

Town of Bellingham MA

10 Mechanic Street, Bellingham MA 02019

MINUTES01.16.2018

Bellingham Housing Authority
Meeting Minutes - Amended
January 16, 2018 held at Wrentham Manor

- Call to Order at 6:01 p.m. for Regular Meeting. Announcement made that the meeting is being recorded.

The following members, staff and others were present:

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

- Approval of December 12, 2017 minutes
 - Mrs. Sacco made a motion to accept the minutes, motion seconded by Mrs. Cartier; discussion. Mr. Sposato noted that discussion regarding business cards are located in 6b and 7b, remove 7b notation; in Section 7c. there should be no reference to the age of the staff person. All in favor, motion carried.
- Public Input
 - Ms. Gelineau inquired about hiring a full-time maintenance staff person. Mr. Sposato explained that the expense for benefits are costly. Mr. Hall pointed out that the budget would change dramatically. Mrs. Cartier noted that benefits can be carried through retirement and also upon the staff person's death on to the survivor.
- Old Business
 - Executive Director Contract
 - Mr. Sposato announced that the contract changes and the vote needs to be tabled until the next meeting due to extensive revisions and the addition of the cover sheet.
 - Mr. Conlon mentioned that MassNAHRO is in the process of possibly suing DHCD in regard to the new contract.
 - Board Secretary/Scribe
 - Mr. Sposato introduced Robert Griffin who is here tonight to listen to the meeting. Robert is considering becoming the scribe for the Board's minutes. He has taken minutes in the past for school functions.
 - Tenant Board member; MassNAHRO Survey Bellingham Legal Counsel
 - Discussion regarding the questions in the survey as they pertain to elections and laws ensued. Mr. Sposato has been in communication with the Bellingham Town Counsel. Counsel is not attending due to the fact that the Authority has no relationship with the Town budgetarily. The recommendation is that the board member "hold over" position will remain or else otherwise dictated by legislation. However, the "hold over" position will end in four years which would be the end of the normal term of the position.
- New Business

- Operating Fund Revision #1
 - Presented by Mr. Conlon; any changes to budget line items plus or minus 10% must present a revision to DHCD
 - Items that are being revised are the \$24,600 for extraordinary work that was changed to modernization, decrease in rental income, decrease in subsidy, decrease maintenance materials, increase in contract costs, adjust extraordinary maintenance, adjust equipment and eliminate light poles.
 - Fee accountants are working with DCD in regard to revisions such as this because responsible budgeting should not be revised and savings should be placed in reserve.
 - Next years budget has been increased by 10% and the new Executive Director's Salary Schedule has been issued.
 - Motion made by Mr. Hall to approve Budget Revision #1, seconded by Mrs. Cartier, discussion.
 - All in favor, motion carried.
- PHN 2018-01 Local Housing Authority Executive Director Salary and Qualifications Schedule
 - Mr. Conlon presented the schedule which has been produced by DHCD based on a nation-wide survey. The actual budget item for the salary does not have to be voted until the new budget. The increase is not an across the board increase; the calculations are based on the number of units, current salary and number of programs.
 - Mr. Sposato inquired if the housing authority can opt to do nothing, be in the range or are there other options to alleviate the burden to the Authority all at once. Mr. Conlon stated that the fee accountants are in discussion with DHCD to determine if authorities can parse out the increase over a three-year period to lessen the impact to budgets without a penalty. The increase is 39% with the new schedule. The budget would have to absorb 29% from the operating budget. The new salary schedule is equivalent to the industry averages.
 - Mrs. Cartier asked how insurance and benefits factor into the calculation. Mr. Conlon stated that he believed that benefits were factored into the calculation. Increases over future years cannot exceed the salary maximum or \$180,000.00. The salary schedule limits any increases for the next three years to the maximum until the new schedule is issued.
 - Mr. Conlon explained that any salary increase will come from non-utility expenses. Currently, the expensed is \$346,220 and the authority will receive a 10% increase to that number (\$380,842). DHCD has not stated whether exemptions will be allowed in future budget guidelines. Mr. Conlon stated that Fire Insurance and Retirement will probably not be allowed.
 - Mrs. Cartier inquired about other staff salaries. Mr. Conlon responded that salaries as far as maintenance are not included in this discussion. Maintenance receive their increases pursuant to the Labor and Workforce Development Rates. Administrative salaries are up for discussion but cannot exceed 5%. Mrs. Bergeron stated that the minimum wage increase did not take effect this year. However, historically speaking, that position has not received an actual increase.
 - Mr. Conlon stated that he has never heard of any one getting this kind of increase. All indications show that privatization is still in the picture. The Executive Director does an awful lot for the amount of money the position is being paid. The wages are a good fair wage but a very large increase at one time.
- PHN 2018-02 FY2018 Local Housing Authority Budget Guidelines
 - Budget questionnaire was given to Mrs. Bergeron to complete.
 - Budget will be discussed at a future meeting.
- 2018 Board meeting dates
 - No holidays affected by the schedule.
 - Mrs. Sacco noted that Depot Court is not noted on the meeting dates. Mrs. Bergeron will update and send to Town Hall.
- Executive Director Performance Evaluation
 - Mr. Sposato implores the members to complete the form by March.
 - Mrs. Bergeron will send out the Tenant Survey's.
 - Mrs. Cartier asked about Mrs. Bergeron's contract and if she was an employee-at-will. Discussion ensued. Mrs. Bergeron has a legal signed contract; just not a DHCD approved contract.

