

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH
OF HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, February 19th, 2020 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 Yolanda Swiney, Commissioner Brent Rivenburgh, Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Jeet Gulati and Commissioner Monique Wilson, Resident

Also, Present:

Absent: Borough Council Liaison

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of January 15th, 2020. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Rivenburgh and seconded by Commissioner Wilson. 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.

No Members of the public were in attendance.

Borough Council Liaison Report:

- None

Committee Report:

- Policy Review. Keith discussed updating the policies in our manual. Many were done in 2012 and need to be updated at this point. Several things have changed over the years, including personnel, VAWA and others. Commissioner Swiney, Gulati, Rivenburgh and Eufemia will serve as policy reviewers.

Resident Council Report:

- None

Resolutions:

- None

Discussion Items:

- **Resolution- Building 7 Keith** discussed the re-bidding of the boiler room. We had to rebid the project after the high bidder threatened to sue over process. We had 7 bidders come to the bid meeting and the bid is due on March 5th. We have used our attorney to handle the bidding process.
- **Cooperation Agreement.** Keith discussed the state of the Cooperation agreement. Keith noted the original agreement calls for the HA to receive all services that all other residents receive. This should include recycling, which we currently pay for. Also, the Borough is supposed to treat our PILOT agreement the same way they handle all other taxes, with the same payments to the schools, county, state and others. The commissioners discussed the agreement, whether to pay anything to the borough until an agreement is signed. There was a long discussion by various board members with varying opinions. Final decision will be made at future meeting as we have until October to make the payment.
- **Summer Camp Scholarship.** Keith presented a scholarship form that would be paid to each camp directly for the child. There is an application form that includes a short essay. The board was in favor of paying the camps directly for each child that is going.
- **Recycling.** Keith distributed flyers we are distributing door to door to increase recycling compliance. Keith has spoken to the mayor explaining the balance of the town will be seeing a comparable increase when the contract comes due. Our compliance is way up since we have been noticing the residents. The members are pleased we are going door to door, and they have learned a lot about recycling from our meetings.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 99% occupancy. The one unit we have is a 2-bedroom unit where a person in a handicap unit is being moved to this unit when complete so that we are able to move in a family with a son in a wheelchair. This is also our test unit for the new kitchens. The space has been redone with new flooring, all electrical work and painting. The cabinets are taking longer than expected to arrive. We are taking this into consideration for the new units.
- We had a REAC inspection from the Federal Government February 18th. The entire property was reviewed from the basements to the rooftops including a broad sampling of the apartments. We did very well on the inspection and final scores, and recommendations will be out in the coming weeks.
- New signs have been placed by the recycling dumpsters with new recycling instructions going out to tenants every week. We will keep an eye on the contamination problem to see if it gets any better.
- The new cabinets will be going into the handicap units. The guys are learning a new skill and enjoying it. The installation does not appear difficult, and the results will be beautiful. Countertops are on site, as well as the plumbing and other accessories. We will order appliances as soon as the cabinets arrive.
- The office kitchen has also been ordered. The guys will start on this kitchen as soon as the other kitchen is complete.
- We had an emergency repair in one handicap unit. The floor pan that was installed leaked over time ruining the plywood underneath. We replaced the pan with a fiberglass

pan that should last for years. The repair took 2 days and the maintenance staff did an excellent job putting it all together. The tenant is thrilled with the project.

- The generators have been bid. With the cost of \$16,500 per unit and a starting time of March to May, we will be doing all 3 units. I have spoken to the contractor and they are on board with doing all 3 units.
- The boilers for building 7 have been put out to bid for the second time. We had 8 contractors pick up bid documents and 8 came to the pre-bid meeting. We will receive the bids on Thursday, March 5th. We are hopeful to get a better price on the boiler room without protest this time.
- The Borough has rejected any amendment to the cooperation agreement. Our attorney has responded to the Borough with intricacies of the old agreement they may not be aware of. We have not heard back from them at this time.

Financial Update: January 2020

In review of the financial reports for the month of January 2020, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the months with positive results.

Income:

- Residential income has come in slightly over budget for the period and over budget for 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 2020, both in resident rent and subsidy.
- Excess Utility is now under budget for the period and slightly under budget for the year.
- Interest income is slightly below budget for the period and the year. Interest does not get posted to the account until after the 15th of the following month. We are continuing to monitor interest rates and will renegotiate our savings rate as warranted.
- Other Operating receipts are slightly over budget for the period.
- Laundry income is over budget for the period and slightly over budget for the year.
- Operating Subsidy income is on 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 been approved. Final spending funds were distributed recently with the correct prorations applied.

Expenses:

- Administrative and Maintenance salaries are both above budget for the period, mainly due to the 3 pay month in January.
- Legal expense is on budget for period and under for the year.
- Staff Training is under budget for the period and the year.
- Travel is slightly over budget due to the registrations for the May Conference.
- Telephone is slightly over budget. This cost appears to be stationary and will be adjusted in the 2020 budget.
- Computer supplies is over budget due to the purchase and installation of 2 new machines and software renewals.

- Sundry Administrative is under budget due to several factors. One is the Affordable Housing Accreditation cost which is \$1,000 per year.
- Dues and Memberships is over budget due to renewals of memberships to National trade organizations.
- Electric is under budget for the period.
- Natural Gas is under budget for the period.
- Maintenance materials is slightly over 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 under budget for the period but over budget for the year due to generator repairs needed after the annual servicing.
- Grounds maintenance is under budget for the year.

Next meeting is scheduled for March 18th, 2019 at 7:00

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director