

APPROVED  
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING  
GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING  
February 18, 2020 3:00 PM  
Flag Rock Village Community Room  
2 Bernard Gibbons Drive Gt. Barrington, MA. 01230

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mercer called the meeting to order at 3:14 p.m. In attendance board of commissioners: Mercer, Sinico, Mooney and Becker. Ryan arrived at 3:18pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM: January 21, 2020.

With a change of three items requested by Mooney, Becker made a motion to approve the minutes as amended seconded by Sinico. **Roll Call Vote: Mooney aye, Sinico aye, Mercer aye, Becker aye. Motion passes.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT:

Executive Director Danzy reported on the \$27,000 Health & Safety Initiative grant she applied for and received for Dewey Court walkways and an ADA ramp.. The timeline for completion of the project by the end of June is a concern and Danzy reported that additional special board meetings may be needed to move the project to completion. Becker thanked Danzy for her hard work in securing the grant.

Becker made a motion to have the housing authority create a recorded history of the grants applied for and details of grants received, seconded by Mooney.

**Vote: Mercer aye, Mooney aye, Becker aye, Sinico aye, Ryan aye. Unanimous.**

Executive Director Danzy reported most tenants are paying their rents on time. There has been no word from the State if the resident services coordinator (RSC) grant discussed at previous meetings has been awarded. The request for bi-annual recertification for 667 that was approved by the board in January has not been confirmed by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Contractor bidding is being advertised for the Brookside foundation repairs. Code Red tenant information forms continue to be sent to the office. Mooney suggested that the ED inquire if local business Carr Hardware would give a discount to the housing authority. Executive Director Danzy agreed to check. Executive Director Danzy reported that she and the fee accountant Sue Honeycutt will meet on March 3rd to work on the FY21 budget. Mooney voiced concerns about the line item specificity for the budget.

AGREED UPON PROCEDURES (AUP):

Sue Honeycutt, CPA and fee accountant from Fenton, Ewald & Associates gave a brief history of the annual AUP and the differences in the AUP audit and a conventional audit. Accounting firms approved by DHCD visit the housing authority each year at a cost of \$2500 per year and review/report on a check list created by DHCD. The DHCD checklist is comprehensive and a report is given by these state auditors to DHCD. A copy of Gary DePace CPA Independent Auditor's Report regarding the housing authority FY19 was discussed. Mooney voiced concerns about exceptions noted in the report and asked for more specificity. Executive Director Danzy reminded the board that in FY19 the housing authority was under the direction of the previous Executive Director Vera Cartier and that Danzy overlapped the fiscal year as an interim for the last quarter. Discussion ensued with Ryan and Becker suggesting that the board should have additional time to look over the AUP, submit questions sent to Executive

Director Danzy ahead of the next meeting to pass to fee accountant Honeycutt so she can go over the AUP details point by point.

#### LEAN PROGRAM FREE FUNDING FOR FLAG ROCK AND DEWEY:

As discussed in previous meetings: 10/15/19, 11/26/19 & 1/21/20, Mercer made a motion to approve the free funding of electrical upgrades at Flag Rock & Dewey, seconded by Mooney. Vote: Mercer aye, Mooney aye, Becker aye, Sinico aye, Ryan aye. Unanimous.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Follow-up on housing authority topics. Executive Director Danzy reported that the housing authority is in year two of a ten year contract with the laundry company that services Flag Rock & Brookside. The company installed the machines that were requested for ADA compliance.

Executive Director Danzy submitted a draft of a snow removal policy to the board. Mooney made a motion to approve the snow removal policy, seconded by Mercer. Vote: Mercer aye, Mooney aye, Becker aye, Sinico aye, Ryan aye. Unanimous.

