

CORPORATE MINUTES - BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF MANCHESTER

2014

February 25, 2014

Ada Lane Congregate

Attending: Chairman Josh Howroyd
Robert Shanbaum
Carol Shanley
Paul Rubin
Mary Ann Murray – Interim Executive Director

I. Chairman Howroyd opened the meeting at 6:40 PM.

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

Ms. Francis Clemente 10 Ada Lane addressed the Board. Ms. Clemente shared questions are raised at Board meetings and residents do not get answers. Chairman Howroyd shared that copies of the minutes are available at the Bluefield Office and on line. Ms. Clemente asked if something could be done about the broken concrete at the entry way to this building. Residents try to hold the door and push their carts in and someone is going to get hurt. We have asked about this before but nothing has been done. Chairman Howroyd shared it is safe to say that the Board is looking at a lot of facility issues. This building is showing its age. It needs a significant investment. Thankfully the State of Connecticut is starting to re-invest in public housing buildings. We are getting a grant to do some fairly significant work. It takes time and it takes money. The Board will put this on the list of things to be looked at.

Question was asked if a new executive director has been named. Chairman Howroyd reported the Board has interviewed 6 candidates and we have narrowed it down to three finalizes. Tonight the Board will go into Executive Session to go into contract negotiations for a new director. It is our hope that a new Executive Director will be in place by the first of April.

Chairman Howroyd remarked this has been a tough winter for all of us and to date he has not heard of any issues with the Congregate. The Maintenance Crew has been working very long hours keeping up with the snow removal. It does take a long time to remove the snow from our facilities and maintenance has been doing an outstanding job getting this done in addition to their other responsibilities.

Ms. Susanne Frank daughter of Francis Clemente addressed the Board. Ms. Frank said she has seen a great improvement with the snow removal this year.

Ms. Shirley Lee of Ada Lane addressed the Board. Ms. Lee stated she uses a walker and it is very difficult to get in and out of the entry way with the broken concrete at the entrance. She asked if the hole could be filled with concrete because it is very difficult to get in and out. Chairman Howroyd said it will put it on the list of things to be looked at.

The public hearing closed at 6:50 pm.

A. Discussion of Public Comments - None

III. Adoption of Minutes

A. Meeting of January 15, 2014

Mr. Shanbaum moved to accept the minutes of January 15, 2014 as written. Mr. Rubin seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

B. Meeting of February 4, 2014

Chairman Howroyd requested that Resolution numbers be added to the action items of February 4, 2014 minutes. Ms. Shanley moved to accept the minutes of February 4, 2014 as amended. Mr. Shanbaum seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

IV. Correspondence

Chairman Howroyd shared he received notice from HUD that the annual CMAP for Section 8 scored a 96% rating - High Performer. He shared the good news with the Section 8 staff. He also reported there will be an audit of Section 8 program in April.

V. Accounts Payable

Chairman Howroyd reviewed the AP report. Mr. Rubin commented the AP Summary Sheet makes it easy to scan through the items.

Mr. Rubin asked about the furniture expense. Ms. Murray said the cost is for a staff workstation. Mr. Rubin also asked about the expense under Card Member service and if that is the office credit card. Chairman Howroyd said the card is used for small purchases almost like petty cash items.

VI. Executive Director's Report

A. Financial Statements

Chairman Howroyd reviewed the reports and called the Boards attention to some additional expenses of short-term over time for the staff working on the D'Amelia program. We have gotten some additional vouchers from D'Amelia but we have been dealing with some mistakes that were previously made in the prior year in the recertification process. We made a staff change in the D'Amelia program adding one person and removing another. So we are dealing with the learning curve for the new person and dealing with making the corrections. The staff has been overwhelmed with this added responsibility. MHA needs to have a discussion with D'Amelia program about their long term strategies. The volume of vouchers for two people is higher than it should be. Ms. Shanley asked if some of the D'Amelia vouchers could be sent back. The former Executive Director was in discussion with D'Amelia but it was not resolved before he left. Chairman Howroyd the Board needs to stay on to of this issue as well as the new Executive Director. We need to have a specific strategy with D'Amelia going forward. D'Amelia pays the salary for the two employees and MHA gets an administrative fee from D'Amelia. Mr. Rubin stated the staff is the responsibility of D'Amelia and they would be making the decision as to whether another person should be hired. MHA has been paying the overtime for these employees. Ms. Murray commented she spoke with Ann Walsh and she said ideally each staff person should have about 350 each but that is slowly creeping up. The new staff member Otilia Jones has a bit of a learning curve and she has had to go back and make the corrections to errors made last year. Mr. Rubin asked if the overtime costs are coming out of the Management Fee that MHA received. Ms. Shanley suggested MHA have a sit down with D'Amelia regarding this and possibly getting a part time person to help with the increasing workload. Mr. Rubin would like to know the outcome of these discussions at the next meeting.

