

**MEETING OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF MANCHESTER
September 19, 2012**

Attending: Chairman Josh Howroyd
Vice Chairman Timothy Becker
Paul Rubin
Robert Shanbaum
Flora Jimenez
Patrick Barder, Executive Director

- I. **Chairman Howroyd opened the meeting at 6:05 pm and welcomed the residents of West Hill Gardens.**
- II. **Public Comments – Chairman Howroyd invited residents to make comments.**

These minutes are intended to be an overview of the comments made and are not necessarily verbatim.

Mr. Jean Paulin 39G Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

She wanted everyone to know that Mr. Barder has never done anything to her personally but she did call him a bully. She has witnessed him yelling at a resident and thought he was going to hit them.

Residents have bird feeders and residents were told they are not to be feeding the birds and squirrels. I think bird feeders are great but we have a lot of pigeons and the other day there was a great number of pigeons on the wires. People are feeding them bread.

Mrs. Paulin commented that she does not like the fact that we will be getting Section 8 people because we could get a lot of riff raff with that.

The street light that was mentioned several months ago is still out in front of her unit.

She commented she has always trimmed the bushes in front of her unit and she puts a bucket under the air conditioner to catch the water and she waters her plants with that.

There has been talk of bathtubs being replaced with handicapped showers. She stated she has artificial knees and it is difficult for her to get in and out of her bath tub. She requests her name be put on a list for a handicapped shower in her unit.

Mr. Richard Brown 64 Pace Drive addressed the Board.

The maintenance department vehicles are not registered and are not authorized to be driven on public roadways. This can open MHA up to a law suit if anyone should be injured.

Tonight he received a very warm welcome from Mr. Barder and that is very nice.

There was a person spraying a chemical on Carver Lane this morning. Town ordinances say what time a sub-contractor can start and he was out there prior to 7:00 am. The truck was not marked and clothing and eyewear was inappropriate for spraying. He called the office and the head maintenance came down and gave him the name of the company to call. MHA should know what the chemicals are being sprayed. There are strict guidelines for spraying chemicals and he wanted

to make the Board aware of this situation. According to OSHA there should be a book available with information about the kinds of chemicals being used and what the precautions are. Residents got copies of the new proposed lease delivered to their homes on Sunday and he did not receive a copy. He did not make comments by the 12th and he expects there will be a special meeting for residents to discuss their concerns.

These articles about the trees getting cut down, new microphones, beautiful offices, what about the moldy basements that these people are breathing in and the water that is down there. The trees across from him were not interfering with any power lines or anything.

Now in his assigned parking space there is a dumpster for three weeks and he wants it moved.

Chairman Howroyd stated regarding the dwelling lease it is on the agenda for a potential action item because we did solicit comments for a period of at least a month. We are prepared to approve the draft so if anyone has specific comments please make them. We did get several comments regarding the grace period and we are changing that from the 5th to the 10th of the month as it relates to the late fees.

Mr. Charles Fuller 105 Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

I read it and made my comments and when will I receive a response to the questions I asked.

There was mention of paying for parking, there is no explanation about it and will that be in effect months from now.

Chairman Howroyd indicated there will be no charge for parking.

Mr. Fuller stated that the lease does not say that, it says there can be charges for parking. It leaves an opening that someday there will be a charge for parking. These things need to be explained more clearly. When do residents have the opportunity to discuss this?

Chairman Howroyd stated there will be no charge for parking.

Mr. Fuller stated he does not know what comments are and there should have been a meeting scheduled here for residents and we were promised there would be a meeting to come and discuss this lease. Residents should have been given the opportunity to come and ask questions and get direct answers. When residents ask questions they should not have to wait three months or more for an answer. Mr. Fuller stated when he read the lease he felt like this was becoming a concentration camp. This is no longer elderly housing, just more restrictions as to what we can do in our own house.

Chairman Howroyd shared that when we started the process of revising the lease many months ago. The lease needed to be updated to conform with both State and Federal Guidelines. An overwhelming majority of the items are standard in leases that you would get in the private sector and there are some aspects that conform with specifics of State or HUD guidelines. There will be no charge for parking.

Mr. Fuller stated there are too many things that are left open that can be changed down the road at anytime. We need to have a meeting to discuss this with all the residents invited. I need to have a lawyer read it before I sign it and that is a shame.

