

Bellingham Housing Authority - Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2021 – virtually via ZOOM

1. Mrs. Cartier calls the meeting to order at 6:02

The following members present:

- Monique Bergeron, Executive Director
- Linda Cartier, Chairperson
- Debra Sacco, Vice-Chairperson
- Sandra Tracy, Treasurer
- Randy Hall, Assistant Treasurer (was not present for first part of meeting)
- Russell Anzivino, Recording Secretary
- Richard Conlon, Accountant

2. Approval of December 8, 2020 amended minutes

- Already approved

3. Approval of January 12, 2021 minutes

- Mrs. Sacco makes motion to approve and Mrs. Tracy seconds; discussion: Mrs. Cartier wants under number 8 to include that the Employee Time Slip was missing from documents; Mrs. Bergeron advises to change spelling of currently under number 8. All in favor with edits. None opposed.

4. Public Input – no public at meeting. Mrs. Tracy does have a question that a resident asked her. Resident wanted to know why fire alarm testing cannot be done in another season due to the cold weather in the winter. Mrs. Bergeron states that unfortunately it needs to be done the same time every year, per the way the law is written. It is discussed that residents don't usually leave the unit but due to COVID restrictions, residents were asked to leave for the duration of the test.

5. New Business

A) Resolution 2021-02 Five-year Housing Choice Voucher Plan: nothing new and done every 5 years. Gives HUD the boards "game plan." No changes to goals or objectives. Mrs. Sacco makes motion to accept and Mr. Hall seconds. No further discussion. All in favor.

B) Resolution 2021-03 Consolidation of Housing Choice Voucher Program: consolidate Section 8 Housing Program and allow Dedham to take entire program. No money is made in program and a lot of work is required for the program. Anyone who lives or works in Bellingham would still get preference. Dedham has good reputation and currently administers about six other housing programs. Mrs. Cartier is concerned with why we would give up these programs if we get money for them. Mr. Conlon stated most times when a program starts up, the housing authority will get a onetime amount of money and that's all. Additionally, he stated that if the program stays in 2022, the housing authority will begin to lose money. Program is only making money this year due to the Federal Government giving \$16,000 in COVID money – other than that, the program would not make money this year. If decision is made to give up program, will work with HUD on timeframe to give it up. The two part-time positions within the Bellingham Housing authority would be reduced to a total of 17 hours – half the amount of the

current hours since half of the payment for these two positions is funded by Section 8. Additionally, salary being absorbed by Section 8 would then be absorbed by the Executive Director salary reducing their salary by \$2,368. Additionally there are factors to consider with the Union. Mr. Conlon suggests not doing any of the recommendations of the Union for the maintenance staff this year including moving maintenance salary up two steps and Mrs. Bergeron only wants one step. Also, concerns for retirement assessment the following year.

Mr. Hall questions why Dedham would even want Bellingham units – Mrs. Bergeron stated that each voucher Dedham get, they make more money. They handle so many now that financially it is worth them taking on more. Mr. Conlon advised that in order for Section 8 program to work, there must be more than 100 units.

Mrs. Tracy questions who the liability rests with – Mrs. Bergeron stated the liability rests with Dedham now.

C) Resolution 2021-04 Procurement Policy Amendment – Draft: used other housing authority policy and changed the things that needed to be changed. Procurement thresholds are much higher. This policy was updated in 2018. Mrs. Sacco questions where the dollar amount changes came from. Any changes came from the Massachusetts General Law. Anything that said “BHA” in old policy has been changed to “Housing Authority.” Mrs. Cartier asks if the board would like additional time to review since there are so many edits. Mrs. Sacco motions to table resolution; Mrs. Tracy seconds; all in favor; motion carries.

6. Old Business

A) Presentation of Agreed-Upon Procedure for Fiscal Year End March 31, 2020: two exceptions – one being the maintenance supervisor salary over budget by 4%. Most years, the salary is based off the old rate plus 3%. This year when the budget was submitted, this was not the case. The pager costs were also not included in the salary. Second exception is to update the contract register. Will have it updated within the next couple months. Mrs. Cartier asks what happens to the 4% - was maintenance given a 4% increase in salary. Mrs. Bergeron states no and that for Fiscal Year 2020, there was no increase in maintenance. \$10,000 increase to salary will wait for now.

7. Treasurer's Report period ending January 31, 2021

- Mrs. Tracy questions the “centralized waiting” in which Mrs. Bergeron advised it's a service the board pays for to assist with Section 8. It is paid quarterly.

- Mrs. Cartier questions the “Independent Accounts Report” – Mrs. Bergeron states it's the “Agreed-Upon Procedure” that was discussed.

- Mrs. Cartier asks about the reimbursement bank fee – Mrs. Bergeron states issue w/ payroll during COVID – not enough money was taken out for pension amounts.

8. Accountant's Reports

- Mrs. Tracy questions on the first page the variance of \$32,663 for solar charges. Mrs. Bergeron states it's a variance toward payments

9. Executive Directors Report

- One vacancy at Depot, one at Center, and three at Wrentham; having difficulty w/ waiting list as a lot of people are not responding. Applied for a grace period so they are not charged for having units off-line. A jump in additional vacancies is to be expected as multiple residents reported to not be coming back.

- Fire alarm testing recently

- Virtual court recently for another eviction – now on hold for one year due to request for reasonable accommodation.

- Webinar for senior vaccine program – town approved to do vaccinations and ordered the vaccine – unsure of how many will be given.

- Tennant Account Receivable increased

- Employee time sheet provided to board on Google Drive

- Mrs. Sacco questions if there has been an increase or not of positive COVID tests – Mrs. Bergeron advised they have slowed down.

10. Any other business that may legally come before the board

- none

11. Meeting Closure

- Next meeting on March 9, 2021; Mrs. Tracy motions to end meeting; Mrs. Sacco seconds; all in favor; motion adjourned.