funding we will receive and when by DHCD. This information will be helpful when supporting our request for funding from Community Preservation funds.

Executive Director's Report

The April NAHRO newsletter was reviewed and discussed.

The April checks were reviewed and signed.

After the recent meeting with Marcia, Anita thought it would be important to discuss how recruiting volunteers might be a way to reduce the effects of budget cuts on our residents. It is discouraging for residents, staff and the Board to see Orchard Knoll deteriorating due to being underfunded for so long. Its not what anyone wants for our community. Marcia spoke a bit about how she utilizes her volunteers and all Board members exchanged suggestions and ideas on how volunteers might be able to improve the grounds and perhaps even turnover rates. Anita will put a blurb in the Banner asking for volunteers and hopefully we can find people interested in helping out our elderly community.

Other Business

Rich Duguay wanted to discuss the new guidelines for the Open Meeting Laws. Kim Hopewell has the information at the Clerk's Office. He also stated that all Public officials and Employees must take an online "class" on Ethics. When completed, a certificate needs to be signed and a copy given to Kim Hopewell, Town Clerk.

Adjournment

Joan Welsh made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45. Marcia Cairns seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Sullivan

Executive Director