

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE HIGHTSTOWN HOUSING
AUTHORITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING
WEDNESDAY, February 18th, 2015 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Call to Order: Chairperson James Eufemia called meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

Open Public Meetings Act Statement: In compliance with Chapter 213 of the Public Laws of 1975, Notice of this Meeting was given by way of the Annual Notice published in the Trenton Times, Princeton Packet and are posted on the calendar at The Hightstown Borough Municipal Building by the Authority and posted in a public place reserved for such announcements in the lobby of the Community Building of the Housing Authority Office.

Roll Call: by Keith LePrevost showed that those present and absent were as follows:

- **Present:** Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director, Commissioner James Eufemia, Chair, Commissioner Carole Nelson, Vice Chair, Commissioner Pascale Emmanuel, Commissioner Christopher Moraitis
- **Also Present:** Steve Misiura, council Liaison, Mayor Larry Quattrone.
- **Absent:** Yolanda Swiney, Brent Rivenburgh, and Esther Velasquez.

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of January 7th, 2015.

Commissioner Moraitis motioned to approve the minutes which were seconded by Commissioner Nelson. The minutes were approved.

Open Public Meeting: At this time the public is invited and encouraged to participate in open forum. It is requested by the Chairman of the Board and the Commissioners of the Housing Authority that all comments and opinions be relevant and timely, and be expressed in a manner which contributes to and advances the orderly progress of the meeting and for all concerned. The Chairman or presiding Commissioner may determine that it is necessary to limit the amount of time allotted to speakers from the public.

Mayor Quattrone requested the security camera issue be moved up on the agenda. He received our request and had a discussion with the Police department. The Mayor and Police feel it is unreasonable for the Borough to spend \$10,000 per year for the next 5 years on a system based in in the Housing Authority, when the police department feel they can accomplish the same thing for \$8-\$10,000. There was a lengthy discussion that resulted in the Mayor requesting a meeting with the HA, himself and the Police Lieutenant. It was clear from the discussion the Mayor did not understand the Police capability for video surveillance and will schedule a meeting with the Lt. to discuss further. The mayor excused himself from the meeting at 7:30pm. The board had a general discussion about the Borough, the camera system and the water issues that are still unresolved. Keith discussed how it is very frustrating for the Borough employees to tell him and his staff one thing, then tell the mayor and council something completely different. This in turn leads to confusion when our residents call the borough to report problems. We discuss with our residents exactly the facts as we know them. When the Borough gives them another story, it causes confusion and distrust. Keith stressed we all need to be speaking the same truth.

Committee Reports:

Keith discussed the need to staff with 2 or three commissioners each of the committees. We will be working on policies, employee contracts and 2016 budgets.

Resolutions:

None at this time

Executive Director Report:

Keith discussed the following:

- We are currently at 99% occupancy. We have refurbished a studio apartment for a new tenant who will move in March. We have a notice from a tenant in a one bedroom apartment, who purchased a home. She will be leaving at the end of February. We are moving an existing tenant from a 2 bedroom unit into that unit.
- Our 2015 budget was submitted to HUD on January 9th. The HUD budget worksheets were published, on a 2007 version of Excel, which did not translate to today's software. Several patches were created, but very few really worked. We were able to use an older computer to download and complete the tools for submission.
- Our plan of being on the February agenda has been changed. Steve Misiura, our council liaison is taking the lead, proposing the borough work with us to complete the needed upgrades. He would like to see the project expanded to cover other areas of the downtown as well. Our project will be part of a larger budget discussion.
- Along the same lines, HUD has announced the 2015 Safety and Security grants. They have allocated twice as much money this year, so I will be applying for the security systems again. I have been working on the grant already, updating our information and documentation. We have until March 20th to apply.
- The HUD 5 year plan and Annual plan updates have been sent to HUD. We will need to modify the plans with a "Plan Update" to reflect the purchase of a new security system.
- The cycle painting of 11 units has been completed. We also repainted several bathrooms and touched up several other units.
- The new secure file room is complete.
- Work on the community space is progressing, we have installed the new lighting, fan and ceiling tiles. Painting and carpet will follow along with a new layout of tables and chairs.
- The staff has completed painting and refurbishing the boiler rooms. They have all been cleaned, walls and floors painted and new lighting installed.
- Conference that are available for 2015. All of these have value for the Commissioners.
 - Final Leo Dauwer Conference in Martha's Vineyard- September(multiple dates)
 - PHADA Annual Convention- San Francisco- May 3-6
 - NJNAHRO-Atlantic City-April 22-24
- I will be working with the Affordable Housing Accreditation Board to test and possibly implement a new national accreditation for affordable housing providers. The systems are all in the testing phases and the first certifications are scheduled

for 2016-2017. They have asked if I am willing to do peer reviews of other communities and facilities in NJ. The HHA will be an early participant in the accreditation process, which when widely available will be the benchmark for high quality housing and services nationwide.

- We are beginning to form verifiable conclusions on our 2014 energy management projects. On the electrical side, we have reduced our consumption in KWH by 20%, resulting in a 30% reduction in our cost of electric. This difference is due to reductions in demand charges. With 4 full months heating data, we have experienced an average 25% reduction in our natural gas consumption (CCF) and a 29% reduction in cost due to reduced usage and market conditions. Over the past 12 months, we have saved almost \$38,000 compared to our normal (past 6 years) in energy costs, and just over \$10,000 in water savings. The 14% rate increase in water rates has impacted our savings, but, without our efforts, we would be paying that much more. In comparing our actual savings to the projected savings detailed in our energy audit dated July, 2013, we have met the expectations of the audit except in water savings. The audit called for .35GPM aerators and 1.1GPM showerheads. In testing these, we would have a lot of resident push back, so .5 and 1.5GPM devices were installed to provide the desired quality flow. I am drafting a final report on the improvements that will be distributed at the end of the heating season. This is being done for the various granting agencies, documenting the benefits their funding provided.

Financial Update: January, 2015

In review of the financial reports for the month of January, 2015, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the month with positive results. Highlights include:

Income:

- Residential income has come in slightly above budget due to incomes of our residents.
- Laundry income is on budget for the year.
- CFP for Operations is on budget, Income was posted in February
- Subsidy income is on budget due to the Federal 2015 budget. We are operating under 2014 assumptions until April when HUD is supposed to have completed their 2015 budget reviews. They will make whatever adjustment to our subsidy at that time.

Expenses:

- Administrative and Maintenance salaries are below our budgeted levels for the month and year.
- Sundry Administrative is over budget due to the annual dinner.
- Computer supplies are over budget due to the renewal of the Yardi tenant management software license.

- Electric is slightly below our budget. (That has been lowered to our new normal)
- Gas is well below budget.
- Misc. Contract costs are over budget due to a quarterly payment on the video security system.

The enclosed financials include: Income Statement for the Current Period (VS Budget), Cash Flow and General Ledger-Cash account.

Announcements: The next meeting is scheduled for March 18th, 2015 at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by a motion made at 8:45PM.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director