

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH  
OF HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, October 18<sup>th</sup> , 2023 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 Brent Rivenburgh, Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Terry Parliaros, Commissioner Jameelliah Lance, Commissioner Anne Studholme.

**Also, Present:** Jeet Gulati-Council Liaison

**Absent:** Commissioner Sean McDonnell, Chelsea Graham, Assistant Director

**Approval of Minutes:** Regular Meeting Minutes of September 20<sup>th</sup>. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Parliaros and seconded by Commissioner Teller. 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.

None Present

**Borough Council Liaison Report:**

- Jeet noted there was no movement on the Cooperation agreement or the crosswalk. He will continue to pursue it.

**Committee Report:**

- None

**Resident Council Report:**

- Keith reported we are sending out notices to all residents regarding the bicycle racks. They are currently a mess, with several bikes unusable due to missing or stolen parts. We will remove any damaged bikes and keep them in storage for a couple weeks to see if they are claimed, then dispose of them.

- Resident council discussed the Halloween Trick-or-Treat bags that have been assembled for the kids and seniors. Several members assisted assembling and packing the bags with the extra candy will be distributed in the courtyard on Halloween.
- The resident council started planning for the upcoming holidays, including the Easter egg hunt and Valentines Day.

#### **Resolutions:**

- 2023-08- To approve the Audit as written.
  - Anne commented she spoke with Tony the auditor and was assured by the conversation.

#### **Discussion Items:**

- **None**

#### **Executive Director Report:**

- We are currently at 99% Occupancy. We currently have a senior studio that is being renovated.
- O&S has completed the design phase of the piping project and conducted the initial construction meeting with the contractor. Together they reviewed the plans, documents and the crawlspaces. We arranged for a location, so storage is readily available to the contractors. We expect during the Month of October work will begin. I will keep everyone up to date on the progress of the project. I spoke with our HUD engineer in Washington about the project. He has signed off on everything and has sent it on for other signatures. Hopefully by the end of October or early November we should have an idea of the next phase of funding.
- The waiting lists remain closed. We are looking at opening the list this winter for 3 months to build up the list. At times it takes 5 or more people to fill a unit, depending on the ability to move. Lynmarie is working on updating the wait list in the new software as it did not convert well. She is setting it up so that it will be able to put people on multiple lists
- We made the choice to change the tenant management vender to PHA -WEB. This is the best for the Authority and the staff. To date things have been working out well. There is a learning curve with the new software, but the support is excellent and very quick to respond to any issues. The accountant worked with us and PHA-WEB to establish all the starting balances so we should be able to iron out all the details in October. We are anticipating discrepancies, but the differences are minor, and will be adjusted. November will be a clean and accurate month.
- The annual Audit took place on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Copies of the Audit have been sent to our website, the Borough, and are available to all members in hard copy. There were no findings. The only recommendation was to change our Capitalization policy to a higher limit, up to \$17,00. This was not a written recommendation, but one that was verbally discussed during the exit conference.

- The plantings in front of building 7 have been replaced and they look good. Fortunately we have had some rain which helps the plants and us (we don't have to water every other day) We budgeted capital funds for the project. We should look at the other buildings and begin to reevaluate the plantings. We will budget capital funds in the coming years to cover the expenses.

### **Financial Update: September 2023**

In review of the financial reports for the month of September 2023, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the month with positive results. This will be the last month out of our Peachtree system and the reports in November will look different and be in a different format. I will work with Pete the accountant to make sure they are readable and well presented.

#### **Income:**

- Residential income has come in slightly under budget. This was due to vacancy and move-in times of 2 units.
- Excess utility is slightly under budget for the period. A cooler than expected period in September had people removing A/C's.
- Interest income is over budget for the period.
- Other Operating receipts are slightly under budget for the period and over for the year. This is due to the insurance dividends that were received.
- Laundry income is over budget for the period and the year.
- Operating Subsidy income is over budget for the period. Starting in April we saw the adjusted numbers and final numbers for the year. We should be receiving higher subsidy amounts continuing this year.

#### **Expenses:**

- Administrative salaries are under budget for the period. We had an overlap in executive positions that is now resolved.
- Legal expenses are slightly over budget for the period.
- Staff Training is under budget for the period.
- Travel is under budget for the period and the year.
- Telephones are under budget for the period. Having all the staff on one network is helpful and makes communications much easier.
- Sundry Administrative is under budget for the period. Pete reclassified some expenses during the transition period.
- Computer supplies are under budget for the period. We will be looking to upgrade at least 2 more computers this year when we install the new tenant management software.
- The Audit occurred in July with no findings, the approval resolution is in the packet.

- Dues and Memberships are over budget for the period. This is due to increasing the membership in certain organizations.
- Misc. Maintenance supplies are under budget.
- Water and Sewer experienced a 17% increase this year that is unbudgeted. The next bill is October 1 and we will deal with the increase. The new rates are included in our 2024 budget. The current amount is for the replacement of the digital heads that needed to be replaced.
- Electric is over budget for the period, but within budget considering the excess utility. The expense is in the new system. (\$7856.71)
- Natural Gas is on budget for the period. We have had cooler than normal temperatures during this period.
- Maintenance salaries are under budget. December is 3 pay month.
- 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 10 units this year. We have flooring and base trim inventoried for the units we are turning over, which comes mostly from the capitol budget.
- Misc. Maintenance supplies are slightly over budget, but well within our budget.
- Electrical contract cost is over budget due to the replacement of 12 building light fixtures.
- Extermination Cost is over budget due to a bed-bug situation we are dealing with.
- Security Alarm is under budget for the period, and over for the year. We had to install a new front door remote strike and wiring. Also, we have had keys made for the Family and Senior laundry room.
- Grounds maintenance is on budget. This will come in slightly over budget for the year.
- Blue Cross/Blue shield. We experienced a 20% price hike on January 1. Fortunately, a larger increase was budgeted, but the expense is still larger than budgeted. We added a new employee that increased the costs, but they are budgeted in 2024.
- Collection Losses-includes all losses encountered during the year that are considered uncollectable.

**Next meeting is scheduled for November 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00**

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

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Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director