

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH
OF HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, December 13th, 2017 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson James Eufemia called meeting to Order at 7:03PM

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: showed that those present and absent were as follows:

Present: Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director, Commissioner James Eufemia, Chair, Commissioner Yolanda Swiney, Commissioner Brent Rivenburgh, Commissioner Christopher Moraitis and Commissioner Pascale Emmanuel, Vice Chair, Monique Wilson, Resident Commissioner and Lee Stultz, Council Liaison

Also, Present:

Absent:

Commissioner Carole Nelson

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of November 15th, 2017. Commissioner Moraitis motioned to approve the minutes which were seconded by Commissioner Swiney. 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.

No Members of the public were in attendance.

Borough Council Liaison Report:

Councilman Lee Stultz updated the Commission on the status of the crosswalk at Riggins. This will be a lighted crosswalk with flashing lights in the street and signage. The Borough is paying 50% of the cost which is approximately \$18,000. Commissioner Moraitis questioned whether the School is participating in the cost. It was explained that the school district was contacted the last time there was an incident, but it never went anywhere. Keith suggested that now would be an ideal time to discuss with the State improving all of our crosswalks that are on the State road. Lee noted the Borough has set up a Cross Walk committee that will study the sidewalks and crosswalks. Keith suggested the Borough could consider budgeting each year to improve just one crosswalk. Lee will speak with the Mayor to see if a person from the HA could participate on the crosswalk committee. Commissioner Rivenburgh questioned whether the 25 miles per hour zone be extended up to the new crosswalk. Currently the speed is 35 heading north until just past the Y. Commissioner Moraitis questioned whether greater enforcement would benefit. He mentioned the enforcement in Princeton and the how the crosswalks are respected.

Lee continued to discuss the Affordable housing plan and committee. The planner is working on examining the Deerfield site to determine the best way to expand the housing stock on that site. The original plan was to infill the courtyards with new buildings. The planner does not think that is the best idea. Escrows are in place and work is being done.

Resident Council Report:

The council has been discussing crossing guards and the crosswalks. They have been mostly focused on support for the family of the boy hit in the crosswalk. A donation box has been put in the lobby for the family. Keith noted the real challenge will be when he comes home. The mother has a job and is still in school. Fortunately, we have several residents that have volunteered to help with care and meal prep so the mom can work. Commissioner Emmanuel questioned what we can do to help from the Authority. Keith said he feels it is important to see what the family needs once the boy comes home. A “payment holiday” was mentioned to help the family. Keith noted the board can decide that once we determine the real need. Keith mentioned several of the residents have come to him asking if something can be done with RR Avenue to slow the traffic. The problem is mainly with the Taxi’s using the street as a cut through. Councilman Stultz noted that there will be major changes will be coming to the Taxi’s in 2018. The council has been meeting and discussing major changes to the Taxi regulations. Keith suggested “South Street speed humps” or similar to slow the traffic. Commissioner Rivenburgh suggested texturing the asphalt like in the downtown. Councilman Stultz questioned whether adding parking to one side of the street would help to slow the traffic. Commissioner Eufemia was not necessarily in favor of adding on street parking due to the fact we would lose control of who parks on the street and for how long.

Resolutions:

- **2017-12 To set meeting dates for 2018** There was a short discussion. The resolution was unanimously approved.
- **2017-13 To write off balance as Uncollectable.** Keith explained this balance is from a tenant that moved quickly out of state. Commissioner Swiney questioned whether the subsidy follows the tenant. Keith explained it does not. She also questioned whether this will go onto her credit report. Keith responded that this debt gets reported to HUD which will make her ineligible for federal assistance until this debt is paid. The resolution was unanimously approved.
- **2017-14 To Approve Final State Budget** Final approved budget has come from the state for final approval. The resolution was unanimously approved.
- **2017-15 To approve easement agreement** Keith sent out copies to everyone including a site plan he provided detailing the location of the water line. Keith feels this project is beneficial to the HA, and has been approved by our attorney. The resolution was unanimously approved.

