

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH
OF HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, April 19th, 2023 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Vice-Chairperson Brent Rivenburgh called meeting to Order at 7:05PM

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 Brent Rivenburgh, Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Terry Sean McDonnell, Commissioner Jameellah Lance, Commissioner Anne Studholme.

Also, Present: Liaison Jeet Gulati

Members of the Public: Sherry Cavanaugh, Helen McCall, Keata McCall, Tonya Bell, Karla Gonzalez, Janielle Jefferson, Kian Picquet, Tiffany Bell.

Absent: Commissioner Eufemia, Commissioner Parliaros

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of March 16th. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Teller and seconded by Commissioner Studholme. 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.

Sherry Cavanaugh reported to the Board she was voluntarily retiring from the Authority. Several of the residents questioned if she was being forced to leave and she responded no, it was her decision. The board had a short discussion on the subject.

Borough Council Liaison Report:

- Jeet discussed the PILOT and the difficulties he is having. Keith reaffirmed with him he is willing to discuss this with the council. I was left that Jeet will continue to work on the issue.

Committee Report:

Resident Council Report:

- Jameallah discussed the upcoming picnic for the Seniors and the Easter Egg hunt that took place recently. The garden plots have been divided up and people are already planting.

Resolutions:

- None currently

Discussion Items:

- Keith discussed the bidding process that is underway. The Engineering firm has completed all the necessary plans and specs for the project and has advertised the project. Several contractors have expressed interest in the project, especially since it is a multi-year project. The office will take care of the residents during construction, and continuously speak with the contractors on the next steps.
- Keith discussed the upcoming retirement and the steps that have been taken. The advertisement and job description have been completed and received by the board committee. Once approved, the job will be posted on the IREM jobs board, NAHRO jobs board and the Princeton Packet papers.
- Keith discussed the Water/Sewer price increases and the effect on the Authority. We saw an increase from around \$21K per quarter to over \$25K. The Borough approved a 17% increase in the Water/Sewer rates for '23. This increase, along with others like the almost \$1k increase in health insurance will cut into our cash flow.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 98% Occupancy. We have a elderly person in a family 2-bedroom unit that has moved over to a senior one bedroom. This frees up a 2-bedroom unit where we can fill from our waiting list. We are renovating a 3-bedroom unit where the previous tenant purchased a home in the area. Once again, we will utilize the wait list and fill the unit with a family.
- O&S has completed the design phase of the piping project. The project will be put out to bid this month and our hopes are to have several contractors bid on the project. Final bids are due by the end of April, possibly going into the first week of May.
- The waiting list has been updated in our new system. There are currently 134 people actively waiting for apartments with the most on the Family(32) and Senior(31) one-bedroom lists. The shortest wait lists continue to be for our handicap units. We did not open the list at this time so that we can become better acclimated with the new software, and the overall length of our waiting lists. We will be doing another letter in August and will reevaluate the list at that time.
- We began the implementation process with our new software in the beginning of January. We are working “parallel” right now with the Beacon and Breeze software until we all reach a comfort level in the new software. April 1 we are “primarily” using the new software, although we continue to update the old program. We will have access to all the data in Beacon through June of this year

so we will have plenty of opportunity to move or recreate data. This is also important as we will need certain data for the Auditor.

- The landscape company has mulched the entire property and cleaned up in preparation of mowing season beginning. Annual flowers will be installed early in May.

Financial Update: March 2023

In review of the financial reports for the month of February 2023, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the month with negative results. This was anticipated due to the annual pension payment made to the State of NJ.

Income:

- Residential income has come in slightly under budget.
- Excess utility is under budget for the period.
- Interest income is below budget for the period. Interest rates are rising as the FED tries to deal with inflation. We will keep monitoring the rates and adjust as needed.
- Other Operating receipts are over budget for the period. Dividends from our insurance policies and recapture from security deposits are posted here.
- Laundry income is over budget for the period and the year.
- Operating Subsidy income is under budget for the period. Starting in April we will see the adjusted numbers and final numbers for the year.

Expenses:

- Administrative salaries are under budget for the period. Our next 3-payroll event will be in June 2023.
- Legal expenses are under budget for the period. We have just filed 2 evictions, so the expense will be up in April.
- Staff Training is over budget for the period due to registrations for Commissioner Classes.
- Travel is under budget for the period and the year.
- Telephones are slightly over budget for the period. We have added 2 cell phones to our plan for the maintenance personnel which adds to the expense.
- Sundry Administrative is under budget for the period.
- Computer supplies is under budget for the period. We will be looking to upgrade at least 2 computers this year.
- Dues and Memberships are slightly over budget for the period. This will come into line as the year progresses, and most memberships renew early in the year.
- Electric is under budget for the period.
- Natural Gas is slightly over budget for the period. We have had cool temperatures this month, keeping the heat on.

- Misc. Office expense is over budget due to the purchase of printer ink cartridges and the replacement of several fire extinguishers after the annual inspection.
- Maintenance salaries are over budget. Overtime costs drove this category up in March.
- Maintenance materials are over budget for the period. As we are tuning over units, we are changing all the switches, outlets, base trim, and lighting. Fortunately, we have turned over 5 units this year. We have flooring and base trim inventoried for the units we are turning over, which comes mostly from the capitol budget.
- Maintenance Contract costs are under budget.
- Misc. Maintenance supplies are over budget due to the purchase of interior doors.
- Maintenance Equipment is over budget. We had a motor failure in the hot water system in building 1. We purchased and replaced the motor and pump that come together as an assembly. The old unit has been sent out to be repaired/refurbished and can be used as a spare. The same pump assembly is used in building 4.
- Misc. Maintenance supplies are over budget due to the purchase of doors for the apartment interiors.
- Maintenance Equipment is well over budget due to the breakdown of a hot water pump and motor in building one going bad and being replaced.
- Extermination Cost is over budget due to a bed-bug situation we are dealing with.
- Security Alarm is over budget. We had to replace 2 exterior cameras and we had 3 interior cameras installed. One in each boiler room so that operation can be monitored.
- Grounds maintenance is slightly over budget. We recently addressed the cap stones on the sitting wall.
- Blue Cross/Blue shield. We experienced a 20% price hike on January 1. Fortunately, a larger increase was budgeted.
- Pension Expense. This is our annual payment that is paid on March 31 of each year. It is based on our overall payroll to employees in the pension system.
- Collection Losses-includes all losses encountered during the year that are considered uncollectable.

Next meeting is scheduled for May 17th at 7:00

The meeting was adjourned by a motion made by Commissioner Rivenburgh and seconded by Commissioner Teller.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director