

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
WOODBIDGE**



The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Township of Woodbridge met in a Regular Session in the community room of Cooper Towers, 1422 Oak Tree Road, Iselin, NJ at 7:00 PM on February 4, 2013, the hour and date duly established for the holding of said meeting.

Kathy Blaha read a Notice of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act P.L. 1975, C.231 which provided that notice of this meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Township of Woodbridge was provided in the following manner:

On October 3, 2012, a copy of this regular meeting setting forth the date, time and location of this meeting was posted on the Housing Authority's official designated bulletin board located at 20 Bunns Lane, Woodbridge, NJ, sent to Town Hall for posting and was faxed to the Home News Tribune and Star Ledger.

A moment of silence was held for our troops and Mark Barbee's brother, Marty, who passed away recently.

Upon roll call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT

ABSENT

Commissioners:

Commissioners:

Terri Briante, Commissioner
Gregg Ficarra, Chairman
John Kenny, Commissioner
Nayan Parikh, Vice Chair
Pedro Rosario, Commissioner
Betsy Rudowski, Commissioner

Mark Barbee, Commissioner

Council Liaison:

Brenda Yori Velasco, Councilwoman

Authority General Counsel:

Terrence Corriston, Esq., Breslin & Breslin

Administration:

Donna Brightman, Executive Director
Kathy Blaha, Housing Director
Larry Stecker, Maintenance Director
Mike Yannuzzi, Maintenance Manager
Maureen Guiney, Executive Asst.

A motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held January 3, 2013 was made by Commissioner Parikh and seconded by Commissioner Kenny and upon roll call the vote was as follows:

Discussion

Councilwoman Velasco stated that on page 1498 there should be an addition to the first sentence under resident services report to include "of the residents" after anger issues.

Chairman Ficarra stated that he feels it is implied in sentence.

ROLL CALL:	Barbee Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
AYES:	Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
NAYS:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Barbee

At this time Chairman Ficarra stated that the BOC and staff would like to thank former Commissioner Pierce for her dedicated service to the residents of Woodbridge and presented her with a plaque. He stated that she always had the best interest of the people in mind even though sometimes we did not see eye-to-eye. He stated that was fine.

Ms. Pierce stated that it was a privilege and honor to work for the seniors and thanked all concerned and mentioned that Executive Director Brightman and staff work like a well-oiled machine.

Public Comment

Cynthia Simmons, 1H, stated that her apartment is cold and uncomfortable. She stated that at night her bathroom is 50° and living room is 68°. She stated that the heat comes on for an area of about 2 feet and that's it. She stated that this is not only her issue. She also mentioned that the people doing the construction are very inconsiderate and have radios blasting at 8:30 AM. She also stated that there is cursing and yelling and that she has smelt liquor on their breath after lunch. She also stated that she is not sure if they know their jobs as her floor is not together.

Executive Director Brightman asked if she told Bernie McLaughlin this.

Ms. Simmons stated that he knows and that the first seven apartments had to be redone.

Executive Director Brightman stated that there was a problem with the prior floor as it had to be removed with a chemical due to the asbestos and this ate the new floor but she thought that these were replaced. She then asked what Mr. McLaughlin did?

Ms. Simmons stated that she spoke to Sean Cashin and he looked at it.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she sent another staff member to trouble shoot but regarding the construction crew, this is the first time she is hearing about these matters and the smell of liquor.

Ms. Simmons stated that this is the first time the floors were washed in a long time and that they are usually filthy.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she has a new crew of maintenance workers coming in.

Ms. Simmons stated that she has a letter from housing about the residents being comfortable regarding heating.

Executive Director Brightman stated that if you are having a problem with your heat, you need to call in a work order.

Ms. Simmons stated that this was checked in the beginning. She then stated that her shower froze and a piece of ice was in it and that it may have to do with the exposed pipes.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will have Maintenance Director Stecker look at the exposed pipes. She also stated that there is a protocol regarding heating and a work order needs to be called in. She mentioned that she will pursue the liquor problem.

