

## GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER: Attendance Roll Call. - Potential Board vote - Chairman John Grogan opened the meeting via Zoom at 11:01am with a roll call: Tom Blauvelt., “aye,” John Grogan, “aye,” Eileen Mooney, “aye,” Philip Orenstein, “aye.” Also present: Executive Director Tina Danzy, Maintenance Director, Rick Phair.

### II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

A. Financials, vacancies, maintenance, legal (mold damage, et. al.) and other updates.

T. Danzy stated information was sent to the Board in advance - J. Grogan stated he will try to get the agenda to T. Danzy at least a week in advance.

1. Water distribution - T. Danzy thanked J. Grogan and P. Orenstein for help in distributing water to tenants and stated water would continue to be distribute until the issue is resolved. She also stated her hope that DHCD would continue to allow GBHA to record the water as a utility item to be reimbursed. She also stated there would be additional efforts to determine how much water tenants need.
2. Current projects - T. Danzy stated she has been working on the AUP audit and the majority of required information has been provided. She added she will be working on the annual plan looking at capital plan, funding, etc. with R. Phair.
3. Vacancies – T. Danzy stated a senior apartment is being turned over at Dewey and there is an applicant and the unit at Brookside with smoke damage is being renovated which has been costly – but there are funds as an emergency capital project. She added that vacancies are budgeted for, but recently it has exceeded budgeted amounts.
4. Financials – T. Danzy noted there have been increase expenses lately for extraordinary maintenance not budgeted for such as light pole damage. She noted this impacts reserves. She also stated the bank balance is \$143,008.

Regarding solar credits being received, she stated GBHA has saved \$87,000 on electricity since January 18. It was clarified that the solar contract is in the manual/binder provided to the board and that it a 20-year contract.

P. Orenstein sked about the cash balance for the month which is down \$200,000 and asked if that is just payments to vendors – T. Danzy replied yes, and DHCD deposits lump sums in the account on an intermittent basis so the account can fluctuate. P. Orenstein asked what is the interfund account – T. Danzy replied she would ask the accountant. P. Orenstein asked about the balance sheet - percent unrestricted net assets is 16.7 this month; it was 19 last month and should be 30. He stated the number is the same, but the percentage is different – T. Danzy stated she would ask the accountant. E. Mooney asked if enough is being budgeted for the pilot and does it include Sheffield – T. Danzy replied it includes Sheffield and should be enough, but she would confirm. E. Mooney asked for copies of the warrants for the month – T. Danzy replied the information provided is complete for July and warrant sheets go with the financials. E. Mooney stated she would like to see more current warrants – T. Danzy replied the other financials are not ready. There was a discussion about the process and how best to present the information. T. Danzy stated invoices from Adirondack are included as there were questions about their fees – she added the fee schedule was sent to J. Grogan. J. Grogan asked about the operating subsidy YTD and received – T. Danzy replied funds are set aside by DHCD and do not come in all at once. He also asked about the line Administrative Otherwise and the overage – T. Danzy replied there are multiple items under that category, and noted it is over now pro rata, but could catch up next month.

E. Mooney asked that income revenue be broken out to understand where the funds are coming from - rents received or DHCD subsidy – to better understand financial flow - T. Danzy replied DHCD disburses funds on an irregular basis and are reflected on the bank statement – J. Grogan added rent is on the balance sheet each month. E. Mooney asked for a breakout of the source of the funds.

P. Orenstein made a motion to provide receipts for DHCD reimbursements and actual rents received from tenants; E. Mooney seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – P. Orenstein stated the accountant can break the line item into the two categories. T. Blauvelt asked why the information is valuable and is in the packet - P. Orenstein replied, if there is an issue, this will be helpful to understand it – T. Blauvelt replied the issue is DHCD paying out on its own schedule. E. Mooney stated it is helpful information for budgeting and is not difficult to obtain – it can be added to the bank statement. J. Grogan questioned if it is a good use of staff time and noted it is likely the accountant cannot pull it easily due to the DHCD system. There was no public comment. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “no,” J. Grogan, “no,” E. Mooney, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” Motion failed 2-2.

P. Orenstein asked about a \$142,000 payment for landscaping – T. Danzy replied it is the final payment for the creative placemaking capital project.

5. Newsletter – T. Danzy reported the newsletter was sent to the board – and noted she was working on scheduling a budgeting workshop for residents. P. Orenstein suggested adding hours/phone number for Karen Lewis, resident services coordinator.
6. Maintenance – R. Phair stated an engineer is required for the tree job and drainage project as they are in a wetlands area. He also stated the ARPA projects have been approved for the emergency elevator switch, the community room and the Dewey alarm system upgrade and septic. T. Danzy added inspections are occurring on a regular basis. R. Phair also reported there are no bids for snow plowing.
7. Project #116076 - Carpet removal/replacement - Potential Board vote. R. Phair stated this is a project for new flooring in 27 senior units. T. Danzy added the budget is \$22,800 which was the low bid. It was confirmed the product is quality as described in the specs.

J. Grogan made a motion to approve the bid for project #116076 for carpet removal and replacement for \$22,800; T. Blauvelt seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – Jackie Sinico, tenant, stated the deck should be sanded and finished before the new carpeting is installed. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” J. Grogan, “aye,” E. Mooney, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor: 4-0.

8. Review and approve Fair Housing Marketing Plan - Potential Board vote. T. Danzy stated DHCD requires the implementation of a Fair Housing Marketing Plan and provides a template. She continued to state she added demographics for our area – percent Berkshire County and Great Barrington which came from the census and she pulled LHA population information. She clarified that GBHA is well above the required demographics, but if the percentage gets too low, we will need to actively market to encourage minority populations to apply. She also clarified this a template from DHCD and any changes would need legal review.

T. Blauvelt made a motion to approve Fair Housing Marketing Plan; J. Grogan seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” J. Grogan, “aye,” E. Mooney, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor: 4-0.

### III. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Joint Subcommittee with Affordable Housing Trust - Potential Board vote. J. Grogan stated he is meeting informally with Fred Clark, Chair, Affordable Housing Trust and will report back to the board.

B. Parking Lot Video Security cameras; other parking ideas - Potential Board vote. P. Orenstein stated there have been complaints/concerns about parking and a security camera can monitor resident/visitor compliance with parking rules – J. Grogan added it would also help with vandalism. T. Danzy stated there are other remote areas on the property she is more concerned about – also security for the office. T. Blauvelt suggested hiring a security firm to advise. P. Orenstein added it should also be discussed how security footage is used and who get access – and noted a camera for the parking lot is simple, more remote areas are more complex. James Garzon, 84 North Plain Road, suggested having an unattended police car parked in the area – J. Grogan replied the police only have three vehicles. E. Mooney suggested having the police look at all the properties regarding security. J. Grogan stated he would call Chief Sorti to discuss. J. Sinico asked that the back lot be monitored and a Ring camera would work – She also noted the police patrol the area regularly.

P. Orenstein made a motion to approve a two-phase plan on security concerns - consult with the police about an overall plan and add funds for the purchase of 1-3 security camera(s) for the Flag Rock; E. Mooney seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: T. Blauvelt, “aye,” J. Grogan, “aye,” E. Mooney, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor: 4-0.

1. E. Mooney asked about previous discussion on adding a parking space – R. Phair replied he had consulted with construction people and it is situated too close to other cars. There was a discussion about the handicapped parking and there being more tenants with placards that spots. J. Sinico suggested making it so those with placards park closest to the sidewalk. T. Danzy stated we have the required number of spots, but it is not enough – R. Phair added more spaces cannot be assigned as there are required dimensions for handicapped spots and that would mean losing some. Marlene Koloski, LTO lead, suggested that visitors and staff park in the upper lot - T. Danzy replied the issue is at night and less during the day – E. Mooney replied there are daytime issues too.

C. Discussion of potential involvement by Sheffield in their Housing Authority property - Potential Board vote. E. Mooney proposed J. Grogan send a letter to the Sheffield Selectmen asking if they would consider how to have the town more involved in the administration at Dewey Court – she noted Sheffield is not represented on the Board and residents cannot vote. Joe Merola, tenant, stated he can be appointed to the board – E. Mooney added he cannot vote.

E. Mooney made a motion to send a letter to Sheffield Selectman regarding oversight of Dewey Court; P. Orenstein seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – E. Mooney stated she has a draft letter and will send to J. Grogan. J. Grogan stated he does not like that people of Sheffield cannot vote, but doubts Sheffield will have a positive response. Roll call vote: J. Grogan, “no,” E. Mooney, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” Motion passed: 2-1.

