

CORPORATE MINUTES
MANCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

2013

Attending: Chairman Josh Howroyd
Flora Jimenez
Paul Rubin
Carol Shanley
Patrick Barder, Executive Director

Absent Robert Shanbaum

I. Call to Order

Chairman Howroyd opened the meeting at 6:05 pm and introduced the newest member of the MHA Board – Carol Shanley. He stated M. Shanbaum will not be at this meeting is trying to attend the meeting via Skype. Chairman Howroyd requested a moment of silence to remember Ada Sullivan who was a long time member of the Board of Commissioners for the Manchester Housing Authority. Ms. Sullivan was responsible for developing the Congregate building and Ada Lane is named after her.

II. Public Comments – *These minutes are intended to be an overview of the comments made and are not necessarily verbatim.*

Ms. Evelyn Babella 12 Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.
She welcomed Ms. Shanley back to MHA.

Ms. Babella commented about a tree in back of her unit and stated there are broken limbs and they could drop and seriously hurt someone. The planters in front of the units are cracked and should be replaced with something more attractive. She asked why this complex is becoming Section 8 and mentioned that MHA is wasting money by mailing statements to all the residents.

Chairman Howroyd stated the hanging limbs will be addressed this spring. He also commented that West Hill Gardens is not becoming Section 8. It is an issue the Board has been wrestling with but again we are not becoming Section 8 housing. There are many issues facing MHA with the government's sequestration. Funding to housing authorities has been greatly reduced and the future of public housing is changing.

Mr. Charles Fuller 105 Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

Mr. Fuller asked that when he pays his rent that his receipt should say paid in full. He also commented about outside people plowing the lots during the recent snow storms. Is it explained to this company what is required? This company only plowed a path through the middle of the parking lots and residents were faced with 7 to 8 feet of snow in front of their cars and he was not able to get out of his space. When MHA maintenance did the plowing they came within 1 foot of the cars.

Chairman Howroyd asked when the plowing was done after the last storm and Mr. Fuller indicated the next day.

Mr. Martin Baser addressed the Board.

Mr. Baser noted that after the last two snow storms their lots were not plowed for two days. He also commented that people coming to apply for public housing are throwing trash all around the complex. They are parking where they do not belong and throwing their cigarettes all over the lawn.

Mr. George Sheffield 11 Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

Mr. Sheffield he has been waiting for a handicapped shower since August and he wants to know when this will be done. His wife is handicapped and needs to be able to take a shower and not sponge baths.

Mr. Barder explained the list has been suspended due to sequestrations of Federal Funding and money for getting vacant apartments ready to be rented comes out of different funding.

Mr. Sheffield stated that 39E is getting a shower and the unit is vacant. Why can't he have a shower for his wife? Chairman Howroyd shared MHA is doing what we can but we cannot spend money that we do not have and he is

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asking residents to be patient and we do have to put certain things on hold until the federal budget has been approved.

Ms. Catherine Oliver 32C McGuire Lane addressed the Board.

Ms. Oliver thanked the Board for using microphones. She has attended several board meetings and was not able to hear what was being said. She also thanked the Board for taking time out of their lives to solve problems with the housing authority. Ms. Oliver commented that McGuire Lane suffered a power surge and Residents were promised money to replace their appliances. To date she has not received her reimbursement check. Mr. Barder said that round two checks are in process.

Mr. Ron Tourville 80F Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

Mr. Tourville shared he understands there are no funds but bricks on one of the chimneys are falling down and could hurt someone. He had mentioned this to the office on other occasions but nothing has been done and the holes are getting larger. Mr. Tourville also mentioned there are loud noises coming from the basement and it sounds like explosions. The noise is very nerve wracking and it is difficult to sleep with this racket going on twenty-four seven.

Mr. Charles Fuller 105 Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

Mr. Fuller asked is it right for his neighbor to give their key to someone to live in his unit while they are away. This person was drunk, yelling, smoking and harassing people. He said he put up with it for 7 days before something was done about it.

Chairman Howroyd stated residents are allowed to have house guests but not to give out their key.

Mr. Fuller stated he did report it but nothing was done.

Mr. Rubin stated there is only so much MHA can do, they cannot throw out a tenant without going through the eviction process. Mr. Rubin asked why he did not call the police because the police have the means to do something quicker.

The public hearing was closed at 6:30 pm.

A. Discussion of Public Comments - None

III. Adoption of Minutes – Meeting of February 20 and March 1, 2013

Chairman Howroyd asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20 and March 1 meetings.

Mr. Rubin moved to approve the minutes of February 20 and March 1 as written.