Tenant security deposits and pet security deposits were discussed. The housing authority has not been consistent with collecting them in the past. Executive Director Danzy noted that she has been collecting them for recent move-ins. Danzy recommended to the board to have a policy stating that security deposits be paid in full equal to the first month rent at the signing of the lease. Sinico made a motion to have security deposits, no second from the board. Mooney asked for legal advice on whether security deposits could be made in installments. Regarding tenant fire safety and evacuation procedures, Chairman Mercer reported there is no new information. In a previous board meeting, Becker volunteered to assist in forming procedures. Mooney requested information on fire hydrant maintenance at all properties and an update at the next board meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding logistics and procedures for tenants and board members surveys that will evaluate the Executive Director's job performance whose contract ends on March 31, (the end of the FY20). Becker updated the surveys to be distributed to all tenants suggesting another conversation about the process at the next meeting. Chairman Mercer agreed with Becker to continue the process, with Becker gathering data for the evaluation. Ryan suggested that any tenant surveys with comments needed to be signed by the tenant. Chairman Mercer voiced concerns of ensuring survey accuracy specifically that each tenant receive one survey and only one survey should be returned, thus eliminating the possibility of duplicates. Discussion then centered on how to achieve that accuracy with Ryan suggesting numbering the surveys, having Executive Director Danzy mail the surveys and having a fixed date of return. Chairman Mercer agreed to get easily identified color coded labels and envelopes that would be returned to the office. Mooney remarked that no return survey should be opened by the office staff. With no disagreement from board members, the plan of action was to move forward with sending out surveys. There was no board vote taken.

#### BUDGET REPORT:

Accountant Sue Honeycutt gave GBHA financial updates and report. Board questions were answered by Honeycutt including the Local Tenant Organization (LTO) budget money of just over \$600. Honeycutt reminded the board that the FY20 budget had not been approved by the board. Executive Danzy remarked that the housing authority has purchased a printer and ink cartridges for the LTO during this fiscal year. Request from Honeycutt for board approval for the revised budget to be sent to DHCD was presented. Ryan made a motion to approve the revised budget, Mooney seconded. Vote: Mercer aye, Mooney aye, Becker aye, Sinico aye, Ryan aye. Unanimous.

#### SHEFFIELD BOARD REPRESENTATION:

Following up on the last board meeting regarding contact with Representative Pignatelli, Mooney reported that there

was no new information to report from the letter she sent to him. Chairman Mercer commented that he had expected Mooney to provide a draft of the letter for Representative Pignatelli so the board could discuss the issue and not mail him her letter.. Chairman Mercer reiterated his support for a Sheffield representative on the board of commissioners should the housing in Sheffield expand. Mooney suggested an update at the next board meeting.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Madonna Meagher Open Meeting Law violation/complaint regarding Mooney. Chairman Mercer asked if this item could be postponed to the next meeting. Meagher agreed.

Eileen Mooney Open Meeting Law violation/complaint regarding Chairman Mercer tabled. Mooney remarked that she filed a complaint under MGL which is different from an OML complaint.

#### LTO REPORT:

LTO President, Marlene Koloski thanked Executive Director Danzy for moving the housing authority in a forward direction specifically noting the grants to help Dewey and Flag Rock. Koloski reprimanded board members Sinico and Mooney for attending the recent LTO meeting. Koloski reminded the entire board that only tenants are allowed at the LTO meetings and while Sinico and Mooney may be tenants they are also board members. Koloski accused Sinico and Mooney of taking information from the LTO meeting and raising those issues at a board of commissioners meeting.

#### BOARD SPEAK:

Mooney questioned the timeliness of the draft minutes on the town website. Chairman Mercer complimented Meagher for getting the minutes and packets ready for the board after the agenda was posted. Sinico questioned the laundry dryer vent cleaning.

#### CITIZEN SPEAK:

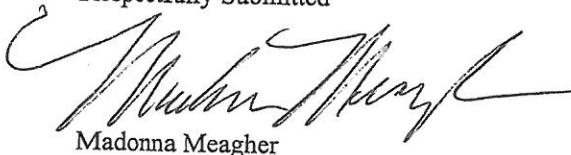
A Great Barrington resident commented on security deposits asking if security deposits are enforceable and stating a payment plan suggested by the board earlier in the meeting might be an undue burden on the Executive Director. A Flag Rock tenant also commented on security deposits specifically if it is a hardship for new tenants to pay.

**ADJOURNMENT: Mercer made a motion to adjourn was seconded by Ryan. Unanimous approval 5-0 4:38pm**

**NEXT MEETING: March 17, 2020: Flag Rock Community Room 3:30 PM**

Documents reviewed: Agenda, January 21,2020 minutes, DePace AUP, Proposed Conservation Measures to be performed: Flagrock, Dewey Way, snow removal policy, Budget reports: 4001, 4009, 689, Proposed Revision of FY20 GBHA budget, Mooney letter to Rep. Pignatelli and Karen Smith letter, Meagher OML violation re:Mooney, Mooney complaint re: Mercer and attachments, Tenant survey for ED

Respectfully Submitted



Madonna Meagher

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.