D. New recording Secretary - Potential Board vote

J. Grogan made a motion to hire Debbie Brazie at a rate of \$125.00 for the first hour and \$25.00 per hour for typing, not meeting time; E. Mooney seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – there was none. Roll call vote: J. Grogan, “aye,” E. Mooney, “aye,” P. Orenstein, “aye.” All in favor: 3-0.

E. OML complaint – J. Grogan stated it is in the package for informational purposes and it is resolved and the minutes in question have been approved.

F. New Budget discussion start - Potential Board vote. It was agreed that budget discussions would start in December.

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Accounting Software/Fenton Ewald - Potential Board vote. J. Grogan stated GBHA has had the same accounting firm for 25 years which is not good business practice and suggested getting bids from other accounting firms. E. Mooney stated GBHA can hire an accountant of its choice – P. Orenstein added they should be experienced in using DHCD software and clarified there is nothing negative about Fenton Ewald's work, this is just good policy/practice. He also added there is likely a limited number of accountants who would be interested/experienced. T. Danzy stated she has had a good working relationship with the firm and they serve a lot of housing authorities. The Board agreed new options should be considered.

P. Orenstein made a motion to undertake review and research options for accounting firms; J. Grogan seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – P. Orenstein stated he would send some ideas to J. Grogan. Roll call vote: J. Grogan, "aye," E. Mooney, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor: 3-0.

B. Legal issues - Potential Board vote. J. Grogan stated an email was sent to the Board – and one action is in the discovery phase and questioned what is liability regarding Housatonic water. E. Mooney asked for a meeting with the DHCD attorney and noted it can be in executive session. J. Grogan agreed noting the Board is the client and is responsible for legal issues. T. Danzy suggested J. Grogan reach out to Sarah O'Leary at DHCD. P. Orenstein suggested calling it a briefing on the case in executive session. T. Danzy clarified if there is liability/settlement, GBHA is only responsible for \$1,000.

C. Policy Subcommittee/Policy Review-Separate meeting date? - Potential Board vote. J. Grogan suggested setting a date to meet and T. Danzy does not need to attend the first-round discussion as it will focus on which policies are acceptable, need updating or need to be created.

D. Ongoing Budget Reserve, PMR Report & Corrective order Discussion - Potential Board vote. T. Danzy confirmed there are no updates and there is nothing to do regarding the corrective order.

V. LTO Report – J. Sinico stated M. Koloski had been in touch with the LTO head office and GBHA is not permitted to do a survey on the LTO as it is a separate entity. T. Danzy clarified the intention was to build a better relationship with the LTO and to get feedback on staff – she added the questions were informational. J. Merola stated it should have been discussed with the LTO in advance and if it goes forward there would be legal action. J. Grogan suggested the office and LTO representative(s) should meet to discuss any issues and work them out. He added that surveys should stop. The Board was in agreement on next steps.

VI. Minute Review/Approval Board Meeting of July & August Meetings. E. Mooney stated corrections were made, but minutes were not sent out. J. Grogan stated he would send them and would be covered at the next meeting.

VII. CITIZEN SPEAK: No citizens asked to speak.

#### VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

A. E. Mooney asked about getting funds/vouchers from DHCD re: augmented rent – J. Grogan replied there was no reply from DHCD on this, but he will follow up. He noted DHCD was supposed to be considering a new program for vouchers with no threshold of entry for families who are downsizing. E. Mooney suggested contacting Chris Rembold, Assistant Town Manager about Town funds that might be available.

B. T. Blauvelt reported CPA step one applications are due October 28 and the application will be on the Town website. He noted housing is one committed use for the funds – it cannot be maintenance, but can be a specific item and GBHA may consider applying. J. Grogan suggested the voucher program.

IX. ADJOURNMENT - J. Grogan made a motion to adjourn; P. Orenstein seconded. Roll call vote: J. Grogan, "aye," E. Mooney, "aye," P. Orenstein, "aye." All in favor: 3-0. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 1:39pm.

Documents reviewed: Financial statements, Fair Housing Marketing Plan template, Project #116076 proposal.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow