

**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 16th, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.
Telephone Meeting**

Chairperson James Eufemia called meeting to Order at 7:10PM

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(Late), Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Jeet Gulati.

Also, Present:

Absent: Borough Council Liaison, Commissioner Monique Wilson, Resident

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of November 18th, 2020. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Teller and seconded by Commissioner Swiney. Minutes were unanimously 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:

- None

Committee Report:

- Policy Review. Keith discussed updating the policies in our manual. Many were done in 2012 and need to be updated at this point. Several things have changed over the years, Keith discussed in these policies most of the changes were in either spelling and punctuation. In November the Ethics policy and the Statement of Values were reviewed. Commissioner Swiney, Gulati, Rivenburgh and Eufemia served as policy reviewers.

Resident Council Report:

- None

Resolutions:

- 2020-10 To accept the State of NJ Approved budget. Keith discussed the process we have gone through, formatting and submitting the budget we approved in October this year. The Budget has been fully approved by the State, and this memorializes the budget. The budget was approved by Roll call vote.
- 2020-11 To write off uncollectible losses. Keith discussed the \$1037.39 that will be written off, and how much of that almost \$837. Was from one tenant that left and there were several items that were damaged in the apartment that were repaired. We are fortunate that there are only a couple tenants left who have the original \$25 dollar security deposit.

Discussion Items:

- **Annual Dinner.** It was decided that we will hold off on the annual dinner until later in the year when we can all get together safely. All agreed we would talk about it again, but July is tentatively set for our annual dinner.
- **Architect- RFP for Roofing and Solar.** Keith discussed the possible RFP being put into the marketplace for a qualified Architect. We have several projects coming up the next year or two that will require an architect. Years ago, we had Minerva and Vanderbeck do all our architecture on the Authority. We will immediately begin working on examining the roofing, looking at Solar, the windows, and doors. This will take care of all the bigger projects on our capitol list for many years to come.
- **Flooring.** Keith discussed his conversations with the staff trying to determine the best way to re-tile the entire apartment. It was determined the least disruptive method is to redo the apartment on turnover. The maintenance staff can handle the removal and reinstallation of the tile as well as the waxing and refinishing. To take this project on while a tenant is living in the unit would involve relocating the tenant and all their belongings for several days. If acceptable, we start redoing the flooring on turnover with the next unit. Normally we do 8-10 units per year, so it will be an ongoing process. Commissioner Rivenburgh questioned the purchase of materials. Keith responded the materials are ordered and we receive upwards of a pallet at a time. This guarantees we are receiving the commercial cost, which is much lower than buying the material by the box.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 98% occupancy. We will be downsizing a current senior to that unit which will free up a 3 bedroom for a family. We have also moved a single woman to a one-bedroom apartment, freeing up a two-bedroom handicap unit. We are currently advertising for that unit. If an acceptable person cannot be placed in the unit, we will move a person in a 3-bedroom handicap unit to the two-bedroom. This will free up the 3-bedroom to be renovated (kitchen cabinets, electrical). At that time an appropriate 3-bedroom handicap ad will be run for that unit. We will work with our waiting list and select an appropriate family.
- We are keeping the waiting list closed until April 1, 2021. There is a long list of applicants that have returned their update letters. We will reevaluate the list next winter to see if any units can be advertised.
- We are recycling again! We continue to work with our Residents to ensure compliance with the recycling regulations. It is not an easy process, but with weekly reminders I believe we will achieve some level of success.
- We have upgraded the entire facility's camera system to a new fiber optic system. In the new year we will investigate upgrading the DVR to a modern fiber-based system. This will increase the speed and reliability of the system. It will also give us the ability to add cameras or continue to increase the resolution of certain cameras as needed.
- All landscaping work has been completed behind building 7 parking area. We were waiting for all the construction work to be done and the dirt settled before any planting work was

done. A tree was planted to replace the large Oak that was removed due to disease by the Senior dumpster.

- All the appropriate paperwork was filed with the West Windsor health department for this meeting space. Wisely, the board has chosen to meet remotely to avoid any spread of the virus. Hopefully, we will be able to meet in person again next year.
- We had a major drainage leak this past month in one of the apartments. The waste line coming from the sink was copper and totally deteriorated. The staff replaced approximate 8 feet of line with new PVC. We will now be looking at other units for signs of deterioration.
- I investigated the replacement of the gas stoves in the residential apartments. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of electric coming to each apartment building. There is a 3 phase 150 Amp service for each building, but it is broken up into 12, 60 Amp services for each apartment. Each new stove would require a dedicated 40 Amp circuit. Each apartment is fed by wires that are only able to handle 65 Amp. Although we may be able to accomplish this, we would run the risk of overloading the panel if the oven was on and multiple air conditioners were running.
- I have prepared an RFP for Architectural services. This will be a 2-year contract that will look at roofing replacement, roof alterations that may need to be done and possible solar installations. We can extend the contract to include other architectural services that may be required by other planned capital projects.
- The novel Coronavirus is on everyone's mind. We have had discussions as a staff regarding safety. Now is the time we are all re-doubling our efforts to stay safe. New guidance from the State have us checking temperatures of everyone entering the building. As a service industry, we are unable to avoid being at work. We are maintaining the social distancing and remaining vigilant until told otherwise by the Governor.

Financial Update: November 2020

In review of the financial reports for the month of November 2020, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the months with positive results.

Income:

- Residential income has come in slightly under budget for the period and slightly under budget for the year, mostly due to accurate budgeting but minor impacts from the virus resulting in layoffs and late rent payments.
- Excess Utility is slightly under budget for the period and slightly under budget for the year.
- Interest income is well below budget for the period and the year. We have moved our savings to a local bank where the return is slightly higher. Our statements will be coordinated making posting and recording more accurate.
- Other Operating receipts are slightly over budget for the period. They are well over budget for the year due to an insurance dividend during this summer.
- Laundry income is over budget for the period and the year.
- Operating Subsidy income is under budget for the period and the year.
- The COVID 19 subsidy is to be used for capital expenses and emergency supplies.

Expenses:

- Administrative and Maintenance salaries are both close to budget for the period and the year.
- Legal expense is over budget for the period but basically on budget for the year.
- Staff Training is slightly under budget for the period and the year.

- Travel is well under budget for the period and the year due to numerous cancellations this year.
- Sundry Administrative is over budget for the period and the year due to annual cost of Accreditation. This is a once annually cost that will be budgeted in the future.
- Dues and Memberships are over budget for the period and over budget for the year due to renewals of memberships to National trade organizations.
- Electric is under budget for the period and year. (Due to the timing of the bills)
- Water is over budget for the year.
- Natural Gas is under budget for the period but under for the year.
- Maintenance materials is under budget for the period and over budget for the year due to apartment renovations being done. Money is spent at HD Facilities and Home Depot for materials.
- Maintenance contract cost are on budget for the period, but under budget for the year.
- Electrical Contract costs are slightly under budget for the period but over budget for the year due to generator additions needed after the new installation and contract for annual servicing.
- Extermination cost is slightly over budget for period and the year due to bed bug treatment in one apartment and mouse treatment under several buildings.
- Security Alarm costs are over budget due to the installation of fiber optic camera cables installed at the facility.
- Boiler contract costs are over budget due to renewal of service contractor for the boiler systems.
- Extraordinary maintenance is used for all costs that are outside the CFP funding and will be capitalized at the end of the year.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 20th, 2021 at 7:00

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director