

GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Approved 11/7/18

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Special Board Meeting

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MEETING MINUTES

Great Barrington Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

Thursday, August 30, 2018

Present: Karen Smith, James Mercer, Jackie Sinico, Diane Dillon

Administration: Vera Cartier, Rich Phair

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Karen Smith at 2:30PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 15, 2018

Cartier stated a correction to the August 15th minutes:

Page 3, under the heading Champ Conversation and Training, “The State will provide funds to train, which Smith and Cartier will be attending to learn how to upload the current waiting list to the new system” should read “The State will provide funds to train, which Karen Lewis and Vera Cartier will be attending to learn how to upload the current waiting list to the new system”

Mercer made a motion, seconded by Dillon to approve the meeting minutes of August 15, 2018 as amended.

Unanimous approval via roll call vote.

OLD BUSINESS

a) Letter to Tree Warden regarding Brookside Trees

Cartier reported two trees have been removed at Brookside. When the roof project for Buildings 5, 7 and 8 takes place any branches that are overhanging the roof area will also be trimmed back by the roofing contractor.

b) Vacancies based on minutes of July 8th and report given at the meeting of August 5th

Current vacancies include (2) family units and (1) one bedroom unit. GBHA is currently has 82 units with 97% occupancy. The one bedroom unit is expected to be rented in the next week. The (2) family units have been offline since May 1st. Rich Phair stated he has had the carpet company to the property

three times, and they were unable to do the job. Another estimate has already been received and an additional company is coming to also provide an estimate. Unit 27 needs the carpet to be put down, bottom of doors trimmed for vapor barrier and cleaned. The second unit, Unit 14, is currently being used as a workshop for the dehumidifier project. Ceiling fans have all been installed. Maintenance will begin pulling carpets in that unit soon. There is no clear projection yet when Unit 14 will be ready to be rented.

Smith inquired why a rentable asset is being used as a workshop. Phair stated he could empty out the workshop and store the equipment to be installed there. Cartier stated she expects both units to be on line and rented by the end of October.

Mercer inquired whether the Authority was receiving additional funds to assist with the re-conditioning of the units, since Unit 14 was left in a very poor state. **Cartier to make the phone call to secure as much support as possible.**

- c) Energy Audit Status with LEAN and Mass Save
- d) OBX Energy Status

Cartier reported she recently was able to connect with her last contact, who sent her back to Mass Save. A representative of Mass Save recently stopped by the office, so Cartier has an appointment on September 5th to meet with John Johnston to begin working on the energy audit. Mass Save is able to perform an energy audit on any buildings containing no more than (4) units. They will be able to work with all GBHA properties except the Flag Rock Senior building.

Smith stated she and Mercer received a proposal to create energy savings systems. The proposal was around \$130,000. Phair stated he had not heard from his previous contact regarding dimmers, but has met with GBHA's electrician who has stated he could install dimmer controls. Also, they can perform a test using the first five street lights – bypassing the ballast and installing “corn bulbs”, which are LED and will use half the energy. **Smith requested the Board receive information on the cost of the dimmers and the cost of the LED bulbs.**

- e) ATT and Verizon regarding cell service

Cartier reported she has spoken to both companies who readily stated the lack of service to the property is due to its location. They also stated a representative will be in touch. **Smith directed Cartier to obtain names and contact information and she will work the top to generate pressure for better service.** It is critical that the individuals on this property have access to cell service for emergency purposes. A booster can be installed on the property to boost service.

- f) Status of \$40.00 a month charge for Suite

Cartier stated this service and charge was part of the original contract when new computers were purchased in 2012. The \$40.00 charge is actually \$20.00 per month for two computers. This is a monthly recurring charge for PC monitoring with remote support and maintenance. Smith stated she would like to use a portion of the monies in the Technology Grant to have a local individual assess the current equipment for function and needs. She would also like to see the Maintenance Department

receive IPADS with GPS capability. Mercer inquired whether the service included virus protection and would caution discontinuing the service if this was so. Smith stated no one has ever seen any of this monitoring or maintenance take place. **Smith instructed Cartier to ask for a list from the provider of the remote check-ins and monitoring have been performed.**

g) Phone issues with roll over

Cartier reported the phone line roll over in the Flag Rock office has not been functioning. The problem has been corrected and tested to make sure it is working. Now if a call comes into the Main Office, if the main line is busy it will roll over to the second line. If all lines are busy the call will roll to voicemail. Smith stated she would like to see Dewey be able to roll to the main office phones when no one is staffing the office there. Dewey phone calls should not be going to a voicemail. **Smith instructed Cartier to check into whether the Dewey phone line could roll over to the main office phones when the office at Dewey was not staffed.**

h) Quotes on Speed Bumps

Phair reported he has made several inquiries regarding speed bumps, and all companies cost about the same. It would be roughly \$258.00 for each 6' speed bump. These speed bumps could be removed during the winter to allow for plowing. Sinico stated she believes 3 speed bumps would do the job. **Smith would like Shaun VanDuesen of the DPW Department to be contacted to look at the problem and give his recommendation for what should be done.** At this point of the year speed bumps would not be installed until next spring.

