

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF GREENWICH
Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners
May 25, 2016
Minutes of the Meeting

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Greenwich was held on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at the Quarry Knoll I Community Room. The Chairman, Sam Romeo, stated this month we would be starting with the Executive Session first. He called the meeting to order, and entered into Executive Session at 5:25 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Sam Romeo, Abelardo Curdumi, George Yankowich, Angelo Pucci, Robert Simms, Jr., James Boutelle and Cathy Landy

Staff Present: Anthony Johnson, Terry Mardula, Derrick Bryant, Penny Lore, Meaghan Maloney, Maria Morris Ruth Young, Laura Murphy, Winston Robinson, John Yankowich, and Sardis Solano

Legal: Lou Pittocco and Kurosh Marjani

Public: Joan Yankowski

Motion to go into Executive Session at 5:25pm.

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 5:50pm.

The Chairman, Sam Romeo, called the meeting to order in public session at 5:55pm.

The Chairman declared that a quorum was present and directed the Assistant Secretary, Meaghan Maloney, to act as secretary for the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed the public and asked for any comments from residents. He reminded the public that this is a public meeting, not a public hearing and that he will invite any non-residents to speak.

Resident, Joan Yankowski, had a complaint about there not being anything posted about the Board meeting. The Executive Director responded that a notice should have been posted by the manager. The Executive Director stated he will remind the manager of their responsibility to post the meeting.

Ms. Yankowski expressed concern about the landscapers and their lack of knowledge about the landscaping. She explained they often overlook the weeds and dead leaves. The Chairman agreed and stated he too has issues with the landscapers. Ms. Yankowski suggested staff accompany the landscapers while they are doing the work around the property. The Chairman and the Deputy Director both asked Winston Robinson if the landscapers come on Fridays to cut the grass. Mr. Robinson reported they come on Friday to cut, trim and blow any leaves. Commissioner Simms

pointed out that while they are here they do not wear safety goggles, which is cause for concern. The Executive Director stated that the landscaping contract is up this year. Moving forward we will re-bid the contract and exclude them from the bidding process based on performance. He also stated that the above mentioned complaints will be documented in their file. The Chairman further stated that he has had personal run-ins regarding the landscapers and they do a terrible job. The Executive Director indicated because of the low cost it results in poor performance. Ms. Yankowski also mentioned that they come with big machines and use them where there isn't any grass Ms. Yankowski also mentioned a tree on the property that is leaning over. The Executive Director questioned if she reported this to maintenance or the main office. She replied that she had reported it, but nothing has been done. The Executive Director asked Mr. Robinson what Dave Tobar said about the leaning tree. Mr. Robinson responded that he was told it is hard to predict what was going to happen to the tree. The Deputy Director stated if it wasn't a concern after being looked at, then the tree is fine.

Ms. Yankowski had another complaint regarding smoking. She stated that people are still smoking on the property and are not following the guidelines of being 25 feet away from the buildings. The Executive Director asked if she could name the persons not following the smoking policy. The Executive Director said once we know who the policy violators are we will need to send them a letter. The Deputy Director instructed Ms. Yankowski to send names to George and he will send letters to those in violation of the policy. Ms Yankowski also expressed concern that there are people smoking while using oxygen. Commissioner Landy questioned where this was taking place. Ms. Yankowski expressed that it was right outside by the wall. Commissioner Landy stated that unfortunately the wall is in the allotted distance where tenants are allowed to smoke. The Executive Director asked Mr. Robinson if it was possible to move the ashtrays further away. Mr. Robinson responded yes, it is possible to move them.

The Chairman asked for approval of the Minutes of The Regular Meeting of the Board on April 27, 2016. On a motion duly made and seconded, the Minutes, with revisions were approved. (Commissioner Landy, Commissioner Pucci, and Commissioner Yankowich abstained due to absence).

The Chairman asked for approval of the Minutes of the Special Board Conference meeting on May 10, 2016. On a motion duly made and seconded, the Minutes, with revisions were approved.

Finance Committee:

The Finance Committee met on May 25, 2016. In attendance were Commissioner Curdumi, Commissioner Simms, Commissioner Boutelle, the Finance Director and the Deputy Director.

Commissioner Curdumi stated that the Finance Director is in the process of doing adjustments. He asked the board to draw their attention to the back page of summary on expenses and informed everyone that management fees for Parsonage were added in May. He stated that Parsonage is showing a \$77,000 deficit, however it does not include any adjustments. Commissioner Yankowich questioned the reason for the revenue shortfall and asked if it was due to rates or vacancies. The Parsonage Cottage Administrator, Penny Lore responded, the shortfall in revenue is equal to 2 vacancies of rooms at the property on average. Commissioner Yankowich confirmed that the year to date shortfall was in the amount of \$56,000.

Commissioner Boutelle asked to have a clarification of the language used on the statement for the accrued management fees. Commissioner Yankowich replied it should show depreciation and accrued management fee, but as long as it reads the same every month it's fine. Commissioner Curdumi stated that in the upcoming months the statements will make more sense, especially when the adjustments are done.