B. Vacancy Report

Chairman Howroyd reviewed the report and commented on the progress MHA has made with staying on top of this. A question was raised about off line time of one of the units on Lisa Drive. Ms. Murray stated there were many renovation issues that were needed for this unit. The target to be back on line is for March 1. Ms. Murray also noted that maintenance staff has been dealing with snow removal so some of the renovation work has been delayed. There have also been delays with some residents moving out due to the snow. Ms. Murray reported Maintenance had to rake the roof o the main office building due to ice building up and leaking into the offices, including her office. Her office carpet had to be wet vacuumed.

Ms. Murray reported that the maintenance garage was broken into and three or our snow blowers were stolen. She also shared the Board of Education reported their offices were also broken into. We have discussed increasing security, possibly getting cameras installed. New dead bolt locks were installed by Manchester Safe and Lock. Keys have been reissued and only the Executive Director and Head of Maintenance can authorize keys being made. We discussed an alarm system or security cameras and Tim thought it would be beneficial to at least have cameras. They are not that

expensive. Chairman Howroyd added the Board has discussed installing cameras at Spencer Village at the Community Room. We will look into the cost and if it would be more reasonable depending on the amount of equipment we order at one time. We would prioritize where they need to be installed first.

Ms. Murray remarked there are also security issues in the main office. There is no buffer for the staff manning the reception desk. There is no privacy for visitors discussing their personal issues with staff.

Ms. Murray also mentioned residents have complained about the lack of lighting in back of McGuire Lane and Bluefield Drive. Mr. Barder was looking into this before he left. He talked about dusk to dawn lights but noted they are very expensive, the bulbs alone cost \$78.

Chairman Howroyd shared he received a telephone call from an energy management company. With our high utility bills it might be a good investment to have an audit done to see how we can save money. It would be an up front cost but MHA would be able to reap the rewards in cost savings on our utility bills.

VII. Chairman's Report - None

VIII. Old Business

A. Parking/Towing Issues

Chairman Howroyd mentioned at the last meeting the Board asked when the contract with Jay's Towing service expires. MHA must give a 30 day notice that we would not be renewing our contract with them. He spoke with Ms. Martha Bertrand about this and she mentioned the plus side of having parking stickers. At some of the scattered sites we were getting requests for more parking stickers and found that we had people living in the units that were not on the lease. This is fraud, not having registered people living in the unit.

Mr. Rubin suggested keeping the policy but redistributing parking stickers and put them in the back window. This would eliminate cars being towed because the sticker could not be seen with the side window rolled down. Mr. Shanbaum said MHA needs to keep the policies consistent at all the sites according to Fair Housing. Mr. Rubin added MHA would need to make a decision by May as to whether or not we want to renew the contract with Jay's Towing.

Mr. Shanbaum moved to table the Parking/Towing issues. Mr. Rubin seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Ms. Murray mentioned designating 2 parking spaces around the circle at the Congregate for picked up and dropped off. They would be next to the 2 handicapped spaces. This would allow cars picking up or dropping of residents a place to park for a short time. We could have signs made up stating 15 minute parking only.

Chairman Howroyd asked for a motion to suspend the rules and move into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Mr. Shanbaum moved to suspend the rules and move into Executive Session at 7:45 pm to discuss personnel matters. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Shanbaum moved to come back to the Board meeting at 8:10 am. Ms. Shanley seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

IX. New Business

A. Appointment of Executive Director

Resolution 2014-3 - Ms. Shanley made a motion to authorize Chairman Howroyd to enter into the Executive Director employment contract with Joseph D'Ascoli. Mr. Rubin seconded. Resolution 2014-3 passed 4-0.

**CORPORATE MINUTES - BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF MANCHESTER**

2014

X. Items for Future Agenda

Tenant Commissioner Appointment. Mr. Shanbaum checked the State Statutes which states we must notify all tenants 60 days in advance of the vacancy in the Tenant Commissioner position. Chairman Howroyd added we did have Tenant Commission Associations at each of the sites but did not have a list of the members. Ms. Murray said she will get the list to the Chairman. Chairman Howroyd said the Board will have to give notice of the Vacancy Tenant Commissioner then we can petition for an election.

XI. Executive Session

A. Personnel Matters - See above

XII. Adjournment

Ms. Shanley moved to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 8:22 pm. Mr. Shanbaum seconded. Motion passed 4-0.