Jean Asouline, 2H, stated that there is a problem with the thermostat on the radiator as it faces the wall and when it turns on, it hits the wall and the thermostat reads that the heat is alright and then turns the heat off. She stated that it should not be facing the wall. She mentioned that the bathroom is cold as there is no radiator there. She mentioned that doors were being left open and they enclosed heating pipes and; therefore, the heat is not coming out.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will have Maintenance Director Stecker have the contractor check it out.

Maintenance Director Stecker stated that this will be the construction crew.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we need the architect to look at it.

Ms. Asouline stated that they need holes in the box that cover the heating pipes.

Commissioner Parikh asked if construction is finished.

Ms. Asouline stated that it is done.

Commissioner Parikh stated that it seems like a bad design.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we have a staff member in the building and a professional company, MAST, hired by the town.

Keith Reeder, 1J, stated that he has the same concerns as Cynthia Simmons but is also concerned about the outlets as the plugs don't stay in the outlet. He also stated that the workers blast music and hammer jack early in the morning. He stated that he works nights so this is difficult for him and also mentioned that they slam doors.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that there is a project manager on-site and doesn't know why this is occurring. She mentioned that he should have been invited to this meeting.

Executive Director Brightman stated that Ellen Hilliard has been coming to the building and trying to enter apartment numbers that have concerns. She then asked Ms. Asouline to hold a tenant meeting and get the issues from the tenants or this can be done on Friday at Donuts and Discussions.

Chairman Ficarra asked if we can have the project manager present at the donuts and discussion meeting on Friday.

Ms. Asouline then stated that there is an issue with the toilets.

Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi stated that there are design problems with the toilets.

Maintenance Director Stecker stated that there were a batch of toilets that were bought by MAST and the parts were supplied by Constellation and these did not work out.

Ms. Asouline stated that some have broken and hers is broken again.

Executive Director Brightman stated that this is MAST's job and \$2.5 million dollars has been spent to renovate Cooper Towers.

Executive Director Brightman stated that residents should go to Mr. McLaughlin when they have a problem.

Commissioner Parikh stated that this is WHA property.

Executive Director Brightman stated that Bernie McLaughlin is our employee.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will be at the building on Friday for Donuts & Discussions and asked Ms. Asouline to put together a complete list regarding the problems and concerns of the building. She stated that Mr. McLaughlin and MAST can also be present.

Mr. Reeder stated that the construction workers are very disrespectful.

Executive Director Brightman asked if he mentioned this to Mr. McLaughlin.

Mr. Reeder responded that he did.

Ms. Asouline then stated that she could not find a parking spot in the lot as the workers were using the spots and that she just came from oncology and was ill.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she would like a list of the all the complaints for Friday.

Councilwoman Velasco stated that she is concerned about the danger of the electrical outlets and asked if it is every outlet.

A resident stated that it is just one outlet in her apartment.

Councilwoman Velasco asked that the residents tell Executive Director Brightman what outlets are a problem.

Chairman Ficarra stated that the complaints have been noted and asked that Mr. McLaughlin be present on Friday. He then asked Executive Director Brightman to send the commissioners an email regarding the progress and also to Councilwoman Velasco as she is the liaison.

Commissioner Kenny asked about the toilets under remodelization.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the construction company did not buy the ESCO toilets.

Maintenance Director Stecker stated that MAST purchased the toilets and they are up to GPS standards. He stated that MAST worked with Constellation as there was a problem with the batch purchased by MAST.

Executive Director Brightman stated that this is a point of contention.

Commissioner Kenny asked about the heating problem.

Maintenance Director Stecker stated that the outside window was torn open and regarding the re-piping in the overhang, insulation was not applied.

Commissioner Kenny stated that if we start popping pipes we will have further problems.

Chairman Ficarra stated that it is very disturbed to hear of all these problems as he thought that the people were happy and this is not true. He stated that he will try to be at the building for Friday.