Commissioner Boutelle explained on the operating statement for April and moving forward there will be no more pilot payments for state properties. The Governor has cut it out of state reimbursements, therefore going forward that number will be zero. He further pointed out that the monthly expenses were high due to the fact there are five Fridays in May which calls for five payrolls. The Deputy Director mentioned that Jim Lash budgeted zero for pilot payment. Commissioner Boutelle stated that Parsonage through April still reflecting costs of higher interest rate being paid on the town loan, but the Finance Director is still working on the adjustments.

Commissioner Yankowich posed a question to Ms. Lore in regards to the two vacancies and asked if they've had two vacancies for five months. Ms. Lore replied that since last summer 15 people have come and gone, which is the highest they've ever had. Ms. Lore explained that it hasn't gotten above 38 residents because of the difficulty in leasing the double room. Commissioner Yankowich stated to the Chairman that he's looked at options to take the slop room and make it into the bathtub room. Commissioner Yankowich suggested doing a sketch layout proposing a new room and stated that \$56,000 would pay for that conversion. The Chairman asked if we are getting cash reimbursement from the town for the loan. Commissioner Yankowich responded no because we are not paying it we are accruing it. The Chairman asked the Executive Director to follow up with Ms. Lore on this issue.

The Executive Director pointed out that on the April 2016 balance sheet, what people don't realize is that although we run the housing authority we also run a construction company. He pointed out we have \$4 million dollars in that account for projects under construction. Commissioner Curdumi asked if that was partial to Greenwich Close. The Executive Director responded that it included Greenwich Close, Adams Garden and Strickland Rd.

Development Committee:

The Development Committee did not meet this month.

The Executive Director informed the Board that we continue to struggle with energy costs at McKinney Terrace and Agnes Morley. He stated that although it hasn't been a particularly cold season it's been a prolonged heating season and as of last week we are still heating the buildings. He explained that as bills start to go from red to black in April and May we will start making a profit and end the year on a positive note. The Executive Director also stated that he is working with an energy conservator to figure out a way to lower the bills.

The Executive Director reported that the bathroom contract at Wilber Peck was voted on and we got great pricing. He explained that HATG will pose 2 options for tenants during the renovation process. First, we will offer 3 nights in a hotel and will have Meaghan look into hotel pricing. The second option will be a stipend for \$100 per night, if tenants opt to stay with other family.

Commissioner Landy questioned if the project takes longer will the tenants still have access to the units. The Executive Director replied yes. The Executive Director stated that the second option was offered at Greenwich Close during the elevator renovations and worked well and only relocated 1 of 130 tenants. Commissioner Yankowich questioned if a legal document would need to be put in place being that HATG would pick up the hotel bill. The Executive Director responded he wasn't sure, would have to ask Lou. The Executive Director also stated that they may have tenants sign a document saying we will not authorize additional charges during the hotel stay. Commissioner Boutelle questioned if a proposed construction schedule was projected. The Chairman responded we won't know until the project begins. He further explained the first set will be a test, and then we can put together a displacement schedule.

The Executive Director reported that they received a challenge to the bid from a firm out of NY. He explained they don't have a legitimate claim. Commissioner Pucci asked if the challenge can hold up. The Executive Director explained they were making the claim attempting to justify their price.

The Chairman stated that the town is trying to make HATG pay for the sewer lines to be fixed at Adams Garden. The Chairman explained that it is not our responsibility. The town agreed they own the sewers, therefore they are responsible. Commissioner Yankowich asked if there was an easement. The Chairman responded he'd imagine there was. Commissioner Boutelle asked if the sewer tax is covered in the pilot. Lou Pittocco responded that the pilot covers the property tax, not the sewer. Commissioner Yankowich reported that he went through town properties and only 1 or 2 of 70 pays sewer tax. He exclaimed we'll pay when the rest pays. The Chairman expressed he brought Tony D'Andrea up to speed.

The Chairman reported that Strickland Rd. Cottage should be complete in 3-4 weeks and stated it is coming along well. Commissioner Boutelle questioned how many bedrooms. The Chairman responded only one because it would require additional permits.

The Deputy Director asked if the sewer issue was the reason for the holdup at Adams Garden. The Commissioner replied yes, and that we need to move forward. Commissioner Yankowich expressed that the sewer people attended the staff meeting at Adams Garden 2 years ago and never mentioned Housing being responsible for the sewers being fixed. The Commissioner stated that they are trying to stick us with the bill so it wouldn't have to come out of their pocket, now we are delayed several weeks and will possibly get charges from the contractor for delays.

Administrative Committee:

The Administrative Committee did not meet this month.

Other Residence Committee:

The Other Residence Committee did not meet this month.

Executive Directors Report:

The Executive Director informed the Board that he has found a new way to better communicate with tenants during an emergency. He stated that Honeywell and a few other companies have a system that will announce maintenance repairs and emergencies instead of Housing Managers

sending notices. He explained that this system provides instant communication and sends out blast notifications in the form of email, phone call and text messages.

The Executive Director reported that Parsonage Cottage got the MI for the porch.

The Executive Director reported on the Section 8 Management Assessment Program, we received a high performance score of 100%. He stated that the score can't get better but we will try.

