

**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 16th, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson James Eufemia called meeting to Order at 7:09PM

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 Jeet Gulati(on phone), Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Sean McDonnell

Also, Present:

Absent: Mayor Larry Quattrone, Commissioner Brent Rivenburgh, Commissioner Terry Parliaros, Commissioner Jameellah Lance

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of October 19th. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Teller and seconded by Commissioner McDonnell. 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.

None Present

Borough Council Liaison Report:

None Present

Committee Report:

Resident Council Report:

None

Resolutions:

None

Discussion Items:

- **Engineering RFP.** Keith discussed the process publicly advertising for an engineer to review, design and oversee the large grant received by the HHA for the crawlspace repiping. Final bids are due December 1 and we will decide then. The firms that are bidding on the project are known by the HHA and both have worked at the HHA previously. One firm designed the entire boiler system and oversaw the installation in all three boiler rooms.
- **Budget Approval for December.** Keith discussed the budget that the board approved has been approved by the State and will be up for final approval at the December meeting. The new all electronic process is much quicker and doesn't requiring mailing documents back and forth several times.
- **Architect-RFP** We received a proposal from the Architect who did the roofs to air-seal the firewalls in the attics of each building. The cost is \$10,000 just to "Study" the issue, which seems like a lot of money for something that should be fairly straight forward. Keith would like to put the issue off for another month so that the staff can look at the problem and see if it can be resolved without the use of the architect.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 99% Occupancy. We currently have 1 studio apartment available where an elderly tenant died. The unit has been totally renovated and we are interviewing wait list people. As of this moment, we have one notice to move for November. The tenant is buying a home and the closing has been delayed several times. She paid her rent for November; with the understanding we will return the unused portion when she moves.
- We submitted a comprehensive package of materials to HUD for review and funding. A total of \$499,350.00 has been deposited into our account for phase 1 of the work. An engineering RFP has been prepared and reviewed and is currently being bid.
- The Lawn and Landscape has been awarded to Growing Concerns. I discussed the boards concerns with their costs and service. I was assured they will be more responsive. The cost because we are in a prevailing wage environment will not change.
- All the porches have been prime painted for the winter. We will bid the painting of the porches this spring and do the work over the summer.
- We have been notified of our annual REAC inspection will take place in January. This is following the new HUD protocol, so we don't know what to expect. I

have asked for more information on the inspection and will share it with you as I receive it.

- The 2023 Budget that was approved has been submitted to the State and approved. It will be on the December agenda for final approval.
- The wait list for all apartment units is now closed until further notice. We send letters to every person on the wait list every 6 months asking for an update. If we notice the waiting lists beginning to decline, we will open that list. We have gone through 6-10 people on the wait list filling the first studio, we have received another studio, and suspect we will have a similar response. This is one list that may reopen.
- Rents are increasing for most of our population due to the Social Security increase. It equates to between \$30 and \$60 dollars per unit.
- Both the Senior and Family laundry room have been completely redone. We had to replace the hot water supply in the family laundry due to the numerous pinholes and corrosion in the pipe.
- Our tenant management system is going away by June of 2023. Our provider, Yardi systems has an enhanced system we can integrate and switch over to by year end. We have done a couple Zoom meetings with them to discuss the product and our needs.
- We held our engineer walk through and public meeting on November 9th. O&S engineering is the only firm that is currently looking at the project. They were the engineers that designed our boiler rooms and the associated piping, so they are very aware of our systems and how to deal with them. They will be sending people back to go through the crawl spaces and review the existing conditions. Final bidding will take place on December 1.

Financial Update: October 2022

In review of the financial reports for the months of October 2022, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the month with positive results. The only negative was the annual PILOT payment, which was planned.

Income:

- Residential income has come in well over budget for the period. This is mainly due to strong resident incomes and diligence by our office keeping up with our residents.
- Excess utility continues to be over budget for the period.(very hot summer-extending into the fall) We are well over budget in this category for the year.
- Interest income is below budget for the period. Interest rates are rising as the FED tries to deal with inflation. We will keep monitoring the rates and adjust as needed.
- Other Operating receipts are over budget for the period. Dividends from our insurance policies are posted here.

- Laundry income is over budget for the period and the year.
- Operating Subsidy income is over budget for the period. This is part of the balancing from the estimated payments received earlier this year. We received our final budget for the year and HUD is going to be paying us the full prorated amount of subsidy. This amount will continue to exceed budget for the balance of the year.

Expenses:

- Administrative salaries are under budget for the period. We will have another 3 pay event in December that will run over budget, but within our budgeted limits.
- Legal expense is over budget for the period. Discussions with the Borough, attendance at our October meeting as well as a couple legal actions against tenants drove this cost up. We are over budget for the year and will make adjustment to the 2023 Budget.
- Staff Training is under budget for the period and under budgeted limits for the year. One commissioner is taking courses now which will bring this into line.
- Travel is under budget for the period and the year. I am not attending the September conference this year.
- Telephone is under budget
- Sundry Administrative is slightly under budget for the period.
- Computer supplies is under budget for the period. Any upgrades will be done in November or December.
- Dues and Memberships are slightly over budget for the period.
- Water is over budget for the year. Bills arrived and were paid in September.
- Electric is over budget for the period. Having received one of the two electric bills in September, they caught up in October. This cost is also offset by the excess utility fees.
- Natural Gas is slightly under budget for the period. The weather is moderating, and so are the bills.
- Maintenance salaries are under budget for the period.
- Maintenance materials is under budget for the period. As we are tuning over units, we are changing all the switches, outlets, base trim, and lighting. Fortunately, we have turned over 10 units this year. We have flooring and base trim inventoried for the units we are turning over, so the expense is lower.
- Grounds maintenance is under budget. We decided to not install the chrysanthemums this year and allow the existing summer flowers remain until frost. This category remains over budget, and hopefully some of the costs will be capitalized at the end of the year.
- 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 and roofing costs and various plumbing repairs. We will have to wait until year end to see how much of this cost the accounts wants to capitalize and depreciate.

The one oddity in the financials is the PILOT payment shows up in the cash flow and check register, but not in our budget to actual(although it is listed). I have asked Pete to look at it and give me an explanation.

Next meeting is scheduled for December 14th at 7:00

The meeting was adjourned by a motion made by Commissioner Eufemia and seconded by Commissioner Teller.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director