Commissioner Parikh asked about the parking.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will handle this tomorrow.

Ms. Asouline stated that this is a gorgeous concept to remodel apartments but that only little things need to be taken care of.

Executive Director Brightman stated that they will be taken care of.

Mr. Reeder complained about a maintenance person knocking on his door and then immediately coming in without allowing him time to answer the door. He asked that they allow him to sleep but they came back five minutes later.

Cathy Martorelli, 2M, stated that she was concerned about the trees outside and asked us to keep an eye on them.

Executive Director Brightman stated that Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi regularly checks on trees and thanked her for her concern.

Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi stated that he would like maintenance to check on the electrical outlets.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the kitchen and bathroom outlets are new.

Mr. Reeder stated that he believes that they are stretched out.

Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi stated that he would like to change these out tomorrow.

Chairman Ficarra stated that he finds all of these problems disturbing.

Ms. Asouline thanked the commissioners for listening.

COMMUNICATIONS

- a) Aquarius Capital letter dated 1/9/13 to Christina Smolder

Executive Director Brightman explained that HUD wanted to recapture our surplus and that every year we follow-up with a study on retirement costs.

Councilwoman Velasco stated that this is being done throughout the State.

REPORTS

Maintenance & Modernization Operations – no comment

Rents Uncollected

Executive Director Brightman stated that rents were paid after the report came out.

Councilwoman Velasco asked if there was a reason.

Housing Manager Blaha stated that some residents don't pay December's rent due to Christmas but make up for it in January.

Commissioner Rudowski then asked about the 13 vacancies.

Executive Director Brightman responded that there are 14 vacancies, all here.

Commissioner Rudowski asked if we are in-line.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we are not and this may affect our score and that she explained this to the commissioners many times before and explained that it would be a draw back to our PHAS score.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that she did remember this.

Cooper Towers Report

Chairman Ficarra stated that he would like to wait for the Resident Council president to gather all of the problems and then investigate it before we get involved.

Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi stated that he was not aware that the pipes are covered over.

Chairman Ficarra stated that it sounds like there is fault in the design.

Executive Director Brightman stated that it is the professional construction management company's job to review this.

Commissioner Parikh asked if this would be Mr. McLaughlin.

Executive Director Brightman responded that Carol Ehrlich would be involved as it has to do with redevelopment.

Commissioner Kenny stated that the sign-off guy is Bernie McLaughlin.

Executive Director Brightman stated that it is actually Carol Ehrlich. She stated that Ms. Ehrlich, Mr. McLaughlin and MAST have a meeting every Friday.

Commissioner Rudowski asked Executive Director Brightman if she attends.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she does not per the Town's request.

Conversation continued and the above issues were reiterated and it culminated with Chairman Ficarra stating that the pipes and toilets are one thing but the parking and drinking are another. He stated that we need to do a determination through investigation. He also asked that the outlets be checked and to let him know about this prior to the next meeting.

Resident Services Report

Commissioner Rudowski asked about the free hearing services at Finn/Adams that is published in the newsletter. She stated that if it is a private company, we should not promote this.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she does not allow that through the WHA but gives the choice for such services to the Resident Council of the particular building involved.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will look into it and that Housing Manager Blaha will ask Danielle Fusco about this in the morning.

Housing Manager Blaha then called Danielle Fusco and it was determined that the residents arranged this themselves and it takes place at different buildings free of charge.

Housing Manager's Report

Chairman Ficarra then asked about our Homeless Day.

Housing Manager Blaha stated that we had about 26-28 people but this year they were a different class of people with some in shelters or living with friends/family and not on the street; therefore, they didn't need to take showers.

Commissioner Rosario stated that he was at the WHA with his daughter and stated that we have a wonderful staff. He mentioned that his daughter likes helping others and that it was a humbling experience.

At this time, Chairman Ficarra mentioned emotional stability.