Mr. Bill Paulin 39G Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

Mr. Paulin shared the Journal Inquirer there was an article and some of the commissioners commented that residents were not happy with what is going on around the complex; name calling and innuendos. Residents are not prone to liking changes and the changes we don't like are the ones being done now and if you want to make us happy change the quality of living around here not detract from it which is what is happening. I called Mr. Barder a dictator because of the way he acts; not caring about the people in this community. There are no innuendos it is all fact, just take a look around here. The draft of the lease glosses over many items. If you expect people to read it, understand it and sign it you are mistaken. In order to understand it, it has to be read by someone one in authority or a lawyer. Several variables are 1) Chapter 8 as opposed to a HUD location. I spoke with HUD and they explained HUD location. Why does MHA want to change it to Chapter 8 – I don't understand that. 2) The paper states about a list of 400 applicants on record right now and we were led to believe that list was eliminated a while ago, shortly after Mr. Barder arrived. We want to be told what is what, when things will happen that involve our livelihood.

Chairman Howroyd commented he was not sure of the comment made about plans for this to be converted to Section 8.

Mr. Becker indicated there was an item in the minutes about the RAD meeting that was attended by the Commissioners.

Chairman Howroyd explained that Commissioners attended a conference where there was a discussion about HUD being eliminated by Congress or by a new Administration. The discussion was about different concepts about as it relates to public housing. This is not anything that this Board is initiating, it is concepts that may or may not happen down the road. HUD is trying to get out of the business of public housing and has not built any new public housing; they are looking to divest themselves of the ongoing subsidies. This Board is trying to keep informed about the national trends so that we don't get short sited. There could be discussions about eliminating public housing as we know it and it is the responsibility of the Board to keep abreast of these issues.

Mrs. Jean Paulin shared there are rumors that children are going to be allowed here and if you don't like them moving in next to you then you can move.

Chairman Howroyd stated we cannot prohibit families from moving in here in this complex that is the Federal Guidelines that have been in place for many years. The size of units here does not invite families to live here. MHA provides family housing at various scattered site locations in town and this was a decision made by this Board and previous Boards of the Manchester Housing Authority. We cannot prohibit by federal law. Provided someone meets the guidelines we can not prohibit them from renting here. It is not a new policy.

Mrs. Evelyn Babella 12 Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

She commented she worked for the State of Connecticut and there is a 10 day grace period.

A lot of trees have come down here that had nothing to do with storms and she misses them. The trees were a good barrier to noise from the roads and the highway. There are still dead branches on a tree in her back yard that have not been taken care of.

The comment made about resident ruining storm doors is not true, the doors are cheap and they are not being replaced.

The benches at the Congregate are uncomfortable, you cannot sit on them.

The landscaping around here is awful, the grass is dying. It was not like this before, it used to be beautiful.

Residents are afraid to speak up.

It does not make a difference if you note from a doctor that you need to be moved to the first floor because of health issues, these orders are ignored.

Residents like to walk around and she asked why there are not benches to sit down. This is our home and we want to be happy here and we are not.

Mr. Marty Baser 27K Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

Mr. Baser commented about a rumor of gas siphoning in the rear parking lot and he stated that is not true. The only people he saw were some kids cutting through the complex. He has witnessed people coming through and dumping garbage and he spoke to the person repeatedly doing this dumping. Behind the dumpster was a maggot problem and it was addressed, and then an ant problem due to the small garbage cans directly behind the units. Now there are maggots in the rear hallway. I spoke directly with Mr. Barder tonight and I have called maintenance about it. Maintenance said it was not a non essential emergency and it would be dealt with in the morning and he is afraid they will come into my apartment. Maintenance did come by and sprayed something but they are all over the walls and on the floor. He wanted to make the Board aware of this problem.

Mr. Wayne Madden 28G Pascal Lane addressed the Board.

Mr. Madden wants to thank Mr. Barder for the things done at Pascal Lane and he asked that residents to notice that things are being done that have been long overdue. Mr. Madden shared he is coming here on behalf of his mother, Patricia Fox who lives at 80 Bluefield Drive. Mrs. Fox needs a first floor one bedroom unit due to numerous medical issues. When she moved in her several years ago she had requested a one bedroom first floor unit and at that time there were none available. The only availability was a studio unit and she accepted it. He is requesting that her first and original request be honored.

Ms. Beverly Desimone 64 Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

Ms. Desimone complimented the job that Mr. Barder is doing. The skunks, raccoons and chipmunks are gone now that the pile of junk has been removed. As far as the spraying goes I cannot believe people complaining of spraying when she has to live with the smell of cigarette smoke that she faces all day long. She cannot open her windows because of the smoke.

