

**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 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 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, Commissioner Brent Rivenburgh, Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Terry Parliaros, commissioner Jeet Gulati.

**Also, Present:** Gregory Smith (resident)

**Absent:** Commissioner Mayor Larry Quattrone.

**Approval of Minutes:** Regular Meeting Minutes of October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Rivenburgh and seconded by Commissioner Teller. 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.

Gregory Smith commented his girlfriend has received several parking notices in our lot. She has a handicap sticker and parks in the handicap space. He does not think she should get these notices. Keith asked whether he or she has talked to Lynmarie in the office and given license plate # and car make so we know its one of our cars. We have had a terrible problem with cars from other properties parking in our lots and we are trying to keep the lots for residents only. Mr. Smith said he has not spoken to the office about the car and will do so tomorrow. He thanked the Board for the time.

**Borough Council Liaison Report:**

- None

**Committee Report:**

- Commissioner Teller and Commissioner Gulati both commented they have talked to the mayor and he does not have a resolution at this point. It was recommended by the board that Keith reach out to our Attorney and have him request time at an upcoming Council

meeting to speak with the council and try to come up with a resolution. Keith will follow up.

- New Members. The board discussed the 2 vacancies that now exist on the board. One vacancy has been for almost 1 year. Several names went around the room, those will be asked if they are willing to serve.

### **Resident Council Report:**

- None

### **Resolutions:**

### **Discussion Items:**

Keith discussed the enclosed capital spreadsheet. A large portion of the budget will finish the roofing project started this year. He discussed the large number presented under “piping repairs” This is a major piece of infrastructure we need to address. The heating, hot and cold-water systems all run under the buildings in the crawlspaces. They are all mostly original to the buildings (1963-4 Vintage) and are beginning to wear out. All the piping systems were examined, and necessary repairs were highlighted. The overall plan is for a wholesale replacement of the system. This could run easily between 5-6 hundred thousand dollars. When the heat is off for the season, we would do an entire building at a time. Members questioned what type of contractor would do this type of job, a plumber or boiler contractor? Keith responded this project would need to be designed by an architect and engineer and then bid. Either type of contractor would be able to do the project. We would consider having our people do the work in each apartment-it would be less intrusive for the resident. Much of the Capital plan relies on the passage of the Build Back better plan which will infuse the HA with a large capital infusion. It was agreed the repairs are to be made and Keith will begin the process of looking for grants and other funding so that we can accomplish the entire project in the next few years.

### **Executive Director Report:**

- We are currently at 100% occupancy. We will be receiving a 3-bedroom unit from a woman that is buying a townhome. She has been with us for years, going to school and now she has a great job and making very good money. Her children are grown and one is away at school and the other has begun working. The unit will be completely redone for a new tenant.
- We had issues that arose this past month. One was the hot water heater (25 years old) finally quit and we had to have it replaced. It was in the 2022 capital plan, but we had to move it up a year. The second was a major leak in a heating pipe under building 1. The old pipe was completely rusted away and about a 20-foot section needed to be replaced along with 2 supply valves. This took a couple days and was beyond what we are capable of handling. I have asked the plumbing contractor to review all the piping in the crawl spaces and we will make a list prioritizing the repairs and replacements that need to be done. Money should be put into the 2022 Capital budget to cover the costs of replacements.

Although this is something no one will ever see, its necessary for the delivery of heat to the units.

- The heating system is now on for the season. We close the valves to the buildings in the summertime to avoid the migration of hot water in the system.
- The support beam has been repaired as per the plans. While the mason was here, he took care of a few other areas that were spalling. Our staff will repaint the affected areas as the temperatures permit.
- The roofs will be started on or about 11/8. We have color samples for the roofing, gutters, soffit and fascia. Materials are being delivered to the site and the contractors are ready to start. The stair contractor has begun and will be working in areas not affected by the roofing to not conflict during the process. This year we will be reroofing buildings 3,4 and 5. Next years capital will be focused on completing the other buildings.
- We have several plants that have not done well in newly landscaped areas. Although well-watered, the heat and time of year they were planted has not been ideal. The landscaper has agreed to remove and reinstall new plants in the fall.
- All the trees in the Courtyard will be cut back this fall when the leaves fall. This keeps the trees away from the buildings and keeps their height down below the roof line. They look bad at first, but quickly grow back in the springtime.
- Covid safety is still our priority. The outside lobby have been reopened to our residents and it feels good to be getting back to “normal” We have been discussing and are concerned with the increase in cases being reported. We are actively watching the variants that are out there and we are prepared to reinstate protective measures as needed.

### **Financial Update: October 2021**

In review of the financial reports for the months of October 2021, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the months with negative results. The spending in the Plumbing Contract area covers not only the water heater that needed to be replaced but the damaged piping in the crawl space. In the future we to add money to the capital budget to address piping issues in the crawl spaces. The piping is the original from 1960 and at the end of its normal life.

#### **Income:**

- Residential income has come in well over budget for the period and over budget for the year. This is mainly due to conservative budgeting and strong incomes by our tenants.
- Excess utility is over budget for the period and the year. We had a very warm year, and many people kept their air conditioners in until we removed them.
- Interest income is below budget for the period. This is mainly due to the low interest rate environment.

- Other Operating receipts are over budget for the period. This is mainly due to the waste removal payments we have been receiving and for money left from repairs needed after a move out.
- Laundry income is slightly over budget for the period, and slightly under for the year.
- Operating Subsidy income is over budget for the period. We will keep an eye on this as the year progresses as it is running well above budget. We have received the November subsidy and it continues to run well above budget. The Government finalized the 2021 budgets and subsidies. We have not been given any indication as to prorations for 2021, but the overall amounts have been approved. We may have some cuts in the December budget period. I will keep you up to date as the year progresses.

#### Expenses:

- Administrative salaries are under budget for the period and the year. December is a 3 pay month, so the budget will come back in line.
- Legal expense is slightly over budget for the period and slightly under budget for the year.
- Staff Training is under budget for the period and slightly under for the year.
- Travel is under budget for the month, but well under for the year. Due to the pandemic, most conferences have been cancelled this year.
- Sundry Administrative is over budget for the period, and slightly over for the year. We renewed the Affordable Housing Accreditation for the 21-22 time period.
- Telephone is over under budget for the period and under for the year.
- Dues and Memberships are under budget for the period but over for the year due to license and association renewals.
- Water is on budget for the year.
- Electric is over budget for the period. The residents have been using their air-conditioning (which is excess utility). Combining our budget with the excess utility line item brings us right in line.
- Natural Gas is slightly over budget for the period and under for the year. We had a very cold spring, and we have done well, running at the low end of our expectations.
- Maintenance salaries are under budget for the period, but over budget for the year due to overtime costs. December is a 3 pay months, which will put us over by that much more.
- Maintenance materials is over 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 including new flooring, switches, outlets, cover plates and smoke detectors. for the units.

- Electrical contract costs are on budget for the period and the year.
- Ground's maintenance is under budget due to keeping the Sun-patiens this year instead of replanting with all mums.
- Extraordinary maintenance is used for all costs that are outside the CFP funding and will be capitalized at the end of the year. Some of these costs are planned and approved items including the Architectural fees.

**Next meeting is scheduled for December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00**

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

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Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director