

APPROVED

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING

November 17, 2021 3:30 p.m.

Participation was done entirely by Zoom

Zoom remote participation per Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Provisions of the Open Meeting
Law

I CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mercer called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. In attendance: Board of Commissioners: Chairman Jim Mercer, Mary Pat Akers, John Grogan, Eileen Mooney, Absent: Marie Ryan

Executive Director (ED) Tina Danzy, Assistant to the Executive Director Madonna Meagher, Rich Phair, Maintenance Supervisor

LTO President, Marlene Koloski, LTO Vice-President, Joe Merola

Public: J. Sinico, N. Wile, J. Green, N. Clouser, L. Del Masto, Phil Orenstein, S Morris, Linda Schubert

II EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Executive Director (ED) Danzy began her report announcing that the yearly Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP) Audit (required by the Department of Housing and Community Development for all Local Housing Authorities) had concluded, and that in FY '21, there were **zero** findings (areas for improvement) noted by the auditor assigned to GBHA. Areas of the audit consisted of: General Accounting, Tenant Accounting, Payroll, Accounts Payable, Inventory, Procurement, and Eligibility Compliance.

Recapping the AUP's over the past five years before she became Executive Director, ED Danzy reported in FY '17 had 9 findings, FY '18 had 15 findings. In FY '19 there were 12 findings (Executive Director Danzy made note that she was brought in as an interim Executive Director during the last four months of that fiscal year). During her first year as the officially hired Executive Director FY '20, there were 4 findings, and reiterating that in her second year as ED, FY'21 there were no findings.

Grogan congratulated Executive Director Danzy on the AUP stating it was "remarkable" (to go from 15 findings [under prior ED] to a current audit final report of zero findings for the GBHA). Mooney stated that the AUP audit (executed by Certified Public Accountant, Gary DePace) wasn't an audit.*

a) FINANCIALS: UPDATE:

Executive Director Danzy stated that the Berkshire Bank balance is \$157,799.97. September financials and Quarterly financials along with warrant cover sheets were provided in the board packets. Executive Director Danzy stated that warrant cover sheets for the (reviewed) month and back up documents would be available for the board to sign on the next Tuesday from 1-2 p.m following the board meeting. Discussion ensued with Grogan questioning fee accountant Sue Honeycutt on accounting details listed on the financial reports. Grogan stated that he had (in his possession) a Stockbridge LHA board packet containing financial data that the GBHA doesn't include. Honeycutt stated that Stockbridge includes Federal Section 8 housing and it's not comparable to what one LHA does and what another LHA does with reporting. Executive Director Danzy stated that she was not presented with the Stockbridge report that Grogan was referring to. Grogan asked if invoices would be presented in 30 days increments rather than 60 days. Executive Director Danzy stated that many invoices don't come into the office until the end of the month, and that the GBHA was not 60 days but 45 days, to get an entire month closed out by the fee accountant.

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b) Rent recertifications update. Executive Director Danzy stated that there are still two tenants who have failed to respond with their documents. The 30 day notice to quit has exceeded its time and notices will be going to the attorney and proceed to housing court.

c) Executive Director Danzy stated that any and all legal questions need to go through the GBHA attorneys. She also reported that DHCD attorney, Sarah O'Leary had not confirmed a meeting date with the ED, but continued attempts to schedule a meeting are ongoing.

MAINTENANCE UPDATE:

Executive Director Danzy gave brief reports on all the GBHA sites. Emergency repairs that were needed at Flag Rock senior apartments cost just under \$4,700 and therefore under the \$5,000 insurance deductible. Wilkinson has been on site at Flag Rock repairing driveway issues, and fall clean-up is scheduled.

Brookside drainage repair with Wilkinson has begun, Brookside unit inspections of all the buildings have been completed and in great condition. Emergency repair of bathroom flooring completed. Bears have been on the property eating bird seed on tenant porches. Birdseed is also creating nibbles for chipmunks and mice.

Dewey fall clean-up is being scheduled. Inspections of units are scheduled for Tuesday, December 7th for building 1 & 3, and Tuesday, December 14th for building 2 and family units. Time for inspections will be between 9 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

WAITLIST/VACANCY UPDATE:

Executive Director Danzy gave an update on the status of vacancies. Three units formerly vacant are now occupied; two with new tenants and one as an internal transfer. Three to four units are under final screening review. Another four units are still open. Executive Director Danzy included in the board packet information about priority preference from DHCD's CHAMP documents.