Ms. Mary St, Amant 27K Bluefield Drive addressed the Board.

She stated the washing machine in the basement of her building keeps leaking and now there is mold and stuff down there she wants to know what is going to be done about this problem. Maintenance did take care of the ants but the maggots are still there and it is ridiculous. The garbage should be removed from in back of her unit.

Ms. Marie Parmalo 32D McGuire Lane addressed the Board.

Ms. Parmalo asked why the washing machines are not maintained. They very filthy and I don't want to put my clothes in there. When she moved in here she was told by Mrs. Shanley that she could have her own small washer and dryer but they were taken away.

Chairman Howroyd said the machines are leased from Mack Gray and they are under contract to take care of the machines.

Ms. Parmalo stated she called the company three or four times and they told her that MHA maintenance is supposed to take care of that.

Chairman Howroyd said this would be looked into.

Mr. Charles Fuller stated he could not stay for the rest of the meeting and he shared that residents are required to give a 30 day notice when they are planning to move out. The lease says that if you don't give 30 days notice the tenant has to pay until the unit gets rented. It takes MHA 5-6 months to get some of these units ready for a new occupant.

Mr. Shanbaum read from the new lease the policy on 30-day notice and explained the maximum the tenant has to pay is the 30 days.

Mr. Fuller explained this is very confusing and there are lots of openings for fees in the new lease and MHA only has to give 10 days notice to evict. He wants to know the final decision on some of the questions raised here and at other meetings. This is very confusing and he would like the opportunity to sit down and discuss this lease

Ms. Evelyn Babella commented that when she moved in here she signed a lease, does that mean that it is now void.

Mr. Shanbaum stated that chances are the lease that she signed expired after a year and she is now month to month tenant. The way this works is at the end of the lease you can stay on the same terms and conditions on a month to month basis. Any landlord in Connecticut has the option to tell a tenant they have to leave with notice but the typical situation here at MHA you don't actually have leases unless a resident has been here less than a year. The one big difference in this lease is that this is a smoke free facility. A lease is intended to protect the tenant as well as the landlord. Most of the features protecting the landlord allow us to evict someone that is disrupting the community.

Mr. Brown shared he has stopped coming to these meetings and he asks if he will get responses to the questions and concerns he has raised this evening.

Chairman Howroyd stated they will follow-up and we take these things seriously. He does not know about the maintenance staff and does not know what the alternative is. If MHA were to have to purchase pickup trucks as opposed to the utility vehicles it would be far more costly for MHA to manage the properties. We will look into the concerns raised.

Chairman Howroyd remarked that there have been many comments tonight and at other meetings about the removal of trees and shrubbery. One section was used a MHA dump; there was an oil tank, asphalt and other junk. Shrubby and trees that were removed were invasive trees. There are plans to plant new trees and make it a small park. The original plans were for a small park there but that was never completed when the complex was originally built.

Mr. Paulin asked about the new lease and if it will be a one year lease and who is allowed to make changes to the conditions of the leases.

Chairman Howroyd indicated it will be a one year lease and only the Board of Commissioners has the authority to make changes to the lease.

Mr. Paulin asked who owns the power lines in this area.

Chairman Howroyd stated that he and Mr. Becker believe the street lights are owned by the Town of Manchester and Mr. Barder believes that MHA owns them.

Mr. Paulin asked if the trees are in the power lines why does MHA do the trimming; why isn't that done by CL&P.

Public comment closed at 6:58 pm.

III. Adoption of Minutes – Meeting of August 15, 2012

Chairman Howroyd asked for a motion to approve the minutes of meeting of August 15, 2012.

Mr. Rubin moved to accept the minutes of August 15, 2012.

Mr. Becker seconded. Motion passed 4-0 with one abstention.

IV. Correspondence

Mr. Barder shared that the HUD has notified us that the annual plan that was approved by this Board was deficient because of spelling errors and lack of detail and other things that were not inserted that they have already approved. MHA passed the resolution that approved a one year plan and the criticism was on a five-year plan and this is to our advantage which means in the following year we can go with the streamlined version of it. He will try and get all the details that HUD is looking for. This will mean that the resident advisory board will have to take a look at it again and then the Board has to go through the resolution process again.

