

**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 17th, 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 (telephone), Commissioner Brent Rivenburgh (telephone), Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Jeet Gulati (telephone).

Also, Present: Mayor Lawrence Quattrone

Absent: Commissioner Monique Wilson

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of October 21st, 2020. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Teller and seconded by Commissioner Rivenburgh. 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: Policies

- Chairperson Eufemia addressed the updated policies. Keith noted the policies were originally done in 2012 and are being modernized. We are continuing to address the policies and will be including new policies in the future to address COVID and how we are handling the virus as a staff and how we are addressing outsiders. Two policies were discussed, the ACOP policy and the Employee manual. Commissioner Teller questioned any findings or other major changes that were addressed. Keith responded with any changes and additions that were incorporated. Commissioner Rivenburgh questioned whether HUD has issued any specific guidance regarding COVID. Keith responded that HUD has been eerily quiet during this time and is basically leaving it up to each Authorities discretion. Both were approved by the Board.

Resident Council Report:

- None

Resolutions:

- 2020-09- To accept Central Jersey Waste as or new recycling contractor. Keith discussed the process the Authority took to secure a new contract. Commissioner Teller questioned the cost, which was about \$40 dollars higher than previously paid. Keith explained the increase cost was expected and within reason.

Discussion Items:

- **Donald Greenwood.** Keith discussed his death and the resultant vacancy.
- **Florence Muse.** One of our longest-term tenants who moved in 1965. She is beginning to fail physically, and the family has decided to move her while she is still OK.
- **Budgets:** Keith explained we have completed our 2021 budget and the State has approved the budget. It will come to the board in December for final approval.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 99% occupancy. We have received notice from an elderly tenant they will be moving to an assisted living in December. We will be downsizing a current senior to that unit which will free up a 3 bedroom for a family. We will work with our waiting list and select an appropriate family.
- We are keeping the waiting list closed until April 1, 2021. There is a long list of applicants that have returned their update letters. We will reevaluate the list next winter to see if any units can be advertised.
- We are recycling again! Central Jersey waste was selected as the winning bidder. The cost is slightly more than we were currently paying. I have communicated with the Borough that we are back online. New signage has been installed at each recycling dumpster and the containers have been properly labeled. We will continue to work with our Residents to ensure compliance with the recycling regulations.
- We have upgraded the entire facility's camera system to a new fiber optic system. The camera system is working flawlessly.
- All landscaping work has been completed behind building 7 parking area. We were waiting for all the construction work to be done and the dirt settled before any planting work was done. A tree was planted to replace the large Oak that was removed due to disease by the Senior dumpster.
- All the appropriate paperwork was filed with the West Windsor health department for this meeting space. It appears the pandemic is getting worse around the country and in New Jersey things are tightening up. We will hold the November meeting and await further guidance for December.
- At HUD's recommendation we have foregone the traditional October full building inspections this year. We have changed all the smoke detector batteries and all Air conditioners have been removed. One concern is that we will not be able to address the work order items that many tenants do not notice or report to the

office. Hopefully in the Spring we will be able to conduct our regular inspections.

- I have been asked to be a national reviewer for the Affordable Housing Accreditation Board. I attended (via Zoom) a board meeting this morning in Columbus Georgia, observing their work, and reviewing policies they are putting forward. This is an ongoing process throughout the year as my time permits. It will provide valuable insight into larger and smaller HA's, how they are run, managed and care for their residents.
- The novel Coronavirus is on everyone's mind. We have had discussions as a staff regarding safety. Now is the time we are all re-doubling our efforts to stay safe. Commissioner Swiney feels we can use the modern technology that is available such as Zoom. Commissioner Rivenburgh offered to use their Zoom membership and host the December meeting. Commissioner Eufemia affirmed the next meeting in December will be held electronically. Keith will send our invitations for the meeting detailing the guidelines. New guidance from the State have us checking temperatures of everyone entering the building. As a service industry, we are unable to avoid being at work. We are maintaining the social distancing and remaining vigilant until told otherwise by the Governor.

Financial Update: October 2020

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

Income:

- Residential income has come in slightly under budget for the period and slightly under budget for the year, mostly due to accurate budgeting but minor impacts from the virus resulting in layoffs and late rent payments.
- Excess Utility is slightly under budget for the period and slightly under budget for the year.
- Interest income is well below budget for the period and the year. We have moved our savings to a local bank where the return is slightly higher. Our statements will be coordinated making posting and recording more accurate.
- Other Operating receipts are slightly over budget for the period. They are well over budget for the year due to an insurance dividend during this summer.
- Laundry income is over budget for the period and the year.
- Operating Subsidy income is under budget for the period and the year.
- The COVID 19 subsidy is to be used for capital expenses and emergency supplies.

Expenses:

- Administrative and Maintenance salaries are both close to budget for the period and the year.
- Legal expense is over budget for the period but basically on budget for the year.
- Staff Training is slightly under budget for the period and the year.
- Travel is well under budget for the period and the year due to numerous cancellations this year.
- Sundry Administrative is over budget for the period and the year due to annual cost of Accreditation. This is a once annually cost that will be budgeted in the future.
- Dues and Memberships are on budget for the period and over budget for the year due to renewals of memberships to National trade organizations.
- Electric is under budget for the period and year.
- Water is over budget for the year.
- Natural Gas is over budget for the period but under for the year.
- Maintenance materials is on budget for the period and over budget for the year due to apartment renovations being done. Money is spent at HD Facilities and Home Depot for materials.
- Maintenance contract cost are on budget for the period, but under budget for the year.
- Electrical Contract costs are slightly under budget for the period but over budget for the year due to generator additions needed after the new installation and contract for annual servicing.
- Extermination cost is slightly over budget for period and the year due to bed bug treatment in one apartment and mouse treatment under several buildings.
- Boiler contract costs are over budget due to renewal of service contractor for the boiler systems.
- Extraordinary maintenance is used for all costs that are outside the CFP funding and will be capitalized at the end of the year.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2021 at 7:00

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director