COVID-19 UPDATE:

Executive Director Danzy reported that there was confirmation of new COVID-19 cases at Flag Rock. Executive Director Danzy reminded everyone to continue safe protocol procedures to stay safe: masking, social distancing and hand washing. Booster shots are now available and seniors should check with their health professional to schedule a booster.

OTHER UPDATES:

Executive Director Danzy sought board approval for the Pittsfield Piper Capital project in the amount of \$24,875 for fan upgrades (to mitigate moisture) for Flag Rock. **Grogan made a motion to award and approve the Flag Rock fan project of \$24,875 seconded by Akers. Roll Call Vote: Akers, aye; Grogan, aye; Mercer aye; Mooney, aye. 4-0 Motion passes.**

Executive Director Danzy sought board approval for the FRG Contractor Corporation in the amount of \$24,720 for removal and replacing Brookside Manor vinyl siding. **Grogan made a motion to award and approve the Brookside Manor project of \$24,720 for removal and replacement of vinyl siding. seconded by Mercer. Roll Call Vote: Akers, aye; Grogan, aye; Mercer aye; Mooney, aye. 4-0 Motion passes. ***

Executive Director Danzy sought board approval to approve an update to the 1994 GBHA pet policy. While similar in content, the pet policies presented to the board included some contrasts for 705 (family) units and 667 (elderly/handicap) units. **Grogan made a motion to approve pet policies as presented, seconded by Mercer. Roll Call Vote: Akers, aye; Grogan, aye; Mercer aye; Mooney, aye. 4-0 Motion passes.**

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Following up on the discussion at the November 17, 2021 board meeting regarding cable charges at GBHA properties, Executive Director Danzy sought board approval to increase the monthly Spectrum cable bill per tenant to \$29 a month, an increase from the current \$15-\$17 per month charge.

Grogan made a motion to approve \$29 a month per tenant cable charge, seconded by Mercer. Roll Call Vote: Akers, aye; Grogan, aye; Mercer aye; Mooney, aye. 4-0 Motion passes.

Executive Director Danzy presented two options for the installation of an ADA door: Option 1: two doors (as planned) at Flag Rock, or option 2, one door at Flag Rock and one door at Dewey Court. Discussion ensued and the board agreed to Option 2, with one exit door at Flag Rock and one ADA entrance door at Dewey Court. **Grogan made a motion to approve Option 2; one ADA exit door at Flag Rock, and one ADA entrance door at Dewey Court seconded by Mooney. Roll Call Vote: Akers, aye; Grogan, aye; Mercer aye; Mooney, aye. 4-0 Motion passes.**

Resident Services Coordinator (RSC) Peggy Zamierowski hosted a Halloween Bingo that was well received. She is also exploring COVID booster clinics at our sites. Peggy's report was included in the board packet.

Executive Director Danzy stated that three interviews for the Office Clerk position were being scheduled. The LTO received copies of the applicant resumes.

Executive Director Danzy stated that she will meet with the Local Tenants Organization (LTO) President and Vice-President on December 1, 2021 to discuss concerns from residents regarding the 5-year plan. Executive Director Danzy explained to the board that there continue to be pending projects from the previous fiscal year and adjustments to the Capital Plan might be needed because of the extraordinary expenses like termite and foundation repairs.

Executive Director Danzy also reported that a review of the GBHA Annual Plan will coincide before the December board meeting on 12/15/21. The Annual Plan has been posted at all sites and is on-line on the GBHA town hall website. *

III OLD BUSINESS:

Grogan led a discussion on Executive Director Benchmark goals based on the ED's performance survey results from the board, LTO, and staff. Included were: Complete grant-based renovations & upgrades, Establish at least monthly LTO meeting, Get financial reporting down to prior month's spending, Time management training course (Grogan to investigate cost), Customer service training for entire staff (Grogan to investigate cost), Mission statement looked at and updated to include treatment of tenants & prospects. (Board participation if desired), Strive to respond to all tenant requests within 24 hours., Strive to fulfill all board requests for information within 5 days. Improve on negative tenant survey scores by 20% in mirror study next year, Board looks into ED hours increase. **Mercer made a motion to adopt the benchmark goals for the ED, seconded by Grogan.**

