

GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Board Approved 1/15/19

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MEETING MINUTES

Great Barrington Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, December 18, 2018

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

Administration: Tina Danzy

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Smith at 2:00PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - November 20, 2018

Sinico made a motion, seconded by Dillon to approve the meeting minutes of November 20, 2018 as written.

Unanimous approval.

RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD

Marlene Koloski stated there was nothing to report.

CITIZEN SPEAK:

None.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT:

a) Office update – Tina Danzy

Danzy reported she has spent much of the last month familiarizing herself with the office, cleaning up and re-organizing files, etc. She is approximately 75% finished with that project.

A number of piles of paperwork in “limbo” have been discovered, such as outstanding invoices, work orders and re-certification paperwork. There is a large backlog of work orders that need to be dealt with. Danzy has discussed these with Phair and shown him how to enter them into the PHA system. As soon as the technology grant is in place Scott will also be trained to do the same for the Dewey property.

Danzy is working on creating a new filing system for work orders. Also purging old vendor invoices going back to January of 2017. Multiple years of invoices have been found, organized and filed away.

Danzy reported she was unable to find a current/up to date easy access file for vendor insurance certificates. She will be requesting updated certificates from all vendors.

b) CHAMPS training

Danzy reported she attended a CHAMPS training last week with regard to the waitlist. The GBHA waitlist is now up to date and potential tenants will be pulled off the waitlist, with priority being given to handicapped/disabled.

c) Vacancies

Danzy reported there are currently (4) vacancies: Unit 110, Unit 14, (1) at Dewey Court and (1) at Brookside. The Dewey Court and Brookside vacancies are due to residents who have recently passed away.

Danzy reported the Statement of Requirement for Disabled/Handicapped units is 13%. Great Barrington Housing Authority should have (11) units. When looking at the waitlist this area will become a high priority.

Unit 14 requires extensive work due to extreme tenant damage. A request is present for Board vote today to add this unit to the Capital Plan. It is estimated to need approximately \$8,831.00 in work to ready it for tenant occupancy. All heating baseboard has been destroyed, covers removed and elements smashed, with cost of replacement estimated to be \$5,400.00. All interior doors need to be replaced, with an estimated cost of \$600.00 for hinges and hanging of doors. Phair stated each new door would cost an additional \$50.00 to \$60.00. Carpet/pad replacement is estimated to cost \$1,385.00.

Danzy stated she is concerned about transferring households to brand new units when those same households have destroyed other units, with no repercussion. Going forward she strongly recommends that the Executive Director and Maintenance Director inspect a unit prior to a transfer and evaluate the condition of the unit being vacated. Unit 14 is all tenant damage that should have been avoided.

Danzy requested that Unit 110, an ADA unit, also be added to the Capital Plan. Phair has inspected the unit and has determined that it requires replacement of a linoleum floor that is over 20 years old. The unit has also not been painted in over 20 years. A request for Board approval to add these repairs to the Capital Plan is being brought forward.

Mercer made a motion, seconded by Sinico to approve repair expenses be added to the GBHA Capital Plan for Unit 14, \$8,831.00 and the Unit 01 – ADA unit, \$7,72.00. Arcat will be covering payment for this expense.

Unanimous approval.

d) Update on Recertification's

Danzy reported it appears a mass recertification was attempted to be completed for September 1, 2018, most of which seems to be complete. However, there is a question of whether tenants received a proper change of notification regarding the effective date of any updates. Several recertification's were also done in October and November, which are not able to have an effective date of September 1st if rents increased. Danzy stated she has shared this concern with Caroline at DHCD.

Danzy has also found that new rental amounts were not transferred to the rent roll. They have all been added to the December 1, 2018 rent roll, so there may be some adjustments that need to be made. Danzy will wait until after the holidays when Caroline from DHCD comes. At that time this issue will be addressed as to how to move forward.

Danzy reported she and Smith have determined that there were (9) "no response" and (11) "in process" for the September 1st recertification. All "no response" were sent letters last week requesting immediate follow up. A couple of the (11) "in process" have been completed, and a few more continue to trickle in.

Danzy reported she has not reviewed all of the September 1st recertification's that were completed, but of note, she has discovered a couple she has reviewed appear to have errors. On one, a work exclusion was given to a household with no earned income. A couple other were given deductions without documentation. Those have been fixed. Danzy will wait until DHCD visits and will possibly review more files to see if other adjustments are necessary.

Danzy reported she found the rent roll had a serious backlog – no rents collected since August had been recorded. This area has also been cleaned up.

A huge stack of applications was discovered that needed to be entered into the CHAMP System. This project is finally complete. The live date for the CHAMP system was originally the 5th, then it was bumped to the 1st. Housing authorities are now being told it could be as late as January 15, 2019. Eventually, an individual will be able to update their own information in the CHAMP System with their own ID.

Danzy stated it was reported to her by a tenant that there was a problem with the laundry system at Flagg Rock. A stack of starter cards seems to be missing. Phair had stated they had been kept locked in a petty cash box. Danzy has looked everywhere and is unable to find the missing cards.

FINANCIAL UPDATES

- a) Procedures going forward for 2019
- b) Status of Accounts

Danzy reported on subsidy deposits made going back to July 1, 2018 as follows:

- September 24, 2018 - \$100,000.00
- October 17, 2018 - \$100,000.00
- November 19, 2018 - \$50,000

There have been other payments made also, such as the maintenance truck, technology, etc. Smith stated the Authority has just been made aware of what subsidy is for what code, so there will be a better understanding going forward of what subsidy money received represents. Mercer inquired whether technology monies are part of those deposits. Yes, but Danzy is unable to confirm what payments yet.