Housing Director Blaha stated that she is waiting to hear from Highland Park as they have a grant funded LSW on staff and she is trying to apply for a similar grant but is having a hard time receiving the info from her boss.

Monthly Budget Expenses Report

Commissioner Rudowski asked if this is for one month. Maintenance Director Stecker stated that it is for two months.

Police Reports Filed for WHA

Councilwoman Velasco was concerned about the Learning Center and I.D. theft.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will ask Kelley Williams to get someone in to explain I.D. theft to the residents.

Councilwoman Velasco stated that people don't realize that this has great repercussions.

Comments

Commissioner Kenny asked about the boilers at building 18 and if they needed to be changed out.

Executive Director Brightman stated that these were put in when Ash Marathe was here and that was about 10-12 years ago.

Maintenance Director Stecker stated that it would take about one day of plumbing work for this to be changed as Kappa replaces them with newer systems.

Commissioner Kenny then asked about the meeting with FEMA and if they cover maintenance workers overtime, vehicle use and gas.

Executive Director Brightman stated that they do. She stated that at first there was some confusion about our eligibility but it was decided that we are entitled but that it is taking a long time to get the money.

Commissioner Kenny stated that we should receive about 75% of the money.

Commissioner Rudowski asked if we will receive the rest from the insurance company.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she does not know.

Counsel Corrison stated that this is a flood issue.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she gave all involved the information but that she has not heard anything as yet.

Commissioner Rudowski then asked about the block grant fund for Olsen Towers and if we need a resolution.

Executive Director Brightman asked Counsel Corrison if they forwarded the agreement to him.

Counsel Corrison replied, no.

Executive Director Brightman then said that we will need a Reso.

Commissioner Rudowski asked if we will have the same people.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we will have the same crew and construction company but that the block grant program has different rules as they are using COAH money. She stated that there will be no change in the ACOP and that the bidding is their responsibility. She mentioned that this will just be for the kitchens at Olsen and this involves only about one day of inconvenience for the resident. She stated that we did this at Finn and residents did not have a problem with this work.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that she would like to discuss this more thoroughly when the time comes regarding the process aspect of it.

Executive Director Brightman responded that it is not our money.

Commissioner Rudowski then asked Executive Director Brightman about the PHADA conference.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the Section 8 Admin. Fee has been cut back to 75% and they spoke of what housing authorities are doing to stay alive. She stated that small housing authorities will be a thing of the past and that the idea of a housing authority running another housing authority is in place and in this way they earn extra money and it seems to be the future of public housing.

Commissioner Rudowski then asked about Leo Dauwer.

Executive Director Brightman stated that he must be around 95 but is still great.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Reso #2572 – Adopting Monthly Bill List

Motion moved by Commissioner Kenny and seconded by Commissioner Rosario to adopt Resolution #2572.

Discussion

Commissioner Rudowski asked who the plumber is.

Executive Director Brightman stated that it is Kelin.

Commissioner Rudowski asked if we get Dunigan in a pinch.

Executive Director Brightman responded that when Kelin does not respond, we do. She stated that his contract is almost up.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that we need to document our plumber's response time and as she remembers another company was fired.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we have to follow the HUD rules to hire the lowest responsible bidder.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that we need to continue to document the plumber issues for the auditors.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we do document these matters and that Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi spoke to Kelin.

ROLL CALL: Barbee Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
AYES: Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Barbee

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #2573 – Authorizing Additional Job Duties and Title Change to the Pest Control Manager Position

Motion moved by Commissioner Parikh and seconded by Commissioner Briante to adopt Resolution #2573.

Discussion

Executive Director Brightman explained that this is not anything new and that Vinnie Sammartino already does this work. She stated that this is a housekeeping issue and that we can't afford to charge Mr. Sammartino 100% to the central cost center.

Commissioner Rudowski asked if there was any additional compensation as she also noted that he is handling Highland Park pest control.

