

APPROVED
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 16, 2023

Participation was done on site at Flag Rock in the community room and 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 Grogan called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. In attendance: Board of Commissioners: Chairman John Grogan, Phil Orenstein, Jackie Sinico, Eileen Mooney

Executive Director (ED) Tina Danzy, Assistant to the Executive Director Madonna Meagher,
LTO President, Marlene Koloski
Public: Susan M, June B, Nora B., Karen S., Sue B., Ann P., Lynn N., Rosemary B., Pete W.

II: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Executive Director Danzy reviewed the financials and warrant cover sheets. Asking if there were questions regarding financials, Chairman Grogan questioned the "Admin Other" budget line, that it's overspent for the quarter and would be helpful to know what the payees are for that budget line. Executive Director Danzy reminded the board that the former fee accountant Sue Honeycutt provided that as a courtesy to the board but GBHA has another fee accountant that hasn't been providing that back end information and if it's provided it may cost the GBHA additional accounting fees.

Board member Mooney had concerns about the legal expenses. Executive Director Danzy responded that she continues to ask DHCD for additional funds due to the increase in legal assistance for non-payments, cause, and evictions. Executive Director Danzy reminded the board that DHCD used to pay for the entire legal costs of GBHA but recently stopped the practice of full reimbursement. Thus, the budget will show a significant increase in legal expenses but Ms. Danzy will continue to seek additional funds from DHCD.

Board member Orenstein had questions regarding an update on solar expenses and a consultant doing a review from Power Options. Discussion ensued regarding the solar arrangement and timetables. Executive Director Danzy had a meeting with them and stated that the project is in the beginning stages, including tree trimming issues and meters. Orenstein requested a summary report from Power Options as they were going to do a review regarding the Bus Lot and Fairgrounds solar fields currently being used. Chairman Grogan offered to contact Power Options.

Continuing with her report, Executive Director Danzy reported that Flag Rock family inspections had been completed. Housekeeping and hoarding concerns are present, and all other GBHA unit inspections will follow.

All efforts of advertising a position for a part time maintenance worker has yielded no applicants. Discussion ensued regarding community outreach for people who might be looking for work.

Executive Director Danzy gave an update on MassNAHRO who will be handling priority preference through the CHAMP waitlist system.

Regarding rent recertifications, only one unit was not in compliance and that tenant has been sent a 30 day NTQ. All other tenants have made significant efforts to be in compliance. Executive Director Danzy appreciated all the

efforts that were made from staff and tenants for completing the required rent recertifications.

Executive Director Danzy continues to work with Spectrum for a contract to continue services that's affordable for tenants. She commented that the letter Spectrum sent out to tenants about the pending changes in service was premature.

The postponed GBHA cookout due to unit inspections and rent recertifications is still a priority and will hopefully be scheduled in the near future.

Executive Director Danzy requested the Board acknowledge - "certify" a DHCD requirement regarding wage match for FY 23. Executive Director Danzy stated that the wage match was completed for FY23 and she was recently informed it required the board to acknowledge it had been completed. Discussion ensued regarding the term "certifying" the report which the board had not seen. **Chairman Grogan made a motion to approve the wage match certification that was submitted from the Executive Director to DHCD for FY '23, seconded by Orenstein. Vote: Sinico aye, Mooney, nay, Grogan, aye, Orenstein, aye. Motion passes 3-1.**

Chairman Grogan asked the newly appointed board member Jackie Sinico if she had completed her certification as a board member. She stated she had. Executive Director Danzy asked Ms. Sinico to submit the certification information so it could be entered into the DHCD system.

Executive Director Danzy updated the board on vacancies, CHAMP list pulls and recent move-ins.

MAINTENANCE UPDATE:

Executive Director Danzy and Maintenance Supervisor Rich Phair gave brief reports on all the GBHA sites.

At last, a camera has been installed to monitor part of the parking lot and dumpster area. Discussion ensued from the board regarding placement of additional cameras.