Ms. Jimenez seconded. Motion passed 3-0 with one abstention

IV. Correspondence

Mr. Barder shared he received a memo from Mr. Mark Pellegrini from the Town Planning Department requesting to be put on the agenda for the April meeting to give a presentation.

Mr. Barder received notification from NERC for the upcoming conference to take place in Manchester Vermont June 23 through 26. This is a good meeting to attend but with the financial situation he is not sure the funding will be available to attend this meeting.

Mr. Barder shared copies of Circle of Friends which is a MHA publication that keeps residents informed about what is going on at MHA.

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Mr. Barder spoke with the MHA attorney about potential exposure to liability for MHA if CPR is not performed on a resident. MHA Staff has been informed to call 911. Once he receives the opinion from MHA's attorney he will share the board.

Mr. Barder shared a letter from HUD that explains the government budget dilemma. If a budget is not set the US Government will shut down at midnight on March 31. No funds will be dispensed. This means that Section 8 will not have operating subsidy. MHA will not be sending checks to Section 8 landlords. He has contacted State Senators and Congressmen and explained the situation to them. If MHA does not pay the Section 8 landlords we will be in breach of our contract with them as of May 1 and they could sue MHA.

A question was asked how long MHA can stay in business. Mr. Barder indicated that we can last for a few months with what we take in rents and what we have in savings.

Mr. Rubin asked if a budget decision comes in the near future, would the funds be made retroactive back to April 1.

Mr. Barder explained he assumes it would be but it will depend entirely on the sequestration approval to the budget. Any renovations to vacancies at MHA have to be done and put back on line. Mr. Barder explained he is trying to save money anywhere he can and still keep things running. Open positions will not be filled, only absolutely necessary overtime will be approved and residents that are locked out of their units will now be charged. The lawn service company has been contracted and they will give us the same rate as last year but we will decrease the number of cuts and any extra services.

Mr. Rubin shared he received his certificate is now an official Certified Housing Commissioner.

V. Accounts Payable

Mr. Barder reported that given the US government financial picture as of March 20 MHA can stay afloat for about six months. He reviewed the accounts payable reports and Martha Bertrand is now totally mobile, giving her greater availability at each of the two locations she manages. MHA is still looking into residents having the availability of direct deposits of their rent.

Chairman Howroyd asked about the patios that were being built at Mayfair Gardens and Westhill Gardens. Mr. Barder explained that all extra projects are on hold until the budget is finalized and we know what MHA will have for available funds.

Mr. Barder reviewed the Section 8 balance sheet and stated that there is a slush fund to pay Section 8 expenses for two to three months. Payments we receive from the federal government is being reduced to 95% which will mean residents will be paying 5% more on their vouchers. MHA has not received management fees from the Congregate but going forward we will. Mr. Barder also commented that the portability rule, which means if a Section 8 person moves from Manchester to another city or state they could take their Section 8 voucher with them. With the changes coming about in public housing the portability will stop because the money has stopped. This will help keep money in MHA. Vouchers used to be \$80.10 and have been reduced to \$55. We will be paying staff out of operating reserves.

Mr. Barder reported that the Congregate cash positions are stable. We are looking at getting a new food service contractor, Sodexo and see what their prices are.

Mr. Barder remarked that the Balance sheet is stable. All the audit adjustments were done.

The North Elm complex is owned by the Town of Manchester and the town owns that outright. There are lots of things that need to be done but the Town has not indicated any funds available for improvements.

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VI. Executive Director's Reports

Mr. Barder handed out copies of the vacancy loss report and reported our loss this year as compared to last is from \$70k to \$43k. The Board also reviewed the unit turnover report and the repair ticket reports.

VII. Chairman's Reports

Chairman Howroyd shared he and Mr. Barder were invited by the Department of Economic Development to a presentation were MHA was granted a \$150k Predevelopment Grant with very few restrictions. MHA needs to find ways to best utilize the money with a Capital needs assessment and saving some of the money for architectural drawings.

VIII. Old Business - None

IX. New Business - None

X. Items for Future Agenda

Mr. Barder will add the presentation by Mr. Pellegrini.

XI. Executive Session @ 8:25 PM

Chairman Howroyd asked for a motion to move to Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

Mr. Rubin moved to go into Executive Session. Ms. Jimenez seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Paul Rubin moved to adjourn Executive session. Carol Shanley seconded. Passed 4-0

XII. Adjournment @ 8:40 PM.

Motion to adjourn by Flo Jimenez. Paul Rubin seconded. Passed 4-0.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: _____