Executive Director Brightman stated that he is not handling Highland Park's pest control.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that it is in his report.

Housing Manager Blaha stated that when bed bugs are found there, he deals with it and bills us for it.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we get the money back from Highland Park.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that he has a lot on his plate and all this work may be overwhelming.

Executive Director Brightman stated that it is not a lot as he is not working at Lakewood any more.

Commissioner Parikh asked if he will receive more money.

Executive Director Brightman responded that he will not.

Commissioner Parikh stated that he can do the inspections and pest control together.

Executive Director Brightman stated that this is true as some pest matters are from poor housekeeping.

Commissioner Rudowski asked if he is still part of the cost center.

Executive Director Brightman stated that his job can now be allocated to different cost centers due to this new job description.

Commissioner Rudowski asked if he is the only inspector.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we have Sean Cashin, Jim Reese, Iliana Colon and Dan Schwenzer.

Commissioner Rudowski asked if they are all certified.

Executive Director Brightman responded that they are.

ROLL CALL: Barbee Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
AYES: Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent:: Barbee

c) Reso #2574 – Extend Contract for Landscaping Services

Motion moved by Commissioner Kenny and seconded by Commissioner Briante to adopt Resolution #2574.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that they are easy to work with.

ROLL CALL: Barbee Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
AYES: Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent:: Barbee

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

d) Reso #2575 – Final Extension of the Contract for Masonry Services

Motion moved by Commissioner Parikh and seconded by Commissioner Rosario to adopt Resolution #2575.

ROLL CALL: Barbee Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
AYES: Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent:: Barbee

e) Reso #2576 – Application & Acceptance of FY2013 ROSS Grant

Motion moved by Commissioner Briante and seconded by Commissioner Parikh to adopt Resolution #2576.

ROLL CALL: Barbee Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
AYES: Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Barbee

Comments

Chairman Ficarra stated that last fall the exempt staff received a cost of living increase and that he would like to extend this offer to Executive Director Brightman as well.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that she thought Executive Director Brightman already received this increase as she is an at-will employee.

Executive Director Brightman responded that she has not received a raise for the past two years.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that she is then in limbo.

Executive Director Brightman concurred.

f) Reso #2577 – Authorizing a Salary Increase for the Executive Director

Motion moved by Commissioner Parikh and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adopt Resolution #2577.

Discussion

Counsel Corrison stated that he will have to look at the resolution regarding Executive Director Brightman being without a contract as he believes she is treated the same as exempt employees for all other purposes.

Executive Director Brightman stated that there is no particular start date and as of February 2011 she has been working without a contract.

Chairman Ficarra stated that Executive Director Brightman should be in-line with the exempt employees and asked Counsel Corrison to see that she is in-line with these employees and to properly compose the resolution.

Counsel Corrison stated that the resolution can be adopted tonight for Executive Director Brightman to receive the same increase as exempt employees retro to October 2012 and this can be changed, if necessary.

ROLL CALL: Barbee Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
AYES: Briante Kenny Parikh Rosario Rudowski Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Barbee

Comments

Chairman Ficarra asked Commissioner Rosario if he has any Rutgers classes scheduled.

Commissioner Rosario stated that he has three scheduled for the spring.

Commissioner Rudowski stated that she is glad that the roof is fixed at Adams Towers.

Commissioner Parikh stated that we have to get the heating fixed in this building.

Further discussion took place between the commissioners regarding the heating and other matters taking place in the building.

Counsel Corrison stated that he attends seven meetings a month and usually the problems aren't as bad as reported and the majority of other residents are happy.

Councilwoman Velasco stated that February is Black History month and that she has two flyers that she asked to be posted. She stated that the Barron Arts Center and the Independence Club are having a historical exhibition from Feb. 16-25. She mentioned that the St. Patty's Day parade in Woodbridge will take place on March 10.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Parikh and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adjourn at 8:45 PM.

All commissioners present voted in favor.

Donna Brightman
Executive Director/Secretary