

APPROVED  
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING  
GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING  
JANUARY 14, 2021 3:30 p.m.

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 3:31 p.m. In attendance by zoom roll call, board of commissioners: Chairman Mercer, Eileen Mooney, Marie Ryan, Mary Pat Akers,  
Executive Director Tina Danzy, Assistant to the Executive Director Madonna Meagher  
Fee Accountant Sue Honeycutt  
RCAT: Stan Pitchko

Public that checked in: Joe Merola, Vice President Local Tenants Organization (LTO), Nan Wile, Jackie Sinico, John Grogan

II APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM: Regular Meeting 9/23/20.

Chairman Mercer asked the board if there were additional changes or comments regarding the corrected September 23, 2020 meeting. Mooney stated that she hadn't looked at them. Akers made a motion to approve draft minutes of 9/23/20. Ryan seconded the motion. **Roll call vote: Ryan aye, Mercer Aye, Akers aye., Mooney abstain Motion passes. 3-1**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM: Board Meetings November 17, 2020, December 16, 2020 and January 7, 2021  
Ryan made a motion to approve the 11/17/20 draft minutes. Akers seconded the motion. **Roll call vote: Ryan aye, Mercer Aye. Akers aye, Mooney nay. Motion passes 3-1**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM: Regular Meeting, December 16, 2020.  
Akers made a motion to approve the December 16, 2020 draft minutes. Ryan seconded the motion. **Roll call vote: Ryan aye, Mercer Aye. Akers aye, Mooney nay. Motion passes 3-1**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM: Board Meeting, January 7, 2021.  
Ryan made a motion to approve the January 7, 2021 draft minutes. Akers seconded the motion. **Roll call vote: Ryan aye, Mercer Aye. Akers aye, Mooney nay. Motion passes 3-1**

III EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

a) Executive Director Danzy reported that the COVID-19 protocols are entering Phase III and will include housing authorities and staff to be inoculated in mid to late February. Executive Director Danzy reported that the Resident Services Coordinators (RSC) are arranging flu clinics at all the sites. The family that tested positive in November is not required to quarantine any more. Executive Director Danzy reported that there have been no other confirmed cases reported to the office.

Executive Director Danzy reported that a mutual aid agreement is being formed between the GBHA and the Stockbridge Housing Authority (SHA). In the event of severe emergencies such as COVID-19 infections, the Executive Director and the maintenance staff from each housing authority will assist each other. This mutual aid agreement was drafted by DHCD.

b) The November financial report was included in all board member packets along with the warrants for that month listing who was paid. Warrants for December were also included in the packet and Executive Director Danzy stated that November warrants would be discussed at this meeting leaving December warrant questions to be discussed at the next board meeting. Executive Director Danzy reported that the Berkshire Bank balance is currently \$239,800. Tenant receivables are decreasing as tenants have been accessing outside agencies for rent relief (with help from the office and the RSC). Executive Director Danzy stated that invoices are being paid as they are received within every week or two.

Chairman Mercer asked board members for questions they might have for fee accountant Sue Honeycutt. Board member Mooney had the only questions for Ms. Honeycutt. Ms. Mooney questioned line items in the budget including accrued liabilities/the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), **[Nota bene: PILOT discussed at board meetings: 6//18/19, 11/17/20, 12/16/20 and 1/14/21]**, administrative salaries, a line item of extra time/informational line, two transactions in the December 2020 warrants: Lodestar Bus Lot (solar company), Hays Companies, and Gary O'Brien. Executive Director Danzy and fee accountant Honeycutt addressed Ms. Mooney's questions stating Hays Companies is invoicing for property insurance, and Gary O'Brien's company provides many services to all properties including clean up and plowing. Fee accountant Honeycutt stated she would review the PILOT figures on the budget that Ms. Mooney mentioned. Additional discussion ensued with Ms. Mooney requesting access to invoices and payroll oversight. Chairman Mercer reiterated the financial oversight at the housing authority which includes the Executive Director preparing the checks, the treasurer reviewing the checks and signing them along with the Executive Director, the fee accountant reviewing all monthly financials, and the annual Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP) audit. Ms. Mooney stated that the housing authority never has had an audit. Fee accountant Honeycutt disagreed and responded that there are technical terms for an "Audit" and an "Auditor". An AUP auditor reviews the financial accounts of the housing authority every year and also includes payroll as part of the audit. Sue Honeycutt stated that the GBHA is not over on any salary items and that the housing authority is in great financial shape.

With fee accountant Sue Honeycutt present, Executive Director Danzy requested the board approve a budget revision in the amount of \$35,557. **Mercer made a motion to approve the amount representing COVID-19 additional funding from DHCD. Seconded by Ryan. Roll Call Vote: Ryan aye, Mercer aye, Akers aye, Mooney aye Motion passes 4-0**

c) Executive Director Danzy requested board approval for the Annual Plan to be submitted to DHCD. The Annual Plan is an overview of the day to day management of the properties which include a five year projection called the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Maintenance Plan, and how those property plans adjust to the overall operational budget each year. Discussion ensued with Ms. Mooney arguing the validity of the procedure and the sequencing of the Annual Plan as presented by Executive Director Danzy. Chairman Mercer made note of Ms. Mooney's complaints against the Executive Director. Executive Director Danzy informed the board that an annual plan is an outline of center policies that can shift such as with the CIP, with special projects that require unforeseen urgency such as the termite damage or the mold remediation. Executive Director Danzy encouraged any board member to assist in applying for grants to help the GBHA properties.

**Akers made a motion to approve the Annual Plan. Seconded by Ryan. Roll Call Vote: Ryan aye, Mercer aye, Akers aye, Mooney nay. Motion passes 3-1**

Following the vote, Executive Director Danzy suggested to the board that a new AUP auditor will be needed (as DePace is completing his fifth and final year) that the board revisit the hiring in the second quarter of FY '22.

d) Fee accountant Honeycutt reported that the budget revision was needed as an operating subsidy from the State raising the amount from \$181,853 to \$272,957. **Ryan made a motion to approve the budget revision as presented for COVID funding from DHCD. Seconded by Akers. Roll Call Vote: Ryan aye, Mercer aye, Akers aye, Mooney aye Motion passes 4-0**

e) Regarding maintenance, Executive Director Danzy reported that daily sanitizing continues at all three properties.

#### IV OLD BUSINESS:

Update on the Board of Health (BOH) residential unit matter:

- a) In regards to the mold remediation of a family unit, Executive Director Danzy stated that she had signed a notice to proceed to go along with the contract with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). A project number from DHCD will be set up. She explained to the board that the invoices, once received, will be forwarded and will be paid once DHCD releases the project money. Responding to a question from Chairman Mercer regarding inspections of all family units, Executive Director Danzy reported that she had emailed for information and received no response.

- b) RFP for AUP audit:

**Mooney made a motion to approve Gary DePace as the AUP auditor this year. Seconded by Mercer. Roll Call Vote: Ryan aye, Mercer aye, Akers aye, Mooney aye Motion passes 4-0**

c) Revisions to Personnel Policy:

To avoid future confusion on when the GBHA Board changed or amended a personnel policy, Ms. Mooney suggested that dates be noted in the policy. The Executive Director noted that she inherited the personnel policy from previous administrations and wanted the board to date policy changes going forward. Chairman Mercer asked if Ms. Mooney would be willing to research the changes and bring them before the board at a future meeting. Ms. Mooney assented.

d) Updates to GBHA website:

Discussion ensued with hiring someone to create a GBHA website or to use the Town website for current GBHA information. Consensus was to furnish the Town website with our updates. Executive Director Danzy asked if Ms. Mooney would like to assist in keeping content current, and Ms. Mooney agreed.

e) Update on Evacuation and Fire Drills:

Ms. Mooney emailed the board at the start of the meeting with Fire Chief Burger's recommendations for fire drills and evacuation. Due to the late timing of receiving the information from Ms. Mooney, Chairman Mercer suggested the board have a chance to review the recommendations and review it at an upcoming meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

None

VI. LTO REPORT:

LTO Vice President Joe Merola that things are going well. Mr. Merola commented that the work on Bldg. 2 at Dewey is great. He also likes the property lawn servicing by vendor O'Brien. Mr. Merola had a message that rebates on electricity for dehumidifiers would be between \$70-\$80. Discussion ensued about the actual cost for running dehumidifiers in tenant units and that additional research is needed.

VII BOARD COMMENTS:

Board member Mooney inquired about the status of the communication system adopted by the GBHA called NexGen. Discussion ensued with Executive Director Danzy reporting that the system is up and running and will be utilized as needed for important tenant messages. Executive Danzy stated that many tenants have relatives receive messages for them, but phoning or mail will be used for resident urgent personal notifications. She continued that the goal of NEX-GEN notifications is for tenants to realize this is a service rather than an inconvenience.

Board member Akers suggested that while researching cost effective internet bundles for tenants at GBHA properties, with NEX-GEN in place, perhaps a cost effective internet bundle could be achieved. Ms. Akers stated the internet is a senior safety issue and perhaps a grant could be applied for. Executive Director Danzy stated that there are free flip-phones for low-income seniors. LTO Vice President, Joe Merola responded to Ms. Akers and Executive Director Danzy's comments mentioning that as long as a free flip phone is charged, a 911 call will go through to emergency services.

Chairman Mercer reminded the Board of the Habitat for Humanity housing project on North Plain Road which is in its early phase of development. Chairman Mercer suggested inviting Selectboard member Bill Cooke to the next GBHA meeting to describe the 21 unit project.

VIII CITIZEN SPEAK:

None

IX ADJOURNMENT: 4:46 p.m.

**Ryan made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Akers. Roll Call Vote: Mooney aye, Akers aye, Ryan aye, Mercer aye. Unanimous**

NEXT MEETING: To Be Determined

Respectfully Submitted,  
Madonna Meagher

Documents reviewed: Agenda, November 2020 financials, draft minutes 11/17/20, draft minutes 12/16/20, draft minutes 1/7/21, Warrant cover page 11/10/20, 11/16/20, 11/23/20, 11/24/20, Included in packet but not discussed December warrant cover pages: 12/8/20, 12/14/20, 12/21/20, 12/23/20, 1/4/21, Annual Plan, Budget revision.

Eileen Mooney's email 1/14/21 @3:30 p.m.with attachments: 1. Mooney's email to Madonna Meagher re: corrections to December 2020 minutes, 2. Note to Tina about payments, 3. Chief Burger's suggestions, 4. proposed agenda items for Jan. 2021.

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.