Danzy reported cash available as of December 18, 2019 is \$10,338.33. \$3,887.25 in check payments were cut this morning, minus payroll expenses for the month will bring total case to \$124,453.44. There are some invoices that were not addressed this morning. The bookkeeper will be back next week and will handle the remaining outstanding invoices.

OLD BUSINESS

a) Computer assessment review

Smith stated, as previously reported, an IT review of the GBHA technology has been performed. Much information has been received. The Board needs to review it thoroughly and use the \$10,000 Technology Grant awarded to make sure technology is as it should be. Recommendations are as follows:

- Discontinue DSL and contract with a higher volume internet provider
- Bring the Sheffield property on line and connect to the Great Barrington property server so work can be performed in that office.
- Begin using the PHA (Public Housing Authority) System for rent rolls, vendors, work orders, etc. Everything will be maintained on the same program.
- Drop (1) printer and discontinue main copier lease
- Upgrade RAM and hard drives in office computers
- Purchase additional desktop and create a work area in the back office for Maintenance staff
- Purchase work pads with internet connection for Maintenance staff

Smith stated a quote needs to be worked out for all this. Dillon inquired of Danzy whether she believed these recommendations to be sufficient. Danzy stated yes, and much needed. Two days this week work time was lost due to internet problems. Dillon also inquired what the direct result to residents would be. Smith stated when a work order comes in and is entered the Maintenance Department will see it immediately on their work pads and will not have to run back and forth to the office to deal with paper. More people services and less paper.

Dillon made a motion, seconded by Sinico to pursue a defined quote in regard to IT recommendations.

Unanimous approval.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Sick time Policy and Comp time update to align with state guidelines

Danzy reported she and the bookkeeper have been going through payroll records, and it seems there may be adjustments needed in regard to employee earned time.

Discrepancies have been noted. This area will be reviewed further in the coming months to determine what each employees earned time should be, and align it to the State guidelines.

MAINTENANCE REPORT - Rich Phair

- Phair reported Unit 14 requires complete replacement of the heating baseboard for the unit. All the baseboard covers have been removed and the heating elements smashed. Also, replacement and rehang (with hardware) of all interior doors
- They have all the LED lights for living room areas and are working on completing replacement of those.
- A range hood was replaced in Unit 7D.
- A no heat call was received on Thanksgiving Day at Dewey. An expansion tank had failed and water was leaking under the wall.
- There was also a no heat call for a new boiler – requiring the factory representative to come out. Phair stated he recommends not using this installer again if he is unable to work on the product he installs.
- A tenant at Brookside who is currently in rehab requires an ADA toilet. There is also another tenant requiring the same. Would like Board permission to purchase and install (2) ADA toilets.

Sinico made a motion, seconded by Dillon to approve of the purchase and installation of (2) ADA toilets.

Unanimous approval.

- A bid has been received from Miracle Method for refinishing/replacement of the tub/shower unit previously painted by a tenant. Refinishing \$1,004.00/Replacement \$3,400.00. Phair recommends refinishing. The company has stated it would take them a day to complete the work.
- A clogged pipe at Dewey was repaired. It was either clogged or frozen.
- Fall cleanup was not performed at Flag Rock Village. O'Brien did not have the time this fall season to complete it.
- Dehumidifier product: Electricians have come back and completed the electrical work they needed to do. Now waiting on Electrical Inspector to sign off.

BOARD COMMENTS

Sinico inquired whether Danzy is taking any classes? Danzy responded she recently took the CHAMPS training class. Sinico inquired whether Danzy paid for the class, as Interim Directors are afforded no “fringe benefits”. Danzy stated the class was free. Sinico inquired whether Danzy will be taking any additional classes. Danzy has stated there may be a few courses coming up that she is interested in attending.

Smith and Mercer approved the interim Director being reimbursed for mileage to and from the CHAMPS training class as it was a necessary training for the function of the GBHA office. Dillon inquired why the decision to do so was made by only (2) Board members. Smith stated the class had been scheduled, canceled and then rescheduled, there was no Board meeting in between. Dillon wanted to clarify that this was the first time she had heard of this also. Dillon stated she looks forward to the Board moving forward together.

Sinico inquired whether Danzy was checking on the tenant that had transferred from Unit 14 to the new unit. It was her understanding the agreement with the previous Executive Director was to inspect the unit once per month. Danzy stated no, she has not as she was not aware of the arrangement made. Danzy agrees inspections should be made. Danzy stated she also believes quarterly inspection to units with housekeeping issues should be made on a quarterly basis. These visits would help to curtail damage to units.

Mercer stated he believes the Board and Authority needs a “re-set”. He has printed off Housing Authority Rules and Policies that list Board responsibilities and Executive Director Responsibilities. He sees this document as a good reminder for all and will distribute copies to any interested party. In addition, the Interim Executive Director term ends February 12, 2019. An email has been sent to the State and the term will be extended to whatever they approve, and advertisement will be made for a permanent Executive Director.

Sinico stated she had requested to meet with Interim Executive Director Danzy three weeks ago and is still waiting for a time to do so.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Great Barrington Housing Authority will be held Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 2:00PM at the Senior Center.

A Tenant asked that copies of minutes and meeting agenda be available at each meeting. Smith stated copies of each are available at every meeting and she will make sure they receive a copy.

Smith also stated the next GBHA Board meeting will take place at the Senior Center in Great Barrington. The Board will begin rotating meetings to accommodate all properties. January will be at the Senior Center, February will be held in Sheffield and March will be held at Flag Rock Village. A schedule of where meetings are to be held could be produced and posted next to

tenant mailboxes. A tenant inquired why meetings could not be held in one place. Smith stated the Board will try the full rotation and will reassess.

ADJOURNMENT

Mercer made a motion, seconded by Sinico to adjourn the meeting at 2:42PM.

Unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted by Debra E Brazie