

**MINUTES OF THE HIGHTSTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS
WEDNESDAY, April 20th 2016 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Call to Order: Chairperson James Eufemia called meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

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: by Keith LePrevost showed that those present and absent were as follows:

- **Present:** Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director, Commissioner James Eufemia, Chair, Commissioner Esther Velázquez, Commissioner Carole Nelson, Commissioner Pascale Emmanuel, Commissioner Yolanda Swiney and Commissioner Brent Rivenburgh.
- **Also Present:**
- **Absent:** Commissioner Christopher Moraitis

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of: February 17, 2016

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 from the public were present.

Committee Reports: Affordable Housing Plan.

Keith relayed a message from Council President Denny Hanson. There will be a resolution on the Affordable Housing Plan on the May 2nd Council Agenda. Keith will review and forward to the commissioners when it is published. Keith will attend the meeting and relay any comments from the Commission.

Resolutions:

2016-01 To Modify the Housing Authority By-Laws to accommodate a resident council liaison. The motion was forwarded by Commissioner Nelson, and seconded by Commissioner Rivenburgh. The motion was unanimously approved.

2016-02 To appoint Monique Wilson as the Resident Council Liaison. The motion was forwarded by Commissioner Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Emmanuel. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion Items:

Summer Rec. Programs. The commission discussed the various summer programs and the money the HA provides to each for our children's participation. Commissioner Swiney motioned to continue funding the Dawes Park and Methodist Madness program at the current level. The commissioners also will fund the RISE summer program on a "as-needed" case by case basis up to \$1,000.

Proposed Overlay Zone. The commissioners reviewed the letters from Municipal planner Tamara Lee. The proposed zoning change does not interfere with our HA and will benefit the surrounding area.

Donation of Golf Cart to the Borough. The commissioners discussed the donation and unanimously agreed to donate the cart to Public works. Keith will have our attorney draft whatever paperwork is needed.

Resident Survey. The commissioners discussed the proposed survey. All agree it is too long and needs to be broken down into smaller units. The material we have may end up as 4 separate surveys. Keith will have Lynmarie rework the survey into manageable pieces.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 100% occupancy. We are fortunate to have two tenants who in process of buying homes. Their closings are in the next month or two which will give us a couple units to turn over. We also have another tenant who is terminally ill and will not be returning. We will have that unit back by the end of May.
- Office renovations are complete. This includes new LED lighting, painting and flooring and the half bath in the entry hall. We have air sealed the windows in the office. We now have a process so that as we renovate apartments we will be air sealing all of the windows.
- We have won a judgment in court against a previous tenant who vacated with a balance due. We will not be pursuing a wage garnishment to satisfy the debt. The cost to continue will outweigh the amount due. We will have to write off the debt at the end of the year.
- The gravel parking lot is being re-graded when the Borough finishes the water line work. We have made other parking provisions for the 2 days we anticipate the lot being closed.
- The 2016 Capitol Fund budget has been submitted to HUD. . Our annual amount has increased this year by about \$6000 due to our designation as a “High Performing Housing Authority”
- We have discovered an active infestation of termites under building 1. We recently had a “swarm” that appeared in one residents apartment. Coopers will be treating the building and inspecting all of our other buildings. We have not found any structural damage, but further investigation will be needed.
- I have been discussing the Section 32 Homeownership program with HUD and with representatives of the Atlantic City Housing Authority who are successfully using the program. I will be developing a proposal and plan to present to HUD later this year.
- I have begun looking at properties near the HA. I reviewed 258 Academy St on the corner of Academy and Morrison. The home is in terrible shape and needs to be completely gutted. The Church that owned it even took out the main stairs to the second floor, leaving a service staircase in the kitchen. All the utilities need to be replaced and updated. The asking price and needed renovations make this home too great of a financial risk at this time.

- We have met with our Architect and mechanical engineer to begin the planning process for the replacement of our boiler systems and roofing on the property. At the same time we are considering installing solar panels to generate electricity and hot water. We are currently working over several sets of assumptions to make sure the work that is proposed will produce the best overall results for the Authority. This will be a 5 year process which will be funded by capital and operating funds. We will be actively seeking local, County, State and Federal grants to cover as much of this work as possible. The quotes on the engineering alone are approximately \$63 thousand dollars. I recommend we reconsider the projects and put the A&E out for bid to see if we can get a better price.
- The crawl space under building 6 has been cleaned and sanitized.
- The Borough Public Works department has expressed an interest in the golf cart we have stored in the maintenance garage. We have not used it in over 3 years, and it has a questionable value. I would like to consider donating it to the Borough.
- We have received competitive bids on our generator service contract. Atlantic Switch and Generator has provided us with a very competitive price on our service and maintenance. Our previous company lost their lead mechanic and felt they would no longer be able to service our account. We had an issue with the generator behind building 1. The carburetor idler bracket (Plastic) broke and we have had it temporarily repaired until the factory replacement part is available. We are having additional work done on building 7's generator and building 4's. Both need belts, hoses, fluids and building 4's need a new head gasket. All of our generators are 20 years old and in need of ongoing maintenance.
- The water department has been on site several times working on solutions to our water problems. They have run a new water main to our office to provide clean water. Plus, they are monitoring the water quality in all of our buildings on a monthly basis to check for clarity and quality. We now have a permanent fix for the water issues. They have also installed a water filter on our service line to help with water clarity.
- We are beginning to work on re-siding the maintenance garage on Roger and Foreman. The siding is deteriorating and was mentioned on our last REAC inspection. We have purchased the materials and the maintenance staff will be doing the work as time allows.
- I have reached out to RISE regarding their summer program. A short description is included in your packet.

Financial Update: February, 2016

In review of the financial reports for the months of February-March, 2016, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the month and the year with positive results. Highlights include:

Income:

- Residential income has come in slightly above budget due to incomes of our residents, and the diligence of the staff to research and follow up when tenants either increase their work hours or find a new job.
- Other Operating receipts includes maintenance fees and refunds from our insurance company. It is negative this period due to the write off of maintenance and exterminating fees we will never collect.
- Laundry income is slightly over budget for the period.
- Subsidy income is slightly over budget due to the Federal 2016 budget. This will change now that our 2016 Subsidy Submission has been completed. Due to our energy saving efforts, our subsidies from HUD are beginning to drop. This year that will equate to approximately \$1000 per month.

Expenses:

- Administrative and Maintenance salaries are on budget for the period. April is a 3 pay month, so this expense will come into line.
- Legal Expenses are over budget for the period due to review of court filings for the Boroughs affordable housing plans.
- Electricity is under budget.
- Natural Gas is under budget.
- Maintenance salaries are under budget, but will come in line in April.
- Misc. Maintenance supplies are over budget due to office renovations. We will be looking at these expenses to see which can be reclassified as capital.
- Extermination costs are over budget due to bed bugs being treated in several apartments. The discovery of Termites will affect our budget over the next couple months.
- Our waste removal cost has jumped from \$336 per month to \$418 per month without notice. I have contacted the hauler. There was a “clerkal” error they are working on fixing in their office.
- The enclosed financials include: Income Statement for the Current Periods- February 1 to March 31st (VS Budget), Cash Flow and General Ledger-Cash account.

Announcements: The next meeting is scheduled for May 18th, 2016 at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by a motion made at 8:45PM.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director