The Executive Director informed the Board there is a P & Z meeting at Armstrong Court on June 6, 2016, for anyone who would like to attend. The Chairman said he expects neighbors to come and report contamination. He further explained that the report does not indicate any contamination or health hazards although it does report pollution. Commissioner Boutelle questioned on the original report if Finkbeiner had any specific allegations about lead. The Chairman stated that we have already disproved those allegations. He further reported we had testing done in the 9 areas that were requested and we did that per their requirements. The Executive Director further indicated that we did what was asked and even switched companies per their request to satisfy their false narrative.

Commissioner Curdumi posed a question to the Executive Director about Armstrong Court fire alarm system. The Executive Director replied that it has been designed but has not been installed. Commissioner Curdumi asked if the outstanding issue has been resolved. The Executive Director reported it is still open, but Wilbur Peck is done and we have received the certificate of occupancy.

The Executive Director reported the Deficiency letter responses for phase II application took place today May 25th and hopes it will continue to move well.

The Chairman informed the Board of the two new additions to the HATG family, Lisette's new baby girl, Mia Estelle and Jamie's baby boy, Evan Jonathan.

Staff Reports:

The Deputy Director informed the Board that they received about 4,000 Section 8 applications. He said that Laura and Ruth are currently going through them. He stated that the lottery would be held soon. He also explained that if an applicant was chosen, they would still need to qualify. The Chairman asked if there's a preference. The Deputy Director replied that we do have preference and they have approval and got a great review. 75 applicants will be drawn to start with a total of 150. We have 12 vouchers right now to give out even though we are 7 over what we have to be.

The Chairman asked about parking issues and stated that at Wilbur Peck there were 29 cars illegally parked at night and had the police come. The Deputy Director reported that during a meeting he held Armstrong Court around 5:15pm there were at least 15 cars without stickers. The Asset Manager, Sardis Solano agreed that there are parking issues present. She explained that people park and block dumpsters and it gets in way of garbage man coming to change out the dumpsters. Commissioner Boutelle asked if there was any way to know if the violators are

on the lease. Ms. Solano responded they are supposed to have stickers. The Chairman expressed it is hard to police at night, but if there is no permit present you cannot park there. The Deputy Director expressed parking enforcement during the day isn't the problem, it's after the hours of 6pm when it becomes an issue. Commissioner Landy questioned how many spaces will be taken up during construction. The Executive Director stated it would need to be discussed but they will likely utilize the spaces by the dumpsters. Mr. Robinson stated that people speeding through the property is also an issue. The Chairman stated adding speed bumps and signage on the property may help.

Commissioner Curdumi asked about the Wilbur Peck Clinic. The Executive Director reported that the work is complete and they've gotten the certificate of occupancy. He reported they held a soft opening and added that he would announce when the grand opening would be held.

Commissioner Landy asked about the dryer lines in laundry room. She states she remembers them being done around May/June. The Deputy Director wasn't sure the time frame and would get back to her. The Chairman asked Commissioner Landy how the laundry was doing. She expressed that it was going well but continue to have some issues. She informed the Board that the person in charge of closing the laundry has been having her 12 year old son take on the responsibility. Commissioner Landy expressed that he is rude and disrespectful. She stated other than that it is clean and neat but would still like to look into longer summer hours or possibly a fob key access system. Ms. Solano agreed about the issues in with the laundry room and stated she continues to receive complaints about the room opening late. The Chairman asked what time it is supposed to be opened and Commissioner Landy replied 6am. The Deputy Director responded a fob system can cause late night issues, but will look into extended the hours and compensating more for closing later.

Other/New Business:

The Administrator for Parsonage Cottage requested to raise private pay to 4.6% which comes to \$200 and equates to \$4,500 per month. The Chairman asked if it would affect the residents. Ms. Lore responded that it would not and stated that rates haven't been raised in over 7 years. Commissioner Boutelle requested to table the discussion until next meeting. Ms. Lore stated she wanted to make the increase for July and has to give 30 days' notice and would need to give notice soon. Commissioner Boutelle stated that he wished he was informed ahead of time and requested to have more information before voting. Commissioner Yankowich explained that 4% over 7 years isn't bad and he didn't have a problem with that. The Executive Director asked how many residents private pay. Ms. Lore responded 20% which is about 8 residents. The Executive Director explained that residents have to spend down money in order to get Medicaid. Ms. Lore stated it takes a short amount of time to get that cost down with most resident's assets equaling \$30,000-\$50,000. The Executive Director asked about the month rates and Ms. Lore responded we get 2% while nursing homes get 5%. Commissioner Yankowich made a motion to approve Ms. Lore's recommendation to increase the private pay rates. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, with one opposition the request was granted.

Resolution 425:

The Chairman stated that an account was renegotiated on loan for Parsonage Cottage and \$50,000 would be set aside for capital improvements. After the language was corrected, upon a motion duly made and seconded the resolution was approved.

Resolution 426:

Base Rent Increases for Vacancies at Armstrong Court

Upon a motion duly made and seconded a unanimous vote was made in favor to increase base rent for vacancies at Armstrong Court.

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Meaghan Maloney