

GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
Special Meeting In-person at Flag Rock Village
Common Room 2 Bernard Gibbons Dr., Housatonic MA
Thursday, February 9, 2024 1:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER: Attendance Roll Call. Chairman John Grogan opened the meeting at 1:01 p.m. with Board members John Grogan, Eileen Mooney, Jackie Sinico, Maureen Meier, and Phil Orenstein present. Also in attendance: Executive Director Tina Danzy, Assistant to Director Madonna Meagher, LTO Head Marlene Koloski; and tenants as follows: June B., Nora B., Ann P., Rosemary B., and Mary E.

II. NEW BUSINESS: Discuss Executive Director Hiring Process

(1) Drafting and Distributing a Job Posting

John G. explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review and revise an ad used in a past search for an executive director, and then to strategize about how best to move forward in the search. To that end, John had sent out an ad to the group prior to the meeting. Eileen M. presented an alternative to the ad at the meeting. Eileen had revised the ad with the aim to reduce word count, thereby reducing ad cost.

Maureen M. inquired about where the job listing ought to be posted. Some discussion ensued about possible places, including mention of the following:

The Berkshire Eagle

The Berkshire Edge

Monster.com

Indeed.com

MA NAHRO (The MA National Association of Housing and Redevelopment
Officials)

Other housing authorities

The CHAPA jobs board (Citizens Housing and Planning Association)

The Boston Builders of Color Coalition

Idealist.org

NAHMA (National Affordable Housing Management Association)

MACDC (MA Association of Community Development Corporations)

AffordableHousingJobs.com

At least one minority newspaper from the list provided by Carolina at EOHLC

The Veterans' Agent
Springfield newspapers
Boston-area newspapers.

(2) Additional Possibilities for Filling the Position

Eileen M. suggested that we ask the housing authority in Stockbridge about the possibility of sharing a director. John G. reported that he had already spoken to Andrea Lindsay at the Stockbridge Housing authority, and the authority there had no interest.

John G. proposed that we consider hiring a consultant, often used to find superintendents, executive directors, etc. Jackie S. raised the point that a consultant costs money, and perhaps we should just try on our own to get some candidates first.

(3) Establishing a Timeline for the Ad Posting and Beyond

Maureen M. asked the group to try and establish a timeline with regard to having an ad ready, and asked what the turnaround time of might be for getting EOHCL approval for the ad.

John responded that he thought it might be a couple of days. He added that he thought we could finish drafting the ad today, and noted that we could send the ad to EOHLC on Monday morning, and perhaps we could start posting ads in newspapers on Wednesday.

John G. asked Tina D. whether the costs should be billed to the housing authority, and Tina said it would make the most sense.

Eileen M. asked where the money would come from, and Tina responded that it would have to come out of account 4190, the account named Administrative (Other).

Maureen M. asked that in the event we opted to use a consultant, would the consultant pay for advertising and complete all the paperwork? John G. affirmed that would be correct.

John stated that the job search and hiring process would be time-consuming, relaying the information that Carolina at EOHLC advised that we will need to follow procedure and regulations, and there were no shortcuts or exceptions.

Eileen M. offered the possibility of hiring an interim director, noting it had been done in the past with the hiring of Jon Hite who served as Interim Executive Director prior to the hiring of former director Vera Cartier. Jackie S. reported that the state sent John Hite to the GBHA in the absence of an Executive Director.

John G. explained that he was aware of the possibility of employing an interim director, but wanted to move forward for a week or so before posing the question to Carolina at EOHLC.

(4) Review of the Job Ad for Posting

Phil O. noted that in Eileen's draft, the necessary certifications were mentioned in two separate paragraphs, one of which included information about required experience and education. He suggested it would be better to keep experience in one paragraph and

certifications in a separate paragraph. There was general agreement on the wisdom of reorganizing the ad in that way. Additional clarifications were made as various questions arose on work hours, salary, and the deadline for responding to the ad. John G. said he would ask Carolina at EOHLC the best way to fill in that information. Maureen M. noted that it didn't seem possible that we could finish a group revision of the ad at today's meeting.

MOTION AND BOARD VOTE:

Maureen M. made a motion to approve Eileen M. as the creator of the ad to be rewritten in time for Monday morning (2/12) so that it could be sent to EOHLC for approval, with Eileen's final version sent to the board in advance of Monday morning. Jackie S. seconded; the motion passed with all in favor.

MOTION AND BOARD VOTE:

Maureen M. motioned that in an effort to avoid deliberation between meetings, we continue to meet on consecutive Fridays for one hour or less, until which time the board agrees that the hiring process is sufficiently underway. Eileen seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

(5) LTO Participation in the Hiring Process

John G. described the specific role the LTO plays in the hiring process. John stated the LTO is charged with examining the resumes of all candidates, expressing views on all candidates, recommending one or more persons for an interview, participating in the interview, and recommending the hire. The role of the LTO does not include reference checks, past employment checks, or independent interviews.

(6) Division of Tasks

Maureen M. suggested that we divide upcoming tasks such that each task has a person who can compile information and suggestions, and take the lead on the task. People volunteered or were persuaded as follows:

Ad - Eileen M.

Job description and job posting costs (media plan) - John G.

Contract review - Phil O.

Packet to EOHLC - Maureen M.

Interview questions - Jackie S. with Marlene K.

MOTION AND BOARD VOTE:

Maureen M. motioned that we each take the lead on the tasks as listed above. Eileen seconded; the motion passed with all in favor.

(7) Water Subsidy Continuation After March

Eileen M. noted that there had been no board vote on whether to continue the water subsidy past the end of March. Jackie S. remembered that the board had previously agreed to

continue the subsidy through June. Phil O. countered that it was a decision made before we knew the EOHLC was discontinuing the subsidy in March. Jackie said it was imperative to continue the subsidy as discussed due to the fact that Flag Rock had no drinkable water. Phil pointed out that the town has set up funding which could compensate, but Jackie countered that due to the near impossibility of saving enough receipts with no advance notice made those funds virtually inaccessible. Tina D. pointed out that it would cost the GBHA \$1,000 monthly to provide the water subsidy for tenants of Flag Rock. John G. reported that an ongoing subsidy might be difficult to justify in that the most recent EPA test came back showing that the water is currently potable. Maureen M. proposed that the matter be tabled until the regular meeting since we had agreed to a meeting not to exceed one hour. Eileen M. noted that the information should go out as soon as possible to tenants so that they could anticipate a possible increase to rent due.

MOTION AND BOARD VOTE:

Eileen M. made a motion that staff send a notice on Wednesday to everyone at Flag Rock stating that there is doubt that the current water subsidy can continue after March, and that said notice be accompanied by a copy of the application for reimbursement from the Town of GB. Maureen seconded. John stated he thought it was not useful to tell people that we might do something at some point in the future. John called for a vote: Eileen M. (aye), Jackie S.(aye), Phil O. (aye); Maureen M. (aye); John G. (nay). The motion passed 4 to 1.

III. CITIZENSPEAK.

None

IV. BOARD COMMENTS

Phil O. noted that the ACP (Affordable Connectivity Program) internet subsidy was soon to come to an end, so perhaps notice could be given at the same time as the water subsidy notice. Tina D. said she did work with Karen L. earlier today to create a way to inform tenants, which Phil O. thought was fine. Tina D. mentioned responding to an email generated by Nan Wile about free tax help, and Tina said flyers had been distributed.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Jackie S. made a motion to adjourn, which John G. seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 1:56.

Materials Distributed:

Former ad used in executive director search
Revision of ad by Eileen M.

Respectfully submitted,
Maureen Meier