

# Town of Bellingham MA

10 Mechanic Street, Bellingham MA 02019

## MINUTES04.11.2017

Bellingham Housing Authority  
Meeting Minutes  
April 11, 2017 held at Wrentham Manor

- Call to Order at 6:00 p.m. Announcement made that meeting is being recorded. Mr. Hall announced that he must leave the meeting by 6:45 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners was held at Wrentham Manor. The following members, staff and others were present:

Joseph M. Hall, Chairman	Lawrence J Sposato, Jr, Vice Chairman
Linda Cartier, Treasurer	Debra Sacco, Assistant Treasurer
Sandra L Tracy, Commissioner	Monique Bergeron, Executive Director
Residents	

- Approval of minutes of March 14, 2017 minutes
  - Mrs. Sacco made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Mr. Sposato.
  - Mrs. Cartier made note that the following should be amended:
    - Mr. Sposato's title is missing from the Call to Order.
    - Section 9 should have the next meeting as April 11, 2017.
    - Notation should be made in between sections 5 & 6 that there was a discussion regarding the hiring of a part-time maintenance laborer.
  - Mrs. Sacco's motion subject to the changes, Mr. Sposato's second subject to the changes, all in favor, motion carried.
- Public Input
  - Mrs. Hutchins made the board aware of an issue she had with "smoke damage" from "black smoke" in her unit a few weeks ago. She explained what happened and what happened after the fact with the fire department. Mrs. Hutchins explained that her son came to clean the oven; she evidently dropped something plastic in the oven. She states that maintenance came in the middle of the night and left her a fan. She claims that no one came to check on her or the other two residents in that building. She is concerned about what would have happened should this had occurred during the night.
    - Mrs. Bergeron explained that at approximately 4:00 p.m. (Thursday or Friday), Mrs. Hutchins turned on the oven and some sort of plastic was in there which caused white smoke. Mrs. Bergeron, Ed Pelletier and the resident from upstairs were there. We made her remove herself from the unit (she went upstairs with the other resident) until the smoke cleared. Mrs. Hutchins never opened the common hallway door therefore the smoke alarm to the fire department did not respond. The unit smoke detector was going off. We did offer to clean the oven for her but she stated her son would do it for her.
    - Mrs. Messina asked about a hard-wired device in the living room. Mrs. Bergeron stated that there is a smoke detector and one-three heat detectors in each unit. If there were truly something wrong, a fire, there would be multiple alarms going off. Mr. Hall stated that tenants should not assume that someone else will call the fire department in any instance.
    - Mrs. Hutchins stated that it doesn't make much sense to her that only the smoke detector went off when there was "thick black smoke" in the unit. Mrs. Bergeron stated that all of the windows were open in her unit and a fan was running when staff arrived. Mrs. Hutchins refutes that statement. Staff did provide her with an additional fan.
    - Mrs. Bergeron will obtain information in regard to live wire smoke detectors or inter-connect the smoke detectors. The alarms are very loud and should there be a hearing issue, the Authority will provide a strobe alarm.
    - Mr. Godbout sympathizes with Mary's concerns; he has set off the alarms with burning food. People can die from smoke inhalation before being burned. He also made note that there have been some people illegally dumping on the property and

Mrs. Bergeron is aware.

- Mrs. Tracy inquired about the heat detectors and at what temperature they would call for fire. Mrs. Cartier stated the tenants will perish with the smoke before the heat. Mrs. Bergeron will obtain more information.
- Mrs. Hutchins also indicated that normally smoke detector batteries are changed with the clock change. She stated that no one changed her batteries. Mrs. Bergeron explained that the smoke detectors are hard-wired and the battery is only a backup. Mrs. Sacco asked if they are tested; Mrs. Bergeron stated that the detector will indicate a low battery with a beep and then the batter is changed. Mrs. Hutchins called the fire department when it started beeping. Mrs. Bergeron asked why she did not call emergency on-call. She did not want to bother them.
- Mrs. Messina stated that nothing is being accomplished between Mrs. Bergeron and an apartment change. Therefore, she has appointment with attorney next Wednesday. Mr. Hall thanked her.

- Correspondence

- Public Housing Notice 2017-08 Regulations Update: 760 CMR 6:00; Withdrawal of Proposed Section 6:10

- The state has rescinded the request for a regulation change in regard to the resident commissioner.
- Mr. Sposato explained that the town's legal counsel met with the town clerk's office and the board chair. Legal counsel stated that the town clerk's office handled the confusion appropriately. The state allegedly will have the regulations finalized within a reasonable amount of time.
- Mrs. Messina interrupted the discussion to ask if the authority had an ombudsman. Mrs. Bergeron stated that the authority has utilized the services of the COA (Sheila Ronkin). Mr. Dann stated that he did not understand why the authority needed anyone to assist; Mrs. Bergeron always helps everyone.
- Mrs. Cartier asked why the entire board was not invited and what was said at the meeting.
- Mr. Hall stated that he was invited as an aside by the Town Clerk's office. Mr. Sposato told Mrs. Cartier that she would have been wasting her time if she was in attendance. The meeting was a regular session legal counsel meeting. The meeting was in reference to the opinions/notices regarding the election process. Mr. Hall reiterated that counsel only stated that the way the town clerk's office handled the election process was appropriate and no further action was to be taken. Mr. Sposato stated that he did speak to Mrs. Cartier in regard to the circumstances surrounding the election. Mrs. Cartier again stated that she just wanted to know why the board was not given a heads' up.

- BlueWave project update regarding the solar project in Westport which is still on schedule.

- New Business

- Resolution 2017-06 Disposal of Fixed Assets

- Mrs. Bergeron stated that she will be offering the tables for sale.
- Motion made by Mrs. Sacco, seconded by Mrs. Cartier, all in favor, motion carried.

- Treasurer's Report

- Mrs. Cartier asked about the payroll for maintenance hours and if they were union. Mrs. Bergeron stated that the two maintenance personnel receive the same hourly rate. Mrs. Cartier asked if they have regular scheduled hours due to, for example, a 30 hour pay period. Mrs. Bergeron explained that any hours above their regularly scheduled hours are not overtime. Mrs. Cartier asked about Kaitlyn's hours and one week over 17 hours. Mrs. Bergeron explained that is a make-up week for a week that she had less hours.

- Accountant's Report

- Executive Director's Report

- Highlights of report presented
- Arthur St is on schedule effective April 10, 2017.
- Mrs. Sacco inquired about the failed inspection and procedure. Mrs. Bergeron explained that this is a special circumstance. The authority attorney felt it would behoove us to have the BOH inspection.

- Mr. Sposato asked about vacancies and the report to the town clerk's office. Mrs. Bergeron explained that all of the actual tenants no longer reside here but still have possession. Mrs. Bergeron stated that there will be many vacancies in the near future. Seven units are coming vacant but two have given up possession.
- Any other business that may legally come before the board
  - Mr. Sposato announced that there will be a candidate's forum at the COA (includes lunch) on April 20, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. You must contact COA to RSVP.
- Meeting Closure
  - Next meeting May 9, 2017 with an Executive Session meeting.
  - Motion to adjourn made by Mrs. Cartier, seconded by Mr. Sposato, all in favor, motion carried.