The GB Conservation Commission (Shep Evans) has not contacted RCAT representative Hugh McKay regarding the storm drain at Flag Rock. An engineer who was supposed to be on-site the day before this board meeting never showed. Board member Orenstein offered to contact Mr. Evans.

The Executive Director and Maintenance Supervisor informed the board that the plowing contract last year to Hils now wants to increase his fee for the second year of a two year contract. Discussion ensued regarding concerns of Hils not honoring the contract he signed last year. Executive Director Danzy stated she didn't have a problem discussing the matter and that Hils should be held to the contract whether or not they seek a cost of living increase.

Bears raiding dumpsters is a problem at Dewey. Executive Director Danzy has been researching grants for bear-proof dumpsters through MSPCA.

Brookside Manor had an emergency tree removal as a large limb fell onto one of the buildings (no damage was reported to the roof) and electric wires made it unsafe to remove the limb without the electric company being involved. Discussions are on-going with an abutting neighbor for access for tree removal.

Brookside Manor refurbishing of the back porches continues to be a priority for repair/replace and RCAT's Hugh McKay is continuing designing a project for this.

Regarding the Flag Rock senior elevator, Rich Phair noted that there is a new project manager at Otis Elevator and he has yet to connect with the project manager to discuss the elevator on-going maintenance and the Otis contract.

III: NEW BUSINESS:

NEXT MEETING: September 21, 2023 @ 11:00 a.m. Brookside (if available) TBD

GBHA letter to DPU opposing HWW rate hike:

Board members Grogan, Orenstein and Mooney worked separately on three different letters regarding the HWW.

1. Chairman Grogan suggested the GBHA board of commissioners write to the DPU opposing the HWW water rate hike. A public hearing regarding the rate hike would take place at the high school on 9/26/23 @ 7:00 p.m. Discussion ensued. A draft Grogan composed was “strident” in tone and Mooney’s less “strident”. It was suggested to meld the two letters and Mooney agreed to take on that task.

Grogan made a motion to “meld” the DPU draft letters of Mooney and Grogan. Seconded by Mooney. Vote: All board members in favor. Motion passes 4-0

2. Board member Mooney can compose a letter to the town selectboard regarding monetary compensation for tenants who have problems with the HWW.

Orenstein made a motion to send the Mooney letter to the selectboard/town manager seconded by Mooney. Vote: All board members in favor. Motion passes 4-0

3. Board member Mooney can compose a letter to local agencies regarding the HWW.

Mooney made a motion to compose and send a letter to local agencies, seconded by Grogan. Vote: All board members in favor. Motion passes 4-0.

IV (a): OLD BUSINESS:

Regarding a potential water filtration for Flag Rock, Maintenance supervisor Rich Phair commented that Moran Mechanical is working on feasibility and cost.

IV (b): CITIZEN SPEAK:

Karen S. commented on the parking lot flooding at Brookside from a recent storm. Maintenance Supervisor Phair responded that the Brookside parking lot is not tied into the town storm drains, all there is at Brookside is a seep well, it takes time for water to drain.

Susan M. complimented the GBHA staff for addressing Brookside complaints.

Pete W. asked maintenance staff if they could assist in making better visibility at the bottom of the driveway, as a bush is impairing the visibility for drivers exiting Flag Rock in a safe manner.

V. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

Grogan made a motion to approve the July 20, 2023 draft minutes, seconded by Mooney. Unanimous by board. Motion passes 4-0

VI: LTO REPORT:

Board member Sinico began to make a report but was cut short by Chairman Grogan who stated as a board member she would not be allowed to do a report.

LTO President Marlene Koloski had left the meeting when this item was up for discussion.

VII: BOARD COMMENTS:

Board member Mooney requested board meeting agendas be placed on the bulletin boards along with the GBHA grievance policy and an update on the Housatonic Water Works. Mooney also requested Chairman Grogan place the

order of the agenda differently.

Board member Sinico commented that the maintenance staff has been prompt in response to a work order in her apartment.

VIII: ADJOURNMENT: 12:34 p.m.

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Madonna Meagher

Documents reviewed: Agenda, draft minutes 7/20/23; financial reports; Warrant cover pages

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.