i) Financial Report (Banking balances with project numbers)

Cartier stated the Board has a report showing the various accounts and balances of each. Dewey Pet Account, Dewey Senior account 6673 and Dewey Family account 7052. 689 Berkshire Meadows Flag Rock, 6671 Brookside, 6672 Senior Flag Rock, 705 Family Flag Rock and Pet Deposit for Brookside and Flag Rock. Monies have not been transferred yet to the Dewey account from the DCHD. The balance in that account represents rents collected. Smith inquired whether Cartier has been in touch with anyone regarding the bills at Dewey. Cartier stated the bills are in the name of GBHA as of July 1st. Smith instructed Cartier to get in touch with Theresa regarding the Dewey bills.

Smith requested a report be supplied at the next meeting on balances of bills that are outstanding.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Revised Extract Minutes requested by DHCD

Cartier stated a revision is needed with new salary inserted - \$49,750 – Witness of document must be the same person as before, Marlene Koloski. Document was amended, signed and witnessed.

b) PMR Report Review

Cartier reported that every year maintenance performance is inspected. A couple of units at Flag Rock were inspected, along with one unit at Brookside. Anything they picked up on happened after GBHA's

own yearly inspections were completed, such as a tenant painted their bathroom and painted over the electrical outlets and switches. Another had a broken outlet cover, so they removed the cover completely. These items have all been repaired. An additional issue was learning how to pull up maintenance records. Cartier will scan and submit the completed repair orders for the exceptions that were found.

c) Handling of PHN Notices

Smith reported there are 35 to 40 PHN (Public Housing Administration Notices) notices per year regarding a myriad of things. In the future these notices will be printed out and distributed, Board members will sign off that they have read them, along with any other pertinent staff. This information will be forwarded to the Executive Director.

Sinico is currently working on blending the Preventive Maintenance document using a GBHA document and the State document to make it GBHA specific. Once this is finished it will be brought before the Board for review.

Smith has requested Cartier to find out whether PHN's are sorted by topic.

d) Personnel Subcommittee for Executive Director Review

Smith stated a motion is needed by the Board to create a Personnel Subcommittee for the purpose of employee performance review. It was agreed Smith and Mercer would serve on this Board.

Mercer made a motion, seconded by Dillon to create a Personnel Subcommittee of the Great Barrington Housing Authority Board. Chairperson Smith and Vice-Chair Mercer to serve on this subcommittee.

Unanimous approval.

CITIZEN SPEAK

Marlene Koloski stated the Spectrum wiring of the Senior building is outdated. Cable television and telephone service goes on and off on a regular basis. Phair stated he will speak to the electrician about an upgrade of the wiring. This wiring is the property/responsibility of the GBHA.

Cartier stated the Brookside cable is under contract until next year. She would like feedback from the Flag Rock tenants whether they would like to keep the cable or not. Smith stated this entity is in the housing business and not the cable business. There are so many other venues that people use these days besides cable such as internet streaming, etc. **Smith would be interested in how other Housing Authorities deal with cable service. She would welcome public input and suggested this could be something the Resident Advisory Board could work on.**

Michelle Loubert stated there has been considerable discussion within government boards in Great Barrington with regard to affordable housing. She is curious whether any Board members or the Executive Director will be attending the upcoming 2018 Housing Summit being held on Thursday, September 20th. Smith stated the Board will take it under advisement. She plans on attending and would like to see what the discussion topics are.

A question was raised regarding the new Champs system for the tenant waiting list. It is important that GBHA openings be filled with local residents, and not residents from other parts of the State. Cartier is not sure whether Champs will work in that way, but she does know the determination of what is an "emergency" is becoming very difficult to prove. Being deemed an emergency jumps that person/family to the top of the waiting list. Currently, the definition for eligibility is "working or living" in the area. Cartier is not sure whether Construct properties will be part of this system or not. Karen Lewis added she recently attended the dedication of the new Forest Springs property on State Road. Smitty Pignetelli was in attendance and stated he would like to see more small complexes come on line – 12 to 15 units in size.

ADJOURNMENT

Mercer made a motion, seconded by Sinico to adjourn the meeting at 3:25PM.

Unanimous approval via roll call vote.



Respectfully submitted by Debra E Brazie