Mr. Barder shared a letter from the daughter of a resident complaining about the letter that the managers of the Congregate sent to the residents that were violating the bench policy. Residents are no longer violating that policy. Mr. Barder also received complaints about the other benches at the Congregate that they are very uncomfortable to sit on. Residents would like to have a cushion for these benches and he will look into it and talk to them next week at their weekly meeting.

Mr. Rubin asked about the original letter that was sent to the residents. Comments were made by several of the Board members about the strong wording of this letter.

Mr. Becker received an email from a Town Director about this issue and explained to him why we don't want people congregating there because it is a disincentive for tenants and we have apparently lost two prospective tenants because they were intimidated by the group. One resident that has a room adjacent to this bench has a loss of privacy because it is right outside her room.

Mr. Barder received an inquiry from a Mr. Burton from the Department on Aging and regarding this and he sent a fax back explaining the circumstances of this issue.

The Congregate held a tenant association election and Karen and Gus were voted in again.

Mary Ann Murray, Joel Lasher and Karen Smalls went to visit the Glastonbury Congregate facility and met with their staff and had a tour of their facility.

Glastonbury is similar to MHA but they also have an assisted living component. At this meeting Glastonbury shared they have a food committee, a small group that meets with the chef to discuss the menu and make suggestions. They work on positive reinforcement with the residents encouraging them to share their concerns. We plan to meet with them again and share ideas and

ways of improving things at our Congregate. Mr. Barder indicated that MHA needs to have a screening process for our congregate residents and tell them what congregate life is like and that it is a community environment.

Mr. Rubin shared he wanted to follow-up on the letter that was written to the Congregate residents. He asked if there is policy in the office about whether the Executive Director or someone else signs off on this type of letter. The letter that was written was not signed by Mr. Barder but it seemed to have the tone of authority. Mr. Rubin said he is concerned about quality control of this kind of letter because in his opinion the letter was harsh. He suggested letters be screened before being sent out.

Chairman Howroyd asked that we look into the cost of putting benches around the West Hill grounds for residents to be able to sit down.

Mr. Barder shared the area that was used as a dumping ground has been cleared and the original plans were for that area to be a small park-like setting. The area needs to be graded and Ansaldi will be delivering several loads of fill so that we can grade it. Once that is completed we will put down top soil and hydro seed the space. Trees are going to be planted and he will look into placing benches in this area and several locations throughout the complex.

Mr. Barder reported that Tru-Green has looked at the grounds and they made some suggestions as to how to get rid of the crab grass and the grass growing in the cracks in the sidewalks. Some residents mentioned at this meeting the brown spots and that is the result of chemical application to the crab grass. Tru-Green suggested a program of applications that will help rid the crab grass.

V. Accounts Payable

Mr. Barder reviewed the financial reports with the Board.

Mr. Becker asked about the patios that are being installed at Mayfair Gardens.

Mr. Barder explained this project was a test and so far they are looking very nice and the tenants are very happy with them.

Mr. Becker said he thought they looked nice but questioned the use of pressure treated wood/railroad ties for the framing and that wood eventually rots even if it is pressure treated. He suggested looking into a concrete perimeter to avoid having to replace them in a few years.

Mr. Barder said he would include that in the bid specs. Mr. Barder also explained that the patios need to be ADA compliant and the patio is sloped from the door stop so a wheel chair can easily move in and out.

VI. Executive Directors Report - Financial Statements & Management Reports

Mr. Barder distributed the financial statements and we are winding down to year end.

Mr. Shanbaum asked about the AMP I Balance sheet and the year to date figure.

Mr. Barder said he thought this was for the current period but he will check on this and report back.

Mr. Barder reviewed the vacancy report and said that MHA has done a lot of work to get units up and ready for rental. He reported that he still needs to hire more maintenance because Pascal Lane has only one person for 80 units. Mr. Barder also reviewed the Vacancy Loss report which shows the loss of revenue due to units being unready to be occupied.

Mr. Rubin left the meeting at 8:25 pm.

VII. Chairman's Report - None

VIII. Old Business – None

1. Ethics Policy Revisions

Mr. Barder said this item had been tabled at the last meeting. He will have the information before the next regular meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Shanbaum to table this item until the November meeting. Ms. Jiminez seconded. Motion was passed 4-0.

2. Revised Personnel Policy

Mr. Barder shared that MHA attorney has reviewed the policy. Comments that were made were added and are outlined in red. The Board reviewed all the changes.

