

GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY  
Special Meeting November 29, 2023 via Zoom and In-person  
at Flag Rock Community Room 2 Bernard Gibbons Dr., Housatonic, MA 01236

I. CALL TO ORDER: Attendance Roll Call, decorum requirements.

Chairman John Grogan opened the meeting at 1:00pm with Board members John Grogan, Maureen Meier, Eileen Mooney, Phil Orenstein, Jackie Sinico present.

Also in attendance: Executive Director Tina Danzy

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

1. Discontinuation of the \$20 per tenant water concession on 2/1/2024. At request of EOHLC.  
Potential Board vote.

- The Board discussed the Town's program to reimburse Housatonic residents for water filtration, bottled water and cleaning-related supplies. J. Grogan stated he is on the review committee and applications are one-time only at this time and he recommended tenants hold receipts until expenses reach \$300.
- Ann Pruhenski, tenant, stated many people do not have receipts. J. Grogan replied they can start saving them now as the program is open through 2026 - and the State is requiring receipts.
- The Board discussed the installation of a filter on the main going to the senior units at Flag Rock and it was noted it needs to be confirmed that it is the right kind of filter. E. Mooney stated the family units need a filtration option too and suggested the Town be asked if it can help with funding. J. Grogan clarified it is a \$300 limit per household and that in February the program will be reviewed by the Town and there may be other options.
- Regarding the discontinuation of \$20 per tenant by EOHLC – T. Danzy clarified that the funds were no longer available as there is now Town funding. It was discussed that T. Danzy should connect with Carolina at EOHLC to clarify State funds are not entirely available to tenants as many do not have receipts, but as soon as they are, EOHLC funding can be eliminated.

**P. Orenstein made a motion to contact EOHLC and ask that funding be continued through June 30, 2024 after which, assistance of the Town will be available; E. Mooney seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – there was none. All in favor 5-0.**

- T. Danzy stated she would get a response from EOHLC by the December meeting.
- P. Orenstein noted everyone at Flag Rock should be notified they should collect receipts.

2. Authorization of a \$10K increase to the RSC program, approving/accepting additional funding for our joint participation. Potential Board vote

- T. Danzy stated the RSC program has been every beneficial and Marleen Koloski, LTO Lead and tenants agree. It was discussed that the additional funds could be used for additional hours of availability.

**E. Mooney made a motion to accept the extra grant as an increase in the amount of funding for the RSC program; P. Orenstein seconded. J. Grogan asked for any discussion – there was none. All in favor 5-0.**

### III. CITIZEN SPEAK:

- M. Koloski stated tenants need time to talk to the Board and asked for better follow up on matters that are raised. She noted the railing on the stairs needs to be fixed. J. Grogan replied the Board does not get involved in the day-to-day operations. E. Mooney stated the Board oversees how the properties are run, and if complaints are raised, it is the Board's responsibility to see they are corrected. T. Danzy stated decisions depend on projects, funding and staff availability and she noted reserves are very low and funds are only spent on necessities. She noted the intention is to get issues fixed as quickly as possible.
- A. Pruhenski stated major fixes are needed and there needs to be more day-to-day maintenance.
- Unidentified tenant stated that maintenance staff works hard and must take care of all the properties.
- Unidentified tenant stated we should get volunteers to help with maintenance. T. Danzy agreed, but noted a CORI is required for all volunteers. The Board agreed to having volunteer help.

Is it Maureen speaking?

### IV. NEW BUSINESS: There was none.

### IV. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Audit Update – E. Mooney stated the State Auditor does not do housing authorities, but stated she would look into the cost of hiring an auditor and will add it to the next meeting agenda. T. Danzy noted it cost \$4500 for the API.
2. Tenant complaints – J. Grogan stated there have been several tenant complaints/issues raised during the last few meetings and the Board has not had the opportunity to discuss in an open meeting. He added the Board should decide if hearing a complaint should be held in a public meeting or in executive session.
  - J. Sinico stated she has been approached with personal issues best heard in executive session.
  - M. Meier stated there is a process for hearing complaints and they should be prioritized and be decided based on what is best way to address them. She added raising issues with the office should be the first step and only after there is an impasse should it come to the Board.
  - E. Mooney stated there have been a lot of complaints and she asked to hear from T. Danzy how they are being addressed. She suggested having an executive session after the December meeting or as a special meeting.
  - J. Sinico stated tenants are asking that citizen speak and the LTO report be slated earlier on the agenda. J. Grogan agreed to do so.
  - P. Orenstein stated he does not have a strong preference for a public or executive session, the issues just need to be aired.
  - T. Danzy asked for more details on her role in the executive session, what it would entail and what complaints are being discussed. And she asked for time to prepare or have representation. It was noted that one of the complaints in question is focused on staff behavior towards tenants. P. Orenstein suggested holding an executive session where concerns are aired/discussed in detail, but there is no expectation for resolution so T. Danzy has time to consider/confer and respond. It was agreed there should be a two-step process as described and that a meeting would be scheduled at the next meeting and would likely occur in January.

V. LTO REPORT – There was none.

VII. BOARD COMMENTS

- The Board discussed minutes and it was raised that Zoom AI or another mechanism could be used to get a transcript which may suffice as meeting minutes. E. Mooney stated that may not comply with Open Meeting Law, and the Board could be liable - but she would look into it.
- T. Danzy asked that if the Board acts together as a whole, no one individual should contact other agencies of their own accord unless the Board voted for them to do so.
- E. Mooney stated meeting agendas must always be posted at every property. The Board discussed ways to ensure the agendas are being posted. E. Mooney suggested emailing the agenda to each location and asking them to post it.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – **J. Sinico made a motion to adjourn; E. Mooney seconded. All in favor: 5-0.**  
The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 2:04pm.

Documents discussed: Letter from EOHLC re: discontinuation of the \$20 per tenant water concession.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow