

APPROVED  
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING  
GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING

September 30, 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, Marie Ryan

Executive Director (ED) Tina Danzy, Assistant to the Executive Director Madonna Meagher, Maintenance supervisor, Rich Phair, Fee Accountant, Sue Honeycutt

LTO Vice-President, Joe Merola

Public: Rebecca Jurczyk, Heather Bellow, J. Sinico, N. Wile, J. Green, E. Cuevas, N. Clouser, D. Van Deusen, L. Del Mastro, Heather Bellow, Phil Orenstein

**II EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Executive Director Danzy reported that with the new COVID-19 variant, she strongly recommended that all tenants use social distancing and mask wearing.

**a) FINANCIALS: UPDATE:**

1. Executive Director Danzy stated that the Berkshire Bank balance is \$132,129.84. July financials along with warrant cover sheets were provided in the board packets. Discussion ensued with Grogan and Mooney questioning accounting details listed on the financial reports. Executive Director Danzy reported that the fee accountant, Sue Honeycutt made herself available to answer Grogan and Mooney's financial questions. Honeycutt reported that the housing authority finances are under budget and that the GBHA is doing well financially.

Discussion ensued regarding vacant units. Executive Director Danzy stated that she requests waivers from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) because of vendor/manpower delays and the multiple pulls to find qualified applicants to house. Honeycutt stated that DHCD subsidizes the housing authority and there is no financial penalty when waivers are authorized. Honeycutt responded to questions about budget line items including the office expenses listed under 4190 and other accounting codes used by the PHA software.

2. **MAINTENANCE UPDATE:**

Maintenance supervisor Rich Phair reported that he and the Executive Director met with Hugh McKay, the new Regional Capital Assistance Team (RCAT) representative assigned to GBHA. Projects are being discussed for Flag Rock to have overgrown trees trimmed as well as a change out of the fans in family units. Regarding moisture issues, the Flag Rock family units have been inspected and maintenance staff is documenting moisture readings in each unit. Maintenance staff continue to find non-compliance with families using fans and dehumidifiers as required.

LaRochelle Construction Company still has a drainage punch list to finish at Brookside. Unit inspections will commence in buildings 1-4 on October 19th and buildings 5-8 on October 26th.

RCAT is reviewing the needs for Dewey including sidewalk and ramp repair and replacing shakes made of vinyl.

Mr. Phair asked for tenants to have patience with non-emergency work orders. Vendors are experiencing staff shortages and backorders are commonplace with supply chain issues.

3. Executive Director Danzy reported on waitlist/vacancies. There are 5 active pulls for filling the empty units at GBHA properties. Final screening is taking place for a family unit and four one-bedroom apartments.

4. COVID-19 update.

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.

5 Other Updates:

Executive Director Danzy reported that Karen Lewis is taking on a new Resident Services Coordinator (RSC) role with other South County housing authorities. Replacing Karen is Peggy Zamierowski. A notice was sent out introducing her. She will have 15 hours a week for GBHA tenants and will split her office hours between Flag Rock and Dewey. There will also be fun events Peggy will be scheduling. Peggy invited Community Support Options (CSO) to Flag Rock where they will host a BBQ for families and CSO will discuss services they offer to families.

Megan Soules, our office clerk, was offered a full time, benefitted position elsewhere and has given her two-week notice. As an equal opportunity employer, the office will be advertising for the office clerk job and it will be posted at all sites.

Regarding concerns mentioned at the August 26, 2021 board meeting:

Executive Director Danzy stated that it was not her intention to upset any tenant with strongly worded letters for tenants to be in compliance for their rent recertification. The office alerted tenants 60 days in advance of the packets being sent. Letters dated on May 1st and June 1st provided a list of phone numbers and contacts for help. The office provided drop in hours and made home visits to any tenant who had missing paperwork and needed assistance. Executive Director Danzy stated that it is the housing authority's goal to keep residents housed and not to terminate their housing. Executive Director Danzy stated that the legal language in the lease is harsh and that tenants are obligated to comply with recertifications. The State mandates September 1, 2021 as the new least start date.

The LTO report at the last meeting stated there were moisture issues in four (4) Flag Rock family units to the Board. Executive Director Danzy wanted to respond to the statements made by LTO President Koloski and LTO Vice President Merola. At no time prior to the August 26th board meeting or after the meeting has the LTO President discussed alleged moisture issues in the family units. The GBHA completed inspections of each unit in July and there have been subsequent follow up visits, all with moisture readings in each and every room. Tenants continue to shut off their dehumidifiers and fans which creates higher moisture levels in their units.

Executive Director Danzy asked that any residents that have unit issues to call the office and maintenance will follow up.

Lisa from AUP accountant Gary DePace's office reached out for scheduling the next AUP audit.

Meeting with Sarah O'Leary from DHCD will be forthcoming at Flag Rock. A report to the board will follow.

### **III OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Director Danzy sought board approval for the Creative Place Making (CPM) project design. Discussion ensued regarding the project design and the total cost estimated for the entire "wish list" project. **Mercer made a**

**motion to approve \$111,000 of the DHCD grant for the design project to begin, including the pathways and landscaping and further discussion and board approval for other “wish list” elements to be added to the CPM project. seconded by Grogan. Roll Call Vote: Akers, aye; Grogan, aye; Mercer aye; Ryan, aye; Mooney, aye. 5-0 Motion passes.**

2. Chairman Mercer reported that Chief Burger visited Dewey Court in September for fire safety training. Many Dewey residents were present for the discussion. Chief Burger will be creating a “cheat sheet” for tenants in case of a fire emergency.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

Guest: GB Health Agent

1. Great Barrington Health Agent, Rebecca Jurczyk addressed the board describing the health department process from any initial complaints to the Board of Health (BOH) through the compliance corrections and or appeals if applicable. Ms. Jurczyk explained that the BOH looks for sources of moisture as mold itself is not in the code.

In regard to the three family units she visited at Flag Rock, Ms. Jurczyk reported one unit had no mold. The other two units had moisture issues which were isolated to the kitchen and bathrooms. As of this meeting, Ms. Jurczyk reported that she had been informed by the GBHA office that all corrections had been done and that she would have a follow up visit to the units.

2. Director Danzy sought board approval for the Brookside fan and Ground Fault Interrupters (GFI) installation. The project had already been approved and was on the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) but was ready to begin, therefore board approval was needed. **Grogan made a motion to move forward on the installation of fans and GFI's in Brookside apartments seconded by Ryan. Roll Call Vote: Akers, aye; Grogan, aye; Mercer aye; Ryan, aye; Mooney, aye. 5-0 Motion passes.**

3. Executive Director Evaluation Presentation.  
Discussion tabled until October 7th @ 2 p.m

#### **V. LTO REPORT:**

LTO Vice-Chair, Joe Merola thanked BOH agent, Jurczyk for her report on the Flag Rock family units. Mr. Merola also thanked maintenance staff for cleaning off the bird droppings at Dewey. Mr. Merola also reported that the Community Health Programs (CHP) came to Dewey and gave COVID-19 tests to all seniors. Mr. Merola also voiced concerns about the compliance letters sent to tenants in August regarding recertification of leases.

**4:28 p.m. Akers leaves the meeting.**

**4:32 p.m. Akers joins meeting**

#### **VI. BOARD COMMENTS:**

Mooney asked the Executive Director about the status of the LTO waiver letter that was supposed to be sent to DHCD. Mooney also suggested the LTO design a survey for family dumpsters at GBHA. Mooney also asked for information on Spectrum cable services.

Grogan commented that he still had questions on GBHA accounting.

Mercer asked if wifi could be in common areas so tenants could participate in Zoom meetings.

#### **VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM: Board Meeting, August 26, 2021**

**Grogan made a motion to approve the August 26, 2021 draft minutes, seconded by Ryan. Vote: Mercer, Aye; Grogan, aye; Akers, aye; Mooney, nay; Ryan, aye; Motion passes 4-1**

**VIII. CITIZEN SPEAK:**

J. Sinico commented on the “proper” use of the GBHA maintenance truck. E. Cuevas complained about the word “compliance” when discussing recertification and communication issues with the office.

**IX ADJOURNMENT: 4:48 p.m.**

**Mercer made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Ryan. Roll Call Vote: Mooney, aye; Akers, aye; Ryan, aye; Mercer, aye; Grogan, aye. Unanimous 5-0**

NEXT MEETING: October 20, 2021 @ 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Madonna Meagher

Documents reviewed: Agenda, draft minutes 9/30/21; July 2021 financial reports; Warrant cover pages 7/13/21, 7/14/21, 7/26/21; Graves Engineering Creative Place-Making project, Fish project for Brookside GFI and Fan installation, draft minutes 8/26/21, Tom Boyer email, Sarah O’Leary, Esq letter from Executive Director, Public Records Request (PRR): cancelled payroll checks and LTO budget information response to Mooney; PRR for Lawsuit and invoices for 4190 response to Mooney, Mooney PRR email 9/14/21; PRR for invoice and records viewing response to Mooney: Sea Crest invoice, and check copies, Policy draft viewing records,

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.