

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH
OF HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, March 17th, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson James Eufemia called meeting to Order at 7:00PM

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 Jeet Gulati.

Also, Present:

Absent: Borough Council Liaison, Commissioner Monique Wilson, Commissioner Eva Teller

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of February 17th, 2021. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Rivenburgh 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:

- Commissioner Eufemia has spoken/texted with the Mayor and he is doing well, getting back to normal routine. Everyone on the Board was glad to hear he is doing well.

Committee Report:

- Review of the 3 policies.

- Commissioner Eufemia feels the changes that were made to the policies are relevant and positive for the residents. Keith commented all the changes are being made to update our policies for 2021, as most were redone in 2012-2013. Most changes were grammatical and spelling. Commissioner Gulati requested that future policies be sent to the Board in Word “red line” fashion so that they are more easily read, and changes are highlighted. Keith will “red line” all future policies. The office plans to have 2-3 policies updated each month for the board to consider. This way all the policies will have been reviewed this year.

Resident Council Report:

- None

Executive Session:

- The board moved into Executive Session to discuss personnel .

Resolutions:

- 2021-4 To remove Monique Dujue Wilson from the Board of Commissioner of the Hightstown Housing Authority and begin the search for a new Resident Commissioner.
 - The resolution was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Discussion Items:

- Keith mentioned the Borough and most committees have moved to the Zoom platform for their meetings. He feels the Board should consider going to that format in the future. The cost was discussed with the Board. Commissioner Rivenburgh volunteered to host the meetings, but Keith feels we need to have a Housing Authority account so that the meetings are properly stored and can be noticed properly. Keith will set up the account and notice everyone for next month.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 97% occupancy. The renovation of a larger 3-bedroom handicap unit is well underway. This 3-bedroom handicap unit has gotten new kitchen cabinets and counters, floor, outlets, switches, base trim and smoke detectors. We have also moved a senior woman to a one bedroom first floor unit from a 3-bedroom unit. Normally we turn over 8-9 units per year so we will be absorbing the cost of new flooring in the turnover. We are interviewing a person from the waiting list for that units when done. We will work with our waiting list and select an appropriate family for the handicap unit and will use Project Freedom in Robbinsville to fill the unit if we do not have an acceptable family.
- We were fortunate to have Jill Swanson from the Health Department call and arrange for 50 single dose J&J vaccines for our resident that are over 65. The list

filled very quickly, and Jill only had a few slots to fill in with other residents. . Sherry arranged times with the residents and took care of the logistics. Most of our residents were thrilled to be able to get the vaccine. We made sure protocols were followed and all safety steps were taken including ways in and out and cleaning procedures.

- There is now a phone number on the Borough website for elderly people to call who may be having trouble getting the vaccine. We allowed the health department to use our conference room for our residents but not for the public. They are using the Fire House for the public vaccination events.
- One of our long-term tenants died this past month. She had an elderly one-bedroom apartment on the senior side and has been in the unit since approximately 1982. We are fortunate she had a family that very quickly cleaned and vacated the unit. We are going to redo the entire unit including flooring. We will go to the waiting list to fill the unit.
- We had a major sewer backup in building 1. Grease and diapers were snaked out of the line by Roto-Rooter. We have received a quote from Roto-Rooter for maintenance service that will be performed on 1 or 2 main lines per year. This will hopefully prevent major backups in the future. Building 3 and 4 are set up for April. They are on a shared line that has not been cleaned in several years.
- We have the maintenance people identifying where our sewer lines exit the buildings to consider installing cleanout on the exterior of the building. This will help in the buildings where there is only a crawl space and is very difficult to access.
- We have all survived a close call with COVID. Our accountant fell ill and had a positive quick test. He followed up with a standard 3-day test, as well as everyone he has been in contact in the last 2 weeks. The entire office staff was tested, and we all had negative results. The office was only closed one day, and we required the negative test paper (from the Lab) before returning to work.
- All the appropriate paperwork was filed with the West Windsor health department for this meeting space. As the Virus continues to get worse, we are meeting remotely so that we can all stay safe.
- I have received the bids for Architectural services. DRG architects have the lowest bid and they are a reputable firm. I have met with the Architects and they are beginning their work. They will develop a budget for the project While they are here, I also gave them the original plans for the concrete stair treads. They will develop a new spec on them, and we will bid and order enough treads to replace all the damaged ones and replace the steps that did not get replaced the first time. They were here this week, reviewed all the attics, venting and measurements. They also used a remote drone with a camera to fly over each of the roofs to look for damage or other trouble spots.

- Covid safety is our priority. Now is the time we are all re-doubling our efforts to stay safe. New guidance from the State has 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: February 2021

In review of the financial reports for the month of February 2021, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the months with positive results. The Cash flow statements is somewhat deceptive as some December expenses were paid out in January (mainly water and sewer) This skewed the balance by almost \$20,00. Keith discussed the impact the March pension payment would have on the budget and projected cash flow. In spite of the increased expenses, the Housing Authority continues to do well.

Income:

- Residential income has come in over budget for the period and over budget for the year. This is mainly due to conservative budgeting.
- Interest income is below budget for the period. This amount is balanced out by the insurance rebate that is received later in the year.
- Other Operating receipts are slightly over budget for the period.
- CFP for operating has been received, just posted by journal entry separately.
- Laundry income is over budget for the period.
- Operating Subsidy income is over budget get for the period. We will keep an eye on this as the year progresses. We have received the March/April subsidy which is well above our estimates. I will update you as the year progresses and the Government finalizes the 2021 budgets and subsidies.

Expenses:

- Administrative and Maintenance salaries are both under budget for the period. We had a 3 pay month that happened in January that still has us over budget, but we will come back into line in March.
- Legal expense is over budget for the period due to PILOT payment discussions and eviction letters. (2)
- Staff Training is slightly under budget for the period and the year. The previous expense is for one commissioners training.
- Sundry Administrative is under budget for the period, but due to software renewals earlier this year, we are still over budget.
- Travel is well under budget for the period due to the virus.
- Dues and Memberships are over budget for the period and the year due to license and association renewals.
- Electric is under budget for the period.

- Natural Gas is under budget for the period but under for the year.
- Maintenance materials is over 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 including new flooring for the units.
- Plumbing contract costs are over budget due the backup in building 1.
- Ground's maintenance is over budget due to the cost of snow removal this year.
- Extermination expense is over budget due to bed bugs being treated in 2 adjoining apartments.
- Maintenance contract cost are on budget for the period, but under budget for the year.
- Extraordinary maintenance is used for all costs that are outside the CFP funding and will be capitalized at the end of the year. The expense shown is for the kitchen cabinet costs that were above what is available in CFP 2020. The cost will be recaptured in the 2021 CFP.

Next meeting is scheduled for April 21st, 2019 at 7:00

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director