- Treasurer's Reports

- Mrs. Sacco asked about BWC Bass River. Mrs. Bergeron stated that is the authority's portion of the electric usage with the credits from the solar panels. The time frame is July through October. Mrs. Sacco stated that the next invoice should be due soon. Mrs. Bergeron has inquired to the company to begin monthly billing.
- Additional large expenses this month include electric, group insurance, retirement, property insurance, and a new washing machine.
- Mrs. Cartier asked about staff who resigned recently. Mrs. Bergeron stated that he quit with no notice due to the fact that he was not being offered full-time employment. Mrs. Bergeron added that a new staff person started the next day. A resigned employee came back temporarily until the end of the month. Mrs. Bergeron will advertise again for the position. Discussion regarding the vocational schools and work study or co-op programs.
- Accountant's Report
- Mr. Hall noted that the electric costs are not truthful but also notes that the billing is not up to date.
 - Mrs. Tracy asked about contract costs and the high costs. Mrs. Bergeron stated that this year is more contract costs than maintenance supplies.
- Executive Director's Report
 - Highlights of reports reported.
 - One vacancy as of 12/31/2017.
 - Center St is still in modernization. The preconstruction meeting was held and the contractor was on-site within two days. Expected completion is the beginning of March.
 - The mini-split heat pumps are complete. The most problems occurred at Wrentham Manor with a lot of oversight and education on the part of housing authority staff.
 - The Work Order report is working properly and additional information is offered for outstanding work orders. Mrs. Tracy observed that the work order report numbers are not accurate. Discussion ensued. Mrs. Bergeron will revisit the report and adjust the spread sheet if needed.
 - Mrs. Tracy asked a few questions for clarification from the tenant accounts receivable report
 - Mrs. Bergeron requested that the Chairman sign the HUD-50077-CR Civil Rights Certification. The form is required annually by HUD for the HCV program; no resolution is required. Mrs. Cartier noted that the form expired 4/30/2011 and inquired about the use of the form outside of housing authorities. Discussion ensued.
 - Mrs. Cartier asked about the status of development and how were things going. Mrs. Bergeron responded that overall the residents have been getting along. Some tenants continue to break the rules and have bad behavior.
 - Mrs. Cartier asked about people smoking, Mrs. Bergeron stated that some changes to the smoking area are being analyzed. Discussion ensued in regard to smoke sensors specific for cigarette smoking; more research is needed. Discussion of medical marijuana.
- Meeting Closure
 - Next scheduled meeting is February 13, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at Depot Court.
 - Motion to adjourn made by Mrs. Cartier, seconded by Mrs. Sacco, all in favor, motion carried.