Discussion Items:

Annual Report to Council: Keith noted the Council has asked for reports from each of the boards and commissions. He noted it will be a “state of the Union” type of address, covering demographics, finances and general information. Keith asked the commissioners for a volunteer to give the report. Commissioner Eufemia volunteered. Councilperson Stultz recommended Keith give the presentation, and discuss the RAD conversion and what it means for the town.

Summer Camp Programs: Keith provided a synopsis of the Dawes Park Summer program, our kids utilization of the program and the ongoing funding. Keith feels this winter is a good time to discuss the various programs that are available and how we can support our kids on an individual basis. Commissioner Moraitis feels we can open it up to programs that are available year-round. Commissioner Eufemia mentioned the Theater program, and promoting our parks. Councilman Stultz agrees with our funding strategy, similar to the Borough cutting back on donations to the local nonprofits.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 98% occupancy. We have renovated the senior citizen unit and it is being occupied this week. The studio that is being vacated has been rented from our wait list for January 15. The family 3 bedroom is being renovated and is rented for January 15th also. Keith noted we have started the process of removing the interior window trims to see how they are installed. An example is the apartment we are doing now, there is literally a 2" gap on each side of the windows.
- Due to the continuing resolutions, our subsidy from HUD will remain at the 2017 level until a new budget is passed.
- The maintenance staff has been installing the final radiator covers.
- The federal subsidy budget tools are not available from HUD at this time. We will be completing them as soon as they are available. The current time line from HUD makes the budget tools available to us by mid-January.
- We are slowly working on completing the work orders from our recent inspections. The guys are making progress, but have been delayed by the vacated apartments.
- We removed another large pin oak that was diseased. This one was by the office and the rain garden. We are selecting another specimen tree (Ulmus- 'Morton Glossy')- Triumph Elm to replace it. This tree is a fast growing, disease and insect resistant strain that will complement our landscape. It also introduces a new species and variety of tree to the property to help promote a diversity to the landscape.
- Our annual boiler maintenance has been done. Our boiler contract is evaluating our systems to prioritize the replacement.
- I have been in touch with the engineers that prepared the plans and specifications for our boiler project. They will be looking at our plans and specs to determine ways to reduce the costs and rebid the project.
- The gutters have all been cleaned and repaired for the winter season. All the corners have been caulked and several areas where joints were separating have been repaired. We will consider replacing the gutters when we begin the re-roofing of the property.

Financial Update: November, 2017

In review of the financial reports for the month of November, 2017, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the month with positive results. We returned to positive cash flow for the month and the year.

Income:

- Residential income has come in slightly over budget for the period.
- Excess utility is slightly over budget.
- Interest income has come in well under budget for the year due to dividends from insurance did not meet expectations this year.
- Laundry income is slightly under budget for the period.

- Subsidy income is over budget due to the final acceptance of our 2017 budget. Adjustments have been made which will boost our subsidy income by around \$1500 per month.

Expenses:

- Administrative and Maintenance salaries are under budget for the period and slightly over budget for the year. This is due to the second 3 pay month that occurred in September.
- Legal expense is slightly over budget for the period, but on budget for the year.
- Staff training is under budget for the year.
- Travel is slightly over budget due to the Washington conference in September and travel arrangements made for the winter conference.
- Audit is under budget for the period but on budget for the year.
- Dues and memberships are over budget due to annual dues for PHADA, NAHRO and IREM.
- Misc. Office Expense is under budget.
- Water is slightly under budget, but will come into line the end of this year.
- Electric is under budget for the period and under budget for the year.
- Natural Gas is under budget for the period and the year.
- Maintenance supplies are over budget for the year due to purchasing of materials as a result of our inspections. This year with the help of the REAC trainers we have done an extensive evaluation of our site and produced numerous work orders.
- Electrical contract costs are over budget for the month due to generator repairs.
- Misc. Contract Costs are for the siding, gutters and soffit repairs done this past month.
- Boiler Contract costs are over budget due to the annual service contract and repairs in boiler room number 1.
- Exterminating costs are over budget for the period, and the year. This is mainly due to bed bug treatments, including one active case.

The board concluded the meeting by discussing annual increases for the line staff. It was agreed a 3% pay increase will be given to each line staff person.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 17th, 2018 at 5:00 pm followed by Dinner at Fernando's

The meeting was adjourned by a motion made by Commissioner Moraitis.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director