

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH
OF HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, November 20th, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson James Eufemia 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 James Eufemia, Chair, Commissioner Sean McDonnell, Commissioner Anne Studholme, Commissioner Meg Rosner, Commissioner Eva Teller

Also, Present: None

Absent: Commissioner Jameellah Lance, Council Liaison Jeet Gulati

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of September 18th. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Teller and 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

Borough Council Liaison Report:

- None

Committee Report:

- None

Resident Council Report:

- Keith discussed the issues from the Resident Council meeting:
 - The residents discussed the Borough Blood pressure and vaccine clinics. Most feel monthly is too much and many have their own doctors and last

month only 1 person showed up. We will move the Clinic to Quarterly to see if we have a better response.

- We discussed the ongoing piping project. The residents were assured they would be given adequate notice of any shutdowns.
- Recycling was discussed. We have tried for years to get people to break down their boxes, not to put plastic bags in the recycling and eliminate pizza boxes to no avail. The residents were complaining of the mess left behind by the truck when they empty the dumpster.
- Dog waste was brought up again, and unfortunately there are pet owners who do not clean up after their pets. We have a number of people from the neighborhood that now walk their children and pets through the HA. This is good and encouraged, but the pet waste needs to be picked up.

Resolutions:

- **2024-05 To change the December meeting Date.** The motion was discussed and approved by roll call vote.

Discussion Items:

- Keith discussed the current piping project. He explained that buildings 3,4 and 5 are completely done and inspected. All the insulation is complete, and the crawlspaces are cleaned out. We are waiting for the Engineers' final approval before making the final payment on the project, which is the retainage, approximately \$69,000. The contractors have moved over to buildings 1 and 2 and have done all the masonry core drilling, installed all the pipe hangers and completed most of the long runs of pipe. They have identified the supply and return lines for the heat to ease the hook-up process. The next step will involve installing all the valves and Ts in the system for the various branches. Testing will follow and State and Borough water testing will be done before they begin the process of hooking up the supplies for each apartment. The underground work will probably wait until the spring.
- Keith discussed inactive members on the board. He explained that it is unfair to the members who come to the meetings every month, take their courses at Rutgers and participate, while we have one member that has only come to 3 meeting in the last 2 years and only complete 1 course. The By-Laws clearly state that a member shall be removed from the board if they miss 3 meetings in any calendar year. Commissioner Eufemia does not want just remove the member, but give them the opportunity to resign their position so that someone else can join. The Board agreed and Keith will write a letter to the member.

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Executive Director Report:

- We are currently 99 % Occupancy. We have just completed a 1-bedroom and a studio unit that is occupied on November 1. We are currently working on a studio unit from a tenant that went permanently to a nursing facility. That unit is rented, and the tenant will be moving in during November.

- The infrastructure piping project for the phase including building 3,4 and 5 is complete. The piping work has been completed and tested. The Inspections are done and approved. The insulation contractor has completely insulated the new piping and repaired any existing insulation that was damaged. The contractor has moved over into buildings 1 and 2 and is on site for the heating system which went online in October. Currently, the contractor is installing long runs of piping for the heating and water system. All masonry holes have been drilled and most of the pipe hangers are in place. We have held off for the first week or so in October due to the outdoor temperature. The boiler chemical company is on alert that there is new water in the system, and he will treat and balance the chemicals once the heat is on. We expect some issues with the current radiators and have found a few already. The plumber takes care of any problems. The project went smoothly, without any major disruption for the tenants or staff.
- The Asbestos issue has been resolved and is now behind us. The company came in with a large crew, set up, cleaned up and broke down complete with State approved air testing. We are now considered Asbestos free in the work areas.
- The maintenance staff are working on replacing the fencing on Academy Street that is decaying. We need to investigate replacing the fencing behind building 1 this year. Due to the volume and long run, we may have to consider a contractor for the project.
- We have been working on the ACOP document and will finish the document this year. Unfortunately, HUD has delayed the rollout of the new changes to at least October of 2025 due to problems with the software. We will be ready well in advance of the official roll out.
- Grass was planted in front of the office and in the front of Building 1. The maintenance staff has kept everything well-watered, and things have grown nicely. The spring bulbs have been planted and we are cleaning up for the winter.
- The PILOT payment has been made to the Borough of Hightstown and our Attorney escrow account. The total PILOT is \$42,183.86 of which we will send \$ 30,775.06 to the Borough and \$ 11,408.80 to our Escrow account. As of October 1, we will have \$41,959.14 in the Attorney Escrow account. This is the 5th year we have been doing this.

Financial Update: October

In review of the financial reports for the month of October 2024, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the months with positive results. I have included a variety of reports for your review.

Income:

- Residential income has come in over budget. Even with the budgeted increase we are still exceeding the amount. We have increased this amount in the 2025 budget.
- Excess utility is over budget for the period. Air conditioners are beginning to come out now, so this number will come down.
- Interest income is over budget for the period. We are now getting current rates on our accounts and have modified the 2025 budget projections.
- Other Operating receipts are under budget for the period.
- Laundry income is slightly under budget for the period.
- Operating Subsidy income is overbudget for the period. We received a large amount of money from HUD to cover the last 3 months of the Federal fiscal year. (July, August, September) For the balance of the year, we will be depending on continuing resolutions until HUD and the Federal Government can finalize a budget. HUD funded the next two months, leaving just December unfunded.

Expenses:

- Administrative salaries are under budget for the period. This number will come in line during our next 3 pay period (November)
- Legal expenses are well over budget for the period. We are moving aggressively against a couple tenants with past due balances.
- Staff training is under budget for the period. Two commissioners are taking courses this fall.
- Accounting and Audit is on budget for the year.
- Telephones are under budget for the period.
- Sundry Administrative is over budget for the period. This account initially gets most of the activity, and the accountant adjusts the amounts to other categories. Much of the expense came from the purchase of the bike racks on the senior porches.
- Misc. office supplies are under budget.
- Water is under budget for the period. We have a meter that is being replaced and we are only receiving estimated bills for that meter. We may see an increase in the December period.
- Electric is over budget for the period. Air conditioning has been used extensively, but we are still on track for the year and will come in under budget.

- Natural gas is over budget for the period. The heat is on and we are sporadically using it and or air conditioning.
- Maintenance salaries are over budget for the period. We brought on a part-time person while one person was out and will be keeping them on doing cleaning and maintenance work around the site.
- Maintenance materials are over budget for the period. In renovating units, we are purchasing supplies and materials for those units. We have completed 1 unit and actively working on another large 4 bedroom unit that is in bad shape.
- Boiler contract costs are over budget. This number is the purchase of redundant pumps and motors for repairs as needed.
- Extermination Cost is under budget. We have been dealing with a bed bug problem which we hope is under control.
- Ground maintenance is under budget. All the summer flowers are being maintained. We decided not to switch out the flowers to Mums, as the SunPations continue to do well and provide color on the site.
- Blue Cross/Blue shield is well over budget. We had a staff person opt for a family plan which dramatically increased the cost. This payment is retroactive fees going back to July.

The enclosed financials include Income Statement for the Current Period-October 2024(VS Budget), and General Ledger Cash account for October.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, December 11th at 7:00

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director