Discussion ensued with Akers concerns about response times given the finite time the office is open and the limited staff. Akers stated that board questions for the staff can vary due to complicated questions. Grogan then suggested adding "strive" to respond to requests. Additional discussion ensued with cost of staff training, the costs of time management classes and the need to approve money for such classes/training. Grogan suggested approving the motion in "macro" and for him to bring back additional clarification on benchmarks. Akers commented that moving the meter in a positive direction was good for the next year. Mooney suggested holding off on a vote until Grogan presented additional information. **Roll Call Vote: Akers, aye; Grogan, aye; Mercer aye; Mooney, abstain. 3-1 Motion passes.**

IV NEW BUSINESS:

Executive Director Danzy restated that the Capital Plan for capital needs at the three sites would be discussed with the LTO on 12/1/21. Executive Director Danzy ran through a list of current FY '22 projects in process and what is currently in the FY '23 list.

Executive Director Danzy stated that board packets would be more comprehensive with financials requested by the board.

V LTO REPORT:

LTO President, Marlene Koloski questioned the stipend for the fans for tenants that it costs more than \$10. To run dehumidifiers and fans. Koloski also reported that tenants signed up for a Thanksgiving dinner which will be cooked on Wednesday afternoon in the Flag Rock kitchen. Vice-President Merola stated that the parking lot at Dewey was not well lit at night. Executive Director Danzy asked if any of the lights were burned out.

VI. BOARD COMMENTS:

Mooney commented that a "hearing" is not a "meeting" with regard to the Annual Plan being discussed on December 15, 2021. Akers asked Mooney for definitions of hearing and meeting.

Mooney inquired about the board of health correction order for a Flag Rock family unit. Mercer informed the board about the Community Development Corporation of South Berkshire (CDCSB) and their upcoming information on affordable housing.

Mercer reminded the board to not deliberate in emails.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM: Board meeting, October 21, 2021

Grogan made a motion to approve the October 21, 2021 draft minutes, seconded by Mercer. Discussion ensued with Mooney expressing the word "meeting" should be "hearing" in reference to the Annual Plan presentation on December 15, 2021 Vote without changes to the 10/21/21 draft minutes: Mercer, Aye; Grogan, aye; Akers, aye; Mooney, nay; Motion passes 3-1

VIII. CITIZEN SPEAK: Nan Wile corrected board member Grogan referring to LTO meetings as being held monthly instead they are to be quarterly. Ms. Wile gave feedback from the LTO tenant meeting stating that some tenants at Brookside Manon didn't want to be involved because of the negativity of the LTO in its presentation. She continued to state that not everyone is complaining about the management.

IX ADJOURNMENT: 5:15 p.m.

Mercer made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Grogan. Roll Call Vote: Mooney, Aye; Akers, aye; Mercer, aye; Grogan, aye. Unanimous 4-0

NEXT MEETING: December 15 2021 @ 3:30 p.m.

[Transcriber's notation. At the December 15, 2021 meeting, Eileen Mooney had a couple of corrections to the 11/17/21 minutes. 1. Ms. Mooney wanted the minutes to reflect that she stated the AUP audit wasn't a "financial" audit. However, upon listening to the recording, it was not stated as Ms. Mooney reported. Ms. Mooney stated "the financial records as I understand it from the auditor, are not examined".*

2. Ms. Mooney had a grammatical issue with the Annual plan sentence as written. Board member Ryan, found a typo that went from Manon, to Manor. That has been corrected.]

Respectfully Submitted as notated,

Madonna Meagher

Documents reviewed: Agenda, draft minutes 11/17/21; September 2021 financial reports; Quarterly Reports, Warrant cover pages 9/7/21,9/15/21.9/29/21; payroll summary from Adirondack Payroll, MMDT September statements, 705 family pet policy, 667 pet policy, CHAMP priority information documents, Pittsfield Piper Capital project, FRG Contractor Corp Brookside siding request for funds, RSC report, SPR21/2973, Mooney 11/2/21email requesting payroll information, BOH Correction order for Flag Rock, Mooney email to Chairman with agenda items for 11/17/21 meeting.

Pursuant to MA General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 20 (e) (f), meetings of the Great Barrington Housing Authority are regularly recorded. Any member of the public wishing to speak at the meeting must receive permission of the Chair. Listed agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.