

**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 16th, 2019 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 Carole Nelson, Commissioner Yolanda Swiney, and Commissioner Pascale Duvert.

Also, Present: Mary Fitch, Tonya Bell, Mayor Quattrone, Jeet Gulati

Absent: Monique Wilson, Resident Commissioner, Lee Stultz, Borough Council

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of September 18th, 2019.

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.

Mary Fitch(applicant) talked to the board about the process of admissions. She feels she was mistreated by Mr. LePrevost. The board listened to the ED's response with his documentation and Ms. Fitch's response. Ms. Fitch was removed from our waiting lists.

Ms. Fitch then complained about the amount of time given her daughter to move. Keith explained that most people are given their keys on a Friday and expected to be all moved in over the weekend. Under special circumstances residents are given up to 7 days. She feels 30 days have to be given to people.

Tonya Bell spoke to the Board about the process and her experience living here. She loves the HA and found the process long, but very fair to both her and her sister.

Borough Council Liaison Report: No report

Resident Council Report: No Report

Discussion Items:

- RAD update. Keith spoke on the proposed costs of moving forward. HUD is insisting on a Phase 2 study of the site. It was explained the various uses of the site going back to the 1850's and the number of wells and asbestos testing that will need to be done. The board put off the decision on the Phase 2 study to the November meeting. Also, Keith discussed the request from the Attorney we turn over all documents related to the RAD transaction. There are over 3500 pages of documentation that have been produced so far, and Keith doubts anyone at the Borough will every read them. He has spoken to our attorney and they will draft a letter on the issue.
- Keith discussed the Cooperation Agreement that was negotiated with the Borough. He mentioned the Borough has not brought is back up and we are in limbo. We made the annual PILOT payment after a long discussion with the Attorneys. The Mayor chimed in that it was the Committee he set up that is the roadblock, and that Keith will need to meet with the Committee. Keith mentioned he was meeting them on another issue tomorrow night and will bring it up.
- Projects such as the Boiler room 7 bid, the new machines in the laundry and the 7 new kitchens were discussed.

Resolutions:

- **Resolution 2019-8 To** approve the State of New Jersey budget that was reviewed in September. The resolution was unanimously approved.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 98% occupancy. We are fortunate to never have more than 2 vacant units at a time. We have been very busy with almost 10% of the units being turned over this year. Change is very good thing for the HA as new people come in, good for the units as they are completely refurbished and good for the overall community. We welcome all our new arrivals.
- The draft "Cooperation agreement was discussed at the May 6th Council meeting. Keith spoke for more than an hour at the meeting, discussing RAD, budgets and the long-term outlook for the HA. To date the council still has not approved the agreement. We are paying the town almost \$40,000 in a PILOT agreement this week. This is up from around \$25,000 through our hard work and utility savings.
- We have completed the initial phase of the RAD conversion, including the Financial plan for the next 20 years. We are in the que for a 2019 closing, probably in December which means are new Section 8 Subsidy will begin in January. Update: The council is now requesting over 2500 pages in documents we have submitted for the RAD program. At this time we are considering not entering the RAD program as the Phase 2 costs may be too high.

- We have received our updated title search and clearance report. There are no outstanding issues.
- All the generators have been serviced. Repairs were needed on 2 generators including a new battery on one generator and a water pump on another. We will be bidding the replacement of 3 of our 4 generators. The plan is to replace one unit per year.
- We have received the Phase 1 environmental study and its recommendations. As always, we have work that can be done, and investigation that could be done, but for this report there are no additional work items to complete.
- The property has been edged and mulched. Fall fertilizer and treatments will be done in the coming weeks. Fall flowers have been installed and all the flowers are watered regularly.
- All the fire escapes have been repaired, stripped and repainted. The contractor did a beautiful job, making them look like brand new.

Financial Update: September, 2019

In review of the financial reports for the month of September, 2019, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the month with positive results.

Income:

- Residential income has come in over budget for the period and the year, mostly due to increased resident incomes and actively monitoring new hires and tenant work status. We have increased our budget expectation in this category for 2019, both in resident rent and subsidy, but are still exceeding that expectation. Adjustments have been made in the 2020 RAD budget and the 2020 Housing Authority budget.
- Excess Utility is now above budget for the period and slightly under budget for the year.
- Interest income is above budget for the period. We have had insurance dividends come in this past month. We are monitoring interest rates and will renegotiate our savings rate as warranted.
- Other Operating receipts are slightly under budget for the period.
- Laundry income is over budget for the period and slightly under budget for the year.
- Operating Subsidy income is over budget for the year. The two-year spending bill passed by congress has increased our subsidy for the year, but a final spending bill has not been approved. Recently they were raised to 2019 levels and funds were distributed. They are estimating we may have a final 2019 budget by October.

Expenses:

- Administrative and Maintenance salaries are both slightly under budget for the period.
- Legal expense is slightly over budget for period but under for the year. We expect this account to be well over budget for the rest of the year due to RAD issues.
- Staff Training is under budget for the period and the year.
- Telephone is slightly over budget due to phone system annual payment.
- Sundry Administrative is over budget due to Accounting and Tenant management software renewals earlier this year along with 3 bid packages for the work being done on the sidewalks, Architect bids and the fire escapes.
- Water is under budget for the period.
- Electric is under budget for the period.
- Natural Gas is under budget for the period.
- Maintenance labor is slightly over budget due the 3 pay month pay cycle in August and overtime costs due to construction.
- Maintenance materials is under budget for the period.
- Maintenance contract cost are well under budget.
- Plumbing Contract costs are over budget due to drain cleaning emergency.
- Electrical Contract costs are over budget due to generator repairs needed after the annual servicing.
- Grounds maintenance is over budget due to the exterior plantings and time of year.
- Extraordinary maintenance. This amount is for the domestic hot water boiler in buildings 1 and 4 and the Capitol Needs assessment for the RAD application. We also paid out the fire escape cost instead of waiting for next year.

Next meeting is scheduled for November 20th, 2019 at 7:00

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director