RESOLUTION 2012- 14 REVISED PERSONNEL POLICY

Motion was made by Mr. Becker to adopt the Personnel Policy as amended.

Mr. Shanbaum seconded Motion passed 4-0.

3. Reverse 911

Mr. Barder reported that he spoke with Chief Montiminy about this system.

Mr. Becker shared that residents are concerned about getting information in the event of a town disaster or situation that would involve emergency measures.

Mr. Barder indicated it would be very expensive to duplicate this list.

Mr. Shanbaum shared there are inexpensive systems that would allow you to send out a recorded message to a given database of telephone numbers.

Motion was made by Mr. Shanbaum to table this item Reverse 911 indefinitely.

Mr. Becker seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

4. Disaster Plan

Mr. Barder received several outlines from other housing authorities and most of them are integrated with their town disaster plan. He does not know if we are part of the Town's disaster plan.

Chairman Howroyd said he would be happy to meet with the town's Emergency Management Personnel. He went on to say that it is important that MHA has a plan as to "who does what when" in the case of an emergency. Who handles activating the Community rooms at each complex and having a list of those residents that have aids assisting them, and those who require Oxygen or have mobility issues?

A motion was made by Mr. Becker to table the Disaster Plan until November.

Ms. Jiminez seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

5. North Elm Management Agreement

Mr. Barder met with Messrs. O'Neil and Simmons from the Town of Manchester to discuss this issue. They are not getting as much revenue from this property as expected and Mr. Barder explained to them that MHA is doing a lot of work that has been put off for a long time. Mr. O'Neil asked how much work is necessary at this complex and Mr. Barder estimated a minimum of \$250,000. They requested us to make a list of the improvements

and they will write up a Capital Needs Assessment that they can present to the Town Board of Directors. They also requested MHA get as much as they can in revenue from the rents and take anything that could be a Capital improvement out of it. They do want us to continue managing this property at the same terms on a month to month basis.

Chairman Howroyd requested that we have these terms in writing.

Mr. Barder also shared he found in our files a document on this property that the house on the North Elm property was not to be included in the property management responsibilities for MHA; but we have been maintaining all along. He also discovered there are no leases at North Elm complex.

After a short discussion it was decided that Mr. Barder will clarify that this house is included in the property management agreement.

Motion was made by Mr. Becker to table this item until the October meeting. Mr. Shanbaum seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

6. Waiting List

Mr. Barder said we have to write an affirmative marketing plan before we open up Section 8 or Public Housing or we will be in violation of most of the fair housing laws. At the last CONARO meeting he was informed by the State people that once you open the waiting list it has to be open a minimum of 90 days.

Chairman Howroyd said you can have a lottery.

Mr. Becker asked about the Public Housing and if there is any reason that it has to be closed and can't be opened on an on-going basis.

Chairman Howroyd read something from HUD that had guidelines on that. What they suggest to do is to make the list with a time limit, say two years and then open enrollment again and get new list of names.

Mr. Barder said we need to address the question of people are already in assisted housing somewhere. We had a bunch of people that were in assisted living elsewhere in the State but were on the Manchester list awaiting housing.

He requested that the Board approve his request to have a professional develop an affirmative marketing plan before opening up Section 8 and Public Housing enrollment.

A motion was made by Ms. Jiminez to authorize the Executive Director to engage a professional to develop an affirmative marketing plan.

Mr. Shanbaum seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

IX. New Business

A. Revised Dwelling Lease

Mr. Barder all the comments that were submitted have been added.

The Board discussed the changes.

Mr. Becker suggested we get send out a copy of the new draft of the lease to West Hill residents and have a town meeting to discuss any changes they may have. A letter could accompany this copy explaining to residents that they have one more opportunity to discuss any changes to the lease before it is adopted.

Mr. Becker moved to table pending a second submission for tenant review. Mr. Shanbaum seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

X. Items for Future Agenda

A. Revised Dwelling Lease

- B. Special meeting to do the Annual Budget
- C. Amending Agenda to add 2A to discuss Public Comments
- D. Revised annual plan needs to be done before October 15
- E. ACOP and make appropriate amendments

XI. Executive Session

Mr. Becker moved to go into Executive Session at 10:20 pm. Ms. Jiminez seconded. Motion was passed 4-0.

Motion to adjourn Executive Session @ 11:39 PM by Becker.
Second by Shanbaum. 4-0.

XII. Adjournment @ 11:40 PM.

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: _____